

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

MITCHELL ROBERTS
Claimant

APPEAL 18A-UI-11023-SC-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT**

**OC: 01/21/18
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Able and Available/Work Search

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Mitchell Roberts (claimant) filed a timely appeal from the October 30, 2018, reference 04, unemployment insurance decision that warned him to make at least two work-search contacts per week but did not deny benefits for the week ending October 27, 2018. After due notice was issued, a telephone conference hearing was held on November 29, 2018. The claimant participated.

ISSUE:

Did the claimant make an adequate work search for the week ending October 27, 2018, and was the warning appropriate?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The claimant claimed benefits for the week ending October 27, 2018. The only job contacts he made that week were to accept a position with one employer and decline positions with two other employers. He reported he did not make any job contacts that week when filing his continued claim for benefits.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes that the claimant did not make an active and earnest search for work for the week ending October 27, 2018. The warning is appropriate.

Iowa Code § 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(3) provides, in relevant part:

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.

(3) Earnestly and actively seeking work. Mere registration at a workforce development center does not establish that the individual is earnestly and actively seeking work. It is essential that the individual personally and diligently search for work. It is difficult to establish definite criteria for defining the words earnestly and actively. Much depends on the estimate of the employment opportunities in the area. The number of employer contacts which might be appropriate in an area of limited opportunity might be totally unacceptable in other areas. When employment opportunities are high an individual may be expected to make more than the usual number of contacts. Unreasonable limitations by an individual as to salary, hours or conditions of work can indicate that the individual is not earnestly seeking work. The department expects each individual claiming benefits to conduct themselves as would any normal, prudent individual who is out of work.

a. Basic requirements. An individual shall be ineligible for benefits for any period for which the department finds that the individual has failed to make an earnest and active search for work. The circumstances in each case are considered in determining whether an earnest and active search for work has been made. Subject to the foregoing, applicable actions of the following kind are considered an earnest and active search for work if found by the department to constitute a reasonable means of securing work by the individual, under the facts and circumstances of the individual's particular situation:

(1) Making application with employers as may reasonably be expected to have openings suitable to the individual.

(2) Registering with a placement facility of a school, college, or university if one is available in the individual's occupation or profession.

(3) Making application or taking examination for openings in the civil service of a governmental entity with reasonable prospects of suitable work for the individual.

(4) Responding to appropriate “want ads” for work which appears suitable to the individual if the response is made in writing or in person or electronically.

(5) Any other action which the department finds to constitute an effective means of securing work suitable to the individual.

(6) No individual, however, is denied benefits solely on the ground that the individual has failed or refused to register with a private employment agency or at any other placement facility which charges the job-seeker a fee for its services. However, an individual may count as one of the work contacts required for the week an in-person contact with a private employment agency.

(7) An individual is considered to have failed to make an effort to secure work if the department finds that the individual has followed a course of action designed to discourage prospective employers from hiring the individual in suitable work.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(28) provides:

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

(28) A claimant will be ineligible for benefits because of failure to make an adequate work search after having been previously warned and instructed to expand the search for work effort.

The claimant may have spoken with three employers; however, declining positions is not likely to lead to employment and discourages the other employers from hiring him. While the claimant did also accept employment, he was still required to search for work as the position may not have come to fruition or the start date could have changed. Accordingly, the warning was appropriate.

DECISION:

The October 30, 2018, reference 04, unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The claimant did not make an active and earnest search for work for the week ending October 27, 2018. Therefore, the warning was appropriate.

Stephanie R. Callahan
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

src/scn