

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

DEBORAH D JOHNSON
653 BOSTON AVE
WATERLOO IA 50703

APAC CUSTOMER SERVICES INC
c/o TALX UCM SERVICES INC
PO BOX 283
ST LOUIS MO 63166-0283

Appeal Number: 05A-UI-08002-HT
OC: 06/26/05 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
Section 96.3(7) – Overpayment

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The employer, APAC, filed an appeal from a decision dated July 21, 2005, reference 01. The decision allowed benefits to the claimant, Decorah Johnson. After due notice was issued a hearing was held by telephone conference call on August 22, 2005. The claimant participated on her own behalf. The employer participated by Administrative Assistant Shana Reuter and Team Leader Kursten Reuter.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having heard the testimony of the witnesses and having examined all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Deborah Johnson was employed by APAC from November 1, 1999 until July 1, 2005. She was a full-time customer service representative making outgoing calls to customers.

On June 2, 2005, the claimant received a "first and final" warning for giving incorrect information to a possible customer. This type of misrepresentation can result in fines from APAC's client or loss of the client's business. She was advised her job was in jeopardy if there were any further incidents of this type. Team Leader Kursten Reuter coached her on how she was to handle these calls as well.

On June 29, 2005, the computer randomly monitored a call made by Ms. Johnson. She quoted a price to a customer for monthly phone service, indicating it was less than what was currently being charged. However, the claimant did not check another computer screen to confirm the type of service the customer was currently getting, which would have changed the price of the monthly service which had been quoted.

Ms. Reuter listened to the call and determined Ms. Johnson had once again misrepresented information to the customer. She was discharged on July 1, 2005, for violating the policy.

Decorah Johnson has received unemployment benefits since filing a claim with an effective date of June 26, 2005.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The issue is whether the claimant is disqualified. The judge concludes she is.

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 claimant had been advised her job was in jeopardy as a result of giving incorrect information to a customer. In spite of the warning the claimant again did not access the necessary information on the customer to be able to give correct information on the price of services. This could have resulted in fines or the loss of the client's business, which is conduct not in the best interests of the employer. The claimant is disqualified.

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 unemployment benefits to which she is not entitled. These must be recovered in accordance with the provisions of Iowa law.

DECISION:

The representative's decision of July 21, 2005, reference 01, is reversed. Deborah Johnson is disqualified and benefits are withheld until she has earned ten times her weekly benefit amount provided she is otherwise eligible. She is overpaid in the amount of \$1,557.00.

bgh/tjc