

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

BECKY A VOGEL

Claimant

APPEAL NO. 12A-UI-08602-NT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

STREAM INTERNATIONAL INC

Employer

OC: 06/10/12

Claimant: Respondent (2-R)

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Employer filed a timely appeal from a representative's decision dated July 12, 2012, reference 01, which held claimant eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits. After due notice was provided, a telephone hearing was held on August 13, 2012. Although duly notified, the claimant did not participate. The employer participated through Ms. Sharon Robertson, Human Resource Generalist, and Ms. Linda Carr, Team Manager.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether the claimant was discharged for misconduct sufficient to warrant the denial of unemployment insurance benefits.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having considered all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Becky Vogel was employed by Stream International, Inc. from June 16, 2008 until June 13, 2012 when she was discharged for violation of company policy. Ms. Vogel was employed as a full-time customer support professional and was paid by the hour. Her immediate supervisor was Linda Carr.

Ms. Vogel was discharged after she violated established company policy by failing to complete work requirements on a call that she had received on or about June 13, 2012. Although Ms. Vogel was aware that she was required to contact a specific customer department because the call had contained a "fire issue" the claimant did not do so.

Ms. Vogel was aware of the policy and had been specifically warned on December 2, 2011 and March 8, 2012. The company policy had been reviewed with all employees in April 2012. Ms. Vogel had no explanation for her failure to follow the required company policy. Her failure jeopardized the employer's contract with its client. Because the claimant had demonstrated the ability to adequately perform the duties of her job and was aware of her job responsibility but did not follow it, she was discharged from employment.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The question before the administrative law judge is whether the evidence in the record establishes misconduct sufficient to warrant the denial of unemployment insurance benefits. It does.

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.

The employer has the burden of proof in this matter. See Iowa Code section 96.6(2). Misconduct must be substantial in order to justify a denial of unemployment insurance benefits. The focus is on deliberate, intentional or culpable acts by the employee. See Gimbel v. Employment Appeal Board, 489 N.W.2d 36, 39 (Iowa Ct. of Appeals 1992).

In this matter the evidence in the record establishes that the claimant was aware of the company policy which required her to notify a specific department before completing and closing a call record. The claimant was not only aware of the rule but she had been warned specifically about violating the rule on two occasions in the past. Claimant's failure to provide the required notification on the call in question jeopardized the employer's contract with its client and was contrary to the employer's interests and reasonable standards of behavior that the employer has a right to expect of its employees under the provisions of the Employment Security Law. There being no evidence to the contrary, the administrative law judge concludes that the claimant was discharged for willful misconduct. Unemployment insurance benefits are withheld.

Iowa Code section 96.3-7, as amended in 2008, provides:

7. Recovery of overpayment of benefits.

a. If an individual receives benefits for which the individual is subsequently determined to be ineligible, even though the individual acts in good faith and is not otherwise at fault, the benefits shall be recovered. The department in its discretion may recover the overpayment of benefits either by having a sum equal to the overpayment deducted from any future benefits payable to the individual or by having the individual pay to the department a sum equal to the overpayment.

b. (1) If the department determines that an overpayment has been made, the charge for the overpayment against the employer's account shall be removed and the account shall be credited with an amount equal to the overpayment from the unemployment compensation trust fund and this credit shall include both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5. However, provided the benefits were not received as the result of fraud or willful misrepresentation by the individual, benefits shall not be recovered from an individual if the employer did not participate in the initial determination to award benefits pursuant to section 96.6, subsection 2, and an overpayment occurred because of a subsequent reversal on appeal regarding the issue of the individual's separation from employment. The employer shall not be charged with the benefits.

(2) An accounting firm, agent, unemployment insurance accounting firm, or other entity that represents an employer in unemployment claim matters and demonstrates a continuous pattern of failing to participate in the initial determinations to award benefits, as determined and defined by rule by the department, shall be denied permission by the department to represent any employers in unemployment insurance matters. This subparagraph does not apply to attorneys or counselors admitted to practice in the courts of this state pursuant to section 602.10101.

DECISION:

The representative's decision dated July 12, 2012, reference 01, is reversed. Claimant is disqualified. Unemployment insurance benefits are withheld until the claimant has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times her weekly benefit amount and is otherwise eligible. The issue of whether the claimant must repay unemployment insurance benefits is remanded to the UIS Division for determination.

Terence P. Nice
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

pjs/pjs