

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**NANCY M LESLEIN**  
Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 09A-UI-02200-MT**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**CARE INITIATIVES**  
Employer

**OC: 12/14/08**  
**Claimant: Respondent (1)**

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Employer filed an appeal from a decision of a representative dated February 2, 2009, reference 01, which held claimant eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. After due notice, a telephone conference hearing was scheduled for and held on March 5, 2009. Claimant participated personally. Employer participated by Lynn Corbeil, Attorney at Law, TALX, with witnesses; Linda Schroeder, Assistant Director Nursing; Amanda Bradac, RN Charge Nurse; and Mike Terrill, Administrator. Exhibits One through Ten were admitted into evidence.

**ISSUE:**

The issue in this matter is whether claimant was discharged for misconduct.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and having considered all of the evidence in the record, finds: Claimant last worked for employer on December 14, 2008.

Claimant was discharged on December 14, 2008 by employer because claimant allegedly failed to answer a call light on December 14, 2008 for a period of 40 minutes. Claimant was discharged for violating the client's dignity and respect. Claimant did not ignore the call light. Claimant responded to the call light immediately upon seeing that it was lit up. Claimant had two prior warnings on her record. A final warning was issued November 5, 2008 for a dignity and respect violation.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF 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 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.

871 IAC 24.32(8) provides:

(8) Past acts of misconduct. While past acts and warnings can be used to determine the magnitude of a current act of misconduct, a discharge for misconduct cannot be based on such past act or acts. The termination of employment must be based on a current act.

The gravity of the incident, number of policy violations, and prior warnings are factors considered when analyzing misconduct. The lack of a current warning may detract from a finding of an intentional policy violation.

In this matter, the evidence fails to establish that claimant was discharged for an act of misconduct when claimant allegedly violated employer's policy concerning dignity and respect. Claimant was warned concerning this policy.

The last incident, which brought about the discharge, fails to constitute misconduct because employer failed to establish the policy violation. Claimant denied the incident under oath. Employer could only refute such by means of hearsay. The sworn testimony is more credible than hearsay. Benefits allowed. The administrative law judge holds that claimant was not discharged for an act of misconduct and, as such, is not disqualified for the receipt of unemployment insurance benefits.

**DECISION:**

The decision of the representative dated February 2, 2009, reference 01, is affirmed. Claimant is eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits, provided claimant meets all other eligibility requirements.

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Marlon Mormann  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

mdm/kjw