

**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**

**ROBERT D HOLDER  
305 SW KENT  
GREENFIELD IA 50849**

**STEW HANSENS DODGE CITY INC  
12103 HICKMAN RD  
DES MOINES IA 50323 1801**

**Appeal Number: 04A-UI-06073-H2  
OC: 05-02-04 R: 03  
Claimant: Respondent (1)**

**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.

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(Administrative Law Judge)

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(Decision Dated & Mailed)

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge/Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The employer filed a timely appeal from the May 27, 2004, reference 01, decision that allowed benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held in Creston, Iowa, on October 25, 2004. The claimant did participate. The employer did participate through John Phillips, Manager at First Auto Acceptance and (representative) Brent Hansen, Partner-General Manager. Claimant's Exhibit A was received. Employer's Exhibit One was received.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The claimant was employed as a sales consultant full time beginning March 6, 2002 through May 4, 2004 when he was discharged. Other employees had access to the safe that held the money.

Additionally, the deposit bag or money is also given to Tina Vandermark who makes the deposits so she also had access to the cash. The records submitted indicate that the claimant received a commission voucher for the deal where he allegedly stole \$1,400.00. The evidence does not establish that the claimant stole the money or altered the receipt log. The claimant clearly filled out a receipt that indicated he received the down payment cash from the customer.

#### 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(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 Department of Job Service, 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). The employer discharged the claimant and has the burden of proof to show misconduct. Misconduct serious enough to warrant discharge is not necessarily serious enough to warrant a denial of job insurance benefits. Such misconduct must be "substantial." When based on carelessness, the

carelessness must actually indicate a “wrongful intent” to be disqualifying in nature. Newman v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 351 N.W.2d 806 (Iowa App. 1984). Poor work performance is not misconduct in the absence of evidence of intent. Miller v. Employment Appeal Board, 423 N.W.2d 211 (Iowa App. 1988). The employer has not established that the claimant took the money that was missing from the deal. The employer paper trail does not establish that it was the claimant who took the money or that the claimant filled out the paperwork incorrectly. Since the claimant was discharged for allegedly stealing \$1,400.00 the employer has the burden of establishing that he actually took the money. The evidence does not establish that the claimant either filled out paperwork incorrectly or that he stole \$1,400.00 from the employer. Because the employer has not established misconduct, benefits are allowed, provided the claimant is otherwise eligible. The employer has not established that the claimant stole the missing money. Additionally, too many other employees had access to the money and could have taken it. While the employer may have had good cause to discharge the claimant, they have not established substantial misconduct. Benefits are allowed, provided the claimant is otherwise eligible.

DECISION:

The May 27, 2004, reference 01, decision is affirmed. The claimant was discharged from employment for no disqualifying reason. Benefits are allowed, provided the claimant is otherwise eligible.

tkh/tjc