

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

---

**NICHOLAS MAYERS**  
Claimant

**EASTERN IOWA TJ LC**  
Employer

**APPEAL 21A-UI-24200-SN-T**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**OC: 07/12/20**  
**Claimant: Appellant (1)**

---

Iowa Code § 96.5(1) – Voluntary Quit  
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.26(4) – Intolerable working conditions

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

The claimant filed an appeal from the January 4, 2021, (reference 03) unemployment insurance decision that denied benefits based upon his voluntary quit. The parties were properly notified about the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on December 28, 2021. The hearing was held jointly with appeal 21A-UI-24201-SN-T and 21A-UI-24202-SN-T. Claimant participated and testified. Employer participated through General Manager Tina Helbing. Exhibits D-1 and D-2 were received into the record.

**ISSUES:**

Whether the claimant's appeal was timely? Whether there are reasonable grounds to consider the claimant's appeal otherwise timely?

Was the separation a layoff, discharge for misconduct or voluntary quit without good cause attributable to the employer?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

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

A disqualification decision was mailed to claimant's last known address of record on January 4, 2021. The claimant received the decision on January 27, 2021. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Section by January 14, 2021. (Exhibit D-1) The appeal was not filed until October 29, 2021, which is after the date noticed on the disqualification decision. (Exhibit D-2)

The claimant explained that he did not file the appeal after receiving the decision because he lost the paperwork. He explained that he had to go to Iowa Workforce Development to get a replacement decision and figure out how to appeal.

## REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The administrative law judge concludes the claimant's appeal is not timely. He further concludes he does not have jurisdiction to evaluate the merits of the claimant's appeal.

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 issuing the notice of the filing of the claim to protest payment of benefits to the claimant. All interested parties shall select a format as specified by the department to receive such notifications. 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, subsections 10 and 11, 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 issued, 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 ten calendar days for appeal begins running on the mailing date. The "decision date" found in the upper right-hand portion of the representative's decision, unless otherwise corrected immediately below that entry, is presumptive evidence of the date of mailing. *Gaskins v. Unempl. Comp. Bd. of Rev.*, 429 A.2d 138 (Pa. Comm. 1981); *Johnson v. Board of Adjustment*, 239 N.W.2d 873, 92 A.L.R.3d 304 (Iowa 1976).

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 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). The question in this case thus becomes whether the appellant was deprived of a reasonable opportunity to assert an appeal in a timely fashion. *Hendren v. IESC*, 217 N.W.2d 255 (Iowa 1974); *Smith v. IESC*, 212 N.W.2d 471, 472 (Iowa 1973).

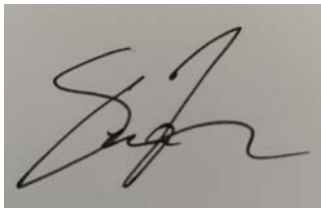
The record shows that the appellant did have a reasonable opportunity to file a timely appeal. The claimant states that he received the decision after the appeal period lapsed. So the claimant would be excused from filing an appeal from January 14, 2021 to January 27, 2021. This is because without notice that he was disqualified and instructions for how to appeal, the claimant would be denied a reasonable opportunity to appeal.

The same cannot be said for the period between January 28, 2021 to October 28, 2021. While it is unfortunate that the claimant lost the decision, this reason is entirely attributable to him rather than to the US Post Office or Iowa Workforce Development. It also does not take away the fact that he had notice of disqualification and the means to appeal on January 27, 2021. Despite having that information, the claimant did not appeal until October 29, 2021.

The administrative law judge concludes that failure to file a timely appeal within the time 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 that the appeal was not timely filed 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 appeal. See *Beardslee v. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979) and *Franklin v. IDJS*, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979).

**DECISION:**

The January 4, 2021, (reference 03), decision is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect.



---

Sean M. Nelson  
Administrative Law Judge  
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Bureau  
1000 East Grand Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0209  
Fax (515) 725-9067

January 25, 2022  
Decision Dated and Mailed

smn/scn

**NOTE TO CLAIMANT:** This decision determines you are not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits. If you disagree with this decision you may file an appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by following the instructions on the first page of this decision. Individuals who do not qualify for regular unemployment insurance benefits, but who are unemployed or continue to be unemployed for reasons related to COVID-19 may qualify for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). **You will need to apply for PUA to determine your eligibility under the program.** Additional information on how to apply for PUA can be found at <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/pua-information>. If this decision becomes final or if you are not eligible for PUA, you may have an overpayment of benefits.

**ATTENTION:** On May 11, 2021, Governor Reynolds announced that Iowa will end its participation in federal pandemic-related unemployment benefit programs effective June 12, 2021. The last payable week for PUA in Iowa will be the week ending June 12, 2021. In other words, claimant's may still apply for unemployment occurring before June 12, 2021, but cannot for unemployment occurring after that date. Additional information can be found in the press release at <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/iowa-end-participation-federal-unemployment-benefit-programs-citing-strong-labor-market-and>.