

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

**MELISA PULLIN**  
Claimant

**VAR-MIL INC**  
Employer

**APPEAL 20A-UI-09253-AW-T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**OC: 03/22/20**  
**Claimant: Respondent (4R)**

Iowa Code § 96.19(38) – Definitions – Total, partial unemployment  
Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Eligibility – A&A – Able to, available for, work search  
Iowa Code § 96.7(2)A(2) – Charges – Same base period employment  
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(26) – Eligibility – A&A – Part-time same hours, wages  
Iowa Code § 96.3(7) – Recovery of Benefit Overpayment  
PL 116-136, Sec. 2104 – Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Employer filed an appeal from the July 27, 2020 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that allowed benefits. The parties were properly notified of the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on September 15, 2020, at 1:00 p.m. Claimant did not participate. Employer participated through Stan Hemesath, Business Manager. No exhibits were admitted. Official notice was taken of the administrative record.

**ISSUES:**

Whether claimant is totally, partially or temporarily unemployed.  
Whether claimant is able to and available for work.  
Whether claimant is still employed at the same hours and wages.  
Whether employer's account is subject to charge.  
Whether claimant was overpaid benefits.  
Whether claimant is eligible for Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant was employed with Var-Mil, Inc. from December 9, 2020 until her employment ended on June 4, 2020. Claimant was employed as a seasonal seamstress. From November through February, claimant worked between 25 and 30 hours per week. From March through October, claimant worked an average of 40 hours per week.

Claimant's job duties included repairing rented tuxedos. From March 23, 2020 through May 31, 2020, employer did not have work available for claimant because high school proms were cancelled due to Covid-19 and, thus, tuxedos were not rented. Between March 23, 2020 and May 31, 2020, claimant performed no work for employer and earned no wages. Claimant filed an initial claim for unemployment insurance benefits effective March 22, 2020.

Employer recalled claimant to work effective June 1, 2020. Claimant worked June 1, 2020 and June 2, 2020. Claimant did not report to work on June 3, 2020. On June 4, 2020, claimant informed employer that she was not returning to work. There is no evidence of whether claimant was able to and available for work after June 4, 2020. The issue of claimant's separation from employment has not yet been the subject of a Benefits Bureau fact-finding interview.

The administrative record reflects that claimant filed for and has received regular unemployment insurance (UI) benefits in the gross amount of \$516.59 for the four-week period between May 31, 2020 and June 27, 2020. In addition to regular unemployment insurance benefits, claimant also received Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) in the gross amount of \$2,400.00 for the four-week period between May 31, 2020 and June 27, 2020. Since June 28, 2020, claimant has received Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) along with FPUC and Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) benefits associated with PEUC.

### **REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes:

Iowa Code section 96.19(38) provides:

"Total and partial unemployment".

a. An individual shall be deemed "totally unemployed" in any week with respect to which no wages are payable to the individual and during which the individual performs no services.

b. An individual shall be deemed partially unemployed in any week in which either of the following apply:

(1) While employed at the individual's then regular job, the individual works less than the regular full-time week and in which the individual earns less than the individual's weekly benefit amount plus fifteen dollars.

(2) The individual, having been separated from the individual's regular job, earns at odd jobs less than the individual's weekly benefit amount plus fifteen dollars.

c. An individual shall be deemed temporarily unemployed if for a period, verified by the department, not to exceed four consecutive weeks, the individual is unemployed due to a plant shutdown, vacation, inventory, lack of work or emergency from the individual's regular job or trade in which the individual worked full-time and will again work full-time, if the individual's employment, although temporarily suspended, has not been terminated.

Iowa Code section 96.4(3) provides:

An unemployed individual shall be eligible to receive benefits with respect to any week only if the department finds that:

3. The individual is able to work, is available for work, and is earnestly and actively seeking work. This subsection is waived if the individual is deemed partially

unemployed, while employed at the individual's regular job, as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "b", unnumbered paragraph (1), or temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "c". The work search requirements of this subsection and the disqualification requirement for failure to apply for, or to accept suitable work of section 96.5, subsection 3 are waived if the individual is not disqualified for benefits under section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraph "h".

Iowa Admin. R. 871-24.23(26) provides:

Availability disqualifications. The following are reasons for a claimant being disqualified for being unavailable for work.

(26) Where a claimant is still employed in a part-time job at the same hours and wages as contemplated in the original contract for hire and is not working on a reduced workweek basis difference from the contract for hire, such claimant cannot be considered partially unemployed.

Iowa Code section 96.7(2)a(2) provides:

2. Contribution rates based on benefit experience.

a. (2) The amount of regular benefits plus fifty percent of the amount of extended benefits paid to an eligible individual shall be charged against the account of the employers in the base period in the inverse chronological order in which the employment of the individual occurred.

(a) However, if the individual to whom the benefits are paid is in the employ of a base period employer at the time the individual is receiving the benefits, and the individual is receiving the same employment from the employer that the individual received during the individual's base period, benefits paid to the individual shall not be charged against the account of the employer. This provision applies to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding subparagraph (3) and section 96.8, subsection 5.

(b) An employer's account shall not be charged with benefits paid to an individual who left the work of the employer voluntarily without good cause attributable to the employer or to an individual who was discharged for misconduct in connection with the individual's employment, or to an individual who failed without good cause, either to apply for available, suitable work or to accept suitable work with that employer, but shall be charged to the unemployment compensation fund. This paragraph applies to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5.

(c) The amount of benefits paid to an individual, which is solely due to wage credits considered to be in an individual's base period due to the exclusion and substitution of calendar quarters from the individual's base period under section 96.23, shall be charged against the account of the employer responsible for paying the workers' compensation benefits for temporary total disability or during a healing period under section 85.33, section 85.34, subsection 1, or section 85A.17, or responsible for paying indemnity insurance benefits.

From March 23, 2020 until May 30, 2020, claimant performed no work and received no wages. Therefore, claimant was totally unemployed. Because claimant was totally unemployed,

claimant is required to be able to and available for work. Employer testified that claimant was able to and available for work from March 23, 2020 until May 30, 2020. Therefore, benefits are allowed provided claimant is otherwise eligible.

From May 31, 2020 until June 6, 2020, claimant worked less than her regular full time hours of her own accord. Claimant's partial unemployment was voluntary; therefore, claimant is not eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. Benefits are denied.

Since June 7, 2020, claimant has been totally unemployed. Claimant has not met her burden of proving she was able to and available for work. Therefore, benefits are denied.

The issue of whether the employer will be charged for regular, state-funded unemployment insurance benefits paid due to the COVID 19 pandemic will be remanded to the Tax Bureau of Iowa Workforce Development for a determination in accordance with the agency's announcement that it would not charge employers for benefits paid due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

The issue of whether claimant's separation is disqualifying will be remanded to the Benefits Bureau of Iowa Workforce Development for an initial investigation and decision.

The next issue to be determined is whether claimant has been overpaid benefits. For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes claimant was overpaid benefits, which must be repaid.

Iowa Code section 96.3(7) states:

*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.

Benefits were paid to which claimant was not entitled. The administrative law judge concludes that claimant has been overpaid UI in the gross amount of \$516.59 for the four-week period between May 31, 2020 and June 27, 2020. Claimant is required to repay those benefits.

PL 116-136, Sec. 2104 provides, in pertinent part:

(b) Provisions of Agreement

(1) Federal pandemic unemployment compensation.--Any agreement under this section shall provide that the State agency of the State will make payments of regular compensation to individuals in amounts and to the extent that they would be determined if the State law of the State were applied, with respect to any week for which the individual is (disregarding this section) otherwise entitled under the State law to receive regular compensation, as if such State law had been modified in a manner such that the amount of regular compensation (including dependents' allowances) payable for any week shall be equal to

(A) the amount determined under the State law (before the application of this paragraph), plus

(B) an additional amount of \$600 (in this section referred to as "Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation").

....

(f) Fraud and Overpayments

(2) Repayment.--In the case of individuals who have received amounts of Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation to which they were not entitled, the State shall require such individuals to repay the amounts of such Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation to the State agency...

Because claimant is disqualified from receiving UI, claimant is also disqualified from receiving FPUC. The administrative law judge concludes that claimant has been overpaid FPUC in the gross amount of \$2,400.00 for the four-week period between May 31, 2020 and June 27, 2020. Claimant is required to repay those benefits.

The issues of whether claimant has been overpaid PEUC and associated FPUC and LWA benefits will be remanded to the Benefits Bureau of Iowa Workforce Development for an initial investigation and decision.

**NOTE TO CLAIMANT:** This decision determines you are not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits. If you disagree with this decision you may file an appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by following the instructions on the first page of this decision. Individuals who do not qualify for regular unemployment insurance benefits due to disqualifying separations, but who are currently unemployed for reasons related to COVID-19 may qualify for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). **You will need to apply for PUA to determine your eligibility under the program.** Additional information on how to apply for PUA can be found at <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/pua-information>. If this decision becomes final or if you are not eligible for PUA, you may have an overpayment of benefits.

#### **DECISION:**

The July 27, 2020 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is modified in favor of appellant. Claimant was totally unemployed and able to and available for work from March 22, 2020 until May 30, 2020; benefits are allowed provided claimant is otherwise eligible. Claimant was voluntarily, partially unemployed from May 31, 2020 until June 6, 2020 and totally unemployed but not able to or available for work since June 7, 2020; benefits are denied effective May 31, 2020.

Claimant has been overpaid regular unemployment insurance benefits in the gross amount of \$516.59 for the four-week period between May 31, 2020 and June 27, 2020, which must be repaid. Claimant has been overpaid Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation in the gross amount of \$2,400.00 for the four-week period between May 31, 2020 and June 27, 2020, which must be repaid.

**REMAND:**

The issue of whether employer should be charged for the unemployment insurance benefits paid to claimant because of the COVID 19 pandemic is remanded to the Tax Bureau of Iowa Workforce Development for a determination.

The separation issue is remanded to the Benefits Bureau of Iowa Workforce Development for an initial investigation and decision.

The issue of whether claimant has been overpaid Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation and associated Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation and Lost Wages Assistance benefits is remanded to the Benefits Bureau of Iowa Workforce Development an investigation and decision.



---

Adrienne C. Williamson  
Administrative Law Judge  
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Bureau  
Iowa Workforce Development  
1000 East Grand Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0209  
Fax (515)478-3528

September 18, 2020  
Decision Dated and Mailed

acw/sam