

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

DARRIN S PETTY
56535 JASPER RD
ATLANTIC IA 50022

PROCTOR MECHANICAL CORPORATION
63 COLLEGE AVE
DES MOINES IA 50314

Appeal Number: 04A-UI-08385-MT
OC: 05/09/04 R: 01
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 96.5-3-a – Work Refusal

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Employer filed an appeal from a decision of a representative dated July 30, 2004, reference 03, which held claimant eligible for unemployment insurance benefits due to a refusal to accept work. After due notice, a telephone conference hearing was scheduled for and held on August 25, 2004. Claimant participated personally. Employer participated by Larry Sherer, Project Manager.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and considered all of the evidence in the record, finds: Employer made an offer of work to the claimant on May 7, 2004. That offer included the following terms: Same rate of pay and job duties full time. The job was for a different location. Claimant would need to commute 80 to 120 miles for the new job. Claimant did not accept the recall and decided to pursue self-employment. Claimant's hourly rate was \$19.00. Claimant refused the offer of work because the distance was too far and he wanted to try self-employment. The job offer was not made during the benefit year.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The issue in this matter is whether claimant refused to accept a suitable offer of work. For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes claimant did not refuse a suitable offer of work. The terms were not suitable, as claimant would need to drive 80 to 120 miles, which is a significant change in the contract of hire. This was not suitable work. Claimant was not obligated to accept work as he was pursuing self-employment. Furthermore, the job offer was not made during the benefit year effective July 30, 2004.

Iowa Code Section 96.5-3-a provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits:

3. Failure to accept work. If the department finds that an individual has failed, without good cause, either to apply for available, suitable work when directed by the department or to accept suitable work when offered that individual. The department shall, if possible, furnish the individual with the names of employers which are seeking employees. The individual shall apply to and obtain the signatures of the employers designated by the department on forms provided by the department. However, the employers may refuse to sign the forms. The individual's failure to obtain the signatures of designated employers, which have not refused to sign the forms, shall disqualify the individual for benefits until requalified. To requalify for benefits after disqualification under this subsection, the individual shall work in and be paid wages for insured work equal to ten times the individual's weekly benefit amount, provided the individual is otherwise eligible.

a. In determining whether or not any work is suitable for an individual, the department shall consider the degree of risk involved to the individual's health, safety, and morals, the individual's physical fitness, prior training, length of unemployment, and prospects for securing local work in the individual's customary occupation, the distance of the available work from the individual's residence, and any other factor which the department finds bears a reasonable relation to the purposes of this paragraph. Work is suitable if the work meets all the other criteria of this paragraph and if the gross weekly wages for the work equal or exceed the following percentages of the individual's average weekly wage for insured work paid to the individual during that quarter of the individual's base period in which the individual's wages were highest:

(1) One hundred percent, if the work is offered during the first five weeks of unemployment.

(2) Seventy-five percent, if the work is offered during the sixth through the twelfth week of unemployment.

(3) Seventy percent, if the work is offered during the thirteenth through the eighteenth week of unemployment.

(4) Sixty-five percent, if the work is offered after the eighteenth week of unemployment.

However, the provisions of this paragraph shall not require an individual to accept employment below the federal minimum wage.

871 IAC 24.24(8) provides:

(8) Refusal disqualification jurisdiction. Both the offer of work or the order to apply for work and the claimant's accompanying refusal must occur within the individual's benefit year, as defined in subrule 24.1(21), before the Iowa code subsection 96.5(3) disqualification can be imposed. It is not necessary that the offer, the order, or the refusal occur in a week in which the claimant filed a weekly claim for benefits before the disqualification can be imposed.

DECISION:

The decision of the representative dated July 30, 2004, reference 03 is affirmed. Claimant is eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits, provided claimant meets all other eligibility requirements.

mdm\tjc