

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

68-0157 (9-06) - 3091078 - EI

TOMMIE L PRINCE
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 08A-UI-10202-MT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

**RIVERSIDE CASINO AND GOLF RESORT
LLC/RIVERSIDE CASINO & GOLF RESORT**
Employer

**OC: 09/28/08 R: 03
Claimant: Respondent (2)**

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct
Section 96.3-7 – Recovery of Overpayment of Benefits

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Employer filed an appeal from a decision of a representative dated October 24, 2008, reference 01, which held claimant eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. After due notice, a telephone conference hearing was scheduled for and held on November 17, 2008. Employer participated by Jim Donovan, Human Resource Director and Kurt Lebsack, Maintenance Manager. Claimant failed to respond to the hearing notice and did not participate. Exhibit One was admitted into evidence.

ISSUES:

The issues in this matter are whether claimant was discharged for misconduct and is overpaid unemployment insurance benefits.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and considered all of the evidence in the record, finds: Claimant last worked for the employer July 24, 2008.

Employer discharged claimant on July 24, 2008 because claimant on July 21, 2008 failed to perform his duties to the satisfaction of the employer. A power outage occurred on July 21, 2008. Claimant was outside moving his car and thereby did not attend to his duties required when power was lost. Claimant had proper training and experience to handle the power outage responsibilities. Claimant was also assigned to replace ceiling tiles. Claimant had prior training and experience in performing this work. Claimant told management that no ceiling tiles were in stock. In fact there was a full stock of ceiling tiles. Claimant had in the past demonstrated the ability to perform this task to the employer/s satisfaction.

Claimant had two prior warnings on his record for work performance. The final warning of June 30, 2008 placed claimant on notice that his job was in jeopardy.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

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.

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 gravity of the incident, number of policy violations and prior warnings are factors considered when analyzing misconduct. The lack of a current warning may detract from a finding of an intentional policy violation.

The administrative law judge holds that the evidence has established that claimant was discharged for an act of misconduct when claimant violated the employer's policy concerning work performance. Claimant was warned concerning this policy.

The last incident, which brought about the discharge constitutes misconduct because claimant failed to perform his work to the satisfaction of employer after a final warning. Failure to perform work for which the claimant has demonstrated ability is misconduct. The prior warnings weigh heavily toward a finding of carelessness or intentional acts in violation of the duty owed

employer. Therefore, claimant was discharged for an act of misconduct and as such, is disqualified for the receipt of unemployment insurance benefits.

The next issue concerns an overpayment of unemployment insurance benefits.

Iowa Code section 96.3-7, as amended in 2008, provides:

7. Recovery of overpayment of benefits.

a. If an individual receives benefits for which the individual is subsequently determined to be ineligible, even though the individual acts in good faith and is not otherwise at fault, the benefits shall be recovered. The department in its discretion may recover the overpayment of benefits either by having a sum equal to the overpayment deducted from any future benefits payable to the individual or by having the individual pay to the department a sum equal to the overpayment.

b. (1) If the department determines that an overpayment has been made, the charge for the overpayment against the employer's account shall be removed and the account shall be credited with an amount equal to the overpayment from the unemployment compensation trust fund and this credit shall include both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5. However, provided the benefits were not received as the result of fraud or willful misrepresentation by the individual, benefits shall not be recovered from an individual if the employer did not participate in the initial determination to award benefits pursuant to section 96.6, subsection 2, and an overpayment occurred because of a subsequent reversal on appeal regarding the issue of the individual's separation from employment. The employer shall not be charged with the benefits.

(2) An accounting firm, agent, unemployment insurance accounting firm, or other entity that represents an employer in unemployment claim matters and demonstrates a continuous pattern of failing to participate in the initial determinations to award benefits, as determined and defined by rule by the department, shall be denied permission by the department to represent any employers in unemployment insurance matters. This subparagraph does not apply to attorneys or counselors admitted to practice in the courts of this states pursuant to section 602.10101.

The administrative law judge holds that claimant is overpaid unemployment insurance benefits in the amount of \$716.00 pursuant to Iowa Code section 96.3-7 because a decision has determined the claimant to be ineligible to receive benefits due to a discharge for misconduct. Since claimant has been disqualified for the receipt of unemployment insurance benefits, the claim shall be locked until claimant has re-qualified or is otherwise eligible.

DECISION:

The decision of the representative dated October 24, 2008, reference 03, is reversed. Unemployment insurance benefits shall be withheld until claimant has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times claimant's weekly benefit amount, provided claimant

is otherwise eligible. Claimant is overpaid unemployment insurance benefits in the amount of \$716.00.

Marlon Mormann
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

mdm/css