

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

KENNETH E TIBBETT
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 07A-UI-07220-MT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

DECKER TRUCK LINE INC
Employer

**OC: 06/03/07 R: 12
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Claimant filed an appeal from a decision of a representative dated July 17, 2007, reference 01, which held claimant ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits. After due notice, a telephone conference hearing was scheduled for and held on August 13, 2007. Claimant participated personally. Employer participated by John Fatino, Attorney at Law, with witness Jim Wilkins, Vice President Safety and Human Resources. Exhibits A, B and C were admitted into evidence.

ISSUE:

The issue in this matter is whether claimant was discharged for misconduct.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and considered all of the evidence in the record, finds: Claimant last worked for employer on May 29, 2007.

Claimant was discharged on June 6, 2007 by employer because claimant had a serious accident on May 29, 2007. Claimant was driving in the rain in heavy traffic. The traffic in front stopped. Claimant swerved to avoid hitting cars in front and caused a six vehicle accident. Claimant was given a traffic ticket for traveling too fast in the traffic. Claimant admitted to the charges.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

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.

871 IAC 24.32(8) provides:

(8) Past acts of misconduct. While past acts and warnings can be used to determine the magnitude of a current act of misconduct, a discharge for misconduct cannot be based on such past act or acts. The termination of employment must be based on a current act.

In this matter, the evidence established that claimant was discharged for an act of misconduct when claimant violated employer's policy concerning safety. Claimant was warned concerning this policy.

The last incident, which brought about the discharge, constitutes misconduct because claimant incurred a serious accident. Claimant was not watching the traffic in front of him and was therefore unable to stop in time. Claimant's careless driving caused a serious multi car accident. Claimant had a duty to drive in a manner that would allow him to stop considering all conditions. Claimant failed this duty. The administrative law judge holds that claimant was discharged for an act of misconduct and, as such, is disqualified for the receipt of unemployment insurance benefits.

DECISION:

The decision of the representative dated July 17, 2007, reference 01, is affirmed. Unemployment insurance benefits shall be withheld until claimant has worked in and been paid

wages for insured work equal to ten times claimant's weekly benefit amount, provided claimant is otherwise eligible.

Marlon Mormann
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

mdm/css