

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

CHAD N SCHWARTZ
8329 WINSLOW RD
JANESVILLE IA 50647

VOLTMER INC
1826 STATE HWY 9
DECORAH IA 52101

Appeal Number: 04A-UI-01045-H2T
OC 12-21-03 R 03
Claimant: Respondent (2)

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/Misconduct
Section 96.3-7 – Recovery of Benefit Overpayment

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The employer filed a timely appeal from the January 28, 2004, reference 01, decision that allowed benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held on February 19, 2004. The claimant did participate. The employer did participate through Larry Pennington, Division Manager for the Cedar Falls Office and Jeff Jenkins, Field Supervisor. Employer's Exhibit One was received.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The claimant was employed as an apprentice helper full time beginning August 4, 2003 through December 22, 2003 when he was discharged. The claimant was hired with understanding that he would enter a journeyman apprentice-training program as part of his employment. The employer does not hire any employees to act as laborers only. All employees must either be licensed electricians or enrolled in an apprentice program. On November 26, 2003 the claimant, Larry Pennington, and Jeff Jenkins had a meeting where the claimant was told that he had to enroll in a journeyman apprentice program. The claimant was told that he needed to enroll in a program by the end of the week of November 26, 2003. The claimant told the employer on November 26, 2003 that he did not want to enroll in any apprentice program that he wanted to be a laborer. The claimant was told that if he did not enter an apprentice program he would be terminated. On December 15, 2003, all the paperwork for the employer's program had to be completed. The claimant did not complete paperwork to enter any apprentice program, either the employer's or any others. The employer cannot allow employees to work who are not licensed or are not in an apprentice program or they end up violating the provisions of the Davis-Bacon.

The claimant has claimed and received unemployment insurance benefits after the separation from employment.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant was discharged from employment due to job-related misconduct.

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 claimant was told when he was hired that he had to either be licensed or that he had to enter a journeyman apprentice program. The claimant was hired with the understanding that he would enter an apprentice program. After he was hired, the claimant decided that he would not enter an apprentice program. The claimant's failure to enter an apprentice program under these circumstances constitutes disqualifying misconduct. Benefits are denied.

Iowa Code Section 96.3-7 provides:

7. Recovery of overpayment of benefits. If an individual receives benefits for which the individual is subsequently determined to be ineligible, even though the individual acts in good faith and is not otherwise at fault, the benefits shall be recovered. The department in its discretion may recover the overpayment of benefits either by having a sum equal to the overpayment deducted from any future benefits payable to the individual or by having the individual pay to the department a sum equal to the overpayment.

If the department determines that an overpayment has been made, the charge for the overpayment against the employer's account shall be removed and the account shall be credited with an amount equal to the overpayment from the unemployment compensation trust fund and this credit shall include both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5.

Because the claimant's separation was disqualifying, benefits were paid to which the claimant was not entitled. Those benefits must be recovered in accordance with the provisions of Iowa law.

DECISION:

The January 28, 2004, reference 01, decision is reversed. The claimant was discharged from employment due to job-related misconduct. Benefits are withheld until such time as he has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times his weekly benefit amount, provided he is otherwise eligible. The claimant is overpaid benefits in the amount of \$2,488.00.

tkh/kjf