

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

**SHANA ROBY**  
Claimant

**BLACK HAWK NURSING AND  
REHABILITATION**  
Employer

**APPEAL 20A-UI-09857-AW-T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**OC: 04/19/20**  
**Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Ability to and Availability for Work

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Claimant filed an appeal from the August 10, 2020 (reference 03) unemployment insurance decision that denied benefits. The parties were properly notified of the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on October 2, 2020, at 8:10 a.m. Claimant participated. Employer did not participate. Claimant's Exhibits A and B were admitted. Official notice was taken of the administrative record.

**ISSUES:**

Whether claimant is able to and available for work.  
Whether claimant is on an approved leave of absence.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

As claimant was the only witness, the administrative law judge makes the following findings of fact based solely upon claimant's testimony: Claimant began her employment as a full-time Certified Nursing Assistant with Black Hawk Nursing and Rehabilitation on October 29, 2019. On April 21, 2020, claimant's physician noted that claimant is under his professional care and is at higher risk of contracting Covid-19 due to an underlying medical condition. (Exhibit B) Claimant stopped working due to her physician's note and her fear of Covid-19. Claimant and employer did not complete formal leave of absence documents. Claimant filed an initial claim for benefits effective April 19, 2020. Claimant returned to work at the end of August 2020, worked for one week and then stopped working again because she had surgery scheduled. Claimant began experiencing symptoms of Covid-19 in late August 2020 and tested positive for Covid-19 on September 2, 2020.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes claimant is not able to and available for work. Benefits are denied.

Iowa Code section 96.4(3) provides:

An unemployed individual shall be eligible to receive benefits with respect to any week only if the department finds that:

3. The individual is able to work, is available for work, and is earnestly and actively seeking work. This subsection is waived if the individual is deemed partially unemployed, while employed at the individual's regular job, as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "b", unnumbered paragraph (1), or temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "c". The work search requirements of this subsection and the disqualification requirement for failure to apply for, or to accept suitable work of section 96.5, subsection 3 are waived if the individual is not disqualified for benefits under section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraph "h".

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22 provides, in pertinent part:

Benefits eligibility conditions. For an individual to be eligible to receive benefits the department must find that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work. The individual bears the burden of establishing that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work.

(1) Able to work. An individual must be physically and mentally able to work in some gainful employment, not necessarily in the individual's customary occupation, but which is engaged in by others as a means of livelihood.

a. Illness, injury or pregnancy. Each case is decided upon an individual basis, recognizing that various work opportunities present different physical requirements. *A statement from a medical practitioner is considered prima facie evidence of the physical ability of the individual to perform the work required.* A pregnant individual must meet the same criteria for determining ableness as do all other individuals.

(2) Available for work. The availability requirement is satisfied when an individual is willing, able, and ready to accept suitable work which the individual does not have good cause to refuse, that is, the individual is genuinely attached to the labor market. Since, under unemployment insurance laws, it is the availability of an individual that is required to be tested, the labor market must be described in terms of the individual. A labor market for an individual means a market for the type of service which the individual offers in the geographical area in which the individual offers the service. Market in that sense does not mean that job vacancies must exist; the purpose of unemployment insurance is to compensate for lack of job vacancies. It means only that the type of services which an individual is offering is generally performed in the geographical area in which the individual is offering the services.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(1), (6), (10), (35) provide:

Availability disqualifications. The following are reasons for a claimant being disqualified for being unavailable for work.

(1) An individual who is ill and presently not able to perform work due to illness.

(6) If an individual has a medical report on file submitted by a physician, stating such individual is not presently able to work.

(10) The claimant requested and was granted a leave of absence, such period is deemed to be a period of voluntary unemployment and shall be considered ineligible for benefits for such period.

(35) Where the claimant is not able to work and is under the care of a medical practitioner and has not been released as being able to work.

An individual claiming benefits has the burden of proof that she is be able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work. Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22.

Claimant was absent from work on the advice of her physician. Employer has presumably consented to this absence as claimant remains employed. While leave of absence forms may not have been completed, claimant is on a leave of absence from work. Claimant remains under the care of her physician(s). Claimant was also absent due to surgery and illness. Claimant has not established that she is able to and available for work. Accordingly, claimant is not eligible for unemployment insurance benefits.

**NOTE TO CLAIMANT:** This decision determines you are not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits. If you disagree with this decision you may file an appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by following the instructions on the first page of this decision. Individuals who do not qualify for regular unemployment insurance benefits, but who are currently unemployed for reasons related to COVID-19 may qualify for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). **You will need to apply for PUA to determine your eligibility under the program.** Additional information on how to apply for PUA can be found at <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/pua-information>. If this decision becomes final or if you are not eligible for PUA, you may have an overpayment of benefits.

**DECISION:**

The August 10, 2020 (reference 03) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. Claimant is not able to and available for work. Benefits are denied.



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Adrienne C. Williamson  
Administrative Law Judge  
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October 8, 2020  
Decision Dated and Mailed

acw/scn