IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Section
1000 East Grand—Des Moines, Iowa 50319
DECISION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
68-0157 (7-97) – 3091078 - EI

LUIS A ESQUIVEL
700 ONTARIO ST
STORM LAKE IA 50588

TYSON FRESH MEATS INC
C/O TALX UCM SERVICES INC
PO BOX 283
ST LOUIS MO 63166-0283

Appeal Number: 06A-UI-01325-MT
OC: 12/18/05 R: 01
Claimant: Appellant (1)

This Decision Shall Become Final, unless within fifteen (15) days from the date below, you or any interested party appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by submitting either a signed letter or a signed written Notice of Appeal, directly to the ***Employment Appeal Board, 4th Floor—Lucas Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319***.

The appeal period will be extended to the next business day if the last day to appeal falls on a weekend or a legal holiday.

STATE CLEARLY

1. The name, address and social security number of the claimant.
2. A reference to the decision from which the appeal is taken.
3. That an appeal from such decision is being made and such appeal is signed.
4. The grounds upon which such appeal is based.

YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in this appeal or you may obtain a lawyer or other interested party to do so provided there is no expense to Workforce Development. If you wish to be represented by a lawyer, you may obtain the services of either a private attorney or one whose services are paid for with public funds. It is important that you file your claim as directed, while this appeal is pending, to protect your continuing right to benefits.

_____
(Administrative Law Judge)

_____
(Decision Dated & Mailed)

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Claimant filed an appeal from a decision of a representative dated January 27, 2006, reference 02, which held claimant ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits. After due notice, a telephone conference hearing was scheduled for and held on February 23, 2006. Claimant participated personally. Employer participated by Will Sager, Complex Human Resource Manager.

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 employer on November 9, 2005.

Claimant was discharged on November 11, 2005 by employer because claimant pushed another coworker. Employer's policy indicates that any violence in the workplace results in discharge on the first offense. Employer has uniformly enforced that policy with discharge. Claimant was informed of the policy at the time of hire.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The issue in this matter is whether claimant was discharged for misconduct.

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.

This definition has been accepted by the Iowa Supreme Court as accurately reflecting the intent of the legislature. Huntoon v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 275 N.W.2d 445, 448 (Iowa 1979).

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.

In this matter, the evidence established that claimant was discharged for an act of misconduct when claimant violated employer's policy concerning physical violence. Claimant was warned concerning this policy.

The last incident, which brought about the discharge, constitutes misconduct because claimant physically assaulted a coworker. Claimant could have retreated from the other worker. Instead claimant assaulted the worker by pushing. This is an intentional act in violation of a known company rule. The administrative law judge holds that claimant was discharged for an act of misconduct and, as such, is disqualified for the receipt of unemployment insurance benefits.

DECISION:

The decision of the representative dated January 27, 2006, reference 02, is affirmed. 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.

mdm\s