

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**MARIA GARCIA**

Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 09A-UI-03775-NT**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**TYSON FRESH MEATS INC**

Employer

**OC: 05/11/08**

**Claimant: Appellant (1)**

871 IAC 24.2(1)e – Failure to Report as Directed  
Section 96.6-2 – Timeliness of Appeal

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Maria Garcia filed an appeal from a representative's decision dated November 10, 2008, reference 01, which held the claimant did not report to a Workforce Development Center as directed and denied benefits as of September 20, 2008. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held by telephone on April 3, 2009. Participating as the official interpreter was Patricia Vargas.

**ISSUE:**

At issue in this matter is whether the appeal filed herein was timely.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

The administrative law judge having considered all of the evidence in the record, finds: That a disqualification decision was mailed to the claimant's last-known address of record on November 10, 2008. The claimant received the decision. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Section by November 20, 2008. The appeal was not filed until March 9, 2009, which is after the date noticed on the disqualification decision. The claimant filed an appeal on the November 10, 2008 decision when she subsequently received an overpayment decision that was dated March 3, 2009.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

Iowa Code section 96.6-2 provides:

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. The representative shall promptly examine the claim and any protest, take the initiative to ascertain relevant information concerning the claim, and, on the basis of the facts found by the representative, shall

determine whether or not the claim is valid, the week with respect to which benefits shall commence, the weekly benefit amount payable and its maximum duration, and whether any disqualification shall be imposed. The claimant has the burden of proving that the claimant meets the basic eligibility conditions of section 96.4. The employer has the burden of proving that the claimant is disqualified for benefits pursuant to section 96.5, except as provided by this subsection. The claimant has the initial burden to produce evidence showing that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving section 96.5, subsection 10, and has the burden of proving that a voluntary quit pursuant to section 96.5, subsection 1, was for good cause attributable to the employer and that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraphs "a" through "h". Unless the claimant or other interested party, after notification or within ten calendar days after notification was mailed to the claimant's last known address, files an appeal from the decision, the decision is final and benefits shall be paid or denied in accordance with the decision. If an administrative law judge affirms a decision of the representative, or the appeal board affirms a decision of the administrative law judge allowing benefits, the benefits shall be paid regardless of any appeal which is thereafter taken, but if the decision is finally reversed, no employer's account shall be charged with benefits so paid and this relief from charges shall apply to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5.

The record in this case shows that more than ten calendar days elapsed between the mailing date and the date this appeal was filed. The Iowa Supreme Court has declared there is a mandatory duty to file appeals from representative's decisions within the time allotted by statute and that the administrative law judge has no authority to change the decision of a representative if a timely appeal has not been filed. Franklin v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 277 N.W.2d 877, 881 (Iowa 1979). Compliance with appeal notice provisions is jurisdictional unless the facts of the case show that the notice was invalid. Beardslee v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 276 N.W.2d 373, 377 (Iowa 1979).

The question in this case thus becomes whether the appellant was deprived of a reasonable opportunity to assert an appeal in a timely fashion. At the conclusion of her testimony Ms. Garcia stated that she did not file an appeal on the November 10, 2008, reference 01, decision until she had received a decision dated March 3, 2009, reference 02, that held her liable to repay overpayments she received between September 14, 2008 and November 1, 2008. The record thus shows that the appellant did have a reasonable opportunity to file a timely appeal.

The administrative law judge concludes that the failure to file a timely appeal within the time period prescribed by the Iowa Employment Security Law was not due to any Agency error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United States Postal Service pursuant to 871 IAC 24.35(2). The administrative law judge further concludes the appeal was not timely filed pursuant to Iowa Code section 96.6-2 and the administrative law judge lacks jurisdiction to make a determination with respect to the nature of the appeal.

**DECISION:**

The representative's decision dated November 10, 2008, reference 01, is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely filed and the decision of the representative remains in effect.

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Terence P. Nice  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

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