

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

CAROL S COCHRAN
Claimant

APPEAL 21A-UI-07198-SC-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
Employer

OC: 05/17/20
Claimant: Appellant (2)

Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Ability to and Availability for Work
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22 – Able & Available - Benefits Eligibility Conditions
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(10) – Able & Available – Leave of Absence

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

On March 10, 2021, Carol S. Cochran (claimant) filed an appeal from the March 2, 2021, reference 01, unemployment insurance decision that denied benefits effective May 17, 2020, based upon the determination she was on an approved leave of absence and was not able to and available for work. After due notice was issued, a telephone hearing was held on May 19, 2021. The claimant participated. The employer participated through Logan Stevens, Accountant. No exhibits were offered into the record.

ISSUE:

Was the claimant able to and available for work effective May 17, 2020?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The claimant has worked for the employer since 1999, as a full-time Food Worker I. She works year-round because students are on campus at all times. On May 16, 2020, the employer laid the claimant off due to a lack of work. Students were not on campus and food service was not needed. The claimant returned to work on July 17, when the employer reinstated food service.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes that the claimant was temporarily unemployed and considered able to and available for work effective May 17, 2020. Benefits are allowed.

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 ... temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, 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". [Emphasis added.]

Iowa Code section 96.19(38)c provides:

Definitions.

38. Total and partial unemployment

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 Admin. Code r. 871-24.22(2)j provides, in relevant part:

Benefits eligibility conditions. For an individual to be eligible to receive benefits the department must find that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work. The individual bears the burden of establishing that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work.

(2) Available for work. The availability requirement is satisfied when an individual is willing, able, and ready to accept suitable work which the individual does not have good cause to refuse, that is, the individual is genuinely attached to the labor market. Since, under unemployment insurance laws, it is the availability of an individual that is required to be tested, the labor market must be described in terms of the individual. A labor market for an individual means a market for the type of service which the individual offers in the geographical area in which the individual offers the service. Market in that sense does not mean that job vacancies must exist; the purpose of unemployment insurance is to compensate for lack of job vacancies. It means only that the type of services which an individual is offering is generally performed in the geographical area in which the individual is offering the services.

j. Leave of absence. A leave of absence negotiated with the consent of both parties, employer and employee, is deemed a period of voluntary unemployment for the employee-individual, and the individual is considered ineligible for benefits for the period.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(10) provides:

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

(10) The claimant requested and was granted a leave of absence, such period is deemed to be a period of voluntary unemployment and shall be considered ineligible for benefits for such period.

An individual claiming benefits has the burden to prove that she is be able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work. Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22. The claimant did not request to be unemployed; rather, the employer temporarily did not have work available because of a public health emergency. As the claimant was not voluntarily unemployed and was temporarily laid off through no fault of her own, she is considered able to and available for work during that time. Benefits are allowed.

DECISION:

The March 2, 2021, reference 01, unemployment insurance decision is reversed. The claimant was temporarily unemployed effective May 17, 2020, and is considered able to work and available for work. Benefits are allowed.



Stephanie R. Callahan
Administrative Law Judge

May 25, 2021
Decision Dated and Mailed

src/kmj