

**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**

**Appeal Number: 05A-UI-12145-LT
OC: 10-16-05 R: 04
Claimant: Respondent (1)**

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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)

Iowa Code §96.5(2)a – Discharge/Misconduct
871 IAC 24.32(7) – Excessive Unexcused Absenteeism

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Employer filed a timely appeal from the November 23, 2005, reference 02, decision that allowed benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held on December 15, 2005. Claimant did participate. Employer did participate through Cindy Crew and was represented by Art Neuhedel, Attorney at Law. Employer's Exhibit 1 was received.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant was employed as a full-time dorm parent March 2, 2005 through May 25, 2005 when she was discharged. On May 24 claimant reported to Lasi, her appointment for a gastrointestinal scope exam scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on May 25 and would be late. She arrived by 11:00 a.m. and left

due to illness shortly thereafter. She was fired due to this final incident even after she offered Cindy Crew medical documentation for that absence. All of the other absences and tardiness was related to her illnesses related to throwing up blood, back problems, migraine headaches and/or related prescription medicine side effects.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant was discharged from employment for no disqualifying reason.

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(7) provides:

(7) Excessive unexcused absenteeism. Excessive unexcused absenteeism is an intentional disregard of the duty owed by the claimant to the employer and shall be considered misconduct except for illness or other reasonable grounds for which the employee was absent and that were properly reported to the employer.

Excessive absences are not considered misconduct unless unexcused. Absences due to properly reported illness or injury cannot constitute job misconduct since they are not volitional. 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. A reported absence related to illness or injury is excused for the purpose of the Iowa Employment Security Act. An employer's point system or no-fault absenteeism policy is not dispositive of the issue of qualification for benefits. Because the final absence for which she was discharged was related to properly reported illness and related medical appointment for which documentation was available but refused, no final or current incident of unexcused absenteeism has been established and no disqualification is imposed.

DECISION:

The November 23, 2005, reference 02, decision is affirmed. The claimant was discharged from employment for no disqualifying reason. Benefits are allowed, provided the claimant is otherwise eligible.

dml/pjs