

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

JASON L EHLERS
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 13A-UI-07101-S2T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

THE BON-TON DEPARTMENT STORES INC
Employer

OC: 05/19/13
Claimant: Respondent (2/R)

Section 96.5-1 - Voluntary Quit

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The Bon-Ton Department Stores (employer) appealed a representative's June 7, 2013 decision (reference 01) that concluded Jason Ehlers (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 scheduled for July 3, 2013. The claimant participated personally. The employer participated by Taffy Johnson, Store Manager, Laura Behrens, Human Resource Representative. The employer offered and Exhibit One was received into evidence.

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 June 1, 2008, as a full-time assistant store manager/human resource manager. The claimant had some issues with a previous store manager but that store manager left in December 2012.

The claimant was seeing a physician for stress-related issues but did not tell the claimant he had to quit work. The claimant provided the employer with a doctor's note for an absence. The note said, "Jason was seen ... on Monday 5-7-13." The employer noticed that Monday was May 6, 2013. The employer suspended the claimant with pay until he provided further documentation that corrected the doctor's note. The claimant provided a note to the employer that was not on the medical center's letterhead in an attempt to correct the date. The employer would not accept it because it was not on letterhead and the claimant provided his letter of resignation effective May 22, 2013. Continued work was available had the claimant not resigned.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow the administrative law judge concludes the claimant voluntarily quit work 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.

871 IAC 24.25(28) 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:

(28) The claimant left after being reprimanded.

A voluntary leaving of employment requires an intention to terminate the employment relationship accompanied by an overt act of carrying out that intention. Local Lodge #1426 v. Wilson Trailer, 289 N.W.2d 608, 612 (Iowa 1980). The claimant's intention to voluntarily leave work was evidenced by his words and actions. He told the employer that he was leaving and quit work. When an employee quits work after having been reprimanded, His leaving is without good cause attributable to the employer. The claimant left work after having been reprimanded. His leaving was without good cause attributable to the employer. The claimant voluntarily quit without good cause attributable to the employer. Benefits are denied.

Iowa Code section 96.3-7, as amended in 2008, provides:

7. Recovery of overpayment of benefits.

a. 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.

b. (1) 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. However, provided the benefits were not received as the result of fraud or willful misrepresentation by the individual,

benefits shall not be recovered from an individual if the employer did not participate in the initial determination to award benefits pursuant to section 96.6, subsection 2, and an overpayment occurred because of a subsequent reversal on appeal regarding the issue of the individual's separation from employment. The employer shall not be charged with the benefits.

(2) An accounting firm, agent, unemployment insurance accounting firm, or other entity that represents an employer in unemployment claim matters and demonstrates a continuous pattern of failing to participate in the initial determinations to award benefits, as determined and defined by rule by the department, shall be denied permission by the department to represent any employers in unemployment insurance matters. This subparagraph does not apply to attorneys or counselors admitted to practice in the courts of this state pursuant to section 602.10101.

The claimant has received benefits since filing the claim herein. Pursuant to this decision, those benefits may now constitute an overpayment. The issue of the overpayment is remanded for determination.

DECISION:

The representative's June 7, 2013 decision (reference 01) is reversed. The claimant voluntarily left work without good cause attributable to the employer. 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. The issue of the overpayment is remanded for determination.

Beth A. Scheetz
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

bas/css