

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

INGRID E RALSTON
Claimant

ABC CHILDCARE INC
Employer

APPEAL 21A-UI-00148-CL-T
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 07/05/20
Claimant: Respondent (1)

Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Ability to and Availability for Work
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(26) – Able & Available – Availability Disqualifications
Iowa Code § 96.1A(37) – Total and Partial Unemployment
Iowa Code § 96.7(2)a(2) – Same Base Period Employment

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

On November 17, 2020, the employer filed an appeal from the November 10, 2020, (reference 03) unemployment insurance decision that allowed benefits based on claimant's availability for work and found employer could be charged for the benefits. The parties were properly notified about the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on February 3, 2021. Claimant did not register for the hearing and did not participate. Employer participated through director/owner Michelle Frauenholz. Employer's Exhibit 1 was received.

ISSUES:

Is the claimant totally, partially, or temporarily unemployed?
Is the claimant able to and available for work?
Is the claimant still employed at the same hours and wages?
Is the employer's account subject to charge?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant has worked for employer since December 2019 as a part-time childcare worker.

On July 3, 2020, was exposed to COVID 19 at employer's daycare. The Iowa Department of Public Health advised to have staff and students exposed to COVID 19 to quarantine until July 15, 2020. Claimant did so, and was therefore totally unemployed during the one week ending July 11, 2020.

Claimant has been identified in Group Code 8. Therefore, Iowa Workforce Development has recognized claimant was unemployed due to COVID 19, and therefore, employer has been relieved of charges for claimant's benefits, in accordance with the policy announced by Iowa Workforce Development when the pandemic began in March 2020.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

Iowa Code section 96.1A(37) provides:

"Total and partial unemployment".

a. An individual shall be deemed "totally unemployed" in any week with respect to which no wages are payable to the individual and during which the individual performs no services.

b. An individual shall be deemed partially unemployed in any week in which either of the following apply:

(1) While employed at the individual's then regular job, the individual works less than the regular full-time week and in which the individual earns less than the individual's weekly benefit amount plus fifteen dollars.

(2) The individual, having been separated from the individual's regular job, earns at odd jobs less than the individual's weekly benefit amount plus fifteen dollars.

c. An individual shall be deemed temporarily unemployed if for a period, verified by the department, not to exceed four consecutive weeks, the individual is unemployed due to a plant shutdown, vacation, inventory, lack of work or emergency from the individual's regular job or trade in which the individual worked full-time and will again work full-time, if the individual's employment, although temporarily suspended, has not been terminated.

Iowa Code section 96.4(3) provides:

An unemployed individual shall be eligible to receive benefits with respect to any week only if the department finds that:

3. The individual is able to work, is available for work, and is earnestly and actively seeking work. This subsection is waived if the individual is deemed partially unemployed, while employed at the individual's regular job, as defined in section 96.1A, subsection 37, paragraph "b", subparagraph (1), or temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.1A, subsection 37, paragraph "c". The work search requirements of this subsection and the disqualification requirement for failure to apply for, or to accept suitable work of section 96.5, subsection 3 are waived if the individual is not disqualified for benefits under section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraph "h".

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(26) provides:

Availability disqualifications. The following are reasons for a claimant being disqualified for being unavailable for work.

(26) Where a claimant is still employed in a part-time job at the same hours and wages as contemplated in the original contract for hire and is not working on a reduced workweek basis different from the contract for hire, such claimant cannot be considered partially unemployed.

Iowa Code section 96.7(2)a(2)(a), (b), and (c) provides:

2. Contribution rates based on benefit experience.

a. (2) The amount of regular benefits plus fifty percent of the amount of extended benefits paid to an eligible individual shall be charged against the account of the employers in the base period in the inverse chronological order in which the employment of the individual occurred.

(a) However, if the individual to whom the benefits are paid is in the employ of a base period employer at the time the individual is receiving the benefits, and the individual is receiving the same employment from the employer that the individual received during the individual's base period, benefits paid to the individual shall not be charged against the account of the employer. This provision applies to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding subparagraph (3) and section 96.8, subsection 5.

(b) An employer's account shall not be charged with benefits paid to an individual who left the work of the employer voluntarily without good cause attributable to the employer or to an individual who was discharged for misconduct in connection with the individual's employment, or to an individual who failed without good cause, either to apply for available, suitable work or to accept suitable work with that employer, but shall be charged to the unemployment compensation fund. This paragraph applies to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5.

(c) The amount of benefits paid to an individual, which is solely due to wage credits considered to be in an individual's base period due to the exclusion and substitution of calendar quarters from the individual's base period under section 96.23, shall be charged against the account of the employer responsible for paying the workers' compensation benefits for temporary total disability or during a healing period under section 85.33, section 85.34, subsection 1, or section 85A.17, or responsible for paying indemnity insurance benefits.

Here, claimant was able to and available for work during the week ending July 11, 2020. Employer could not allow her to work, based on advice it received from public health authorities. This was through no fault of claimant or employer. Claimant is allowed benefits and employer has been relieved of benefit charges since the period of unemployment was directly attributable to the COVID 19 pandemic.

DECISION:

The November 10, 2020, (reference 03) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The claimant was able to and available for work for the week ending July 11, 2020, but could not due to a self-quarantine directed by the public health authorities. Claimant is eligible for benefits, and employer has been relieved of benefit charges in accordance with the policy announced by Iowa Workforce Development.



Christine A. Louis
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February 17, 2021
Decision Dated and Mailed

cal/mh