

**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**

**JEAN A LAING
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PO BOX 122
NORTH LIBERTY IA 52317**

**ROCKWELL COLLINS INC
ATTENTION EMPLOYEE EFFECT
MS126-205
400 COLLINS RD NE
CEDAR RAPIDS IA 52498**

**Appeal Number: 04A-UI-11720-S2T
OC: 10/26/04 R: 03
Claimant: Appellant (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 for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Jean Laing (claimant) appealed a representative's October 18, 2004 decision (reference 01) that concluded she was not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because she was discharged from work with Rockwell Collins (employer) for excessive unexcused absenteeism after being warned. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was held on November 24, 2004. The claimant participated personally. The employer participated by Trisha Olson, Human Resources Specialist; Diane Wilkinson, Occupational Registered Nurse; and Kathy Kooyman, Value Stream Facilitator.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and considered all of the evidence in the record, finds that: The claimant was hired on March 11, 1996, as a full-time Assembly Operator. The claimant received warnings on March 1, June 4 and August 5, 2004, for absenteeism. The employer told the claimant on August 5, 2004, she had to report her absences prior to the start of her shift.

On September 24, 2004, the claimant reported she would be absent due to illness more than four hours after the start of her shift. The claimant understood she would be terminated for further infractions. On September 29, 2004, the claimant was going to be tardy in reporting to work. She thought she would be terminated so she did not go to work and did not notify the employer of her absence. On September 30, 2004, the claimant did not appear for work or notify the employer of her absence.

On October 1, 2004, the claimant appeared for work at the normal time. The employer told the claimant she needed a physician's note to excuse her from work. The employer terminated the claimant on October 1, 2004, because of her absences, her failure to properly report and her failure to supply a doctor's note. On October 4, 2004, the claimant supplied the employer with a doctor's note excusing her from work on September 29, 30 and October 1, 2004.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The issue is whether the claimant was discharged for misconduct. For the following reasons, the administrative law judge concludes she was.

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, (8) provide:

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).

(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.

The employer has the burden of proof in establishing disqualifying job misconduct. Excessive absences are not misconduct unless unexcused. Absences due to properly reported illness can never constitute job misconduct since they are not volitional. Cosper v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 321 N.W.2d 6 (Iowa 1982). The employer must establish not only misconduct but that there was a final incident of misconduct which precipitated the discharge. The last incidents of absence were improperly reported illness which occurred on September 24, 29 and 30, 2004. The claimant's absence does amount to job misconduct because it was not properly reported. The claimant was discharged for misconduct. She is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits.

DECISION:

The representative's October 18, 2004 decision (reference 01) is affirmed. The claimant is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because she was discharged from work for misconduct. Benefits are withheld until she has worked in and has been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times her weekly benefit amount, provided she is otherwise eligible.

bas/tjc