

IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Section
1000 East Grand—Des Moines, Iowa 50319
DECISION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
68-0157 (7-97) – 3091078 - EI

TISHA QUICK
PO BOX 154
EARLHAM IA 50072

DILLARD DEPARTMENT STORES INC
ATTN MS BILLIE TREAT
1600 CANTRELL RD
LITTLE ROCK AR 72201-1110

Appeal Number: 05A-UI-08119-BT
OC: 07/03/05 R: 03
Claimant: Respondent (2)

This Decision Shall Become Final, unless within fifteen (15) days from the date below, you or any interested party appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by submitting either a signed letter or a signed written Notice of Appeal, directly to the **Employment Appeal Board, 4th Floor—Lucas Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319.**

The appeal period will be extended to the next business day if the last day to appeal falls on a weekend or a legal holiday.

STATE CLEARLY

1. The name, address and social security number of the claimant.
2. A reference to the decision from which the appeal is taken.
3. That an appeal from such decision is being made and such appeal is signed.
4. The grounds upon which such appeal is based.

YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in this appeal or you may obtain a lawyer or other interested party to do so provided there is no expense to Workforce Development. If you wish to be represented by a lawyer, you may obtain the services of either a private attorney or one whose services are paid for with public funds. It is important that you file your claim as directed, while this appeal is pending, to protect your continuing right to benefits.

(Administrative Law Judge)

(Decision Dated & Mailed)

Section 96 5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct
Section 96.3-7 - Overpayment

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Dillard Department Stores, Inc. (employer) appealed an unemployment insurance decision dated July 27, 2005, reference 01, which held that Tisha Quick (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 August 24, 2005. The claimant did not comply with the hearing notice instructions and did not call in to provide a telephone number at which she could be contacted, and therefore, did not participate. The employer participated through Dena Getz, Assistant Store Manager and Kayleen Mishler, Business Manager for Estee Lauder.

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 as a full-time sales associate from July 14, 2004 through June 24, 2005. She was discharged for a repeated disruptive and negative attitude, which is a violation of work rule number ten. The claimant had problems in getting along with her co-workers dating back to October 26, 2004 when she received a written warning for negative behavior. She was advised at that time that termination could occur if there were continued problems. A subsequent verbal warning was issued on approximately April 11, 2005 for the same issue. The claimant did not smile and was not friendly to customers. Co-employees did not want to work with the claimant and complaints were made about her on a continual basis.

A new business manager started on June 7, 2005 and the claimant made negative comments to her about not liking any of the Estee Lauder products, even though she is tasked with selling those products. One associate reported to the employer that the claimant was telling other associates that she was the only one who did anything and the other associate did nothing. The claimant reportedly stated that she was going to drive off another African-American woman who had just started as the claimant did not want an associate of the same race as she working with her. Verbal warnings were issued to the claimant with no change in her behavior. The supervisor directed the claimant to make her sales calls to customers but the claimant refused. There was a dress code for all employees but the claimant would not follow that dress code if her supervisor was not scheduled for a particular day. The final incident was when the other African-American sales person quit stating that she simply could no longer work with the claimant because the claimant made her feel worthless. This occurred near June 24, 2005 and the claimant was discharged as a result.

The claimant filed a claim for unemployment insurance benefits effective July 3, 2005 and has received benefits after the separation from employment in the amount of \$476.00.

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 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).

The employer has the burden to prove the claimant was discharged for work-connected misconduct as defined by the unemployment insurance law. Cosper v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 321 N.W.2d 6 (Iowa 1982). The claimant was discharged for repeated disruptive and negative attitude which is a violation of work rule number ten. She had been warned numerous time and her attitude did not improve. The claimant's conduct was a willful and material breach of the duties and obligations to the employer and a substantial disregard of the standards of behavior the employer had the right to expect of the claimant. Work-connected misconduct as defined by the unemployment insurance law has been established in this case and benefits are denied.

Iowa Code section 96.3-7 provides:

7. Recovery of overpayment of benefits. 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.

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.

Because the claimant's separation was disqualifying, benefits were paid to which the claimant was not entitled. Those benefits must be recovered in accordance with the provisions of Iowa law.

DECISION:

The unemployment insurance decision dated July 27, 2005, reference 01, is reversed. The claimant is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because she was discharged from work for misconduct. Benefits are withheld until she has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times her weekly benefit amount, provided she is otherwise eligible. The claimant is overpaid benefits in the amount of \$476.00.

sdb/pjs