

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

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**ERICA HESTON**  
Claimant

**LEXINGTON SQUARE LLC**  
Employer

**APPEAL 21A-UI-13156-DG-T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**OC: 03/22/20  
Claimant: Respondent (1)**

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Iowa Code § 96.5(3)a – Failure to Accept Work  
Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Ability to and Availability for Work

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

The employer filed an appeal from the May 18, 2021, (reference 05) unemployment insurance decision that allowed benefits based upon claimant not receiving a suitable offer of work. After due notice was issued, a telephone conference hearing was held on August 26, 2021. Claimant participated. Employer participated through Ashley Ruffcorn, Human Resources Director and was represented by Kacy Flaherty-Tarpey, Attorney at Law. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record.

**ISSUES:**

Was a suitable offer of work made to the claimant?

If so, did the claimant fail to accept and was the failure to do so for a good cause reason?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having heard the testimony and having reviewed the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant was not given a suitable offer of work on or about October 4, 2020.

Claimant began working for employer as an EMT on January 6, 2020. Claimant was laid off by employer on or about March 19, 2020 because of lack of work. Employer told claimant over the phone on June 4, 2020 that PRN or as needed work as a certified nursing assistant was usually available. The offer did not specify the number of hours she would be guaranteed, or the wages.

Claimant was pregnant, and that offer was not suitable given her prior work experience, and her ability to lift patients while she was pregnant. No offers of work were made to claimant after that date.

## REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the offer of work made on June 4, 2020 was not suitable, and no offers of work which detailed hours and wages were actually communicated to claimant after that date.

Iowa Code section 96.5(3)a provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits, regardless of the source of the individual's wage credits:

3. *Failure to accept work.* If the department finds that an individual has failed, without good cause, either to apply for available, suitable work when directed by the department or to accept suitable work when offered that individual. The department shall, if possible, furnish the individual with the names of employers which are seeking employees. The individual shall apply to and obtain the signatures of the employers designated by the department on forms provided by the department. However, the employers may refuse to sign the forms. The individual's failure to obtain the signatures of designated employers, which have not refused to sign the forms, shall disqualify the individual for benefits until requalified. To requalify for benefits after disqualification under this subsection, the individual shall work in and be paid wages for insured work equal to ten times the individual's weekly benefit amount, provided the individual is otherwise eligible.

a. (1) In determining whether or not any work is suitable for an individual, the department shall consider the degree of risk involved to the individual's health, safety, and morals, the individual's physical fitness, prior training, length of unemployment, and prospects for securing local work in the individual's customary occupation, the distance of the available work from the individual's residence, and any other factor which the department finds bears a reasonable relation to the purposes of this paragraph. Work is suitable if the work meets all the other criteria of this paragraph and if the gross weekly wages for the work equal or exceed the following percentages of the individual's average weekly wage for insured work paid to the individual during that quarter of the individual's base period in which the individual's wages were highest:

(a) One hundred percent, if the work is offered during the first five weeks of unemployment.

(b) Seventy-five percent, if the work is offered during the sixth through the twelfth week of unemployment.

(c) Seventy percent, if the work is offered during the thirteenth through the eighteenth week of unemployment.

(d) Sixty-five percent, if the work is offered after the eighteenth week of unemployment.

(2) However, the provisions of this paragraph shall not require an individual to accept employment below the federal minimum wage.

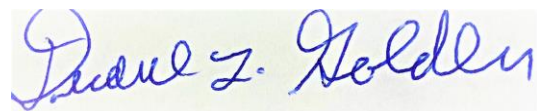
The June 4, 2020 phone call reminding claimant that employer usually has PRN nursing assistant hours available to employees is not a suitable offer of work. Claimant was a certified EMT, and she was pregnant. No offers of work were made after that date. If employer is unable to make personal contact to extend an offer of work, a written offer with sufficient detail may be sent by certified mail with return receipt requested. Since no offer of

work which provided the hours claimant would be working and the wages she would receive was actually made, benefits are allowed.

**Note to Claimant:** If this decision determines you are not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits and 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, 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 May 18, 2021, (reference 05) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The employer did not communicate an offer of work to claimant.



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Duane L. Golden  
Administrative Law Judge

September 8, 2021  
Decision Dated and Mailed

dlg/mh