

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

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**SIERA WEBB**  
Claimant

**MCFARLAND CLINIC PC**  
Employer

**APPEAL 20A-UI-08235-HP-T**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**OC: 03/22/20**  
**Claimant: Appellant (1)**

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Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Ability to and Availability for Work  
Iowa Code § 96.5(1) – Voluntary Quitting  
Iowa Code § 96.5(2) – Discharge for Misconduct  
Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Claimant Siera Webb filed an appeal from an April 15, 2020 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that found the claimant was not eligible for unemployment insurance benefits based upon her voluntarily quitting work without good cause attributable to the employer. The parties were properly notified of the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on August 25, 2020. At the time of the hearing Webb appeared and testified. No one appeared on behalf of the employer.

**ISSUE:**

Did the claimant file a timely appeal?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

A decision that disqualified Webb from receipt of unemployment insurance benefits was mailed to the Webb's correct address of record on April 15, 2020. Webb testified she received the decision in the mail shortly after the decision was issued. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Section by April 25, 2020. Webb filed her appeal electronically on July 13, 2020. Webb applied for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance benefits regarding her self-employment as a driver for Uber and Lyft. A representative from Iowa Workforce Development told her to appeal the decision, reference 01, dated April 15, 2020.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

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

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 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. 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 § 96.4. The employer has the burden of proving that the claimant is disqualified for benefits pursuant to § 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 § 96.5, subsection 10, and has the burden of proving that a voluntary quit pursuant to § 96.5, subsection 1, was for good cause attributable to the employer and that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving § 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 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.** 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 § 96.8, subsection 5.

(emphasis added).

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).

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 871 Iowa Administrative Code 24.35(2). As such, the appeal was not timely filed pursuant to Iowa Code section 96.6(2) and the administrative law judge lacks jurisdiction to make a determination with respect to the nature of the appeal. See *Beardslee*, 276 N.W.2d at 377; *Franklin*, 277 N.W.2d at 881.

**DECISION:**

**Regular Unemployment Insurance Benefits Under State Law**

The April 15, 2020 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision denying unemployment insurance benefits is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely and the decision of the representative remains in effect.

**Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (“PUA”) Under the Federal CARES Act**

Even though the claimant is not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits under state law, the claimant may be eligible for federally funded unemployment insurance benefits under the CARES Act. Section 2102 of the CARES Act creates a new temporary federal program called Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (“PUA”) that may provide up to 39 weeks of unemployment benefits. An individual receiving PUA benefits may also receive an additional \$600 weekly benefit amount under the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (“FPUC”) program if the individual is eligible for PUA benefits for the week claimed. The FPUC additional \$600 payment per week ends as of July 25th in Iowa. This means the \$600 weekly additional benefit will stop and at this time, no extension or change to the program has been made by Congress at this time. This does mean that you will see a corresponding decrease in your weekly benefit amount. The FPUC payments are not a state benefit and Iowa is unable to make any changes to the availability of this benefit. If a change takes place to this benefit in the future, IWD will share on the IWD website and social media. This decision does not address whether the claimant is eligible for PUA. If the claimant wishes to receive PUA benefits, the claimant must apply for PUA, as noted in the instructions provided in the “Note to Claimant” below:

**Note to Claimant:** If this decision determines you are not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits and 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 currently 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>.** This decision denies benefits. If this decision becomes final or if you are not eligible for PUA, you may have an overpayment of benefits.



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Heather L. Palmer  
Administrative Law Judge  
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August 28, 2020  
Decision Dated and Mailed

hlp/sam