

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

LASTALCHA JONES

Claimant

APPEAL NO. 06A-UI-11836-ET

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

WELLS FARGO BANK NA

Employer

**OC: 11-05-06 R: 02
Claimant: Respondent (2)**

Section 96.5-1 – Voluntary Leaving
Section 96.3-7 – Recovery of Benefit Overpayment

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The employer filed a timely appeal from the November 29, 2006, reference 01, decision that allowed benefits to the claimant. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held by telephone conference call before Administrative Law Judge Julie Elder on December 27, 2006. The claimant did not respond to the hearing notice and did not participate in the hearing or request a postponement of the hearing as required by the hearing notice. Patrick Prescott, Supervisor, participated in the hearing on behalf of the employer.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether the claimant voluntarily left her employment with good cause attributable to the employer.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The claimant was employed as a full-time representative II on the phone floor for Wells Fargo from January 2006 to November 7, 2006. On October 26, 2006, the claimant called in and stated she was taking bereavement leave. The employer allows employees to take five days for bereavement but because the claimant did not speak to anyone personally about her situation the employer tried to call her twice during that time but the claimant did not return his calls. The claimant was scheduled to return to work November 2, 2006, but did not call or show up for work that day or November 3, 7, 8 or 9, 2006, at which time the employer prepared a job abandonment letter and sent it certified mail, along with her personal belongings. The claimant signed for her belongings but did not sign for the registered letter. The employer has not had any further contact with the employer. The employer had continuing work available for the claimant had she not left.

The claimant has claimed and received unemployment insurance benefits since her separation from this employer.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant voluntarily left employment without good cause attributable to the employer.

Iowa Code section 96.5-1 provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits:

1. Voluntary quitting. If the individual has left work voluntarily without good cause attributable to the individual's employer, if so found by the department.

871 IAC 24.25(4) provides:

Voluntary quit without good cause. In general, a voluntary quit means discontinuing the employment because the employee no longer desires to remain in the relationship of an employee with the employer from whom the employee has separated. The employer has the burden of proving that the claimant is disqualified for benefits pursuant to Iowa Code section 96.5. However, the claimant has the initial burden to produce evidence that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving Iowa Code section 96.5, subsection (1), paragraphs "a" through "i," and subsection 10. The following reasons for a voluntary quit shall be presumed to be without good cause attributable to the employer:

- (4) The claimant was absent for three days without giving notice to employer in violation of company rule.

Inasmuch as the claimant failed to report for work or notify the employer for three consecutive workdays in violation of the employer's policy after her bereavement leave ended, she is considered to have voluntarily left employment without good cause attributable to the employer. Therefore, benefits are denied.

Iowa Code section 96.3-7 provides:

7. Recovery of overpayment of benefits. If an individual receives benefits for which the individual is subsequently determined to be ineligible, even though the individual acts in good faith and is not otherwise at fault, the benefits shall be recovered. The department in its discretion may recover the overpayment of benefits either by having a sum equal to the overpayment deducted from any future benefits payable to the individual or by having the individual pay to the department a sum equal to the overpayment.

If the department determines that an overpayment has been made, the charge for the overpayment against the employer's account shall be removed and the account shall be credited with an amount equal to the overpayment from the unemployment compensation trust fund and this credit shall include both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5.

Because the claimant's separation was disqualifying, benefits were paid to which the claimant was not entitled. Those benefits must be recovered in accordance with the provisions of Iowa law.

DECISION:

The November 29, 2006, reference 01, decision is reversed. The claimant voluntarily left employment without good cause attributable to the employer. Benefits are withheld until such time as she has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times her weekly benefit amount, provided she is otherwise eligible. The claimant is overpaid benefits in the amount of \$2,422.00.

Julie Elder
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

je/css