

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

KORYN JOHNSON
Claimant

APPEAL NO: 12A-UI-12056-BT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

ORANGE LEAF
Employer

OC: 09/02/12
Claimant: Respondent (2/R)

Iowa Code § 96.5(2)(a) - Discharge for Misconduct
Iowa Code § 96.3-7 - Overpayment

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Orange Leaf (claimant) appealed an unemployment insurance decision dated September 26, 2012, reference 01, which held that Koryn Johnson (claimant) was eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was held on November 27, 2012. The claimant participated in the hearing. The employer participated through Owner Alan Ruden. Employer's Exhibits One through Three were admitted into evidence. Based on the evidence, the arguments of the parties, and the law, the administrative law judge enters the following findings of fact, reasoning and conclusions of law, and decision.

ISSUE:

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

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and considered all of the evidence in the record, finds that: The claimant was employed from August 1, 2012 through September 7, 2012 and was most recently working as a part-time supervisor. He was on probation for the first three months of employment and was discharged for repeated insubordination. The claimant was told three times not to report to work on August 20, 2012 but he clocked in anyway. He had done this several times during the week of August 12, 2012. The claimant used profanity towards the general manager on August 23, 2012. The claimant was directed to check on a leak in the ceiling on August 25, 2012 but opted not to do so. He made an employee cry on September 1, 2012 and was counseled by the owner as to how he needed to handle employee issues.

The claimant had some attendance issues and was late for work several times. The final incident occurred on September 6, 2012 when the owner told him to order three cases of strawberries and he ordered six cases. The claimant said he believed he was doing the

employer a favor but could not offer an explanation as to why he did not tell the employer what he was going to do when it was contrary to what the employer wanted.

The claimant filed a claim for unemployment insurance benefits effective September 2, 2012 and has received benefits after the separation from employment.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The issue is whether the employer discharged the claimant for work-connected misconduct. A claimant is not qualified to receive unemployment insurance benefits if an employer has discharged the claimant for reasons constituting work-connected misconduct. Iowa Code § 96.5-2-a.

Iowa Code § 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 to prove the discharged employee is disqualified for benefits due to work-related misconduct. *Sallis v. Employment Appeal Bd.*, 437 N.W.2d 895, 896 (Iowa 1989). The claimant was discharged on September 7, 2012 for a repeated failure to follow directives. Repeated failure to follow an employer's instructions in the performance of duties is misconduct. *Gilliam v. Atlantic Bottling Company*, 453 N.W.2d 230 (Iowa App. 1990). The claimant admitted he was directed to order three cases of strawberries on September 6, 2012 but he ordered six cases instead. His insubordination shows a willful or wanton disregard of the standard of behavior the employer has the right to expect from an employee, as well as an

intentional and substantial disregard of the employer's interests and of the employee's duties and obligations to the employer. Work-connected misconduct as defined by the unemployment insurance law has been established in this case and benefits are denied.

Iowa Code § 96.3(7) provides that benefits must be recovered from a claimant who receives benefits and is later determined to be ineligible for benefits, even though the claimant acted in good faith and was not otherwise at fault. The overpayment recovery law was updated in 2008. See Iowa Code § 96.3(7)(b). Under the revised law, a claimant will not be required to repay an overpayment of benefits if all of the following factors are met. First, the prior award of benefits must have been made in connection with a decision regarding the claimant's separation from a particular employment. Second, the claimant must not have engaged in fraud or willful misrepresentation to obtain the benefits or in connection with the Agency's initial decision to award benefits. Third, the employer must not have participated at the initial fact-finding proceeding that resulted in the initial decision to award benefits. If Workforce Development determines there has been an overpayment of benefits, the employer will not be charged for the benefits, regardless of whether the claimant is required to repay the benefits.

Because the claimant has been deemed ineligible for benefits, any benefits the claimant has received could constitute an overpayment. Accordingly, the administrative law judge will remand the matter to the Claims Division for determination of whether there has been an overpayment, the amount of the overpayment, and whether the claimant will have to repay the benefits.

DECISION:

The unemployment insurance decision dated September 26, 2012, reference 01, is reversed. The claimant is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because he was discharged from work for misconduct. Benefits are withheld until he has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times his weekly benefit amount, provided he is otherwise eligible. The matter is remanded to the Claims Section for investigation and determination of the overpayment issue.

Susan D. Ackerman
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

sda/css

NOTE TO EMPLOYER:

If you wish to change your mailing address of record please access your account at: <http://www.myiowaui.org/UITIPTaxWeb/>.

Helpful information about using this site may be found at:

<http://www.iowaworkforce.org/ui/uiemployers.htm> and

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mpCM8FGQoY>