

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

LINDSEY J SENN
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 11A-UI-11660-LT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

THE BOYLE COMPANY INC
Employer

**OC: 07/31/11
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Iowa Code § 96.5(2)a – Discharge for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant filed an appeal from the August 24, 2011 (reference 01) decision that denied benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held by telephone conference call on October 26, 2011. Claimant participated. Employer participated through administrator Stefanie Geigle and DON Jody Vande Weerd. Employer's Exhibit 1 (fax pages 2 -13) was admitted to the record. Claimant's Exhibit A (pages 1 – 9) was admitted to the record.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether claimant was discharged for reasons related to job misconduct sufficient to warrant a denial of benefits.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant was employed full-time as a CNA and was separated from employment on August 3, 2011. She was tardy on August 2, 2011 because of child care arrangement difficulties. She had been warned in writing about attendance on July 18, 2011. Although the employer discussed looking into changing her start time from 6 a.m. to 6:30 a.m., it was not done and she did not follow up with Geigle or Vande Weerd about the issue. She had other written and verbal warnings about attendance on June 9, 2011 and December 14, 2010. The employer has a no-fault attendance policy.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant was discharged from employment due to job-related misconduct.

Iowa Code § 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(7) provides:

(7) Excessive unexcused absenteeism. Excessive unexcused absenteeism is an intentional disregard of the duty owed by the claimant to the employer and shall be considered misconduct except for illness or other reasonable grounds for which the employee was absent and that were properly reported to the employer.

The determination of whether unexcused absenteeism is excessive necessarily requires consideration of past acts and warnings. The term "absenteeism" also encompasses conduct that is more accurately referred to as "tardiness." An absence is an extended tardiness, and an incident of tardiness is a limited absence. Absences related to issues of personal responsibility such as transportation, lack of childcare, and oversleeping are not considered excused. *Higgins v. Iowa Department of Job Service*, 350 N.W.2d 187 (Iowa 1984). Absences due to properly reported illness or injury cannot constitute job misconduct since they are not volitional. *Cosper v. Iowa Department of Job Service*, 321 N.W.2d 6 (Iowa 1982). An employer's point system or no-fault absenteeism policy is not dispositive of the issue of qualification for benefits.

An employer is entitled to expect its employees to report to work as scheduled or to be notified in a timely manner as to when and why the employee is unable to report to work. The employer has established that the claimant was warned that further unexcused absences could result in termination of employment and the final absence was not excused. The final absence, in combination with the claimant's history of unexcused absenteeism, is considered excessive. Benefits are withheld.

DECISION:

The August 24, 2011 (reference 01) decision is affirmed. The claimant was discharged from employment due to excessive, unexcused absenteeism. Benefits are withheld until such time as she has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times her weekly benefit amount, provided she is otherwise eligible.

Dévon M. Lewis
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

dml/pjs