

**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF INSPECTIONS AND APPEALS  
ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS DIVISION, UI APPEALS BUREAU**

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**DOUGLAS E EGGERS**

Claimant

**BURLINGTON STAGE LINES LTD**

Employer

**APPEAL NO. 23A-UI-02258-JT-T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**OC: 12/06/20**

**Claimant: Appellant (1)**

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Iowa Code Section 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal

Iowa Code Section 96.4(3) – Able & Available

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

On February 27, 2023, Douglas Eggers (claimant) filed a late appeal from the August 11, 2022 (reference 02) decision that denied benefits for the period beginning December 6, 2020, based on the deputy's conclusion the claimant requested and was approved for a leave of absence, was voluntarily unemployed, and was not available for work. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held on March 21, 2023. Claimant participated and presented additional testimony through Dustin Peterson. Caylie Cherry represented the employer. The hearing in this matter was consolidated with the hearing in Appeal Number 23A-UI-02259-JT-T. Exhibit A, the 3-page appeal packet, was received into evidence. The administrative law judge took official notice of the following Agency administrative records: the reference 01, 02 and 03 decisions, DBIN, KCCO, WAGEA, WAGEC, NMRO, the Employment Appeal Board remand decision in Hearing Number 21B-UI-02342 and the administrative law judge decision in Appeal Number 21R-UI-12889-DG-T.

**ISSUES:**

Whether the appeal from the August 11, 2022 (reference 02) decision was timely. Whether there is good cause to treat the appeal as timely.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds:

On August 11, 2022, Iowa Workforce Development mailed the August 11, 2022 (reference 02) decision to the claimant's Cedar Rapids last-known address of record. The reference 02 decision denied benefits for the period beginning December 6, 2020, based on the deputy's conclusion the claimant requested and was approved for a leave of absence, was voluntarily unemployed, and was not available for work. The reference 02 decision stated the decision would become final unless an appeal was postmarked by August 21, 2022 or was received by the Appeals Section by that date. The decision stated that if the deadline for appeal fell on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, the deadline would be extended to the next working day. August 21, 2022 was a Sunday and the next working day was Monday, August 22, 2022. The

claimant asserts he did not receive the reference 02 decision when it was mailed to him. The claimant did not take steps to file an appeal from the reference 02 decision by the August 22, 2022 extended appeal deadline.

On August 26, 2022, Iowa Workforce Development mailed the August 26, 2022 (reference 03) overpayment decision to the claimant's Cedar Rapids last-known address of record. The reference 03 decision held the claimant was overpaid \$3,349.00 in regular state benefits for seven weeks between December 6, 2020 and January 23, 2021, due to the reference 02 decision that denied benefits in connection with the determination the claimant was not available for work with Burlington Stage Lines Ltd. The reference 03 decision also held the claimant was overpaid \$1,200.00 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) benefits for four weeks between December 27, 2020 and January 23, 2021, due to the reference 02 disqualification decision. The reference 03 decision stated the decision would become final unless an appeal was postmarked by September 4, 2022 or was received by the Appeals Section by that date. The decision stated that if the deadline for appeal fell on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, the deadline would be extended to the next working day. September 4, 2022 was the Sunday before Labor Day and the next working day was Tuesday, September 6, 2022. The claimant asserts he did not receive the reference 03 decision when it was mailed to him. The claimant did not take steps to file an appeal from the reference 03 decision by the September 6, 2022 extended appeal deadline.

The claimant asserts he did not receive the August 11, 2022 (reference 02) disqualification decision or the August 26, 2022 (reference 03) overpayment decision when those decisions were mailed to the claimant. The claimant resided at the Cedar Rapids address of record during the period in which the decisions were mailed. The claimant adds that he was preoccupied with an outside project during that time. It is highly unlikely that two decisions mailed from Des Moines to the claimant's house in Cedar Rapids within 15 days of one another would both be lost in the mail. Given this improbability, and the claimant's decision to ignore a subsequent overpayment repayment demand document, the weight of the evidence indicates the claimant received the decisions in a timely manner, but elected not to take action in response to receiving them.

The claimant advises that he received an unspecified overpayment document in September or October 2022 that demanded repayment of overpayment amounts. The claimant advises that in lieu of taking action in response to the overpayment document, he did nothing and "hoped the State of Iowa would work it out," meaning he hoped the overpayment would go away on its own. The claimant advises that he received two or three overpayment statements and that the most recent overpayment statement was mailed February 1, 2023.

On February 27, 2023, the claimant went to the Cedar Rapids IowaWORKS Center, obtained a new copy of the August 11, 2022 (reference 02) decision, completed an appeal form, and delivered the completed appeal form and the copy of the reference 02 decision to the IWD representative. The claimant made no mention on the appeal form about not receiving the reference 02 disqualification decision or the reference 03 overpayment decision in a timely manner. The copy of the reference 02 decision attached to the claimant's appeal is from the IWD computer system, but is not an exact copy of the decision that would have been mailed to the claimant and the employer with both names and addresses on the same decision. The IowaWORKS personnel date-stamped the appeal received on February 27, 2023. On March 2, 2023, IowaWORKS personnel faxed the appeal to the Appeals Bureau. The faxed materials included a fax cover sheet, the appeal form, and the copy of the reference 02 decision that omitted the employer's name and address. The Appeals Bureau received the appeal on March 2, 2023 and treated it as an appeal from the reference 02 and 03 decisions.

## REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

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 section 96.4. The employer has the burden of proving that the claimant is disqualified for benefits pursuant to section 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 section 96.5, subsections 10 and 11, and has the burden of proving that a voluntary quit pursuant to section 96.5, subsection 1, was for good cause attributable to the employer and that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving section 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 section 96.8, subsection 5.

The ten-day deadline for appeal begins to run on the date Workforce Development mails the decision to the parties. The "decision date" found in the upper right-hand portion of the Agency 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).

An appeal submitted by mail is deemed filed 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 was 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. See Iowa Administrative Code rule 871-24.35(1)(a). See also *Messina v. IDJS*, 341 N.W.2d 52 (Iowa 1983). An appeal submitted by any other means is deemed filed on the date it is received by the Unemployment Insurance Division of Iowa Workforce Development. See Iowa Administrative Code rule 871-24.35(1)(b).

The evidence in the record establishes 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). One 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).

No submission shall be considered timely if the delay in filing was unreasonable, as determined by the division after considering the circumstances in the case. See Iowa Administrative Code rule 871-24.35(2)(c).

The weight of the evidence in the record establishes a February 27, 2023 untimely appeal from the August 11, 2022 (reference 02) decision. The weight of the evidence establishes that the claimant received the reference 02 decision in a timely manner, had a reasonable opportunity to file an appeal by the appeal deadline, but unreasonably delayed filing the appeal to February 27, 2023. Even if the administrative law judge had found the claimant's improbable assertion of non-receipt of the reference 02 decision credible and reliable, the claimant was well aware of the disqualification determination, the overpayment determination, and the affected period as of September or October 2022 when the claimant commenced receiving repayment demand letters from IWD. The weight of the evidence establishes the late filing of the appeal was not attributable to the Iowa Workforce Development error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United States Postal Service. There is not good cause to treat the late appeal as a timely appeal. See Iowa Administrative Code rule 871-24.35(2). Because the appeal was untimely, the administrative law judge lacks jurisdiction to disturb the decision from which the appellant appeals in the present matter. 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 from the August 11, 2022 (reference 02) decision was untimely. The decision that denied benefits for the period beginning December 6, 2020, based on the deputy's conclusion the claimant requested and was approved for a leave of absence, was voluntarily unemployed, and was not available for work remains in effect and applies to the claimant period of December 6, 2020 through January 30, 2021.



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James E. Timberland  
Administrative Law Judge

March 27, 2023  
Decision Dated and Mailed

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**APPEAL RIGHTS.** If you disagree with the decision, you or any interested party may:

1. Appeal to the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days of the date under the judge's signature by submitting a written appeal via mail, fax, or online to:

**Employment Appeal Board  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor – Lucas Building  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319  
Fax: (515)281-7191  
Online: eab.iowa.gov**

The appeal period will be extended to the next business day if the last day to appeal falls on a weekend or a legal holiday.

**AN APPEAL TO THE BOARD SHALL STATE CLEARLY:**

- 1) The name, address, and social security number of the claimant.
- 2) A reference to the decision from which the appeal is taken.
- 3) That an appeal from such decision is being made and such appeal is signed.
- 4) The grounds upon which such appeal is based.

An Employment Appeal Board decision is final agency action. If a party disagrees with the Employment Appeal Board decision, they may then file a petition for judicial review in district court.

2. If no one files an appeal of the judge's decision with the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days, the decision becomes final agency action, and you have the option to file a petition for judicial review in District Court within thirty (30) days after the decision becomes final. Additional information on how to file a petition can be found at Iowa Code §17A.19, which is online at <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf>.

**Note to Parties:** YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in the appeal or obtain a lawyer or other interested party to do so provided there is no expense to Workforce Development. If you wish to be represented by a lawyer, you may obtain the services of either a private attorney or one whose services are paid for with public funds.

**Note to Claimant:** It is important that you file your weekly claim as directed, while this appeal is pending, to protect your continuing right to benefits.

**SERVICE INFORMATION:**

A true and correct copy of this decision was mailed to each of the parties listed.

**DERECHOS DE APELACIÓN.** Si no está de acuerdo con la decisión, usted o cualquier parte interesada puede:

1. Apelar a la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo dentro de los quince (15) días de la fecha bajo la firma del juez presentando una apelación por escrito por correo, fax o en línea a:

**Employment Appeal Board  
4th Floor – Lucas Building  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319  
Fax: (515)281-7191  
En línea: eab.iowa.gov**

El período de apelación se extenderá hasta el siguiente día hábil si el último día para apelar cae en fin de semana o día feriado legal.

**UNA APELACIÓN A LA JUNTA DEBE ESTABLECER CLARAMENTE:**

- 1) El nombre, dirección y número de seguro social del reclamante.
- 2) Una referencia a la decisión de la que se toma la apelación.
- 3) Que se interponga recurso de apelación contra tal decisión y se firme dicho recurso.
- 4) Los fundamentos en que se funda dicho recurso.

Una decisión de la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo es una acción final de la agencia. Si una de las partes no está de acuerdo con la decisión de la Junta de Apelación de Empleo, puede presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el tribunal de distrito.

2. Si nadie presenta una apelación de la decisión del juez ante la Junta de Apelaciones Laborales dentro de los quince (15) días, la decisión se convierte en acción final de la agencia y usted tiene la opción de presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el Tribunal de Distrito dentro de los treinta (30) días después de que la decisión adquiriera firmeza. Puede encontrar información adicional sobre cómo presentar una petición en el Código de Iowa §17A.19, que está en línea en <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf>.

**Nota para las partes:** USTED PUEDE REPRESENTARSE en la apelación u obtener un abogado u otra parte interesada para que lo haga, siempre que no haya gastos para Workforce Development. Si desea ser representado por un abogado, puede obtener los servicios de un abogado privado o uno cuyos servicios se paguen con fondos públicos.

**Nota para el reclamante:** es importante que presente su reclamo semanal según las instrucciones, mientras esta apelación está pendiente, para proteger su derecho continuo a los beneficios.

**SERVICIO DE INFORMACIÓN:**

Se envió por correo una copia fiel y correcta de esta decisión a cada una de las partes enumeradas.