

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Section
1000 East Grand—Des Moines, Iowa 50319
DECISION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
68-0157 (7-97) – 3091078 - EI**

**AHMET ZAHIROVIC
4608 EUCLID AVE
DES MOINES IA 50310**

**WAL-MART STORES INC
C/o THE FRICK COMPANY
PO BOX 283
ST LOUIS MO 63166-0283**

**ZIJO SUCESKA
INTERPRETER
4341 FRANKLIN
DES MOINES IA 50310**

**Appeal Number: 04A-UI-08526-S2T
OC: 07/04/04 R: 02
Claimant: Respondent (1)**

This Decision Shall Become Final, unless within fifteen (15) days from the date below, you or any interested party appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by submitting either a signed letter or a signed written Notice of Appeal, directly to the **Employment Appeal Board, 4th Floor—Lucas Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319.**

The appeal period will be extended to the next business day if the last day to appeal falls on a weekend or a legal holiday.

STATE CLEARLY

1. The name, address and social security number of the claimant.
2. A reference to the decision from which the appeal is taken.
3. That an appeal from such decision is being made and such appeal is signed.
4. The grounds upon which such appeal is based.

YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in this appeal or you may obtain a lawyer or other interested party to do so provided there is no expense to Workforce Development. If you wish to be represented by a lawyer, you may obtain the services of either a private attorney or one whose services are paid for with public funds. It is important that you file your claim as directed, while this appeal is pending, to protect your continuing right to benefits.

(Administrative Law Judge)

(Decision Dated & Mailed)

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (employer) appealed a representative's July 30, 2004 decision (reference 01) that concluded Ahmet Zahirovic (claimant) was discharged and there was no evidence of willful or deliberate misconduct. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was held on September 2, 2004. The claimant participated personally through Zijo Suceska, Interpreter. The employer participated by Carl Fitzgerald, Store Manager; and Curtis Matzen, Meat Department Manager.

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 November 15, 2001, as a full-time meat processor. The employer requires that employees complete computer-based training regarding fresh meat coding procedures. The meat department manager took the tests for his employees. He took the tests for the claimant. The claimant did not receive any warnings while he worked for the employer.

On or about June 29, 2004, the claimant's co-worker was told by the meat department manager that he and the claimant could cut out-dated meat and take it for themselves. The claimant and co-worker were cutting the meat next to the meat department manager without incident until another employee noticed the problem. The other employee reported it to the meat department manager. While the claimant and co-worker were having lunch, the meat department manager threw the meat away. The claimant and co-worker did not know where the meat went and the meat department manager did not say anything to the two. On July 3, 2004, the employer terminated the claimant for processing out-dated meat.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The issue is whether the claimant was discharged for misconduct. For the following reasons the administrative law judge concludes he was not.

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.

This definition has been accepted by the Iowa Supreme Court as accurately reflecting the intent of the legislature. Huntoon v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 275 N.W.2d 445, 448 (Iowa 1979).

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). The employer discharged the claimant and has the burden of proof to show misconduct. The employer did not provide any evidence of misconduct at the hearing. Consequently the employer did not meet its burden of proof to show misconduct. Benefits are allowed.

DECISION:

The representative's July 30, 2004 decision (reference 01) is affirmed. The claimant was discharged. Misconduct has not been established. Benefits are allowed provided the claimant is otherwise eligible.

bas/pjs