

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**SAMBA DIALLO**  
Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 13A-UI-02976-HT**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**WEST LIBERTY FOODS LLC**  
Employer

**OC: 02/10/13**  
**Claimant: Appellant (2)**

Section 96.5(2)a – Discharge

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

The claimant, Samba Diallo, filed an appeal from a decision dated March 14, 2013, reference 01. The decision disqualified him from receiving unemployment benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held by telephone conference call on April 12, 2013. The claimant participated on his own behalf. The employer, West Liberty Foods, participated by Human Resources Supervisor Nikki Bruno.

**ISSUE:**

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

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Diallo Samba was employed by West Liberty Foods from January 31, 2012 until February 7, 2013 as a full-time production worker. He received a warning March 13, 2012, for horseplay and on July 12, 2012, for work performance and horseplay. On November 12, 2012, he received a final written warning and three-day suspension for being late returning from his break.

On February 6, 2013, team leader Marcello reported to supervisor Socorro Zamudio that Mr. Diallo had been later returning from break again and product had been piling up at his work station. The next day the claimant was discharged by human resources supervisor Nikki Bruno and operations manager Walter DeBock. The claimant denied he had been late returning from break but was still discharged.

## 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.

The claimant denied he was late returning from break on February 6, 2013. The employer did not present any testimony from the only eyewitness to the event. If a party has the power to produce more explicit and direct evidence than it chooses to do, it may be fairly inferred that other evidence would lay open deficiencies in that party's case. *Crosser v. Iowa Department of Public Safety*, 240 N.W.2d 682 (Iowa 1976). The administrative law judge concludes that the hearsay evidence provided by the employer is not more persuasive than the claimant's denial of such conduct. The employer has not carried its burden of proof to establish that the claimant committed any act of misconduct in connection with employment for which he was discharged. Misconduct has not been established. The claimant is allowed unemployment insurance benefits.

**DECISION:**

The representative's decision of March 14, 2013, reference 01, is reversed. Samba Diallo is qualified for benefits, provided he is otherwise eligible.

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Bonny G. Hendricksmeier  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

bgh/tll