

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

ECHOO WLEH

Claimant

WHIRLPOOL CORPORATION

Employer

APPEAL 21A-UI-13751-AW-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 03/07/21

Claimant: Appellant (2)

Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Ability to and Availability for Work

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22 – Able & Available – Benefits Eligibility Conditions

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Claimant filed an appeal from the June 2, 2021 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that denied benefits. The parties were properly notified of the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on August 3, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. Claimant participated. Employer did not participate. No exhibits were admitted.

ISSUES:

Whether claimant is able to and available for work.

Whether claimant is on an approved leave of absence.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant began his employment with Whirlpool Corporation on September 9, 2014. Claimant currently works as a full-time Machine Operator/Fabricator on third-shift. Claimant was on an approved leave of absence from work from December 22, 2020 through February 26, 2021. When claimant returned from his leave of absence, employer required him to quarantine for 14 days due to its Covid-19 protocol. Claimant filed an initial claim for benefits effective March 7, 2021. Since March 7th, claimant has not been ill, hospitalized, out of town, on vacation, self-employed or incarcerated. Claimant had transportation to and from work and work-related childcare. Claimant had no barriers to employment.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes claimant was able to and available for work effective March 7, 2021.

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 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "b", unnumbered paragraph (1), or temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, 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. 871-24.22(2) provides:

Benefit eligibility conditions. For an individual to be eligible to receive benefits the department must find that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work. The individual bears the burden of establishing that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work.

(2) Available for work. The availability requirement is satisfied when an individual is willing, able, and ready to accept suitable work which the individual does not have good cause to refuse, that is, the individual is genuinely attached to the labor market. Since, under unemployment insurance laws, it is the availability of an individual that is required to be tested, the labor market must be described in terms of the individual. A labor market for an individual means a market for the type of service which the individual offers in the geographical area in which the individual offers the service. Market in that sense does not mean that job vacancies must exist; the purpose of unemployment insurance is to compensate for lack of job vacancies. It means only that the type of services which an individual is offering is generally performed in the geographical area in which the individual is offering the services.

j. Leave of absence. A leave of absence negotiated with the consent of both parties, employer and employee, is deemed a period of voluntary unemployment for the employee-individual, and the individual is considered ineligible for benefits for the period.

(1) If at the end of a period or term of negotiated leave of absence the employer fails to reemploy the employee-individual, the individual is considered laid off and eligible for benefits.

(2) If the employee-individual fails to return at the end of the leave of absence and subsequently becomes unemployed the individual is considered as having voluntarily quit and therefore is ineligible for benefits.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(10) provides:

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

(10) The claimant requested and was granted a leave of absence, such period is deemed to be a period of voluntary unemployment and shall be considered ineligible for benefits for such period.

An individual claiming benefits has the burden of proof that he or she is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work. Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22.

Claimant was not on a leave of absence and had no barriers to employment effective March 7, 2021. Accordingly, benefits are allowed provided claimant is otherwise eligible.

DECISION:

The June 2, 2021 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is reversed. Claimant is able to and available for work effective March 7, 2021. Benefits are allowed provided claimant is otherwise eligible.



Adrienne C. Williamson
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August 9, 2021
Decision Dated and Mailed

acw/lj