

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

BARBARA E DAVIS

Claimant

APPEAL 20R-UI-11431-AW-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

MERCY SERVICES IOWA CITY INC

Employer

OC: 04/05/20

Claimant: Appellant (1)

Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Ability to and Availability for Work

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22 – Able & Available – Benefits Eligibility Conditions

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Claimant filed an appeal from the July 7, 2020 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that denied benefits. The parties were properly notified of the hearing. A telephone hearing was scheduled for August 13, 2020. No hearing was held because appellant failed to respond to the hearing notice and provide a telephone number at which appellant could be reached for the scheduled hearing. On August 20, 2020, a default decision was issued dismissing the appeal.

On August 24, 2020, claimant appealed to the Employment Appeal Board (EAB). On September 17, 2020, the EAB remanded this matter to the Appeals Bureau for a hearing on the merits. Upon remand, due notice was issued and a hearing was held on November 10, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. Claimant participated. Employer did not participate. No exhibits were admitted. Official notice was taken of the administrative record.

ISSUE:

Whether claimant is able to and available for work.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

As claimant was the only witness, the administrative law judge makes the following findings of fact based solely upon claimant's testimony: Claimant began working as a full-time Prior Authorization Specialist for both Mercy Services Iowa City and Mercy Hospital on July 24, 2016. Half of claimant's wages were paid by each employer. Claimant last performed work for either employer on March 6, 2020. Claimant was hospitalized with pneumonia from March 12, 2020 until March 23, 2020. Upon release from the hospital, claimant was advised to quarantine due to Covid-19. Claimant informed employer and took a medical leave of absence from work. Claimant has not been released by her physician to return to work. Claimant filed an initial claim for unemployment insurance benefits effective April 5, 2020.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes claimant is not able to work and available for work. Benefits are denied.

Iowa Code section 96.4(3) provides:

An unemployed individual shall be eligible to receive benefits with respect to any week only if the department finds that:

3. The individual is able to work, is available for work, and is earnestly and actively seeking work. This subsection is waived if the individual is deemed partially unemployed, while employed at the individual's regular job, as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "b", unnumbered paragraph (1), or temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "c". The work search requirements of this subsection and the disqualification requirement for failure to apply for, or to accept suitable work of section 96.5, subsection 3 are waived if the individual is not disqualified for benefits under section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraph "h".

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22(1), (2) provide, in pertinent part:

Benefits eligibility conditions. For an individual to be eligible to receive benefits the department must find that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work. The individual bears the burden of establishing that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work.

(1) Able to work. An individual must be physically and mentally able to work in some gainful employment, not necessarily in the individual's customary occupation, but which is engaged in by others as a means of livelihood.

a. Illness, injury or pregnancy. Each case is decided upon an individual basis, recognizing that various work opportunities present different physical requirements. A statement from a medical practitioner is considered prima facie evidence of the physical ability of the individual to perform the work required. A pregnant individual must meet the same criteria for determining ableness as do all other individuals.

(2) Available for work. The availability requirement is satisfied when an individual is willing, able, and ready to accept suitable work which the individual does not have good cause to refuse, that is, the individual is genuinely attached to the labor market. Since, under unemployment insurance laws, it is the availability of an individual that is required to be tested, the labor market must be described in terms of the individual. A labor market for an individual means a market for the type of service which the individual offers in the geographical area in which the individual offers the service. Market in that sense does not mean that job vacancies must exist; the purpose of unemployment insurance is to compensate for lack of job vacancies. It means only that the type of services which an individual is offering is generally performed in the geographical area in which the individual is offering the services.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(1) and (35) provide:

Availability disqualifications. The following are reasons for a claimant being disqualified for being unavailable for work.

(1) An individual who is ill and presently not able to perform work due to illness.

(35) Where the claimant is not able to work and is under the care of a medical practitioner and has not been released as being able to work.

An individual claiming benefits has the burden of proof that she is be able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work. Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22.

Claimant is unable to work due to illness and has not been released to return to work by her medical provider. Claimant has not met her burden of proving she is able to and available for work. Accordingly, she is not eligible for unemployment insurance benefits.

NOTE TO CLAIMANT: This decision determines you are not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits. If you disagree with this decision you may file an appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by following the instructions on the first page of this decision. Individuals who do not qualify for regular unemployment insurance benefits, but who are currently unemployed for reasons related to COVID-19 may qualify for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). **You will need to apply for PUA to determine your eligibility under the program.** Additional information on how to apply for PUA can be found at <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/pua-information>. If this decision becomes final or if you are not eligible for PUA, you may have an overpayment of benefits.

DECISION:

The July 7, 2020 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. Claimant is not able to and available for work. Benefits are denied.



Adrienne C. Williamson
Administrative Law Judge
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Bureau
Iowa Workforce Development
1000 East Grand Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0209
Fax (515)478-3528

November 23, 2020
Decision Dated and Mailed

acw/mh

NOTE TO CLAIMANT:

This decision determines you are not eligible for REGULAR unemployment insurance benefits under state law. If you disagree with this decision you may file an appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by following the instructions on the first page of this decision.

If you do not qualify for regular unemployment insurance benefits under state law and are currently unemployed for reasons related to COVID-19, you may qualify for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). **If you have applied and have been approved for PUA benefits, this decision will NOT negatively affect your entitlement to PUA benefits.**