

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

LATRISHA J RIFE
Claimant

EMERALD GREEN LAWN CARE INC
Employer

APPEAL NO. 20A-UI-01551-B2T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 06/09/19
Claimant: Respondent (1)

Iowa Code § 96.6-2 – Timeliness of Appeal
Iowa Code § 96.5-1 – Voluntary Quit
Iowa Code § 96.3-7 – Recovery of Overpayment of Benefits
871 IA Admin. Code 24(10) – Employer Participation in Fact Finding

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Employer filed an appeal from the June 26, 2019, reference 01, decision that granted benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held on April 23, 2020. The claimant did participate. The employer did participate through Jeff Pickle. Both parties agreed to waive time and notice and discuss the issue of timely appeal.

ISSUES:

Whether the appeal is timely?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: A decision was mailed to the employer's last known address of record on June 26, 2019. Employer stated that they did not know whether they received the decision that was sent to the correct address as the decision did not appear in the employee file where employer believed it should have been. Employer acknowledged that they did participate in fact finding and further acknowledged that they knew they were to receive the Unemployment Insurance Decision shortly after the hearing. Employer stated that they did not check on this decision for the next eight months as it is difficult to get through to IWD when you call in. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Section by July 6, 2019. The appeal was not filed until February 18, 2020, which is after the date noticed on the disqualification decision.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

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 begin 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).

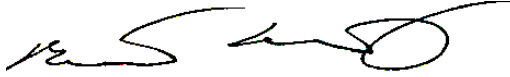
Pursuant to rules Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-26.2(96)(1) and Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(96)(1), appeals are considered filed when postmarked, if mailed. *Messina v. IDJS*, 341 N.W.2d 52 (Iowa 1983).

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 Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(2). The administrative law judge further concludes that 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 v. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979) and *Franklin v. IDJS*, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979).

DECISION:

The June 26, 2019, reference 01, decision is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect.



Blair A. Bennett
Administrative Law Judge

April 24, 2020
Decision Dated and Mailed

bab/scn