

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

TERRY L DAVIS
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WAL-MART STORES INC
c/o FRICK UC EXPRESS
PO BOX 283
ST LOUIS MO 63166-0283

Appeal Number: 04A-UI-05476-LT
OC 04-18-04 R 02
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.

(Administrative Law Judge)

(Decision Dated & Mailed)

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge/Misconduct
871 IAC 24.32(7) – Absenteeism

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Employer filed a timely appeal from the May 4, 2004, reference 01, decision that allowed benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held on June 9, 2004. Claimant did participate. Employer did participate through Ron Hilligas.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant was employed as a full-time stockman pushing carts outside through April 16, 2004 when he was discharged. He was last absent on April 13 due to illness reported to Jamie Thompson, store manager for personal time for illness.

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).

The reported absences related to illness or injury (carpal tunnel) are all excused for the purpose of the Iowa Employment Security Act. The employer's no-fault absenteeism policy is not dispositive of the issue of qualification for benefits. Because the final absence for which he was discharged was related to properly reported illness, no final or current incident of unexcused absenteeism has been established and no disqualification is imposed.

Although absences related to illness are not disqualifying for unemployment insurance purposes, claimant's absences were so frequent that he may wish to consider obtaining advice from his physician about boosting his immune system so as to avoid illness where possible and absenteeism discipline in future employment.

DECISION:

The May 4, 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.

dml/kjf