

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

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ROCKWELL COLLINS INC
ATTENTION: HUMAN RESOURCES
MANAGER/M/S155-100
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Appeal Number: 04A-UI-02872-S2T
OC: 12/14/03 R: 03
Claimant: Respondent (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:

Rockwell Collins (employer) appealed a representative's March 3, 2004 decision (reference 01) that concluded Dana Mayher (claimant) was discharged and there was no evidence of willful or deliberate misconduct. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was held on April 6, 2004. The claimant participated personally. The employer participated by Trisha Olson, 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 April 22, 1991, as a full-time assembly operator. The claimant had problems with her attendance in the year 2003, due to the illnesses of her children. The claimant received warnings on February 14, April 2 and July 31, 2003. She understood that she would be terminated if she were absent from work for any reason after July 31, 2003.

The claimant worked every day from July 31, 2003, through February 1, 2004. On February 2, 2004, the claimant's geographic area experienced a snowstorm with a large amount of ice. The sheriff's department issued a travel warning. The employer did not institute its inclement weather policy that day and required employee's to appear for work. The claimant properly reported that she would be absent due to the weather. On February 9, 2004, the employer terminated the claimant for her absence on February 2, 2004.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The issue is whether the claimant was discharged for misconduct. For the following reasons the administrative law judge concludes she was not.

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(8) provides:

(8) Past acts of misconduct. While past acts and warnings can be used to determine the magnitude of a current act of misconduct, a discharge for misconduct cannot be based on such past act or acts. The termination of employment must be based on a current act.

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). The employer discharged the claimant and has the burden of proof to show misconduct. The employer must establish not only misconduct but that there was a final incident of misconduct which precipitated the discharge. The last incident provided by the employer occurred on February 2, 2004. The absence was not volitional and properly reported. The employer has failed to provide any evidence of willful and deliberate misconduct which was the final incident leading to the discharge and disqualification may not be imposed.

DECISION:

The representative's March 3, 2004 decision (reference 01) is affirmed. The claimant was discharged. Misconduct has not been established. Benefits are allowed provided the claimant is otherwise eligible.

bas/kjf