

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

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**PAULA S. BLAKE**  
Claimant

**APPEAL 22A-UI-02878-CS-T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**QPS EMPLOYMENT GROUP INC**  
Employer

**OC: 02/07/21  
Claimant: Respondent (3)**

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Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Able and Available  
Iowa Code § 96.5(3)a – Failure to Accept Work  
871 IAC 24.24(15)i – Suitable Work

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

On January 17, 2022, QPS Employment Group, Inc. (employer) appealed a representative's January 10, 2022, decision (reference 01) that concluded Paula S. Blake (claimant) was eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because no offer of work was actually made by employer on February 3, 2021. The parties were properly notified about the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on February 25, 2022. The hearing was held together with appeals 22A-UI-02879-CS-T and 22A-UI-02880-CS-T and combined into one record. Claimant did not call in to participate. Employer participated through Unemployment Coordinator, Jessica Segner. Exhibits 1, 2, and 3 were admitted into the record.

**ISSUES:**

Is claimant able and available for work?

Did the claimant refuse suitable work?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and considered all of the evidence in the record, finds that: Prior to her separation, claimant worked full-time for the employer earning \$10.00 an hour.

On Tuesday, February 2, 2021, the employer offered the claimant a full-time job with Goodwill in Cedar Rapids. The offer was for first shift and the new employer was 4.2 miles from claimant's residence. On February 3, 2021, the claimant refused the offer of work because she was out of town until Thursday. (Exhibit 1, pg. 1). On Monday, February 8, 2021, the employer reached out to Claimant again to see if she was back in town. Claimant reported that she was out of town until Friday. (Exhibit 2, pg. 2).

The claimant filed a new claim for unemployment insurance benefits with an effective date of February 7, 2021. The claimant's highest quarter of wages during her base period was the 4th quarter of 2019, during which her wages totaled \$5,503.00. The claimant's average weekly wage during her highest quarter of wages was \$423.31.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

The first issue that must be determined is whether the claimant is able and available for work.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.24(4) provides:

(4) Work refused when the claimant fails to meet the benefit eligibility conditions of Iowa Code section 96.4(3). Before a disqualification for failure to accept work may be imposed, ***an individual must first satisfy the benefit eligibility conditions of being able to work and available for work*** and not unemployed for failing to bump a fellow employee with less seniority. ***If the facts indicate that the claimant was or is not available for work, and this resulted in the failure to accept work or apply for work, such claimant shall not be disqualified for refusal since the claimant is not available for work.*** In such a case it is the availability of the claimant that is to be tested. Lack of transportation, illness or health conditions, illness in family, and child care problems are generally considered to be good cause for refusing work or refusing to apply for work. However, the claimant's availability would be the issue to be determined in these types of cases. (Emphasis added).

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 partially unemployed, while employed at the individual's regular job, as defined in section 96.1A, subsection 37, paragraph "b", subparagraph (1), or temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.1A, subsection 37, 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".

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(25) provides:

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

(25) If the claimant is out of town for personal reasons for the major portion of the workweek and is not in the labor market.

In this case the claimant was not available for work. Claimant reported that she was out of town and could not accept the work. Claimant reported that she was out of town from February 3, 2021, through February 12, 2021. Since claimant was out of town for a major portion of the week she is not able to and available for work effective February 3, 2021.

Since the claimant was not available for work, claimant shall not be disqualified for refusal to accept suitable work.

**DECISION:**

The representative's January 10, 2022, decision (reference 01) is MODIFIED in favor of the appellant. The claimant is not available for work for the week ending February 6, 2021. Benefits are denied for the week ending February 6, 2021.



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Carly Smith  
Administrative Law Judge  
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Bureau

March 16, 2022  
Decision Dated and Mailed

cs/scn