

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

CAMERON M DAHLBERG
Claimant

APPEAL 21A-UI-03174-S1-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

WHIRLPOOL CORPORATION
Employer

**OC: 03/15/20
Claimant: Appellant (1/R)**

Iowa Code § 96.4-3 – Able and Available
871 IAC 24.23(10) – Voluntary Leave of Absence

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Cameron Dahlberg (claimant) appealed a representative's January 8, 2021, decision (reference 01) that concluded ineligibility to receive unemployment insurance benefits as of September 20, 2020, because a leave of absence was granted by Whirlpool Corporation (employer) at the claimant's request. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was scheduled for March 17, 2021. The claimant participated personally. The employer did not provide a telephone number where it could be reached and therefore, did not participate in the hearing.

The claimant offered and Exhibits A, B, and C were received into evidence. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative file.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether the claimant is available for work and whether the claimant was on an approved leave of absence.

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 September 17, 2015, and he is currently working as a full-time training team leader. The employer questioned employees as they entered the workplace about Covid-19 symptoms. If they answered in the affirmative to any of the questions, they were required to quarantine for ten days. The claimant understood the policy.

On September 17, 2020, the employer questioned the claimant and he said he was experiencing diarrhea, a Covid-19 symptom on the list. The employer would not let him enter the workplace and placed him on quarantine for ten days. The claimant thought the diarrhea was a result of something he ate but he did not provide the employer with any information from a medical source to support this idea. The claimant returned to work on October 1, 2020.

The claimant filed for unemployment insurance benefits with an effective date of March 15, 2021. His weekly benefit amount was determined to be \$481.00. He filed an additional claim on September 20, 2020. The claimant received state unemployment insurance benefits of \$481.00 for the week ending September 26, 2020.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

Iowa Code section 96.4(3) provides:

An unemployed individual shall be eligible to receive benefits with respect to any week only if the department finds that:

3. The individual is able to work, is available for work, and is earnestly and actively seeking work. This subsection is waived if the individual is deemed partially unemployed, while employed at the individual's regular job, as defined in section 96.1A, subsection 37, paragraph "b", subparagraph (1), or temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.1A, subsection 37, paragraph "c". The work search requirements of this subsection and the disqualification requirement for failure to apply for, or to accept suitable work of section 96.5, subsection 3 are waived if the individual is not disqualified for benefits under section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraph "h".

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22(1)a provides:

Benefits eligibility conditions. For an individual to be eligible to receive benefits the department must find that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work. The individual bears the burden of establishing that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work.

(1) Able to work. An individual must be physically and mentally able to work in some gainful employment, not necessarily in the individual's customary occupation, but which is engaged in by others as a means of livelihood.

a. Illness, injury or pregnancy. Each case is decided upon an individual basis, recognizing that various work opportunities present different physical requirements. A statement from a medical practitioner is considered prima facie evidence of the physical ability of the individual to perform the work required. A pregnant individual must meet the same criteria for determining ableness as do all other individuals.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(1) provides:

Availability disqualifications. The following are reasons for a claimant being disqualified for being unavailable for work.

(1) An individual who is ill and presently not able to perform work due to illness.

The claimant has the burden of proof in establishing his ability and availability for work. *Davoren v. Iowa Employment Security Commission*, 277 N.W.2d 602 (Iowa 1979). When employees are unable to perform work due to a medical condition, they are considered to be unavailable for work. The claimant exhibited symptoms of Covid-19. To prevent the spread of a deadly virus, the employer removed and quarantined an employee from the workplace. He was

not able and available for work during that period. The claimant is disqualified from receiving unemployment insurance benefits the week ending September 26, 2020.

Even though the claimant is not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits under state law, he may be eligible for federally funded unemployment insurance benefits under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ("Cares Act"), Public Law 116-136. Section 2102 of the CARES Act creates a new temporary federal program called Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) that in general provides up to 39 weeks of unemployment benefits. An individual receiving PUA benefits may also receive the \$600 weekly benefit amount (WBA) under the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) program if he or she is eligible for such compensation for the week claimed. The claimant must apply for PUA, as noted in the instructions provided in the "Note to Claimant" below.

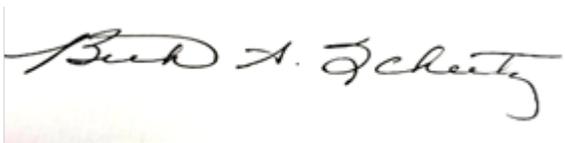
The issue of whether claimant has been overpaid unemployment insurance benefits is remanded to the Benefits Bureau of Iowa Workforce Development for an initial investigation and decision.

DECISION:

The representative's January 8, 2021, decision (reference 01) is affirmed. The claimant is considered to be unavailable for work and is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits from September 20, 2020.

The issue of whether claimant has been overpaid unemployment insurance benefits is remanded to the Benefits Bureau of Iowa Workforce Development for an initial investigation and decision.

Note to Claimant: This decision determines you are not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits. If 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>.



Beth A. Scheetz
Administrative Law Judge

March 18, 2021
Decision Dated and Mailed

bas/scn