

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**BLOSSOM J PARKER**  
Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 07A-UI-08821-CT**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OF IOWA**  
Employer

**OC: 08/12/07 R: 02  
Claimant: Appellant (2)**

Section 96.5(1) – Voluntary Quit

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Blossom Parker filed an appeal from a representative's decision dated September 14, 2007, reference 01, which denied benefits based on her separation from Children and Families of Iowa. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held by telephone on October 1, 2007. Ms. Parker participated personally and offered additional testimony from Jill Morland, Diane Sweet, and Lori Hutchinson. The employer did not respond to the notice of hearing.

**ISSUE:**

At issue in this matter is whether Ms. Parker was separated from employment for any disqualifying reason.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having heard the testimony of the witnesses and having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Ms. Parker was employed by Children and Families of Iowa from April 17 until August 1, 2007. She worked full time as an advocate in a shelter for victims of domestic abuse. She voluntarily quit the employment because she did not feel safe. Because the employer's facility is for victims of abuse, policies are in place to make sure strangers are not allowed in the building without proper clearance. Ms. Parker found that some staff members were not trained on the proper procedures and that others did not always follow the established procedures.

Ms. Parker felt that the failure of staff to always follow the established protocol for admitting visitors had the potential of allowing those charged with abuse to have access to the building. She felt threatened by the possibility that violent offenders might inadvertently be allowed access to the shelter. She addressed the issue with her supervisor but no changes were made.

Ms. Parker also had concerns that there was no consistency in dealing with residents who were under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. Some were allowed to remain in their rooms until sober. Others were asked to leave immediately. Ms. Parker felt for her safety on an occasion when she was told to have a resident leave as the resident was under the influence of alcohol

and acting in a belligerent manner. Ms. Parker also left the employment because her work hours were changed in June. She remained in the employment in spite of the schedule change.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

An individual who voluntarily quits employment is disqualified from receiving job insurance benefits unless the quit was for good cause attributable to the employer. Iowa Code section 96.5(1). The term "good cause attributable to the employer" generally refers to some matter over which the employer has control. After considering all of the evidence, the administrative law judge concludes that Ms. Parker's concerns regarding the admission of visitors to the shelter provided good cause for quitting.

It was the employer's intent to maintain a safe and secure environment not only for residents but also for staff. Procedures intended to promote safety were in place but were not utilized on a consistent basis. Individuals were allowed access to the shelter without the appropriate checks to make sure they had a legitimate reason for being there. This failure opened up the possibility that a purported abuser might gain access to the shelter seeking a resident. As such, the failure to utilize established procedures placed staff and residents in harms way. Ms. Parker's concern for her safety represented a valid concern that was not addressed by the employer. The problem that led to her quit was within the employer's control.

For the reasons stated herein, the administrative law judge concludes that good cause attributable to the employer has been established by the evidence. Accordingly, benefits are allowed.

**DECISION:**

The representative's decision dated September 14, 2007, reference 01, is hereby reversed. Ms. Parker quit her employment for good cause attributable to the employer. Benefits are allowed, provided she satisfies all other conditions of eligibility.

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Carolyn F. Coleman  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

cfc/pjs