

**IN THE IOWA ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS DIVISION  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

**MAYA D WILLIAMS**  
Claimant

**COMMUNITY ACTION OF EASTERN IOWA**  
Employer

**APPEAL NO. 24A-UI-03137-JT-T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**OC: 06/04/23  
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Iowa Code Section 96.5(2)(a) & (d) – Discharge for Misconduct

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

On March 20, 2024, Maya Williams (claimant) filed a timely appeal from the March 11, 2024 (reference 02) decision that disqualified the claimant for benefits and that relieved the employer’s account of liability for benefits, based on the deputy’s conclusion that the claimant was discharged on February 20, 2024 for violation of a known company rule. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held on April 11, 2024. Claimant participated. Attorney Arthur Eggers represented the employer and presented testimony through Jenny Kreiter, Jaleesa Prince, Nichole Kerker, Tammy Critten and Deanna Coulter. Exhibits 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 through 14, and A were received into evidence. There were no Exhibits 2 and 7.

**ISSUE:**

Whether the claimant was discharged for misconduct in connection with the employment.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds:

Maya Williams was employed by Community Action of Eastern Iowa as a full-time Education Assistant from 2017 until February 20, 2024, when the employer discharged her from the employment for violation of the employer’s “face to name” child tracking policy and protocol. The employer is a licensed daycare provider. The claimant assisted with caring for a room of three and four year old children. For safety purposes, the employer tracked the whereabouts of the children through a “face to name” tracking form. The employer used the form throughout the claimant’s employment. The claimant was at all relevant times familiar with the child tracking protocol and her obligation to follow the protocol. The claimant was jointly responsible for tracking children on the form as they arrived and as they transitioned from inside the facility to outside the facility and vice versa.

In March 2023, the claimant and the lead teacher in the three to four-year-old room were formally reprimanded when they left a child behind in the room during a fire drill due to their failure to properly follow the “face to name” tracking system.

On February 12, 2024, the claimant added two nonsensical tracking columns to the “face to name” tracking form. The information the claimant added to the form made it look like the children had transitioned from one area to another of the employer’s facility when no transition had taken place. When questioned about the columns that indicated a non-existent transition of children, the claimant asserted that she was confused. The claimant’s explanation defied logic.

On February 13, 2024, the claimant initialed a column on the “face to name” tracking form to indicate she had performed a head count of the children as they re-entered the building after an outdoor period. However, the children had not cued to re-enter the building and the claimant had not yet conducted the required head count. In other words, the claimant cut a corner and falsified the child tracking document. The falsified record came to the employer’s attention when the lead teacher conducted the required head count. The claimant was unable to provide a plausible and logical explanation for why she had initialed the head count before the children were actually counted.

The employer discharged the claimant in response to the falsified tracking record and the repeated deviation from the “face to name” child tracking protocol.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

Iowa Code section 96.5(2)(a) and (d) provides as follows:

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 disqualification shall continue 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.

...

d. For the purposes of this subsection, “misconduct” means a deliberate act or omission by an employee that constitutes a material breach of the duties and obligations arising out of the employee's contract of employment. Misconduct is 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. Misconduct by an individual includes but is not limited to all of the following:

...

(2) Knowing violation of a reasonable and uniformly enforced rule of an employer.

(3) Intentional damage of an employer's property.

...

(6) Conduct that substantially and unjustifiably endangers the personal safety of coworkers or the general public.

...

See also Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.32(1)(a) (duplicating the text of the statute).

The employer has the burden of proof in this matter. See Iowa Code section 96.6(2). Misconduct must be substantial in order to justify a denial of unemployment benefits. Misconduct serious enough to warrant the discharge of an employee is not necessarily serious enough to warrant a denial of unemployment benefits. See *Lee v. Employment Appeal Board*, 616 N.W.2d 661 (Iowa 2000). The focus is on deliberate, intentional, or culpable acts by the employee. See *Gimbel v. Employment Appeal Board*, 489 N.W.2d 36, 39 (Iowa Ct. App. 1992).

While past acts and warnings can be used to determine the magnitude of the current act of misconduct, a discharge for misconduct cannot be based on such past act(s). The termination of employment must be based on a current act. See 871 IAC 24.32(8). In determining whether the conduct that prompted the discharge constituted a “current act,” the administrative law judge considers the date on which the conduct came to the attention of the employer and the date on which the employer notified the claimant that the conduct subjected the claimant to possible discharge. See also *Greene v. EAB*, 426 N.W.2d 659, 662 (Iowa App. 1988).

Allegations of misconduct or dishonesty without additional evidence shall not be sufficient to result in disqualification. If the employer is unwilling to furnish available evidence to corroborate the allegation, misconduct cannot be established. See Iowa Administrative Code rule 87124.32(4).

The evidence in the record establishes a discharge for misconduct in connection with the employment. The evidence establishes that on February 13, 2024 the claimant knowingly and intentionally falsified the “face to name” child tracking form to make it look like she had conducted the required safety head count of children when she had not. This incident followed a bizarre deviation from the child tracking protocol on the previous day and a complete failure to follow the child tracking protocol months earlier. The claimant’s conduct, especially the falsified tracking document, indicated an intentional and substantial disregard of the employer’s interests in ensuring the safety of the children within its care. The claimant is disqualified for benefits until the claimant has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to 10 times the claimant’s weekly benefit amount. The claimant must meet all other eligibility requirements. The employer’s account shall not be charged for benefits.

**DECISION:**

The March 11, 2024 (reference 02) decision is AFFIRMED. The claimant was discharged on February 20, 2024 for misconduct in connection with the employment. The claimant is disqualified for benefits until the claimant has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to 10 times the claimant's weekly benefit amount. The claimant must meet all other eligibility requirements. The employer's account shall not be charged for benefits.



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James E. Timberland  
Administrative Law Judge

April 19, 2024  
Decision Dated and Mailed

JET/jkb

**APPEAL RIGHTS.** If you disagree with the decision, you or any interested party may:

1. Appeal to the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days of the date under the judge's signature by submitting a written appeal via mail, fax, or online to:

**Employment Appeal Board  
6200 Park Ave Suite 100  
Des Moines, Iowa 50321  
Fax: (515)281-7191  
Online: eab.iowa.gov**

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.

**AN APPEAL TO THE BOARD SHALL 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.

An Employment Appeal Board decision is final agency action. If a party disagrees with the Employment Appeal Board decision, they may then file a petition for judicial review in district court.

2. If no one files an appeal of the judge's decision with the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days, the decision becomes final agency action, and you have the option to file a petition for judicial review in District Court within thirty (30) days after the decision becomes final. Additional information on how to file a petition can be found at Iowa Code §17A.19, which is online at <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf>.

**Note to Parties:** YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in the appeal or 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.

**Note to Claimant:** It is important that you file your weekly claim as directed, while this appeal is pending, to protect your continuing right to benefits.

**SERVICE INFORMATION:**

A true and correct copy of this decision was mailed to each of the parties listed.

**DERECHOS DE APELACIÓN.** Si no está de acuerdo con la decisión, usted o cualquier parte interesada puede:

1. Apelar a la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo dentro de los quince (15) días de la fecha bajo la firma del juez presentando una apelación por escrito por correo, fax o en línea a:

**Employment Appeal Board  
6200 Park Ave Suite 100  
Des Moines, Iowa 50321  
Fax: (515)281-7191  
Online: eab.iowa.gov**

El período de apelación se extenderá hasta el siguiente día hábil si el último día para apelar cae en fin de semana o día feriado legal.

**UNA APELACIÓN A LA JUNTA DEBE ESTABLECER CLARAMENTE:**

- 1) El nombre, dirección y número de seguro social del reclamante.
- 2) Una referencia a la decisión de la que se toma la apelación.
- 3) Que se interponga recurso de apelación contra tal decisión y se firme dicho recurso.
- 4) Los fundamentos en que se funda dicho recurso.

Una decisión de la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo es una acción final de la agencia. Si una de las partes no está de acuerdo con la decisión de la Junta de Apelación de Empleo, puede presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el tribunal de distrito.

2. Si nadie presenta una apelación de la decisión del juez ante la Junta de Apelaciones Laborales dentro de los quince (15) días, la decisión se convierte en acción final de la agencia y usted tiene la opción de presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el Tribunal de Distrito dentro de los treinta (30) días después de que la decisión adquiriera firmeza. Puede encontrar información adicional sobre cómo presentar una petición en el Código de Iowa §17A.19, que está en línea en <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf>.

**Nota para las partes:** USTED PUEDE REPRESENTARSE en la apelación u obtener un abogado u otra parte interesada para que lo haga, siempre que no haya gastos para Workforce Development. Si desea ser representado por un abogado, puede obtener los servicios de un abogado privado o uno cuyos servicios se paguen con fondos públicos.

**Nota para el reclamante:** es importante que presente su reclamo semanal según las instrucciones, mientras esta apelación está pendiente, para proteger su derecho continuo a los beneficios.

**SERVICIO DE INFORMACIÓN:**

Se envió por correo una copia fiel y correcta de esta decisión a cada una de las partes enumeradas.