

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

AMY E FLEMING
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 17A-UI-02585-S1-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

CARGILL INCORPORATED
Employer

OC: 01/29/17
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Amy Fleming (claimant) appealed a representative's March 3, 2017, decision (reference 01) that concluded she was not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits after her separation from employment with Cargill (employer). After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was scheduled for March 31, 2017. The claimant participated personally. The employer participated by Nicole Cahill, Supervisor, and Rachel Frideres, Operations Manager. The employer offered and Exhibit 1 was received into evidence.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether the claimant was separated from employment for any disqualifying reason.

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 hired on December 10, 2012, as a full-time operations technician. The claimant had access to the employer's handbook. She was trained on lock out, tag out procedures. The employer issued the claimant warnings for attendance on August 14, 2014, and August 12, 2015. It issued her a warning for errors on January 28, 2015. The employer notified the claimant each time that further infractions could result in termination from employment. On March 15, 2015, the employer placed the claimant on a performance improvement plan (PIP) testing her for understanding of the system in a timely manner. On March 15, 2015, the employer placed the claimant on a PIP for lock out, tag out procedural issues and confrontational behaviors.

On February 2, 2017, the claimant placed a lock on a master lock box but not on another required lock box before performing work. The claimant knew she was supposed to put her lock on both lock boxes but forgot. On February 3, 2017, the employer terminated the claimant for the safety violation.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow the administrative law judge concludes the claimant was discharged for misconduct.

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.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.32(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 Dep't of Job Serv.*, 275 N.W.2d 445, 448 (Iowa 1979).

The employer has the burden of proof in establishing disqualifying job misconduct. *Cosper v. Iowa Department of Job Service*, 321 N.W.2d 6 (Iowa 1982). 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). An employer has a right to expect employees to follow instructions in the performance of the job. The claimant disregarded the employer's right by repeatedly failing to follow the employer's instructions after having been counseled. The claimant's disregard of the employer's interests is misconduct. As such the claimant is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits.

DECISION:

The representative's March 3, 2017, decision (reference 01) is affirmed. The claimant is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because the claimant was discharged from

work for misconduct. Benefits are withheld until the claimant has worked in and has been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times the claimant's weekly benefit amount provided the claimant is otherwise eligible.

Beth A. Scheetz
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

bas/rvs