

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

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Appeal Number: 04A-UI-11318-SWT
OC: 09/12/04 R: 01
Claimant: Appellant (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

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant appealed an unemployment insurance decision dated October 13, 2004, reference 01, that concluded he was discharged for work-connected misconduct. A telephone hearing was held on November 22, 2004. The parties were properly notified about the hearing. The claimant participated in the hearing with assistance of an interpreter, Janice Hawkins. Jim Petzoldt participated in the hearing on behalf of the employer. Exhibit One was admitted into evidence at the hearing.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The claimant worked full time for the employer as a production worker from August 12, 2003 to September 14, 2004. The claimant was informed and understood that under the employer's work rules, regular attendance was required and employees were required to notify the employer if they were not able to work as scheduled. Under the employer's policy, employees

are subject to termination if they receive 14 attendance points in a 12-month period. The claimant had received 14 attendance points after missed work due to illness on August 10, 2004. He was given one more chance but was informed that any other attendance violations would result in his discharge. The claimant had received 6 of the 14 points for reporting to work late.

On September 13, 2004, the claimant punched in fifteen minutes late for work. He had lost his identification card, which was required for him to report to his workstation. He had reported to the guard station before the start of his shift, but was required to wait until his supervisor appeared to punch him and escort him into the plant. As a result of this additional attendance problem, the employer discharged the claimant on September 14, 2004.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The issue in this case is whether the claimant was discharged for work-connected misconduct as defined by the unemployment insurance law.

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, (7) provide:

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).

(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 claimant's repeated tardiness was a willful and material breach of the duties and obligations to the employer and a substantial disregard of the standards of behavior the employer had the right to expect of the claimant. The final incident cannot be considered to have been for legitimate reasons since it was the claimant's failure to secure his identification card that caused him to be late for work. He had been warned in the past about his attendance but continued to arrive late for work. Work-connected misconduct as defined by the unemployment insurance law has been established in this case.

DECISION:

The unemployment insurance decision dated October 13, 2004, reference 01, is affirmed. The claimant is disqualified from receiving unemployment insurance benefits until he has been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times his weekly benefit amount, provided he is otherwise eligible.

saw/kjf