

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

AUDRA N BALES
Claimant

APPEAL 19A-UI-00102-DB-T
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT**

OC: 07/01/18
Claimant: Appellant (2)

Iowa Code § 96.3(5)b – Training Extension Benefits
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.40 Training Extension Benefits

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant/appellant filed an appeal from the December 31, 2018 (reference 06) unemployment insurance decision that denied claimant's request for training extension benefits. The claimant was properly notified of the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on January 23, 2018. The claimant participated personally. The administrative law judge took administrative notice of the claimant's unemployment insurance benefits file and administrative record.

ISSUE:

Is the claimant eligible to receive training extension benefits?

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 involuntarily separated from full-time employment at Varicose Vein Center Inc. on June 29, 2018 when the doctor she worked for retired and closed his practice. Claimant was a surgical technologist. Her job duties included caring for patients during surgery.

Claimant did not separate from employment in a declining occupation. Claimant did not separate from seasonal employment. However, claimant did separate from employment due to a permanent reduction in operations when the doctor she worked for retired and closed the practice.

Claimant filed a claim for benefits with an effective date of July 1, 2018 and a benefit year end date of July 7, 2019. Claimant resides in Warren county, Iowa, which is located in Iowa Workforce Development Region 11. She has exhausted all benefit payments on regular unemployment insurance benefits as of the week-ending January 5, 2019. The application for training extension benefits was submitted in December of 2018, which was before the end of the benefit year. Claimant's administrative records establish that she has been approved for department approved training.

In August of 2018, she started schooling at Des Moines Area Community College to receive a certificate in medical coding and billing (medical records technician). She is currently attending school on a full time basis, which is twelve credit hours. She expects to complete that training in April of 2019. She attends classes on Mondays from 12:50 p.m. to 2:45 p.m. and Wednesdays from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. She attends two online classes each week as well. She is making satisfactory progress in all classes.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow the administrative law judge concludes the claimant is eligible to receive training extension benefits.

Iowa Code § 96.3(5)a-b provides:

a. Duration of benefits. The maximum total amount of benefits payable to an eligible individual during a benefit year shall not exceed the total of the wage credits accrued to the individual's account during the individual's base period, or twenty-six times the individual's weekly benefit amount, whichever is the lesser. The director shall maintain a separate account for each individual who earns wages in insured work. The director shall compute wage credits for each individual by crediting the individual's account with one-third of the wages for insured work paid to the individual during the individual's base period. However, the director shall recompute wage credits for an individual who is laid off due to the individual's employer going out of business at the factory, establishment, or other premises at which the individual was last employed, by crediting the individual's account with one-half, instead of one-third, of the wages for insured work paid to the individual during the individual's base period. Benefits paid to an eligible individual shall be charged against the base period wage credits in the individual's account which have not been previously charged, in the inverse chronological order as the wages on which the wage credits are based were paid. However if the state "off" indicator is in effect and if the individual is laid off due to the individual's employer going out of business at the factory, establishment, or other premises at which the individual was last employed, the maximum benefits payable shall be extended to thirty-nine times the individual's weekly benefit amount, but not to exceed the total of the wage credits accrued to the individual's account.

b. Training Extension Benefits.

(1) An individual who has been separated from a declining occupation or who has been involuntarily separated from employment as a result of a permanent reduction of operations at the last place of employment and who is in training with the approval of the director or in a job training program pursuant to the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Pub. L. No. 105-220, at the time regular benefits are exhausted, may be eligible for training extension benefits.

(2) A declining occupation is one in which there is a lack of sufficient current demand in the individual's labor market area for the occupational skills for which the individual is fitted by training and experience or current physical or mental capacity, and the lack of employment opportunities is expected to continue for an extended period of time, or the individual's occupation is one for which there is a seasonal variation in demand in the labor market and the individual has no other skill for which there is current demand.

(3) The training extension benefit amount shall be twenty-six times the individual's weekly benefit amount and the weekly benefit amount shall be equal to the individual's weekly benefit amount for the claim in which benefits were exhausted while in training.

(4) An individual who is receiving training extension benefits shall not be denied benefits due to application of § 96.4, subsection 3, or § 96.5, subsection 3. However, an employer's account shall not be charged with benefits so paid. Relief of charges under this paragraph "b" applies to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding § 96.8, subsection 5.

(5) In order for the individual to be eligible for training extension benefits, all of the following criteria must be met:

(a) The training must be for a high-demand occupation or high-technology occupation, including the fields of life sciences, advanced manufacturing, biotechnology, alternative fuels, insurance, and environmental technology. "High-demand occupation" means an occupation in a labor market area in which the department determines work opportunities are available and there is a lack of qualified applicants.

(b) The individual must file any unemployment insurance claim to which the individual becomes entitled under state or federal law, and must draw any unemployment insurance benefits on that claim until the claim has expired or has been exhausted, in order to maintain the individual's eligibility under this paragraph "b". Training extension benefits end upon completion of the training even though a portion of the training extension benefit amount may remain.

(c) The individual must be enrolled and making satisfactory progress to complete the training.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.40 provides:

Training extension benefits.

(1) The purpose of training extension benefits is to provide the individual with continued eligibility for benefits so that the individual may pursue a training program for entry into a high-demand or high-technology occupation. Training extension benefits are available to an individual who was laid off or voluntarily quit with good cause attributable to the individual's employer from full-time employment in a declining occupation or is involuntarily separated from full-time employment as a result of a permanent reduction of operations.

(2) The weekly benefit amount shall be pursuant to the same terms and conditions as regular unemployment benefits and the benefits shall be for a maximum of 26 times the weekly benefit amount of the claim which resulted in eligibility. Both contributory and reimbursable employers shall be relieved of charges for training extension benefits.

(3) The course or courses must be for a high-demand or high-technology occupation. The department will make available to serve as a guide a list of high-demand, high-technology, and declining occupations. The lists shall be available on the department's Web site and workforce centers.

a. High-technology occupations include life sciences, advanced manufacturing, biotechnology, alternative fuels, insurance, environmental technology, and technologically advanced green jobs. A high-technology occupation is one which requires a high degree of training in the sciences, engineering, or other advanced learning area and has work opportunities available in the labor market area or the state of Iowa.

b. A high-demand occupation means an occupation in a labor market area or the state of Iowa as a whole in which the department determines that work opportunities are available.

c. A declining occupation has a lack of sufficient current demand in the individual's labor market area or the state of Iowa for the occupational skills possessed by the individual, and the lack of employment opportunities is expected to continue for an extended period of time.

d. A declining occupation includes an occupation for which there is a seasonal variation in demand in the labor market or the state of Iowa, and the individual has no other skill for which there is a current demand.

e. A declining or high-demand occupation will be determined by using Iowa labor market information for each region in the state.

(4) The individual must be enrolled in the training no later than the end of the benefit year which included the separation which made the individual eligible for training benefits or the week in which any federal benefit program based upon that benefit year is exhausted. Enrolled before the end of the benefit year means the individual has taken all steps available for entry into the training and has secured a reserved position in the training class. The individual has paid tuition or will pay tuition when the training starts. The training class may begin after the end of the benefit year. The application for training benefits must be received 30 days after the end of the benefit year or 30 days after federal benefits are exhausted. The individual must be enrolled and making satisfactory progress to complete the training program in order to continue to be eligible for training extension benefits.

(5) Training benefits shall cease to be available if the training is completed; the individual quits the training course; the individual exhausts the training extension maximum benefit amount; or the individual fails to make satisfactory progress; and benefits shall cease no later than one calendar year following the end of the benefit year in which the individual became eligible for the benefits. Individuals must file and receive benefits under any federal or state unemployment insurance benefit program until the claim has expired or has been exhausted, in order to maintain eligibility for training extension benefits.

This rule is intended to implement 2009 Iowa Code Supplement § 96.3(5).

(emphasis added).

Claimant meets the eligibility requirements for training extension benefits because medical coding and billing (medical records technician) is considered by Iowa Workforce Development to be a high demand or high technology occupation, she has been found eligible for department approved training, she was separated from her last employer due to a permanent reduction of

operations, she is attending school full-time and is making satisfactory progress, and has exhausted all her regular unemployment insurance benefits. Therefore, training extension benefits are allowed.

DECISION:

The December 31, 2018 (reference 06) unemployment insurance decision is reversed. The claimant is eligible to receive training extension benefits.

Dawn Boucher
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

db/rvs