

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

ROBERT J FANGMAN
Claimant

APPEAL NO: 06A-UI-08792-MT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

EAGLE WINDOW & DOOR INC
Employer

OC: 03/26/06 R: 04
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 August 29, 2006, reference 01, which held claimant eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. After due notice, a telephone conference hearing was scheduled for and held on September 18, 2006. Claimant participated personally. Employer participated by Amy Turner, Human Resources Representative. Exhibit One was 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 August 2, 2006.

Claimant was discharged on August 8, 2006 by employer because claimant was 45 minutes late for work. Claimant was on a final suspension for absenteeism. The start time changed while claimant was on suspension to one hour earlier. Claimant did not check the start time prior to coming back in from suspension.

Claimant had multiple prior absences due to illness. Claimant always reported the need to be off in accordance with policy. All prior absences were due to claimant's illness or family illness but for the incident of September 17, 2005.

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.

This definition has been accepted by the Iowa Supreme Court as accurately reflecting the intent of the legislature. Huntoon v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 275 N.W.2d 445, 448 (Iowa 1979).

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.

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

The last incident, which brought about the discharge, fails to constitute misconduct because the final incident was an error in judgment. The start time changed on claimant while he was on suspension. The tardy was not intentional. Furthermore, there are insufficient prior unexcused absences to constitute chronic unexcused absenteeism. Claimant's prior absences were due to illness and were properly reported. There is only one unexcused absence prior to the last incident. Claimant's in-person and sworn testimony is more credible than hearsay on the issue of reporting absences in a timely manner. 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 August 29, 2006, reference 01, is affirmed. Claimant is eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits, provided claimant meets all other eligibility requirements.

Marlon Mormann
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

mdm/cs