

**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF INSPECTIONS AND APPEALS
ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS DIVISION, UI APPEALS BUREAU**

FRANCISCO D DIEGO

Claimant

**IOWA WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

APPEAL 23A-UI-03758-LJ-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 12/11/22

Claimant: Appellant (1)

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal

Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Ability to and Availability for Work

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

On April 12, 2023, claimant filed an appeal from the February 15, 2023 (reference 02) unemployment insurance decision that found the claimant not able to work due to injury. The parties were properly notified of the hearing. A telephonic hearing was held at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, April 26, 2023. Appeal numbers 23A-UI-03756-LJ-T, 23A-UI-03757-LJ-T, and 23A-UI-03758-LJ-T were heard together and created one record. Claimant Francisco D. Diego participated. Witnesses Wendy Lastor and Nessa Canales testified on claimant's behalf. Spanish English interpreter Mary (ID number 16037) with CTS Language Link provided interpretation for the hearing. Claimant's Exhibit A was received and admitted into the record. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record.

ISSUE:

Did the claimant file a timely appeal? Is there good cause to treat the appeal as timely?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds:

The unemployment insurance decision informing claimant he was denied benefits until he provided proof of legal authorization to work was mailed to his current address of record on February 2, 2023. Claimant received this decision sometime before February 12, 2023. The first sentence of the decision states, "If this decision denies benefits and is not reversed on appeal, it may result in an overpayment which you will be required to repay." The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Bureau by February 12, 2023.

Next, the unemployment insurance decision informing claimant he was denied benefits because he was not able to work due to injury was mailed to his current address of record on February 15, 2023. Claimant received this decision. The first sentence of the decision states, "If this decision denies benefits and is not reversed on appeal, it may result in an overpayment which

you will be required to repay.” The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Bureau by February 25, 2023.

Finally, the unemployment insurance decision informing claimant he was overpaid \$3,085.00 in regular unemployment insurance benefits was mailed to his current address of record on March 2, 2023. Claimant admits he received this decision. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeal Bureau by March 12, 2023.

Claimant filed his appeal on April 12, 2023. He fractured his right foot and hurt his shoulder in a work-related accident, and he was unable to leave his bed for a period of time. Claimant also had to attend numerous medical appointments due to his work-related injuries, and these appointments occupied his time and his mental energy and prevented him from appealing in time. As he explained in his online appeal, “I totally forgot I had a deadline.” Claimant filed an appeal online on April 12, 2023, and that appeal was applied to the three decisions.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes claimant failed to file a timely appeal and has not demonstrated good cause to treat the appeal as timely filed.

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) provides, in pertinent part: “[u]nless 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.”

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(1) provides:

1. Except as otherwise provided by statute or by division rule, any payment, appeal, application, request, notice, objection, petition, report or other information or document submitted to the division shall be considered received by and filed with the division:

(a) If transmitted via the United States Postal Service on the date it is mailed as shown by the postmark, or in the absence of a postmark the postage meter mark of the envelope in which it is received; or if not postmarked or postage meter marked or if the mark is illegible, on the date entered on the document as the date of completion.

...

(c) If transmitted by any means other than [United States Postal Service or the State Identification Data Exchange System (SIDES)], on the date it is received by the division.

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

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

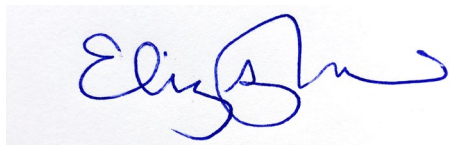
due to division error or misinformation or to delay or other action of the United States postal service.

The Iowa Supreme Court has declared that there is a mandatory duty to file appeals from representatives' 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 is not filed. *Franklin v. IDJS*, 277 N.W.2d 877, 881 (Iowa 1979). Compliance with appeal notice provisions is jurisdictional unless the facts of a case show that the notice was invalid. *Beardslee v. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d 373, 377 (Iowa 1979); see also *In re Appeal of Elliott* 319 N.W.2d 244, 247 (Iowa 1982).

Here, the claimant received the decision in the mail and, therefore, had an opportunity to file an appeal prior to the appeal deadline. His justification for missing the deadline is in significant part that he "totally forgot" about it. While the administrative law judge understands the overwhelming nature of a serious injury, forgetting about the deadline is not a good cause reason for filing a late appeal. Claimant's delay was not due to an error or misinformation from the Department or due to delay or other action of the United States Postal Service. No other good cause reason has been established for the delay. Claimant's appeal was not filed on time and the administrative law judge lacks jurisdiction (authority) to decide the other issue in this matter.

DECISION:

The February 15, 2023 (reference 02) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. Claimant failed to file a timely appeal. The decision of the representative remains in effect.



Elizabeth A. Johnson
Administrative Law Judge

April 27, 2023
Decision Dated and Mailed

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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:

**Employment Appeal Board
4th Floor – Lucas Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
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:

**Employment Appeal Board
4th Floor – Lucas Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
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.