

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

GLORIA J DAVIS
630 E 7TH ST
DAVENPORT IA 52803

APAC CUSTOMER SERVICES INC
C/O FRICK UC EXPRESS
PO BOX 283
ST LOUIS MO 63166-0283

Appeal Number: 04A-UI-03068-S2T
OC: 02/01/04 R: 04
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, 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 96.5-1 – Voluntary Quit
Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct
Section 96.3-7 – Overpayment

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Gloria Davis (claimant) appealed a representative's March 11, 2004 decision (reference 01) that concluded she was not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because she was discharged from work with APAC Customer Services (employer) for violation of a known company rule. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was held on April 8, 2004. The claimant participated personally. The employer was represented by Klaren Bentley, Hearings Representative, and participated by Turkessa Hill, Human Resources Coordinator, and Angela Johnson, Assistant Operations

Manager. The employer offered one exhibit which was marked for identification as Exhibit One. Exhibit One was received into evidence.

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 January 6, 2003, as a full-time customer service representative. The claimant signed that she read a copy of the employer's Orientation Checklist, Telephone Consent Form, and Dropping and Discontinuing Calls Form on January 6, 2003.

The employer thought that some of the claimant's calls were too short and ordered an Agent Trace Report on January 20, 2004. On or about January 27, 2004, the employer gave the claimant her evaluation. The employer found the claimant to be doing an excellent job and one of the employer's top performers.

On February 3, 2004, a customer complained to the employer that the claimant hung up the telephone in the middle of the call. The employer questioned the claimant and the claimant did not remember the specific call. The claimant did remembered spilling some water and accidentally hanging up on a customer. The employer terminated the claimant on February 3, 2004, for hanging up on a customer on February 3, 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).

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 sufficient evidence of misconduct at the hearing. Negligence does not constitute misconduct unless recurrent in nature; a single act is not disqualifying unless indicative of a deliberate disregard of the employer's interests. Henry v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 391 N.W.2d 731 (Iowa App. 1986). The employer proved one act of negligence on February 3, 2004. For negligence to rise to the level of misconduct, the negligence would have to have been recurrent in nature. Consequently, the employer did not meet its burden of proof to show misconduct. Benefits are allowed.

DECISION:

The representative's March 11, 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/b