

**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF INSPECTIONS AND APPEALS
ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS DIVISION, UI APPEALS BUREAU**

KRISTY K KNUTSON

Claimant

THE ANTHEM COMPANIES INC

Employer

APPEAL 22A-UI-18273-DZ-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 09/18/22

Claimant: Appellant (1)

Iowa Code § 96.5(1) – Voluntary Quit

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Kristy K. Knutson, the claimant/appellant filed an appeal from the Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) October 10, 2022 (reference 01) unemployment insurance (UI) decision. The decision denied REGULAR (state) UI benefits because IWD concluded that Ms. Knutson voluntarily quit on September 16, 2022 for personal reasons. The parties were properly notified about the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on November 29, 2022. Ms. Knutson participated personally. The employer participated through Frankie Patterson, Equifax hearing representative, and Hannah Hawkins, regional manager. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record and admitted Claimant's Exhibit A as evidence.

ISSUE:

Did Ms. Knutson voluntarily quit without good cause attributable to the employer?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Ms. Knutson began working for the employer on November 25, 2019. She worked as a full-time case manager. Her employment ended on September 16, 2022.

Ms. Knutson's usual work hours were 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Outside of work Ms. Knutson coaches volleyball and track. In 2020 and 2021, Ms. Knutson asked her manager for a flex schedule for several weeks so she could work different hours to be able to coach. The employer does not have a specific policy about flex schedules, but the policy does provide that any work completed outside of an employee's usual work hours must be pre-approved by the employee's manager. Ms. Knutson's then-manager approved both requests.

As of April 1, 2022, the employer assigned Ms. Hawkins as Ms. Knutson's manager. In July 2022, Ms. Knutson asked Ms. Hawkins to work a flex schedule so she could coach during the upcoming season. Ms. Knutson asked to work 10:15 a.m. - 6:15 p.m. for three-to-four weeks, and 7:00 a.m. through 3:30 p.m. for eight-to-nine weeks. Ms. Hawkins denied the request. Ms. Knutson requested a meeting to discuss the matter. The employer met with Ms. Knutson and raised work performance issues. Ms. Knutson was surprised by this as she had

not reviewing showing work issues. Later in July, Ms. Knutson asked Ms. Hawkins for a flex schedule again. Ms. Hawkins again denied the request.

Ms. Hawkins told Ms. Knutson the reason she denied the requests is that managers are not allowed to approve daily flex schedules, only case-by-case, sporadic requests to make up time. For example, if an employee has an appointment, a manager may approve the employee not attending work for the appointment and making up the time at the end of the day or the next day. Ms. Knutson assumed that her previous manager's approval of her requests the previous two years had set a precedent. Ms. Knutson was frustrated, confused and stressed by the employer's denial of request in 2022.

On September 2, 2022, Ms. Knutson sent Ms. Hawkins and email giving her two-week notice of her intention to resign. Ms. Knutson explained that she was resigning because she did not feel that the employer was supporting her per the employer's values and because of the employer inconsistency in approving her flex schedule requests. The employer accepted Ms. Knutson notice. Ms. Knutson's worked through September 16 when her employment ended.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes Ms. Knutson's separation from employment was without good cause attributable to the employer.

Iowa Code section 96.5(1) provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits:

1. Voluntary quitting. If the individual has left work voluntarily without good cause attributable to the individual's employer, if so found by the department.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.25(37) provides:

Voluntary quit without good cause. In general, a voluntary quit means discontinuing the employment because the employee no longer desires to remain in the relationship of an employee with the employer from whom the employee has separated. The employer has the burden of proving that the claimant is disqualified for benefits pursuant to Iowa Code section 96.5. However, the claimant has the initial burden to produce evidence that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving Iowa Code section 96.5, subsection (1), paragraphs "a" through "i," and subsection 10. The following reasons for a voluntary quit shall be presumed to be without good cause attributable to the employer:

(37) The claimant will be considered to have left employment voluntarily when such claimant gave the employer notice of an intention to resign and the employer accepted such resignation. This rule shall also apply to the claimant who was employed by an educational institution who has declined or refused to accept a new contract or reasonable assurance of work for a successive academic term or year and the offer of work was within the purview of the individual's training and experience.

The claimant has the burden of proving that the voluntary leaving was for good cause attributable to the employer.¹ A voluntary leaving of employment requires an intention to terminate the employment relationship accompanied by an overt act of carrying out that intention.² "Good cause" for leaving employment must be that which is reasonable to the average person, not the overly sensitive individual or the claimant in particular.³

In this case, Ms. Knutson resigned because she did not like that the employer denied her flex schedule request. The employer accepted her resignation and she stopped working for the employer. Ms. Knutson did what was best for her, but her leaving was not for a good-cause reason attributable to the employer according to Iowa law. Benefits are denied.

DECISION:

The October 10, 2022 (reference 01) UI decision is AFFIRMED. Ms. Knutson voluntarily left her employment without good cause attributable to the employer. Benefits are withheld until such time as she has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times her weekly benefit amount, provided she is otherwise eligible.



Daniel Zeno
Administrative Law Judge

December 6, 2022
Decision Dated and Mailed

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¹ . Iowa Code § 96.6(2).

² *Local Lodge #1426 v. Wilson Trailer*, 289 N.W.2d 608, 612 (Iowa 1980).

³ *Uniweld Products v. Indus. Relations Comm'n*, 277 So.2d 827 (Fla. Dist. Ct. App. 1973).

APPEAL RIGHTS. If you disagree with the decision, you or any interested party may:

1. Appeal to the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days of the date under the judge's signature by submitting a written appeal via mail, fax, or online to:

**Employment Appeal Board
4th Floor – Lucas Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Fax: (515)281-7191
Online: eab.iowa.gov**

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.

AN APPEAL TO THE BOARD SHALL 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.

An Employment Appeal Board decision is final agency action. If a party disagrees with the Employment Appeal Board decision, they may then file a petition for judicial review in district court.

2. If no one files an appeal of the judge's decision with the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days, the decision becomes final agency action, and you have the option to **file a petition for judicial review in District Court** within thirty (30) days after the decision becomes final. Additional information on how to file a petition can be found at Iowa Code §17A.19, which is online at <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf> or by contacting the District Court Clerk of Court <https://www.iowacourts.gov/iowa-courts/court-directory/>.

Note to Parties: YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in the appeal or 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.

Note to Claimant: It is important that you file your weekly claim as directed, while this appeal is pending, to protect your continuing right to benefits.

SERVICE INFORMATION:

A true and correct copy of this decision was mailed to each of the parties listed.

DERECHOS DE APELACIÓN. Si no está de acuerdo con la decisión, usted o cualquier parte interesada puede:

1. Apelar a la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo dentro de los quince (15) días de la fecha bajo la firma del juez presentando una apelación por escrito por correo, fax o en línea a:

**Employment Appeal Board
4th Floor – Lucas Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Fax: (515)281-7191
En línea: eab.iowa.gov**

El período de apelación se extenderá hasta el siguiente día hábil si el último día para apelar cae en fin de semana o día feriado legal.

UNA APELACIÓN A LA JUNTA DEBE ESTABLECER CLARAMENTE:

- 1) El nombre, dirección y número de seguro social del reclamante.
- 2) Una referencia a la decisión de la que se toma la apelación.
- 3) Que se interponga recurso de apelación contra tal decisión y se firme dicho recurso.
- 4) Los fundamentos en que se funda dicho recurso.

Una decisión de la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo es una acción final de la agencia. Si una de las partes no está de acuerdo con la decisión de la Junta de Apelación de Empleo, puede presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el tribunal de distrito.

2. Si nadie presenta una apelación de la decisión del juez ante la Junta de Apelaciones Laborales dentro de los quince (15) días, la decisión se convierte en acción final de la agencia y usted tiene la opción de **presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el Tribunal de Distrito** dentro de los treinta (30) días después de que la decisión adquiriera firmeza. Puede encontrar información adicional sobre cómo presentar una petición en el Código de Iowa §17A.19, que se encuentra en línea en <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf> o comunicándose con el Tribunal de Distrito Secretario del tribunal <https://www.iowacourts.gov/iowa-courts/court-directory/>.

Nota para las partes: USTED PUEDE REPRESENTARSE en la apelación u obtener un abogado u otra parte interesada para que lo haga, siempre que no haya gastos para Workforce Development. Si desea ser representado por un abogado, puede obtener los servicios de un abogado privado o uno cuyos servicios se paguen con fondos públicos.

Nota para el reclamante: es importante que presente su reclamo semanal según las instrucciones, mientras esta apelación está pendiente, para proteger su derecho continuo a los beneficios.

SERVICIO DE INFORMACIÓN:

Se envió por correo una copia fiel y correcta de esta decisión a cada una de las partes enumeradas.