

**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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**Appeal Number: 05A-UI-03734-LT  
OC: 03-06-05 R: 04  
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.

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(Administrative Law Judge)

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(Decision Dated & Mailed)

Iowa Code § 96.5(2)a – Discharge/Misconduct  
871 IAC 24.32(7) – Excessive Unexcused Absenteeism

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Employer filed a timely appeal from the March 28, 2005, reference 01, decision that allowed benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held on April 29, 2005. Claimant did respond to the hearing notice instructions but was not available when the hearing was called and did not participate. Employer did participate through Kelly Green.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant was employed as a third shift full-time shipper through March 3, 2005 when he was discharged for having left early due to illness on the March 2 to 3 shift. On the February 27 to 28 shift, claimant left after working a ten-hour shift when the employer wanted him to work twelve hours.

Claimant's supervisor, Dave Egan, did not participate. Employer has a no-fault attendance policy and does not know the reasons for the absences on October 17, and 19, 2004 and February 24, 26, and 28, 2005.

#### REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant was discharged from employment for no disqualifying reason.

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(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.

Excessive absences are not considered misconduct unless unexcused. Absences due to properly reported illness or injury cannot constitute job misconduct since they are not volitional. Cosper v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 321 N.W.2d 6 (Iowa 1982).

Because claimant's supervisor did not participate and provide direct information about the date confusion and the last absence, claimant's fact-finding interview statement is considered credible. Reported absences related to illness are excused for the purpose of the Iowa Employment Security Act. An employer's point system or no-fault absenteeism policy is not dispositive of the issue of qualification for benefits. Since employer has the burden of proving job misconduct and employer does not know the reasons for the other absences, they are considered excused without evidence to the contrary. Claimant's decision to leave work early on the February 27 to 28 shift was unexcused because there was no indication he received permission from his supervisor before leaving after having been asked to work two more hours. However, because the final absence for which he was discharged was related to properly reported illness, no final or current incident of unexcused absenteeism has been established and no disqualification is imposed.

#### DECISION:

The March 28, 2005, reference 01, decision is affirmed. The claimant was discharged from employment for no disqualifying reason. Benefits are allowed, provided the claimant is otherwise eligible.

dml/sc