

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

68-0157 (9-06) - 3091078 - EI

**MATHEW R BOON**  
Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 08A-UI-08321-S2T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**THE CBE GROUP INC**  
Employer

**OC: 08/10/08 R: 04  
Claimant: Appellant (2)**

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Mathew Boon (claimant) appealed a representative's September 5, 2008 decision (reference 01) that concluded he was not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because he was discharged from work with The CBE Group (employer) for conduct not in the best interest of the employer. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was scheduled for October 1, 2008. The claimant participated personally. The employer participated by Michael Frost, Vice President and General Counsel, and Nick Michael, Senior Vice President of Business Development. The claimant offered and Exhibit A was received into evidence.

**ISSUE:**

The issue is whether the claimant was discharged for misconduct.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and considered all of the evidence in the record, finds that: The claimant was hired on July 5, 2006, as a full-time collection department supervisor. The claimant signed for receipt of the employer's handbook on July 5, 2006. The claimant had training on confidentiality of collection information and recordings. The employer issued the claimant verbal warnings on February 8, 2007, June 4 and August 6, 2008, for performance issues and on July 11, 2006, for attendance.

On July 21, 2008, the claimant filed a complaint with his employer for working in a hostile work environment. A hearing was held and the claimant recorded the hearing. The claimant also recorded the employer's attorney telling the claimant there were no other complainants and that he was an independent investigator. In addition the claimant recorded a telephone conversation from his home with a senior vice president.

On August 11, 2008, the employer terminated the claimant for recording information stating he was violating the employer's policy on recording collection calls.

## REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow the administrative law judge concludes the claimant was not discharged for misconduct.

Iowa Code section 96.5-2-a provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits:

2. Discharge for misconduct. If the department finds that the individual has been discharged for misconduct in connection with the individual's employment:

a. The individual shall be disqualified for benefits until the individual has worked in and has been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times the individual's weekly benefit amount, provided the individual is otherwise eligible.

871 IAC 24.32(1)a provides:

Discharge for misconduct.

(1) Definition.

a. "Misconduct" is defined as a deliberate act or omission by a worker which constitutes a material breach of the duties and obligations arising out of such worker's contract of employment. Misconduct as the term is used in the disqualification provision as being limited to conduct evincing such willful or wanton disregard of an employer's interest as is found in deliberate violation or disregard of standards of behavior which the employer has the right to expect of employees, or in carelessness or negligence of such degree of recurrence as to manifest equal culpability, wrongful intent or evil design, or to show an intentional and substantial disregard of the employer's interests or of the employee's duties and obligations to the employer. On the other hand mere inefficiency, unsatisfactory conduct, failure in good performance as the result of inability or incapacity, inadvertencies or ordinary negligence in isolated instances, or good faith errors in judgment or discretion are not to be deemed misconduct within the meaning of the statute.

The employer has the burden of proof in establishing disqualifying job misconduct. Cosper v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 321 N.W.2d 6 (Iowa 1982). Misconduct serious enough to warrant discharge is not necessarily serious enough to warrant a denial of job insurance benefits. Such misconduct must be "substantial." Newman v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 351 N.W.2d 806 (Iowa App. 1984). The employer did not provide sufficient evidence of job-related misconduct at the hearing. The employer's rules appear to apply to collection recordings. The claimant did not make any collection related recordings. The claimant did not know that his actions would result in his separation from employment. The employer did not meet its burden of proof to show misconduct. Benefits are allowed.

**DECISION:**

The representative's September 5, 2008 decision (reference 01) is reversed. The employer has not met its proof to establish job related misconduct. Benefits are allowed.

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Beth A. Scheetz  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

bas/pjs