

**IN THE IOWA ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS DIVISION
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

DAMON M WILLIS
Claimant

KATECHO INC
Employer

APPEAL 24A-UI-07427-PT-T
ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION

OC: 07/21/24
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Iowa Code § 96.5(1) – Voluntary Quitting

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant, Damon Willis, filed an appeal from a decision of a representative dated August 12, 2024, (reference 01) that held the claimant ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits after a separation from employment. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on September 9, 2024. The claimant participated personally. The employer, Katecho Inc., participated through Human Resources Generalist Lindsey Snethen. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record.

ISSUE:

Whether the claimant quit for good cause attributable to the employer.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The claimant began working for Katecho Inc. on April 28, 2022. Most recently, he worked full-time hours as a quality lead 3. In his position, the claimant supervised a team of quality inspectors and was responsible for reviewing and verifying orders, performing product testing, and auditing results.

The claimant has a young child and, through most of his employment, the claimant was able to arrange for his child to attend daycare while he was at work. In early-July 2024, the claimant's usual child care arrangements became unavailable and the claimant had no one to watch his child while he was at work. On July 12, 2024, the claimant notified the employer that he was resigning his position effective immediately. The claimant did not provide the employer a reason for his resignation, but the claimant quit because he was not able to find childcare for his son and he needed to stay home full-time to take care of him. The employer accepted the claimant's resignation. Continuing work was available for the claimant had he not quit the employment.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant voluntarily left the employment without good cause attributable to the employer. Benefits must be denied.

Iowa unemployment insurance law disqualifies claimants who voluntarily quit employment without good cause attributable to the employer or who are discharged for work-connected misconduct. Iowa Code §§ 96.5(1) and 96.5(2)a. The burden of proof rests with the employer to show that the claimant voluntarily left the employment. *Irving v. Empl. App. Bd.*, 883 N.W.2d 179 (Iowa 2016). A voluntary quitting of employment requires that an employee exercise a voluntary choice between remaining employed and terminating the employment relationship. *Wills v. Emp't Appeal Bd.*, 447 N.W.2d 137, 138 (Iowa 1989); *Peck v. Emp't Appeal Bd.*, 492 N.W.2d 438, 440 (Iowa Ct. App. 1992). It requires an intention to terminate the employment relationship accompanied by an overt act carrying out that intention. *Local Lodge #1426 v. Wilson Trailer*, 289 N.W.2d 608, 612 (Iowa 1980).

In this case, the claimant's verbal and written resignations to the employer are both evidence of his intention to sever the employment relationship and are overt acts carrying out his intention. The record shows that the claimant, not the employer, ended the employment relationship. As such, I find the claimant quit his employment.

The claimant has the burden of proving that the voluntary leaving was for good cause attributable to the employer. Iowa Code § 96.6(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. *Uniweld Products v. Indus. Relations Comm'n*, 277 So.2d 827 (Fla. Dist. Ct. App. 1973). If the claimant fails to meet their burden, the separation from employment is disqualifying.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.25(17) and (37) provide:

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:

(17) The claimant left because of lack of child care.

(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 material facts in this case are not in dispute. The claimant quit his employment so that he could stay home full-time to care for his young child due to a lack of child care. While the claimant's decision to quit his employment so he could stay home with his child may have been

for good personal reasons, it was not a good-cause reason attributable to the employer. As such, benefits must be denied.

DECISION:

The August 12, 2024 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The claimant voluntarily left his employment on July 12, 2024, without good cause attributable to the employer. Unemployment insurance benefits shall be withheld until the claimant has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times the claimant's weekly benefit amount after the July 12, 2024 separation date, provided the claimant is otherwise eligible.



Patrick B. Thomas
Administrative Law Judge

September 12, 2024
Decision Dated and Mailed

PBT/jkb

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:

**Iowa Employment Appeal Board
6200 Park Avenue Suite 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50321
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:

**Iowa Employment Appeal Board
6200 Park Avenue Suite 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50321
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.