

IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Section
1000 East Grand—Des Moines, Iowa 50319
DECISION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
68-0157 (7-97) – 3091078 - EI

PATRICIA A JOHNSON
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WATERLOO IA 50702-2143

US BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
C/O JON-JAY ASSOCIATES INC
PO BOX 182523
COLUMBUS OH 43218-2523

Appeal Number: 06A-UI-02115-S2T
OC: 01/22/06 R: 03
Claimant: Respondent (2)

This Decision Shall Become Final, unless within fifteen (15) days from the date below, you or any interested party appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by submitting either a signed letter or a signed written Notice of Appeal, directly to the **Employment Appeal Board, 4th Floor—Lucas Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319.**

The appeal period will be extended to the next business day if the last day to appeal falls on a weekend or a legal holiday.

STATE CLEARLY

1. The name, address and social security number of the claimant.
2. A reference to the decision from which the appeal is taken.
3. That an appeal from such decision is being made and such appeal is signed.
4. The grounds upon which such appeal is based.

YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in this appeal or you may obtain a lawyer or other interested party to do so provided there is no expense to Workforce Development. If you wish to be represented by a lawyer, you may obtain the services of either a private attorney or one whose services are paid for with public funds. It is important that you file your claim as directed, while this appeal is pending, to protect your continuing right to benefits.

(Administrative Law Judge)

(Decision Dated & Mailed)

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct
Section 96.3-7 – Overpayment

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

U.S. Bank National Association (employer) appealed a representative's February 10, 2006 decision (reference 01) that concluded Patricia Johnson (claimant) was discharged and there was no evidence of willful or deliberate misconduct. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was held on March 10, 2006. The claimant participated personally. The employer participated by Kathy Zeets, Assistant Branch Manager, and Diane Kupferschmidt, Vice President of Human Resources.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and considered all of the evidence in the record, finds that: The claimant was hired on July 8, 1991, and at the end of her employment was working as a full-time teller. The claimant signed that she read the Code of Ethics. Each fall the claimant received training on the Code of Ethics. The claimant received warnings in March and April 2005, for failure to follow the employer's policies regarding balancing her cash drawer. The employer warned the claimant that further infractions could result in her termination from employment.

On November 18, 2005, a customer requested cash advances from two different credit cards. She wanted the same amount of cash from each card. The claimant handled the transaction and gave the customer the money. The employer did not process the transaction until mid-January 2006. At that time the employer discovered that the customer had only signed one of the slips. The employer told the claimant to contact the customer to obtain the signature.

The claimant was unable to reach the customer. She noticed that she could see the outline or imprint of the customer's signature on the slip. The claimant traced the signature, told the employer she got the customer's signature and put the slip in a drawer. This took the claimant about an hour. The employer was amazed at how quickly the claimant obtained the customer's signature and investigated.

The employer discovered that the customer's telephone number was not in service. The employer sent a letter to the customer but has never heard from the customer. On January 25, 2006, the employer questioned the claimant about the transaction. The claimant admitted to signing the customer's name without the customer's knowledge.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The issue is whether the claimant was discharged for misconduct. For the following reasons the administrative law judge concludes she was.

Iowa Code section 96.5-2-a provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits:

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 individual shall be disqualified for benefits 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.

871 IAC 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 Department of Job Service, 275 N.W.2d 445, 448 (Iowa 1979).

The employer has the burden of proof in establishing disqualifying job misconduct. Cosper v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 321 N.W.2d 6 (Iowa 1982). Falsification of an activity log book constitutes job misconduct. Smith v. Sorensen, 222 Nebraska 599,386 N.W.2d 5 (1986). Repeated failure to follow an employer's instructions in the performance of duties is misconduct. Gilliam v. Atlantic Bottling Company, 453 N.W.2d 230 (Iowa App. 1990). An employer has a right to expect employees to conduct themselves with integrity. The claimant disregarded the employer's right by falsifying the signature of a customer. The claimant's disregard of the employer's interests is misconduct. As such she is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits.

Iowa Code section 96.3-7 provides:

7. Recovery of overpayment of benefits. If an individual receives benefits for which the individual is subsequently determined to be ineligible, even though the individual acts in good faith and is not otherwise at fault, the benefits shall be recovered. The department in its discretion may recover the overpayment of benefits either by having a sum equal to the overpayment deducted from any future benefits payable to the individual or by having the individual pay to the department a sum equal to the overpayment.

If the department determines that an overpayment has been made, the charge for the overpayment against the employer's account shall be removed and the account shall be credited with an amount equal to the overpayment from the unemployment compensation trust fund and this credit shall include both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5.

The claimant has received benefits in the amount of \$1,439.00 since filing her claim herein. Pursuant to this decision, those benefits now constitute an overpayment which must be repaid.

DECISION:

The representative's February 10, 2006 decision (reference 01) is reversed. The claimant is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because she was discharged from

work for misconduct. Benefits are withheld until she has worked in and has been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times her weekly benefit amount provided she is otherwise eligible. The claimant is overpaid benefits in the amount of \$1,439.00.

bas/tjc