

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

JORDAN D PLATH
Claimant

SC GROCERY INC
Employer

APPEAL 19A-UI-00254-SC-T
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 12/09/18
Claimant: Respondent (1)

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Protest

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

SC Grocery, Inc. (employer) filed an appeal from the January 7, 2019, reference 02, unemployment insurance decision that found the protest untimely and allowed benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held by telephone conference call on January 28, 2019. Jordan D. Plath (claimant) registered a phone number, but declined to participate when contacted at the time of the hearing. The employer participated through Manager Elery J. Egger. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record, including the notice of claim and protest.

ISSUE:

Is the employer's protest timely?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The claimant separated from employment on January 15, 2018 and filed a claim for benefits effective December 9, 2018. The notice of claim was mailed to employer's address of record on December 14 and was received by employer within ten days on December 19. The notice of claim contains a warning that the employer protest response is due ten days from the initial notice date and gave a response deadline of December 24. The employer did not file a protest response until January 2, 2019, which is after the ten-day period had expired because Manager Elery J. Egger was busy with other job duties during the holiday season and that was the earliest she was able to work on her office duties.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes that employer has failed to file protest response within the time period prescribed by the Iowa Employment Security Law.

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) provides, in pertinent part:

2. Initial determination. A representative designated by the director shall promptly notify all interested parties to the claim of its filing, and the parties have ten days from the date of mailing the notice of the filing of the claim by ordinary mail to the last known address to protest payment of benefits to the claimant.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(2) provides:

Date of submission and extension of time for payments and notices.

(2) The submission of any payment, appeal, application, request, notice, objection, petition, report or other information or document not within the specified statutory or regulatory period shall be considered timely if it is established to the satisfaction of the division that the delay in submission was due to division error or misinformation or to delay or other action of the United States postal service.

a. For submission that is not within the statutory or regulatory period to be considered timely, the interested party must submit a written explanation setting forth the circumstances of the delay.

b. The division shall designate personnel who are to decide whether an extension of time shall be granted.

c. No submission shall be considered timely if the delay in filing was unreasonable, as determined by the department after considering the circumstances in the case.

d. If submission is not considered timely, although the interested party contends that the delay was due to division error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United States postal service, the division shall issue an appealable decision to the interested party.

Another portion of this same Code section dealing with timeliness of an appeal from a representative's decision states that such an appeal must be filed within ten days after notification of that decision was mailed. In addressing an issue of timeliness of an appeal under that portion of this Code section, the Iowa Supreme Court held that this statute prescribing the time for notice of appeal clearly limits the time to do so, and that compliance with the appeal notice provision is mandatory and jurisdictional. *Beardslee v. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979).

The administrative law judge considers the reasoning and holding of that court in that decision to be controlling on this portion of that same Iowa Code section which deals with a time limit in which to file a protest after notification of the filing of the claim has been mailed. The employer, who has the burden of proof, has not established that the delay in filing its protest was due to any Agency error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United States Postal Service pursuant to Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(2). As the employer has failed to timely protest pursuant to Iowa Code § 96.6(2), the administrative law judge lacks jurisdiction to make a determination with respect to the nature of the claimant's separation from employment. See, *Beardslee v. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979); *Franklin v. Iowa Dep't of*

Job Serv., 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979) and *Pepsi-Cola Bottling Co. v. Emp't Appeal Bd.*, 465 N.W.2d 674 (Iowa Ct. App. 1990).

DECISION:

The January 7, 2019, reference 02, unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The employer has failed to file a timely protest response, and the decision of the representative shall stand and remain in full force and effect.

Stephanie R. Callahan
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

src/scn