

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

68-0157 (9-06) - 3091078 - EI

SIMON M GATCHAAK
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 14A-UI-06649-S2T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

TYSON FRESH MEATS INC
Employer

OC: 05/18/14
Claimant: Appellant (2)

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Simon Gatchaak (claimant) appealed a representative's June 19, 2014 (reference 02) decision that concluded he was not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits after his separation from employment with Tyson Fresh Meats (employer). After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known address of record, a telephone hearing was scheduled for July 18, 2014. The claimant participated personally through Bassa Kekki, Interpreter. The employer provided a telephone number but could not be reached at the time of the hearing. The administrative law judge spoke to a woman who answered the telephone. The woman indicated the employer was not at work. A message was left for the employer.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether the claimant was separated from employment for any disqualifying reason.

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 October 7, 2013 as a full-time laborer. The employer did not issue the claimant a handbook or any warnings. The claimant did accrue three attendance points when he went to the hospital.

On April 23, 2014 coworkers told the employer the claimant was drunk. This was not true. The nurse tested the claimant four times. Each time the claimant blew into a machine and saw the test strip. The strip said "zero". After the fourth time the nurse lied and told the employer the claimant tested at 1.5. On April 23, 2014 the employer told the claimant to go home because he was terminated.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow the administrative law judge concludes the claimant was not discharged for misconduct.

Iowa Code § 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.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.32(1)a provides:

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 Dep't of Job Serv., 275 N.W.2d 445, 448 (Iowa 1979).

The employer has the burden of proof in establishing disqualifying job misconduct. Cosper v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 321 N.W.2d 6 (Iowa 1982). Misconduct serious enough to warrant discharge is not necessarily serious enough to warrant a denial of job insurance benefits. Such misconduct must be "substantial." Newman v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 351 N.W.2d 806 (Iowa App. 1984). The employer did not participate in the hearing and, therefore, provided no evidence of job-related misconduct. The employer did not meet its burden of proof to show misconduct. Benefits are allowed.

DECISION:

The representative's June 19, 2014 (reference 02) decision is reversed. The employer has not met its proof to establish job-related misconduct. Benefits are allowed.

Beth A. Scheetz
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

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