

**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**

**DOUGLAS E CASSATT
138 S FELLOWS AVE
OTTUMWA IA 52501-3331**

**ABC BEVERAGE MANUFACTURER'S INC
ATTN HUMAN RESOURCES
PO BOX 4656
DES MOINES IA 50306**

**Appeal Number: 06A-UI-07421-HT
OC: 06/25/06 R: 03
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

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant, Douglas Cassatt, filed an appeal from a decision dated July 13, 2006, reference 01. The decision disqualified him from receiving unemployment benefits. After due notice was issued a hearing was held by telephone conference call on August 10, 2006. The claimant participated on his own behalf. The employer, ABC Beverage Manufacturers, Inc. (ABC), participated by Regional Human Resources Manager Brenda Dixon and Production Manager Robert Gomez.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having heard the testimony of the witnesses and having examined all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Douglas Cassatt was employed by ABC from July 31, 2000 until June 19, 2006. He was a full-time machine operator working 3:30 p.m. until 2:00 a.m. The employer's attendance policy and progressive disciplinary procedure is based on a point system. Employees are given a written warning when four points have been accumulated and a second written warning at five points. Discharge occurs at six points and points drop off after twelve months.

Mr. Cassatt received a number of warnings at the four-point level, and his last one was given on June 7, 2006, when he had four and one-half points. He missed work again on June 12, 2006, because of car problems and again on June 15, 2006, when he over slept and was one and three-quarters hours late for work. He told his supervisor he had overslept and figured he had "pointed out." He worked a short time then went home. The employer had to review his attendance record to confirm his point total then he was notified on June 19, 2006, he was discharged.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The issue is whether the claimant was discharged for misconduct sufficient to warrant a denial of his unemployment benefits.

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).

871 IAC 24.32(7) provides:

(7) Excessive unexcused absenteeism. Excessive unexcused absenteeism is an intentional disregard of the duty owed by the claimant to the employer and shall be considered misconduct except for illness or other reasonable grounds for which the employee was absent and that were properly reported to the employer.

The claimant had been advised his job was in jeopardy as a result of his absenteeism. In spite of the warnings he was absent the final two times due to car problems and oversleeping, then leaving before the end of his shift because he believed he had "pointed out." Matters of purely personal consideration, such as oversleeping, are not considered an excused absence. Harlan v. IDJS, 350 N.W.2d 192 (Iowa 1984). The claimant was discharged for excessive unexcused absenteeism. Under the provisions of the above Administrative Code section, this is misconduct for which the claimant is disqualified.

DECISION:

The representative's decision of July 13, 2006, reference 01, is affirmed. Douglas Cassatt is disqualified and benefits are withheld until he has earned ten times his weekly benefit amount, provided he is otherwise eligible.

bgh/pjs