

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**WILLIAM T ROBINSON**  
Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 12A-UI-11033-M**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**BRIDGESTONE AMERICAS TIRE**  
Employer

**OC: 07/29/12  
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Claimant filed an appeal from a decision of a representative dated September 4, 2012, reference 01, which held claimant ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits. After due notice, a hearing was scheduled for and held on October 11, 2012. Employer participated by Jim Funcheon, Divisional Human Resource Manager; Pete Goshorn, Medical Manager and Tom Barragan, Human Resource Section Manager. Claimant failed to respond to the hearing notice and did not participate. Exhibit A, One and Two 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 considered all of the evidence in the record, finds: Claimant last worked for employer on July 27, 2012.

Claimant was discharged on August 7, 2012 by employer because claimant tested positive for cocaine on July 27, 2012. Claimant fell asleep at work. This incident created reasonable suspicion for employer to test for drugs. Employer sent claimant a certified letter explaining claimant's rights to have the specimen tested at a laboratory of his choice. Employer informed claimant of the drug policy. Claimant violated the same policy and was warned January 16, 2009. Employer warned claimant that further violations would result in discharge.

**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.

871 IAC 24.32(4) provides:

(4) Report required. The claimant's statement and the employer's statement must give detailed facts as to the specific reason for the claimant's discharge. Allegations of misconduct or dishonesty without additional evidence shall not be sufficient to result in disqualification. If the employer is unwilling to furnish available evidence to corroborate the allegation, misconduct cannot be established. In cases where a suspension or disciplinary layoff exists, the claimant is considered as discharged, and the issue of misconduct shall be resolved.

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 established that claimant was discharged for an act of misconduct when claimant violated employer's policy concerning drugs. Claimant was warned concerning this policy.

The last incident, which brought about the discharge, constitutes misconduct because claimant violated a known company rule after a final warning. Upon a positive drug screen, Iowa Code §

730.5(9)(g) requires, under certain circumstances, that an employer offer substance abuse evaluation and treatment to an employee the first time the employee has a positive drug test. The Iowa Supreme Court has held that an employer may not "benefit from an unauthorized drug test by relying on it as a basis to disqualify an employee from unemployment compensation benefits." *Eaton v. Iowa Employment Appeal Board*, 602 N.W.2d 553, 557, 558 (Iowa 1999). Employer had reasonable suspicion to test for drugs after claimant was caught sleeping. Employer fulfilled all requirements of Iowa Code section 730 by sending a certified letter to claimant informing him of his rights. The administrative law judge holds that claimant was discharged for an act of misconduct and, as such, is disqualified for the receipt of unemployment insurance benefits.

**DECISION:**

The decision of the representative dated September 4, 2012, reference 01, is affirmed. Unemployment insurance benefits shall be withheld until claimant has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times claimant's weekly benefit amount, provided claimant is otherwise eligible.

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Marlon Mormann  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

mdm/pjs