

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**ROSA E RODRIGUEZ**

Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 10A-UI-06736-SWT**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**TYSON FRESH MEATS INC**

Employer

**Original Claim: 04/04/10**

**Claimant: Appellant (2)**

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

The claimant appealed an unemployment insurance decision dated April 28, 2010, reference 01, that concluded she was discharged for work-connected misconduct. A telephone hearing was held on June 28, 2010. The parties were properly notified about the hearing. The claimant participated in the hearing with the assistance of an interpreter, Steven Rhoades. No one participated in the hearing on behalf of the employer.

**ISSUE:**

Was the claimant discharged for work-connected misconduct?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

The claimant worked full-time for the employer as a production worker from May 2002, to April 2, 2010. She was discharged because it was alleged she had hit a coworker on April 1, 2010. The claimant believed the coworker was going to hit her, so she raised her hands in a defensive gesture and accidentally made contact with the coworker's face. Nothing further happened, as the claimant and the coworker immediately went their separate ways.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

The issue in this case is whether the claimant was discharged for work-connected misconduct as defined by the unemployment insurance law.

The unemployment insurance law disqualifies claimants discharged for work-connected misconduct. Iowa Code § 96.5-2-a. The rules define misconduct as (1) deliberate acts or omissions by a worker that materially breach the duties and obligations arising out of the contract of employment, (2) deliberate violations or disregard of standards of behavior that the employer has the right to expect of employees, or (3) carelessness or negligence of such degree of recurrence as to manifest equal culpability, wrongful intent, or evil design. 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 misconduct within the meaning of the statute. 871 IAC 24.32(1).

The employer has the burden to prove the claimant was discharged for work-connected misconduct as defined by the unemployment insurance law. Cosper v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 321 N.W.2d 6 (Iowa 1982). The propriety of a discharge is not at issue in an unemployment insurance case. An employer may be justified in discharging an employee, but the employee's conduct may not amount to misconduct precluding the payment of unemployment compensation. The law limits disqualifying misconduct to substantial and willful wrongdoing or repeated carelessness or negligence that equals willful misconduct in culpability. Lee v. Employment Appeal Board, 616 N.W.2d 661, 665 (Iowa 2000).

No willful and substantial misconduct has been proven in this case.

**DECISION:**

The unemployment insurance decision dated April 28, 2010, reference 01, is reversed. The claimant is qualified to receive unemployment insurance benefits, if she is otherwise eligible.

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Steven A. Wise  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

saw/kjw