

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

MERLE L BEESON
621 GENERAL CAVOZOS BLVD #2
KINGSVILLE TX 78363

THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
c/o DAVE BERGEON
EMPLOYEE RELATIONS
121 R UNIVERSITY SERVICES BLDG
IOWA CITY IA 52242

Appeal Number: 04A-UI-10988-S2T
OC: 09/12/04 R: 12
Claimant: Appellant (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)

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Merle Beeson (claimant) appealed a representative's October 5, 2004 decision (reference 01) that concluded he was not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because he was discharged from work with The University of Iowa (employer) for excessive unexcused absenteeism after having been warned. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was held on November 2, 2004. The claimant participated personally. The employer participated by David Bergeon, Human Resources Specialist.

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 March 5, 2001, as a full-time custodian. On December 6, 2002, the claimant signed a last-chance agreement regarding the claimant's consumption of alcohol. On July 18, 2004, the claimant appeared for work intoxicated. The claimant did not appear for work or notify the employer of his absence on July 20 and 21, 2004. Later on July 21, 2004, the employer contacted the claimant. The claimant admitted he had been drinking and was not sober enough to work. The employer terminated the claimant on July 21, 2004.

The claimant never sought treatment for alcoholism. Even though the claimant admitted he was under the influence of alcohol at the hearing, his answers were clear and responsive to the administrative law judge's questions.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The issue is whether the claimant was discharged for misconduct. For the following reasons the administrative law judge concludes he was.

Iowa Code Section 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.

871 IAC 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 Department of Job Service, 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). Repeated failure to follow an employer's instructions in the performance of duties is misconduct. Gilliam v. Atlantic Bottling Company, 453 N.W.2d 230 (Iowa App. 1990). An employer has a right to expect employees to follow instructions and not to be under the influence of alcohol during work time. The claimant disregarded the employer's right by drinking before working and drinking so much that he was unable to appear for work. The claimant's disregard of the employer's interests is misconduct. As such, he is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits.

DECISION:

The representative's October 5, 2004 decision (reference 01) is affirmed. The claimant is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because he was discharged from work for misconduct. Benefits are withheld until he has worked in and has been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times his weekly benefit amount, provided he is otherwise eligible.

bas/b