

**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**

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**Appeal Number: 04A-UI-09516-H2T
OC 08-01-04 R 03
Claimant: Respondent (1)**

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/Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The employer filed a timely appeal from the August 24, 2004, reference 01, decision that allowed benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held on September 27, 2004. The claimant did participate. The employer did participate through Jeff Brandon, Operations Manager, and John Thielen, AM Operations Manager, and was represented by Klaren Bentley of Talx UC eXpress. Employer's Exhibit One was received.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The claimant was employed as a material handler part time beginning January 24, 2000 through August 3, 2004 when she was discharged.

On July 24, 2004 the claimant did not punch in on the time clock when she arrived at work. Surveillance tapes indicate that the claimant arrived at work at 3:39 a.m. The claimant's scheduled start time was 3:00 a.m. The claimant manually filled out her time card to indicate that she had arrived at work at 3:00 a.m. The claimant's time card was clearly wrong and the claimant does not deny that she filled out her time card incorrectly. When asked to provide a statement as to why she did not punch in as was required the claimant indicated she made an honest mistake. At hearing the claimant indicated that by the time her shift ended she had forgotten that she had arrived late that day. The claimant did not punch out on her time card on July 24, 2004. The claimant had been previously warned about the importance of punching in on the time clock every single time she worked.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant was discharged from employment for no disqualifying reason.

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). The employer discharged the claimant and has the burden of proof to show misconduct. Misconduct serious enough to warrant discharge is not necessarily serious enough to warrant a denial of job insurance benefits. Such misconduct must be “substantial.” When based on carelessness, the carelessness must actually indicate a “wrongful intent” to be disqualifying in nature. Newman v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 351 N.W.2d 806 (Iowa App. 1984). Poor work performance is not misconduct in the absence of evidence of intent. Miller v. Employment Appeal Board, 423 N.W.2d 211 (Iowa App. 1988).

The claimant testified that she forgot to punch in and out on her time card on July 24, 2004. While the claimant did incorrectly fill out her time card, there is not sufficient evidence to establish that she was trying to obtain pay for hours she did not work. The employer’s evidence does not establish that the claimant deliberately and intentionally acted in a manner she knew to be contrary to the employer’s interests or standards. There was no wanton or willful disregard of the employer’s standards. In short, substantial misconduct has not been established by the evidence. While the employer may have had good cause to discharge, conduct which might warrant a discharge from employment will not necessarily sustain a disqualification from job insurance benefits. Budding v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 337 N.W.2d 219 (Iowa App. 1983). Benefits are allowed, provided the claimant is otherwise eligible.

DECISION:

The August 24, 2004, reference 01, decision is affirmed. The claimant was discharged from employment for no disqualifying reason. Benefits are allowed, provided the claimant is otherwise eligible.

tkh/s