

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

MIRABEL A ELUME
Claimant

APPEAL 21A-UI-22088-CS-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

SWIFT PORK COMPANY
Employer

OC: 03/22/20
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Iowa Code §96.5(2)a-Discharge/Misconduct
Iowa Code §96.5(1)- Voluntary Quit
Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

On October 6, 2021, the claimant/appellant filed an appeal from the December 1, 2020, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that disallowed benefits based on claimant voluntarily quitting for personal reasons. The parties were properly notified about the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on December 1, 2021. The hearing was held together with appeals 21A-UI-22088-CS-T; 21A-UI-22093-CS-T; and 21A-UI-22095-CS-T and combined into one record. Claimant participated at the hearing. Employer did not call into the hearing to participate. Administrative notice was taken of claimant's unemployment insurance benefits records.

ISSUES:

Is claimant's appeal timely?

Was the separation a layoff, discharge for misconduct, or voluntary quit without good cause?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The unemployment insurance decision was mailed to the appellant's address of record on December 1, 2020. The appellant did not receive the decision. The first notice of disqualification was the overpayment decision dated October 1, 2021. The appeal was sent within ten days after receipt of that decision.

Claimant began working for employer in September 2020. Claimant last worked as a full-time mezzanine worker. Claimant was separated from employment on May 11, 2019, when she submitted her written resignation. Claimant provided employer a two-week notice that she would be quitting. Claimant resigned so she could start her own small business.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The first issue to be considered in this appeal is whether the appellant's appeal is timely. The administrative law judge determines it is.

Iowa Code section 96.6(2) provides:

2. Initial determination. A representative designated by the director shall promptly notify all interested parties to the claim of its filing, and the parties have ten days from the date of mailing the notice of the filing of the claim by ordinary mail to the last known address to protest payment of benefits to the claimant. The representative shall promptly examine the claim and any protest, take the initiative to ascertain relevant information concerning the claim, and, on the basis of the facts found by the representative, shall determine whether or not the claim is valid, the week with respect to which benefits shall commence, the weekly benefit amount payable and its maximum duration, and whether any disqualification shall be imposed. The claimant has the burden of proving that the claimant meets the basic eligibility conditions of section 96.4. The employer has the burden of proving that the claimant is disqualified for benefits pursuant to section 96.5, except as provided by this subsection. The claimant has the initial burden to produce evidence showing that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving section 96.5, subsections 10 and 11, and has the burden of proving that a voluntary quit pursuant to section 96.5, subsection 1, was for good cause attributable to the employer and that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraphs "a" through "h". Unless the claimant or other interested party, after notification or within ten calendar days after notification was mailed to the claimant's last known address, files an appeal from the decision, the decision is final and benefits shall be paid or denied in accordance with the decision. If an administrative law judge affirms a decision of the representative, or the appeal board affirms a decision of the administrative law judge allowing benefits, the benefits shall be paid regardless of any appeal which is thereafter taken, but if the decision is finally reversed, no employer's account shall be charged with benefits so paid and this relief from charges shall apply to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5.

The appellant did not have an opportunity to appeal the fact-finder's decision because the decision was not received. Without notice of a disqualification, no meaningful opportunity for appeal exists. See *Smith v. Iowa Emp't Sec. Comm'n*, 212 N.W.2d 471, 472 (Iowa 1973). The claimant timely appealed the overpayment decision, which was the first notice of disqualification. Therefore, the appeal shall be accepted as timely.

The next issue is whether the claimant voluntarily quit her employment for good cause attributable to the employer. The administrative law judge concludes she did not voluntarily quit her job for good cause attributable to the employer.

Iowa Code section 96.5(1) provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits:

1. Voluntary quitting. If the individual has left work voluntarily without good cause attributable to the individual's employer, if so found by the department.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.25(19) and (37) provides:

Voluntary quit without good cause. In general, a voluntary quit means discontinuing the employment because the employee no longer desires to remain in the relationship of an employee with the employer from whom the employee has separated. The employer has the burden of proving that the claimant is disqualified for benefits pursuant to Iowa Code section 96.5. However, the

claimant has the initial burden to produce evidence that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving Iowa Code section 96.5, subsection (1), paragraphs "a" through "i," and subsection 10. The following reasons for a voluntary quit shall be presumed to be without good cause attributable to the employer:

(19) The claimant left to enter self-employment.

(37) The claimant will be considered to have left employment voluntarily when such claimant gave the employer notice of an intention to resign and the employer accepted such resignation. This rule shall also apply to the claimant who was employed by an educational institution who has declined or refused to accept a new contract or reasonable assurance of work for a successive academic term or year and the offer of work was within the purview of the individual's training and experience.

Claimant has the burden of proving that the voluntary leaving was for good cause attributable to the employer. Iowa Code § 96.6(2). "Good cause" for leaving employment must be that which is reasonable to the average person, not the overly sensitive individual or the claimant in particular. *Uniweld Products v. Indus. Relations Comm'n*, 277 So.2d 827 (Fla. Dist. Ct. App. 1973). A voluntary leaving of employment requires an intention to terminate the employment relationship accompanied by an overt act of carrying out that intention. *Local Lodge #1426 v. Wilson Trailer*, 289 N.W.2d 608, 612 (Iowa 1980).

Claimant submitted her written resignation to the employer. Claimant left her employment to begin her small business. While claimant's leaving may have been based upon good personal reasons, it was not for a good-cause reason attributable to the employer according to Iowa law. Benefits are denied.

DECISION:

The claimant's appeal is timely.

The December 1, 2020, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The claimant voluntarily left her employment without good cause attributable to the employer. Benefits are withheld until such time as she has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times her weekly benefit amount, provided she is otherwise eligible.



Carly Smith
Administrative Law Judge
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Bureau

January 6, 2022
Decision Dated and Mailed

cs/scn

NOTE TO CLAIMANT: This decision determines you are not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits. If you disagree with this decision you may file an appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by following the instructions on the first page of this decision. Individuals who do not qualify for regular unemployment insurance benefits but who were unemployed for reasons related to COVID-19 may qualify for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). **You will need to apply for PUA to determine your eligibility under the program.** Additional information on how to apply for PUA can be found at <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/pua-information>. If this decision becomes final or if you are not eligible for PUA, you may have an overpayment of benefits.

ATTENTION: On May 11, 2021, Governor Reynolds announced that Iowa will end its participation in federal pandemic-related unemployment benefit programs effective June 12, 2021. The last payable week for PUA in Iowa is the week ending June 12, 2021. You may be eligible for benefits incurred prior to June 12, 2021. Additional information can be found in the press release at <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/iowa-end-participation-federal-unemployment-benefit-programs-citing-strong-labor-market-and>.