

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

MARQUIS JONES
Claimant

PRIA LOGISTICS LLC
Employer

APPEAL 24R-UI-09334-ED-T
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 08/04/24
Claimant: Appellant (3)

Iowa Code § 96.5(1) – Voluntary Quit

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The Claimant/appellant, Marquis Jones, filed an appeal from the September 3, 2024 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that denied benefits. A notice of hearing was mailed to the parties setting the hearing for September 24, 2024. A default decision was entered on September 25, 2024 and the claimant appealed that decision to the Employment Appeal Board. On November 1, 2024, the Employment Appeal Board issued a decision remanding the matter for a new hearing. The parties were properly notified of the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on November 19, 2024. The claimant, Marquis Jones, did participate personally. The employer, Pria Logistics, participated through the company owner, Edgar Ortiz. No exhibits were offered or admitted into the record. Official notice was taken of the claimant's unemployment administrative record.

ISSUES:

Did claimant voluntarily quit the employment with good cause attributable to the employer?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Mr. Jones began working for this employer on September 23, 2023 as a full-time delivery driver. This employer is a logistic company that contracts with Amazon. His immediate supervisor was Jessica Coffey. Mr. Jones last day physically working in this job was August 3, 2024.

On August 3, 2024, Mr. Jones was involved in an accident while driving his delivery truck. The claimant hit a garage door with the delivery truck and left the scene. He did not call the police or wait at the scene of the accident for the authorities to arrive. After the accident, Mr. Jones returned to the station and left the keys and delivery truck with the employer. He did not go into the station, nor did he talk to anyone when he was at the station. Mr. Jones did notify his dispatcher via text message that he already left everything for the vehicle 16. He apologized for the situation and said he couldn't return to work because of his shame. He did not return to work any shifts after August 3, 2024. Continuing work was available to Mr. Jones with this employer after August 3, 2024.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes Mr. Jones was not discharged from employment, but he voluntarily quit his employment without good cause attributable to the employer.

Iowa Code section 96.5(2)a provides: An individual shall be disqualified for benefits, regardless of the source of the individual's wage credits:

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 disqualification shall continue 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.

In this case, the employer never discharged the Mr. Jones. Continuing work was available for Mr. Jones if he had reported back to work after the accident on August 3, 2024.

Iowa Code § 96.5(1) provides: An individual shall be disqualified for benefits, if the individual has left work voluntarily without good cause attributable to the individual's employer, if so found by the department.

A voluntary quitting means discontinuing the employment because the employee no longer desires to remain in the relationship of an employee with the employer and requires an intention to terminate the employment. *Wills v. Emp't Appeal Bd.*, 447 N.W. 2d 137, 138 (Iowa 1989). 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); *Peck v. Emp't Appeal Bd.*, 492 N.W.2d 438 (Iowa Ct. App. 1992). 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). Where a claim gives numerous reasons for leaving employment the agency is required to consider all stated reasons which might combine to give the claimant good cause to quit in determining any of those reasons constitute good cause attributable to the employer. *Taylor v. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 362 N.W.2d 534 (Iowa 1985).

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.25(4) 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:

(4) The claimant was absent for three days without giving notice to employer in violation of company rule.

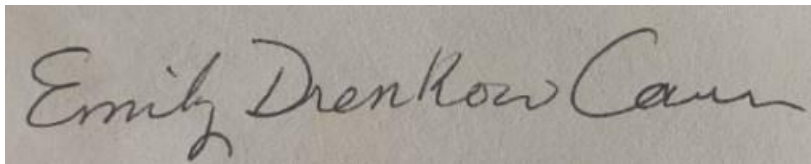
It is the duty of the administrative law judge, as the trier of fact, to determine the credibility of witnesses, weigh the evidence and decide the facts in issue. *Arndt v. City of LeClaire*, 728 N.W.2d 389, 394-395 (Iowa 2007). The administrative law judge may believe all, part or none of any witness's testimony. *State v. Holtz*, 548 N.W.2d 162, 163 (Iowa App. 1996). In assessing the credibility of witnesses, the administrative law judge should consider the evidence using his or her own observations, common sense and experience. *Id.* In determining the facts, and deciding what testimony to believe, the fact finder may consider the following factors: whether the testimony is reasonable and consistent with other evidence you believe; whether a witness has made inconsistent statements; the witness's appearance, conduct, age, intelligence, memory and knowledge of the facts; and the witness's interest in the trial, their motive, candor, bias and prejudice. *Id.*

The findings of fact show how I have resolved the disputed factual issues in this case. I assessed the credibility of the witnesses who testified during the hearing, considering the applicable factors listed above, and using my own common sense and experience. I find the employer's testimony more credible than the claimant's testimony. The claimant admitted to leaving the scene of the accident without notifying authorities or waiting for the arrival of authorities. This act reduced the claimant's overall reliability.

Mr. Jones voluntarily quit his employment with Pria Logistics LLC when he failed to report to work after August 3, 2024 and did not notify employer for three consecutive shifts in violation of company rule. Claimant's explanation that he had too much shame due to the accident that occurred on August 3, 2024 to report back to work does not constitute good cause attributable to the employer. Claimant has not met his burden of proving he voluntarily quit his employment for good cause attributable to employer. Benefits are denied.

DECISION:

The September 3, 2024 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is modified in favor of the respondent, Pria Logistics LLC. Mr. Jones voluntarily quit his employment on August 6, 2024 without good cause attributable to employer. Benefits are denied until claimant has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times his weekly benefit amount, provided he is otherwise eligible.



Emily Drenkow Carr
Administrative Law Judge

November 20, 2024
Decision Dated and Mailed

ed/scn

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.