

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

PATRICE GREEN
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 11A-UI-08552-S2T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

CAREAGE MANAGEMENT
Employer

**OC: 05/22/11
Claimant: Appellant (2)**

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Patrice Green (claimant) appealed a representative's June 21, 2011 decision (reference 01) that concluded she was not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because she was discharged from work with Careage Management (employer) for violation of a known company rule. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was scheduled for July 20, 2011. The claimant participated personally. The employer participated by Karie Kesterson, director of nursing. The claimant's brother-in-law, Bobby Naylor, observed the hearing.

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 having considered all of the evidence in the record, finds that: The claimant was hired on September 8, 2005, as a full-time licensed practical nurse. The claimant signed for receipt of the employer's handbook. The employer did not issue the claimant any warnings during her employment.

The claimant discussed with the Director of Nursing being absent on May 20, 21 and 22, 2011. The claimant thought the Director of Nursing approved the leave and had a replacement for the May 20, 2011, shift. The claimant understood she was to find a replacement for the May 21 and May 22, 2011 shifts. The claimant properly notified the charge nurse of her absence on May 20, 2011. The employer called the claimant when she was on her way to her daughter's graduation in Mississippi. The administrator asked the claimant why she was away and had not found a replacement. The claimant explained her situation. The director of nursing told the administrator that she had not promised to find a replacement. The administrator terminated the claimant over the telephone.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant was not discharged for misconduct.

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.

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). An employer may discharge an employee for any number of reasons or no reason at all, but if it fails to meet its burden of proof to establish job-related misconduct as the reason for the separation, employer incurs potential liability for unemployment insurance benefits related to that separation. Inasmuch as employer had not previously warned claimant about any of the issues leading to the separation, it has not met the burden of proof to establish that claimant acted deliberately or negligently in violation of company policy, procedure, or prior warning. If an employer expects an employee to conform to certain expectations or face discharge, appropriate (preferably written), detailed, and reasonable notice should be given. The employer provided one incident of failure to cover her shift. It did not provide sufficient evidence of job-related misconduct. The employer did not meet its burden of proof to show misconduct. Benefits are allowed.

DECISION:

The representative's June 21, 2011 decision (reference 01) is reversed. The employer has not met its burden of proof to establish job-related misconduct. Benefits are allowed.

Beth A. Scheetz
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

bas/kjw