

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

HAROLD E EDWARDS
Claimant

CLEAN SWEEP OF I I LLC
Employer

APPEAL 21A-UI-07397-AW-T
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 03/15/20
Claimant: Appellant (4R)

Iowa Code § 96.1A(37) – Definitions – Total, partial unemployment
Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Eligibility – A&A – Able to, available for, work search
Iowa Code § 96.7(2)A(2) – Charges – Same base period employment
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(26) – Eligibility – A&A – Part-time same hours, wages
Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Filing – Timely Appeal
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35 – Filing

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Claimant filed an appeal from the February 15, 2021 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that denied benefits. The parties were properly notified of the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on May 21, 2021, at 8:00 a.m. Claimant participated. Employer did not participate. Claimant's Exhibit A was admitted. Official notice was taken of the administrative record over claimant's objection.

ISSUES:

Whether claimant filed a timely appeal.
Whether claimant is totally, partially or temporarily unemployed.
Whether claimant is able to and available for work.
Whether claimant is still employed at the same hours and wages.
Whether employer's account is subject to charge.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The Unemployment Insurance Decision was mailed to claimant at the incorrect address on February 15, 2021. Claimant did not receive the decision. The decision states that it becomes final unless an appeal is postmarked or received by Iowa Workforce Development Appeals Section by February 25, 2021. Iowa Workforce Development appealed the decision on claimant's behalf via facsimile on March 12, 2021. Claimant's appeal was received by Iowa Workforce Development's Appeals Bureau on March 12, 2021.

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant began employment with Clean Sweep of I & I in October 2019. Claimant is a part-time Detailer. Claimant reports working an average of 25 hours per week and an hourly wage of \$10.00. The administrative record reflects an average of 14 hours per week during 2019.

Employer reduced claimant's hours due to Covid-19 from March 15, 2020 through January 2021. Claimant filed an initial claim for unemployment insurance benefits effective March 15, 2020. Claimant's weekly benefit amount is \$92.00. Claimant had no barriers to employment since filing his initial claim for benefits effective March 15, 2020.

The administrative record shows that claimant filed ongoing weekly claims from March 15, 2020 until October 3, 2020 and from November 28, 2020 until January 16, 2021. Claimant reported wages earned on three of his ongoing weekly claims. The wages claimant reported do not match the wages employer reported for claimant during the same time periods. For example, claimant filed weekly claims for each week during the second quarter of 2020 and reported no wages; employer reported claimant earned \$447.00 in the second quarter of 2020. Claimant filed weekly claims for each week during the third quarter of 2020 and reported wages of \$1.00; employer reported claimant earned \$780.00 in the third quarter of 2020. The issue of whether claimant accurately reported wages earned should be remanded to the Investigations and Recovery Bureau of Iowa Workforce Development for an initial investigation and decision.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes claimant's appeal was timely.

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.

(b) If transmitted via the State Identification Data Exchange System (SIDES), maintained by the United States Department of Labor, on the date it was submitted to SIDES.

(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). 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).

Claimant never received the decision. Therefore, the appeal notice provisions were invalid. Claimant did not have a reasonable opportunity to file a timely appeal. Claimant's appeal is considered timely.

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge further concludes:

Iowa Code section 96.1A(37) provides:

"Total and partial unemployment".

a. An individual shall be deemed "totally unemployed" in any week with respect to which no wages are payable to the individual and during which the individual performs no services.

b. An individual shall be deemed partially unemployed in any week in which either of the following apply:

(1) While employed at the individual's then regular job, the individual works less than the regular full-time week and in which the individual earns less than the individual's weekly benefit amount plus fifteen dollars.

(2) The individual, having been separated from the individual's regular job, earns at odd jobs less than the individual's weekly benefit amount plus fifteen dollars.

c. An individual shall be deemed temporarily unemployed if for a period, verified by the department, not to exceed four consecutive weeks, the individual is unemployed due to a plant shutdown, vacation, inventory, lack of work or emergency from the individual's regular job or trade in which the individual worked full-time and will again work full-time, if the individual's employment, although temporarily suspended, has not been terminated.

Iowa Code section 96.4(3) provides:

An unemployed individual shall be eligible to receive benefits with respect to any week only if the department finds that:

3. The individual is able to work, is available for work, and is earnestly and actively seeking work. This subsection is waived if the individual is deemed partially unemployed, while employed at the individual's regular job, as defined in section 96.1A, subsection 37, paragraph "b", unnumbered paragraph (1), or temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.1A, subsection 37, paragraph "c". The work search requirements

of this subsection and the disqualification requirement for failure to apply for, or to accept suitable work of section 96.5, subsection 3 are waived if the individual is not disqualified for benefits under section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraph "h".

Iowa Admin. R. 871-24.23(26) provides:

Availability disqualifications. The following are reasons for a claimant being disqualified for being unavailable for work.

(26) Where a claimant is still employed in a part-time job at the same hours and wages as contemplated in the original contract for hire and is not working on a reduced workweek basis difference from the contract for hire, such claimant cannot be considered partially unemployed.

Iowa Code section 96.7(2)a(2) provides:

2. Contribution rates based on benefit experience.

a. (2) The amount of regular benefits plus fifty percent of the amount of extended benefits paid to an eligible individual shall be charged against the account of the employers in the base period in the inverse chronological order in which the employment of the individual occurred.

(a) However, if the individual to whom the benefits are paid is in the employ of a base period employer at the time the individual is receiving the benefits, and the individual is receiving the same employment from the employer that the individual received during the individual's base period, benefits paid to the individual shall not be charged against the account of the employer. This provision applies to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding subparagraph (3) and section 96.8, subsection 5.

(b) An employer's account shall not be charged with benefits paid to an individual who left the work of the employer voluntarily without good cause attributable to the employer or to an individual who was discharged for misconduct in connection with the individual's employment, or to an individual who failed without good cause, either to apply for available, suitable work or to accept suitable work with that employer, but shall be charged to the unemployment compensation fund. This paragraph applies to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5.

(c) The amount of benefits paid to an individual, which is solely due to wage credits considered to be in an individual's base period due to the exclusion and substitution of calendar quarters from the individual's base period under section 96.23, shall be charged against the account of the employer responsible for paying the workers' compensation benefits for temporary total disability or during a healing period under section 85.33, section 85.34, subsection 1, or section 85A.17, or responsible for paying indemnity insurance benefits.

From March 15, 2020 until October 3, 2020 and from November 28, 2020 until January 16, 2021, claimant was not employed under the same hours and wages as contemplated at hire. Claimant was either totally or partially unemployed depending on whether he performed work for employer during any given benefit week. Benefits are allowed provided claimant is otherwise eligible and subject to claimant reporting wages earned.

The issue of whether the employer will be charged for regular, state-funded unemployment insurance benefits paid due to Covid-19 will be remanded to the Tax Bureau of Iowa Workforce Development for a determination in accordance with the agency's announcement that it would not charge employers for benefits paid due to Covid-19.

DECISION:

Claimant's appeal was timely. The February 15, 2021 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is modified in favor of appellant. From March 15, 2020 until October 3, 2020 and from November 28, 2020 until January 16, 2021, claimant was not employed at the same hours and wages as agreed upon at the time of hire and, therefore, was totally or partially unemployed. Benefits are allowed, provided claimant is otherwise eligible and subject to claimant reporting wages earned.

REMAND:

The issue of whether employer should be charged for the unemployment insurance benefits paid to claimant because of Covid-19 is remanded to the Tax Bureau of Iowa Workforce Development for a decision.

The issue of whether claimant accurately reported wages earned is remanded to the Investigations and Recovery Bureau of Iowa Workforce Development for an investigation and decision.



Adrienne C. Williamson
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May 28, 2021
Decision Dated and Mailed

acw/ol