

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

68-0157 (9-06) - 3091078 - EI

CARMEN M HIRACHETA
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 13A-UI-09750-S2T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

HY-VEE INC
Employer

OC: 07/28/13
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Carmen Hiracheta (claimant) appealed a representative's August 16, 2013 decision (reference 02) that concluded she was not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because she was discharged from work with Hy-Vee (employer) for excessive unexcused absenteeism after having been warned. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was scheduled for September 27, 2013. The claimant did not provide a telephone number for the hearing and, therefore, did not participate. The employer was represented by Bruce Burgess, Hearing Representative, and participated by Les Bruner, Human Resource Manager.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether the claimant was separated from employment for any disqualifying reason.

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 December 31, 2012, as a part-time checker/courtesy clerk. The claimant signed for receipt of the employer's handbook on December 31, 2012. On April 29, 2013, the employer issued the claimant a written warning for attendance. The claimant was tardy three days and was absent one day. The employer notified the claimant that further infractions could result in termination from employment.

On July 24, 2013, the claimant did not appear for work or notify the employer of her absence. The employer called the claimant's telephone number but the number would not accept messages. The claimant did not call the employer on July 25, 2013. On July 26, 2013, the claimant appeared for work. She told the employer she was absent on July 24, 2013, due to personal family issues. The employer sent the claimant home, telling her to meet with the human resource manager and store director on July 29, 2013. On July 29, 2013, the employer terminated the claimant for excessive absenteeism.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow the administrative law judge concludes the claimant was not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits.

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(7) provides:

(7) Excessive unexcused absenteeism. Excessive unexcused absenteeism is an intentional disregard of the duty owed by the claimant to the employer and shall be considered misconduct except for illness or other reasonable grounds for which the employee was absent and that were properly reported to the employer.

The determination of whether unexcused absenteeism is excessive necessarily requires consideration of past acts and warnings. The term "absenteeism" also encompasses conduct that is more accurately referred to as "tardiness." An absence is an extended tardiness, and an incident of tardiness is a limited absence. Absences related to issues of personal responsibility such as transportation, lack of childcare, and oversleeping are not considered excused. Higgins v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 350 N.W.2d 187 (Iowa 1984).

An employer is entitled to expect its employees to report to work as scheduled or to be notified when and why the employee is unable to report to work. The employer has established that the claimant was warned that further unexcused absences could result in termination of employment and the final absence was not excused. The final absence, in combination with the claimant's history of unexcused absenteeism, is considered excessive. Benefits are withheld.

DECISION:

The representative's August 16, 2013, decision (reference 02) is affirmed. The claimant is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because the claimant was discharged from work for misconduct. Benefits are withheld until the claimant has worked in and has been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times the claimant's weekly benefit amount, provided the claimant is otherwise eligible.

Beth A. Scheetz
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

bas/pjs