

**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**

**TRUDY D VANDERGRIFF
2384 HWY 1 S
FAIRFIELD IA 52556**

**VAN BUREN COUNTY HOSPITAL & CLINIC
ATTN ADMINISTRATOR
304 FRANKLIN ST
KEOSAUQUA IA 52565**

**Appeal Number: 05A-UI-11836-LT
OC: 10-23-05 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.

(Administrative Law Judge)

(Decision Dated & Mailed)

Iowa Code §96.5(3)a – Work Refusal

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Employer filed a timely appeal from the November 18, 2005, reference 02, decision that allowed benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held on December 14, 2005. Claimant did participate. Employer did participate through Helen Holland, Linda Goldstein, Doug DeHart and Lisa Schnedler. Claimant's Exhibit A was received. Employer's Exhibit 1 was received.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant was employed as a full-time accountant from May 12, 2003 through September 19, 2005 when she was discharged by Helen Holland, CFO, for not following "sound business practices and office standards." (Claimant's Exhibit A, page 1) However, Holland acknowledged her errors were not intentional and saw a "mismatch" in the position for claimant. Lisa Schnedler,

administrator, found an error in an investment report for the hospital board. When brought to claimant's attention in the July 5, 2005 letter, claimant corrected the error and was not notified of any additional errors thereafter. (Employer's Exhibit 1, pages 2 and 3)

On September 19, employer offered to transfer her to work with the same pay, hours and benefits as a billing department clerk under Linda Goldstein, business office manager and gave claimant a couple of days to think about it. Claimant declined on September 21 because it was her interactions with Goldstein that caused her to file the grievance and possibly contribute to her health problems. No other jobs were offered.

Claimant had spoken to Holland several times about issues that began with Goldstein in March 2005, and Lisa Schnedler, administrator, told her to file a grievance with Doug DeHart, assistant administrator. Claimant did so on May 25 and after DeHart summarily denied the grievance on May 27, claimant did not pursue the issue further after two department heads told her nothing would be done if the grievance involved Goldstein and the process was exacerbating her high blood pressure.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes claimant did not refuse a suitable offer of work.

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(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.

However, the administrative law judge does not have jurisdiction to evaluate the offer or refusal of work since the offer of employment took place outside of the benefit year. Even if the offer were made within the benefit year, the offer was not suitable as the same working conditions claimant experienced with Goldstein as accountant would be more intense if she worked for Goldstein as a billing department clerk. Benefits are allowed.

DECISION:

The November 18, 2005, reference 02, decision is affirmed. Claimant did not refuse a suitable offer of work and since the offer of work was made outside of her benefit year the administrative law judge has no jurisdiction to determine suitability of the offer. Benefits are allowed, provided claimant is otherwise eligible.

dml/pjs