

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

---

**THOMAS G FECHT**  
Claimant

**APPEAL 18A-UI-00840-SC-T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT**

**OC: 12/10/17  
Claimant: Appellant (1R)**

---

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal  
Iowa Code § 96.4(3) - Able and Available  
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.2(1)e – Notice to Report  
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(11) – Failure to Report

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Thomas G. Fecht (claimant) filed a timely appeal from the January 8, 2018, reference 02 unemployment insurance decision that denied benefits because of a failure to report as directed. After due notice was issued, a telephone conference hearing was set for February 12, 2018. The claimant participated.

**ISSUE:**

Is the appeal timely?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: A disqualification decision was mailed to the claimant's last known address of record on January 8, 2018. He received the decision within ten days, but did not read it as he was sick with the flu. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Bureau by January 18, 2018. The appeal was not filed until January 19, 2018, which is after the date noticed on the disqualification decision, because that was when he finally read his mail and turned his phone on. That same day, the claimant contacted IWD about his pension, but did not receive a return call. He also filed his appeal explaining that the pension was from John Deere and not his base period employer.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant's appeal is untimely.

Iowa Code section 96.6(2) provides, in pertinent part:

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. . . . 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.

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. Bd. 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. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 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. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 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. Iowa Emp't Sec. Comm'n*, 217 N.W.2d 255 (Iowa 1974); *Smith v. Iowa Emp't Sec. Comm'n*, 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's 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 Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(2). As the appeal was not timely filed pursuant to Iowa Code § 96.6(2), the administrative law judge lacks jurisdiction to make a determination with respect to the nature of the appeal. See *Beardslee v. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979) and *Franklin v. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979).

**DECISION:**

The January 8, 2018, reference 02, unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect.

**REMAND:**

The issue of whether the claimant's contacts with IWD about his pension on January 19, 2018 when he called and filed his appeal render him available for work is remanded to the Benefits Bureau for an initial investigation and determination.

---

Stephanie R. Callahan  
Administrative Law Judge

---

Decision Dated and Mailed

src/scn