

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

DEREK LAFFOON

Claimant

APPEAL NO: 12A-UI-14844-BT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

CARGILL MEAT SOLUTIONS CORP

Employer

OC: 11/25/12

Claimant: Respondent (2/R)

Iowa Code § 96.5-1 - Voluntary Quit

Iowa Code § 96.3-7 - Overpayment

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Cargill Meat Solutions Corporation (employer) appealed an unemployment insurance decision dated December 14, 2012, reference 01, which held that Derek Laffoon (claimant) was eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was held on January 22, 2013. The claimant did not comply with the hearing notice instructions and did not call in to provide a telephone number at which he could be contacted, and therefore, did not participate. The employer participated through Angie Stevens, Human Resources Generalist. Employer's Exhibit One was admitted into evidence. Based on the evidence, the arguments of the party, and the law, the administrative law judge enters the following findings of fact, reasoning and conclusions of law, and decision.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether the claimant's voluntary separation from employment qualifies him to receive unemployment insurance benefits?

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 employed as a full-time production worker from November 21, 2011 through October 31, 2012 when he voluntarily quit. He filled out an exit interview stating he was "seeking other interests" and was "unhappy with fellow employees/environment issues." There is no record of the claimant going to the human resources department for any assistance with any problems he may have been having.

The claimant filed a claim for unemployment insurance benefits effective November 25, 2012 and has received benefits after the separation from employment.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The issue to be determined is whether the reasons for the claimant's separation from employment qualify him to receive unemployment insurance benefits. The claimant is not

qualified to receive unemployment insurance benefits if he voluntarily quit without good cause attributable to the employer. Iowa Code § 96.5-1.

In general, a voluntary quit requires evidence of an intention to sever the employment relationship and an overt act carrying out that intention. *Local Lodge #1426 v. Wilson Trailer*, 289 N.W.2d 608, 612 (Iowa 1980) and *Peck v. Employment Appeal Bd.*, 492 N.W.2d 438 (Iowa Ct. App. 1992). The claimant demonstrated his intent to quit and acted to carry it out by telling the employer he quit and completing a voluntary termination exit interview form on October 31, 2012.

It is the claimant's burden to prove that the voluntary quit was for a good cause that would not disqualify him. Iowa Code § 96.6-2. He did not participate in the hearing and has not satisfied that burden. Benefits are therefore denied.

Iowa Code § 96.3(7) provides that benefits must be recovered from a claimant who receives benefits and is later determined to be ineligible for benefits, even though the claimant acted in good faith and was not otherwise at fault. The overpayment recovery law was updated in 2008. See Iowa Code § 96.3(7)(b). Under the revised law, a claimant will not be required to repay an overpayment of benefits if all of the following factors are met. First, the prior award of benefits must have been made in connection with a decision regarding the claimant's separation from a particular employment. Second, the claimant must not have engaged in fraud or willful misrepresentation to obtain the benefits or in connection with the Agency's initial decision to award benefits. Third, the employer must not have participated at the initial fact-finding proceeding that resulted in the initial decision to award benefits. If Workforce Development determines there has been an overpayment of benefits, the employer will not be charged for the benefits, regardless of whether the claimant is required to repay the benefits.

Because the claimant has been deemed ineligible for benefits, any benefits the claimant has received could constitute an overpayment. Accordingly, the administrative law judge will remand the matter to the Claims Division for determination of whether there has been an overpayment, the amount of the overpayment, and whether the claimant will have to repay the benefits.

DECISION:

The unemployment insurance decision dated December 14, 2012, reference 01, is reversed. The claimant voluntarily left work without good cause attributable to the employer. Benefits are withheld until he has worked in and has been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times his weekly benefit amount, provided he is otherwise eligible. The matter is remanded to the Claims Section for investigation and determination of the overpayment issue.

Susan D. Ackerman
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

sda/css