

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

MILDRED A SPEGAL
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 09A-UI-15657-S2T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

WAL-MART STORES INC
Employer

OC: 09/13/09
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Section 96.5-1-d - Voluntary Quit for Medical Reasons

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Mildred Spegal (claimant) appealed a representative's October 15, 2009 decision (reference 01) that concluded she was not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because she had voluntarily quit employment with Wal-Mart Stores (employer). After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was held on November 19, 2009. The claimant participated personally. The employer did not provide a telephone number where it could be reached and therefore, did not participate in the hearing.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether the claimant is denied unemployment insurance benefits because she voluntarily quit work without good cause attributable to the employer.

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 in September 2007, as a part-time people greeter. The claimant took a personal leave of absence from work in August 2009, because she had knee and back pain. The claimant saw her physician and her physician restricted her to performing work sitting down. The claimant told the employer about the restriction. The employer consented to the claimant's absence.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow the administrative law judge concludes the claimant voluntarily quit work without good cause attributable to the employer.

Iowa Code section 96.5-1-d provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits:

1. Voluntary quitting. If the individual has left work voluntarily without good cause attributable to the individual's employer, if so found by the department. But the individual shall not be disqualified if the department finds that:

d. The individual left employment because of illness, injury or pregnancy upon the advice of a licensed and practicing physician, and upon knowledge of the necessity for absence immediately notified the employer, or the employer consented to the absence, and after recovering from the illness, injury or pregnancy, when recovery was certified by a licensed and practicing physician, the individual returned to the employer and offered to perform services and the individual's regular work or comparable suitable work was not available, if so found by the department, provided the individual is otherwise eligible.

A voluntary leaving of employment requires an intention to terminate the employment relationship accompanied by an overt act of carrying out that intention. Local Lodge #1426 v. Wilson Trailer, 289 N.W.2d 608, 612 (Iowa 1980). A claimant is not disqualified for leaving employment if he or she (1) left employment by reason of illness, injury or pregnancy; (2) on the advice of a licensed and practicing physician; (3) and immediately notified the employer or the employer consented to the absence; (4) and when certified as recovered by a physician, the individual returned to the employer and offered services but the regular or comparable suitable work was not available. Area Residential Care, Inc. v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 323 N.W.2d 257 (Iowa 1982).

The claimant left work due to an injury under the advice of her physician. The employer consented to her leaving. The claimant has failed to provide the employer with certification that she has recovered. In addition the claimant has failed to offer her services to the employer. The claimant has failed to meet the requirements of the statute and, therefore, is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits. The claimant may requalify by returning to the employer with an unconditional release. The claimant could then receive benefits if regular work or comparable suitable work was not available.

DECISION:

The representative's October 15, 2009 decision (reference 01) is affirmed. The claimant voluntarily left work without good cause attributable to the employer. Benefits are withheld until the claimant has worked in and has been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times the claimant's weekly benefit amount, provided the claimant is otherwise eligible.

Beth A. Scheetz
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

bas/css