

871—24.17(96) Failure to accept work and failure to apply for suitable work. A claimant's failure to accept work and failure to apply for suitable work will be removed when the individual has worked in (except in back pay awards) and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times the individual's weekly benefit amount, provided the individual is otherwise eligible.

24.17(1) *Bona fide offer of work.*

a. In deciding whether or not a claimant failed to accept or apply for suitable work, it must first be established that a bona fide offer of work was made to the individual by personal contact or that a referral was offered to the claimant by personal contact to an actual job opening and a definite refusal was made by the individual. For purposes of a recall to work, a registered letter is deemed to be sufficient as a personal contact.

b. Upon notification of a job opening for a claimant, a representative of the department will notify the claimant of the job referral. If the claimant fails to respond without good cause, the claimant will be disqualified until such time as the claimant contacts the department.

24.17(2) *Job within claimant's capabilities.*

a. To be suitable, the job offered must be within the claimant's physical capabilities and not require any undue physical skill or particular training the claimant does not already possess. As the period of unemployment lengthens, work that might originally have been unsuitable may become suitable.

b. A refusal of suitable work occurs when a claimant, separated for lack of work, fails to accept work offered by the employer on recall or fails to apply for work when directed by a representative of the department. The claimant will be disqualified for failure to apply for or accept an offer to work until such time as the individual has worked in (except in back pay awards) and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times the individual's weekly benefit amount, provided the individual is otherwise eligible.

24.17(3) *Each case decided on its own merits.* The department will investigate and determine whether the work was suitable and whether the claimant had good cause for refusal. Each case will be determined on its own merits as established by the facts. Good cause for refusing suitable work may nevertheless disqualify a claimant as being unavailable for work.

24.17(4) *Work refused when the claimant fails to meet the benefit eligibility conditions of Iowa Code section 96.4(3).* Before a disqualification for failure to accept work may be imposed, an individual must first satisfy the benefit eligibility conditions of being able to work and available for work and not unemployed for failing to bump a fellow employee with less seniority. If the facts indicate that the claimant was or is not available for work, and this resulted in the failure to accept work or apply for work, such claimant will not be disqualified for refusal since the claimant is not available for work. In such a case it is the availability of the claimant that is to be tested. Lack of transportation, illness or health conditions, illness in family, and child care problems are generally considered to be good cause for refusing work or refusing to apply for work. However, the claimant's availability would be the issue to be determined in these types of cases.

24.17(5) *Bumping rights to a job.* A claimant who fails to exercise seniority rights to bump a less senior employee is eligible for benefits and the provision pertaining to the search for work is waived during a period of regular unemployment insurance benefits. This waiver of the search for work does not apply to a claimant who is receiving extended benefits.

24.17(6) *Claimant physically unable to perform job.* A medical practitioner must submit certification to support the claimant's statement that work offered is unsuitable because of the claimant's physical condition.

24.17(7) *Gainfully employed outside of area where job is offered.* Two reasons that generally constitute good cause for not accepting an offer of work are if the claimant is gainfully employed elsewhere or the claimant does not reside in the area where the job is offered.

24.17(8) *Refusal disqualification jurisdiction.* Both the offer of work or the order to apply for work and the claimant's accompanying refusal must occur within the individual's benefit year, as defined in subrule 24.1(21), before the Iowa Code section 96.5(3) disqualification can be imposed. It is not necessary that the offer, the order, or the refusal occur in a week in which the claimant filed a weekly claim for benefits before the disqualification can be imposed.

24.17(9) *Distance to new job.* Without a prior specific agreement between the employer and employee, the employee's refusal to follow the employer to a distant new job site may not be reason for a refusal disqualification.

24.17(10) *Bulletin board notice of work.* A bulletin board notice for employees to work during a plant shutdown does not constitute an offer of work by the company.

24.17(11) *Claimant discourages prospective employers.* When a claimant willfully follows a course of action designed to discourage a prospective employer from hiring such claimant, the claimant will be deemed to have refused suitable work.

24.17(12) *Claimant moved to another state.* A claimant who moves to another state will not be subject to disqualification for refusal to return to a previously held job.

24.17(13) *Employment offer from former employer.*

a. A claimant will be disqualified for refusing work with a former employer if the work offered is reasonably suitable, comparable, and within the purview of the claimant's usual occupation. The provisions of Iowa Code section 96.5(3) "b" control the determination of suitability of work.

b. An employment offer will not be considered suitable if the claimant had previously quit the former employer and the conditions that caused the claimant to quit are still in existence.

24.17(14) *Suitable work.* In determining what constitutes suitable work, the department will consider, among other relevant factors, the following:

a. Any risk to the health, safety and morals of the individual.

b. The individual's physical fitness.

c. Prior training.

d. Length of unemployment.

e. Prospects for securing local work by the individual.

f. The individual's customary occupation.

g. Distance from the available work.

h. Whether the work offered is for wages equal to or above the federal or state minimum wage, whichever is higher.

i. Whether the work offered meets the percentage criteria established for suitable work that is determined by the number of weeks that have elapsed following the effective date of the most recent new or additional claim for benefits filed by the individual.

j. Whether the position offered is due directly to a strike, lockout, or other labor dispute.

k. Whether the wages, hours or other conditions of employment are less favorable for similar work in the locality.

l. Whether employment is contingent on joining or resigning from a labor organization.

24.17(15) *Disabled accessibility to job.* A job offer is not suitable if a disabled individual has no access to a building or its facilities.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 96.3(3), 96.4(2), 96.4(3), 96.5(1), 96.5(3), 96.6(1), 96.11(1), 96.16, 96.1A, and 96.29.

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