

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**JOSE M PORTILLO**

Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 10A-UI-00568-MT**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**BOB LENC LANDSCAPING INC**

Employer

**OC: 11/22/09**

**Claimant: Respondent (1)**

Section 96.5-3-a – Work Refusal

Section 96.5-1 – Voluntary Quit

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Employer filed an appeal from a decision of a representative dated December 30, 2009, reference 01, which held claimant eligible for unemployment insurance benefits due to a refusal to accept work. After due notice, a telephone conference hearing was scheduled for and held on February 24, 2010. Claimant participated personally. Employer participated by Felicia Ramirez, Human Resources. Exhibit One was admitted into evidence.

**ISSUE:**

The issue in this matter is whether claimant refused to accept a suitable offer of work. The issue in this matter is whether claimant quit for good cause attributable to employer.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and considered all of the evidence in the record, finds: Claimant was on layoff effective November 15, 2009 due to lack of work. Employer made an offer of work to the claimant on December 10, 2009 by leaving a message on an answering machine. That offer included the following terms: Snow removal work at about \$14.00 per hour. Claimant refused the offer of work because he did not actually receive the offer.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes claimant did not refuse a suitable offer of work. The offer was not valid as it was not made in person or by certified mail. Messages left with other people or on answering machines are not suitable deliveries of offers of work. There is no suitable offer of work. Benefits allowed.

Since claimant was laid off work November 15, 2009 due to lack of work this is a quit for cause attributable to employer. Benefits allowed.

Iowa Code section 96.5-1 provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits:

1. Voluntary quitting. If the individual has left work voluntarily without good cause attributable to the individual's employer, if so found by the department.

Iowa Code section 96.5-3-a provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits:

3. Failure to accept work. If the department finds that an individual has failed, without good cause, either to apply for available, suitable work when directed by the department or to accept suitable work when offered that individual. The department shall, if possible, furnish the individual with the names of employers which are seeking employees. The individual shall apply to and obtain the signatures of the employers designated by the department on forms provided by the department. However, the employers may refuse to sign the forms. The individual's failure to obtain the signatures of designated employers, which have not refused to sign the forms, shall disqualify the individual for benefits until requalified. To requalify for benefits after disqualification under this subsection, the individual shall work in and be paid wages for insured work equal to ten times the individual's weekly benefit amount, provided the individual is otherwise eligible.

a. In determining whether or not any work is suitable for an individual, the department shall consider the degree of risk involved to the individual's health, safety, and morals, the individual's physical fitness, prior training, length of unemployment, and prospects for securing local work in the individual's customary occupation, the distance of the available work from the individual's residence, and any other factor which the department finds bears a reasonable relation to the purposes of this paragraph. Work is suitable if the work meets all the other criteria of this paragraph and if the gross weekly wages for the work equal or exceed the following percentages of the individual's average weekly wage for insured work paid to the individual during that quarter of the individual's base period in which the individual's wages were highest:

- (1) One hundred percent, if the work is offered during the first five weeks of unemployment.
- (2) Seventy-five percent, if the work is offered during the sixth through the twelfth week of unemployment.
- (3) Seventy percent, if the work is offered during the thirteenth through the eighteenth week of unemployment.
- (4) Sixty-five percent, if the work is offered after the eighteenth week of unemployment.

However, the provisions of this paragraph shall not require an individual to accept employment below the federal minimum wage.

871 IAC 24.24(1)a provides:

(1) Bona fide offer of work.

a. In deciding whether or not a claimant failed to accept suitable work, or failed to apply for suitable work, it must first be established that a bona fide offer of work was made to the individual by personal contact or that a referral was offered to the claimant by personal contact to an actual job opening and a definite refusal was made by the individual. For purposes of a recall to work, a registered letter shall be deemed to be sufficient as a personal contact.

871 IAC 24.24(8) provides:

(8) Refusal disqualification jurisdiction. Both the offer of work or the order to apply for work and the claimant's accompanying refusal must occur within the individual's benefit year, as defined in subrule 24.1(21), before the Iowa code subsection 96.5(3) disqualification can be imposed. It is not necessary that the offer, the order, or the refusal occur in a week in which the claimant filed a weekly claim for benefits before the disqualification can be imposed.

**DECISION:**

The decision of the representative dated December 30, 2009, reference 01, is affirmed. Claimant is eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits, provided claimant meets all other eligibility requirements. Claimant did not refuse a suitable offer of work on December 10, 2009.

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Marlon Mormann  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

mdm/pjs