

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

ECHO DIEHL
Claimant

PARCO LTD
Employer

APPEAL NO. 19A-UI-01112-B2T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 01/06/19
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Iowa Code § 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Claimant filed an appeal from a decision of a representative dated January 29, 2019, reference 02, which held claimant ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits. After due notice, a hearing was scheduled for and held on February 25, 2019. Claimant participated. Employer participated by Taunya Embrey.

ISSUE:

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

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 December 20, 2018. Claimant was terminated on December 21, 2018 after she walked off work on December 20, 2018.

Claimant was hired by employer on December 4, 2018. Claimant was hired at one Wendy's location, and was trained at another Wendy's location owned by employer. The place where claimant was being trained received paychecks on December 20, 2018 to be delivered to employees on December 21, 2018. Claimant's check was not included. Claimant then called the other place where claimant was originally hired and that locale could not locate claimant's check. Claimant became upset and walked off in the middle of her shift as she couldn't locate her check. Employer then terminated claimant the next day for her walking off from her shift. \

Claimant stated that she spoke with a manger before she left and the manager, Jo, said, "I'd do the same thing," prior to claimant's walking out in the middle of her shift.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

Iowa Code section 96.5(2)a provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits, regardless of the source of the individual's wage credits:

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 disqualification shall continue 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.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.32(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 Dep't of Job Serv.*, 275 N.W.2d 445, 448 (Iowa 1979).

A claimant is not qualified to receive unemployment insurance benefits if an employer has discharged the claimant for reasons constituting work connected misconduct. Iowa Code § 96.5-2-a. Before a claimant can be denied unemployment insurance benefits, the employer has the burden to establish the claimant was discharged for work-connected misconduct. *Cosper v. Iowa Department of Job Service*, 321 N.W.2d 6 (Iowa 1982), Iowa Code § 96.5-2-a.

In order to establish misconduct as to disqualify a former employee from benefits an employer must establish the employee was responsible for a deliberate act or omission which was a material breach of the duties and obligations owed by the employee to the employer. Rule 871 IAC 24.32(1)a; *Huntoon v. Iowa Department of Job Service*, 275 N.W.2d 445 (Iowa 1979); *Henry v. Iowa Department of Job Service*, 391 N.W.2d 731, 735 (Iowa Ct. App. 1986). The conduct must show a 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 the employee's duties and obligations to the employer. Rule 871 IAC 24.32(1)a; *Huntoon supra*; *Henry supra*.

The gravity of the incident, number of policy violations and prior warnings are factors considered when analyzing misconduct. In this matter, the evidence established that claimant was discharged for an act of misconduct when claimant violated employer's policy concerning job

abandonment. The last incident, which brought about the discharge, constitutes misconduct because claimant did not have reason to believe that she would not get paid, but chose to walk off from work because of an understandable check snafu occurring because claimant working at a different restaurant than she'd been hired. Claimant did not act reasonably, and employer appropriately terminated claimant for walking off the job. 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 29, 2019, 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.

Blair A. Bennett
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

bab/rvs