

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

MICHAEL SLATER
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 14A-UI-03460-BT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

IOWA DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION
Employer

**OC: 04/28/13
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Iowa Code § 96.5-5 - Receipt of Pension Benefits
Iowa Code § 96.6-2 - Timeliness of Appeal

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Michael Slater (claimant) appealed an unemployment insurance decision dated July 18, 2013, (reference 02), which held that he would receive a reduced unemployment weekly benefit due to the receipt of a pension from the Iowa Department of Transportation (employer). After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was held on April 22, 2014. The claimant participated in the hearing. The employer did not comply with the hearing notice instructions and did not call in to provide a telephone number at which a representative could be contacted, and therefore, did not participate. Exhibit D-1 was admitted into evidence.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether the claimant filed a timely appeal or established a legal excuse for filing a late appeal.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and considered all of the evidence in the record, finds that: A decision reducing weekly benefits due to the receipt of pension pay was mailed to the claimant's last-known address of record on July 18, 2013. The claimant received the decision. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Section by July 28, 2013. The claimant never filed an appeal to the decision but did file an appeal to an overpayment decision that resulted from this decision. The appeal to the overpayment decision was filed on March 31, 2014.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The law states that an unemployment insurance decision is final unless a party appeals the decision within ten days after the decision was mailed to the party's last known address. Iowa Code § 96.6-2. The unemployment insurance rules provide that if the failure to file a timely appeal was due to any Agency error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United

States Postal Service, it would be considered timely. 871 IAC 24.35(2). Without timely notice of a disqualification, no meaningful opportunity for appeal exists. See *Smith v. Iowa Employment Security Commission*, 212 N.W.2d 471, 472 (Iowa 1973).

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).

Pursuant to rules 871 IAC 26.2(96)(1) and 871 IAC 24.35(96)(1), appeals are considered filed when postmarked, if mailed. *Messina v. IDJS*, 341 N.W.2d 52 (Iowa 1983).

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 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 claimant's appeal in this case was not timely. The unemployment insurance decision dated July 18, 2013, (reference 02), is affirmed. The claimant's weekly benefit amount is reduced effective June 1, 2013, due to his receipt of pension payments.

Susan D. Ackerman
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

sda/pjs