

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

ALEX R UTHOFF
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 11A-UI-02393-LT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

COX MUSIC COMPANY INC
Employer

OC: 01/23/10
Claimant: Respondent (1)

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Protest

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Employer filed a timely appeal from the February 22, 2011 (reference 02) decision that found the protest untimely and allowed benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held by telephone conference call on March 22, 2011. The claimant did not participate. The employer participated by Julie Cox. Department's Exhibit D-1 was received.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether employer's protest is timely.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant's notice of claim was mailed to employer's address of record on January 26, 2011, and was received by the employer within ten days. Julie Cox was on vacation from January 27 through February 4, 2011 and does not authorize any of the managers to open mail in her absence. She returned to the office on February 7, 2011. The notice of claim contains a warning that any protest must be postmarked, faxed, or returned not later than ten days from the initial mailing date. Employer did not file a protest until February 8, 2011, which is after the ten-day period had expired. No good-cause reason has been established for the delay.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The administrative law judge concludes that employer has failed to protest within the time period prescribed by the Iowa Employment Security Law.

Iowa Code section 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.

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 has not shown any good cause for not complying with the jurisdictional time limit. Therefore, the administrative law judge is without jurisdiction to entertain any appeal regarding the separation from employment.

Cox's decision to hold the mail while the business operations continued during her absence was a business decision. *The delay was not due to any Agency error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United States Postal Service pursuant to 871 IAC 4.35(2).* The administrative law judge further concludes that the employer has failed to timely protest pursuant to Iowa Code § 96.6(2), and the administrative law judge lacks jurisdiction to make a determination with respect to the nature of the claimant's termination of employment. See *Beardslee v. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979); *Franklin v. IDJS*, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979) and *Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company v. Employment Appeal Board*, 465 N.W.2d 674 (Iowa App. 1990).

DECISION:

The February 22, 2011 (reference 02) decision is affirmed. Employer has failed to file a timely protest, and the decision of the representative shall stand and remain in full force and effect.

Dévon M. Lewis
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

dml/kjw