

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

TRACI M LEICHLEITER  
1407 CADY AVE  
OMAHA NE 68110

WAL-MART STORES INC  
c/o THE FRICK COMPANY  
P O BOX 283  
ST LOUIS MO 63166-0283

Appeal Number: 04A-UI-01932-S2T  
OC: 01/25/04 R: 12  
Claimant: Appellant (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, 4<sup>th</sup> 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.

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(Administrative Law Judge)

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(Decision Dated & Mailed)

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Traci Leichter (claimant) appealed a representative's February 19, 2004 decision (reference 01) that concluded she was not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because she was discharged from work with Wal-Mart Stores (employer) for wanton carelessness in performing her work. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was held on March 12, 2004. The claimant participated personally. The employer participated by Donna Doran, Lead Customer Service Manager.

#### 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 June 28, 2002, as a full-time cashier. The claimant received written warnings for register shortages on March 3, May 27 and June 8, 2003. The claimant understood she could be terminated for further shortages of a larger amount.

The employer noted that the claimant had a cash shortage on January 6, 2004. The employer finished its investigation on January 20, 2004, and found that the claimant's cash drawer was short \$99.96. The employer provided the calculations to the claimant. The claimant discovered that at most she was short \$8.00 and she may have had a cash surplus. The claimant asked the employer to investigate. The employer looked at the amounts but did not explain the calculation to the claimant. On January 23, 2004, the employer terminated the claimant.

#### 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).

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 did not provide any evidence of misconduct at the hearing. The employer could not point to any shortage larger than \$8.00. Consequently the employer did not meet its burden of proof to show misconduct. Benefits are allowed.

DECISION:

The representative's February 19, 2004 decision (reference 01) is reversed. The claimant was discharged. Misconduct has not been established. Benefits are allowed provided the claimant is otherwise eligible.

bas/s