

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**CAROL A SMITH**  
Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 12A-UI-13959-MT**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**CITY OF DES MOINES PAYROLL DEPT-B**  
Employer

**OC: 06/24/12**  
**Claimant: Appellant (4)**

Section 96.5-3-a – Work Refusal

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Claimant filed an appeal from a decision of a representative dated November 16, 2012, reference 01, which held claimant ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits due to a refusal to accept work. After due notice, a telephone conference hearing was scheduled for and held on December 21, 2012. Claimant participated personally. Employer participated by Carol Moser, Attorney at Law, City Legal Department. Exhibits A through F and One and Two were admitted into evidence.

**ISSUE:**

The issue in this matter is whether claimant refused to accept a suitable offer of work.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and considered all of the evidence in the record, finds: Employer made an offer of work to the claimant on September 20, 2012. That offer included the following terms: Part time work at \$14.21 per hour. Claimant did not receive the offer. Claimant did not return three telephone calls. Claimant did not pick up the certified letter sent by employer making the offer. Claimant failed to make herself reasonably available for contact by prospective employers.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes claimant did not refuse a suitable offer of work. The offer was not communicated to claimant. It is not a valid offer. No disqualification is imposed for refusal of a suitable offer.

Claimant has failed to make herself available for job offers. Claimant's failure to make herself reasonably available for work offers indicates that she is not able and available for work effective September 23, 2012. Benefits withheld.

Iowa Code section 96.4-3 provides:

An unemployed individual shall be eligible to receive benefits with respect to any week only if the department finds that:

3. The individual is able to work, is available for work, and is earnestly and actively seeking work. This subsection is waived if the individual is deemed partially unemployed, while employed at the individual's regular job, as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "b", unnumbered paragraph 1, or temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "c". The work search requirements of this subsection and the disqualification requirement for failure to apply for, or to accept suitable work of section 96.5, subsection 3 are waived if the individual is not disqualified for benefits under section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraph "h".

Iowa Code section 96.5-3-a provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits:

3. Failure to accept work. If the department finds that an individual has failed, without good cause, either to apply for available, suitable work when directed by the department or to accept suitable work when offered that individual. The department shall, if possible, furnish the individual with the names of employers which are seeking employees. The individual shall apply to and obtain the signatures of the employers designated by the department on forms provided by the department. However, the employers may refuse to sign the forms. The individual's failure to obtain the signatures of designated employers, which have not refused to sign the forms, shall disqualify the individual for benefits until requalified. To requalify for benefits after disqualification under this subsection, the individual shall work in and be paid wages for insured work equal to ten times the individual's weekly benefit amount, provided the individual is otherwise eligible.

a. In determining whether or not any work is suitable for an individual, the department shall consider the degree of risk involved to the individual's health, safety, and morals, the individual's physical fitness, prior training, length of unemployment, and prospects for securing local work in the individual's customary occupation, the distance of the available work from the individual's residence, and any other factor which the department finds bears a reasonable relation to the purposes of this paragraph. Work is suitable if the work meets all the other criteria of this paragraph and if the gross weekly wages for the work equal or exceed the following percentages of the individual's average weekly wage for insured work paid to the individual during that quarter of the individual's base period in which the individual's wages were highest:

- (1) One hundred percent, if the work is offered during the first five weeks of unemployment.
- (2) Seventy-five percent, if the work is offered during the sixth through the twelfth week of unemployment.
- (3) Seventy percent, if the work is offered during the thirteenth through the eighteenth week of unemployment.
- (4) Sixty-five percent, if the work is offered after the eighteenth week of unemployment.

However, the provisions of this paragraph shall not require an individual to accept employment below the federal minimum wage.

871 IAC 24.24(1)a, provides:

(1) Bona fide offer of work.

a. In deciding whether or not a claimant failed to accept suitable work, or failed to apply for suitable work, it must first be established that a bona fide offer of work was made to the individual by personal contact or that a referral was offered to the claimant by personal contact to an actual job opening and a definite refusal was made by the individual. For purposes of a recall to work, a registered letter shall be deemed to be sufficient as a personal contact.

871 IAC 24.24(4) provides:

(4) Work refused when the claimant fails to meet the benefit eligibility conditions of Iowa Code section 96.4(3). Before a disqualification for failure to accept work may be imposed, an individual must first satisfy the benefit eligibility conditions of being able to work and available for work and not unemployed for failing to bump a fellow employee with less seniority. If the facts indicate that the claimant was or is not available for work, and this resulted in the failure to accept work or apply for work, such claimant shall not be disqualified for refusal since the claimant is not available for work. In such a case it is the availability of the claimant that is to be tested. Lack of transportation, illness or health conditions, illness in family, and child care problems are generally considered to be good cause for refusing work or refusing to apply for work. However, the claimant's availability would be the issue to be determined in these types of cases.

871 IAC 24.24(8) provides:

(8) Refusal disqualification jurisdiction. Both the offer of work or the order to apply for work and the claimant's accompanying refusal must occur within the individual's benefit year, as defined in subrule 24.1(21), before the Iowa code subsection 96.5(3) disqualification can be imposed. It is not necessary that the offer, the order, or the refusal occur in a week in which the claimant filed a weekly claim for benefits before the disqualification can be imposed.

#### **DECISION:**

The decision of the representative dated November 16, 2012, reference 01 is modified. Unemployment insurance benefits shall be withheld effective September 23, 2012 because claimant is not able and available for work. The refusal of work disqualification is removed.

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Marlon Mormann  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

mdm/pjs