

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

TERESA J CHOPARD
Claimant

APPEAL 18A-UI-09868-SC-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT**

**OC: 01/28/18
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Iowa Code § 96.4(6)a – Department Approved Training
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.39 – Department Approved Training

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Teresa J. Chopard (claimant) appealed the September 6, 2018, reference 02, unemployment insurance decision that denied department approved training. After due notice was issued, a telephone hearing was held on October 11, 2018. The claimant participated. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record, including fact-finding documents.

ISSUE:

Is the claimant eligible for department approved training?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The claimant filed a claim for benefits effective January 28, 2018. She applied for department-approved training on September 4, 2018. The claimant is enrolled full-time in a program to obtain an Associate's Degree through Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC). She is currently attending classes that include Anatomy and Physiology, Introduction to Psychology, Composition, and Study Strategies. The claimant ultimately hopes to enroll in the Dental Hygienist program but has not yet applied or been accepted into that program. She began classes at DMACC on August 23, 2018 and is scheduled to graduate on December 13, 2019. The claimant currently has been satisfactorily attending classes and has the necessary finances to complete the training.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant is not eligible for department approved training.

Iowa Code section 96.4(6)a, b provides:

6. a. An otherwise eligible individual shall not be denied benefits for any week because the individual is in training with the approval of the director, nor shall the individual be denied benefits with respect to any week in which the individual is in training with the approval of the director by reason of the application of the provision in subsection 3 of this section relating to availability for work, and an active search for work or the provision of section 96.5, subsection 3, relating to failure to apply for or a refusal to accept suitable work. However, an employer's account shall not be charged with benefits so paid.

b. (1) An otherwise eligible individual shall not be denied benefits for a week because the individual is in training approved under 19 U.S.C. section 2296(a), as amended by section 2506 of the federal Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, because the individual leaves work which is not suitable employment to enter the approved training, or because of the application of subsection 3 of this section or section 96.5, subsection 3, or a federal unemployment insurance law administered by the department relating to availability for work, active search for work, or refusal to accept work.

(2) For purposes of this paragraph, "suitable employment" means work of a substantially equal or higher skill level than an individual's past adversely affected employment, as defined in 19 U.S.C. section 2319(I), if weekly wages for the work are not less than eighty percent of the individual's average weekly wage.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.39 provides:

Department-Approved Training or Retraining Program.

The intent of department-approved training is to allow for claimants to return to the labor market after attending vocational training while being paid unemployment insurance benefits. Vocational training is nonacademic, skill-oriented training that provides the student with job tools and skills that can be used in the workplace. Vocational training includes technical, skill-based, or job readiness training intended for pursuing a career. Upon approval from the department, the claimant shall be exempt from the work search requirement for continued eligibility for benefits. In order to be eligible for department-approved training programs and to maintain continuing participation therein, the individual shall meet the following requirements:

(1) The claimant must make application to the department setting out the following:

- a. The educational establishment at which the claimant would receive training.
- b. The estimated time required for such training.
- c. The date the training will be complete or the degree will be obtained.
- d. The occupation which the training is allowing the claimant to maintain or pursue.
- e. The training plan, indicating the requirements which must be met in order to complete the certification or degree.

(2) A claimant may receive unemployment insurance while attending a training course approved by the department, under the following conditions:

- a. The educational establishment must be a college, university or technical training institute.
- b. The training must be completed 104 weeks or less from the start date.
- c. The individual must be enrolled and attending the training program as a full-time student.

While attending the approved training course, the claimant need not be available for work or actively seeking work. After completion of department-approved training, the claimant must, in order to continue to be eligible for unemployment insurance, place no restriction on employability. The claimant must be able to work, be available for work, and be actively searching for work. In addition, the claimant may be subject to disqualification for any refusal of work without good cause after the claimant has completed the training.

(3) The claimant must show satisfactory attendance and progress in the training course prior to being considered for a subsequent approval and must demonstrate that such claimant has the necessary finances to complete the training to substantiate the expenditure of unemployment insurance funds.

[Emphasis added.]

The claimant does not meet the eligibility requirements for department-approved training because the training in which she is currently enrolled is academic and not vocational in nature. Therefore, while the claimant's desire for additional education is understandable and admirable, department approved training must be denied.

DECISION:

The September 6, 2018, reference 02, unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The claimant is not eligible for department approved training.

Stephanie R. Callahan
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

src/scn