

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

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**JEANETTE R MULLER**  
Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 23A-UI-02708-JT-T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT**

**OC: 01/15/23  
Claimant: Appellant (2)**

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Iowa Code Section 96.4(3) – Able & Available, Work Search Warning

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

On March 13, 2023, Jeanette Muller (claimant) filed a timely appeal from the March 7, 2023 (reference 01) decision that reminded the claimant she was required to engage in four reemployment activities, including three job applications, each benefit week and that warned the claimant could be disqualified for benefits for future weeks in which the claimant did not meet the work search requirement. The reference 01 decision cited the weekly claim for the week ending March 4, 2023 as the basis for the work search warning. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held on April 3, 2023. Claimant participated. Exhibit A, the online appeal, and Exhibit B, the IowaWORKS.gov Summary of Employer Job Contacts, was received into evidence. The administrative law judge took official notice of the following Agency administrative records: KCCO, DBRO, and IowaWORKS.gov

**ISSUES:**

Whether the claimant was able to work and available for work during the week that ended March 4, 2023.

Whether the claimant met the work search/reemployment activities requirements during the week that ended March 4, 2023.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

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

Jeanette Muller (claimant) established an original claim for benefits that was effective January 15, 2023 and made weekly claims that included a claim for the week that ended March 4, 2023. During that week the claimant applied for four jobs within her field. The claimant uploaded appropriate weekly work search information to the IowaWORKS.gov database. The claimant subsequently encountered a technical issue with the IowaWORKS.gov system when she attempted to certify her work search information for the week that ended March 4, 2023. IowaWORKS.gov record reflect the claimant successfully certified her work search information on March 6, 2023. Iowa Workforce Development records (KCCO) indicate the claimant made her weekly claim on March 5, 2023. The IWD weekly claim system erroneously documented zero employer contacts for the week that ended March 4, 2023.

During the week that ended March 4, 2023, the claimant was physically and mentally able to work and available to look for and report for work.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

Iowa Code section 96.4(3) provides:

An unemployed individual shall be eligible to receive benefits with respect to any week only if the department finds that:

3. The individual is able to work, is available for work, and is earnestly and actively seeking work. This subsection is waived if the individual is deemed partially unemployed, while employed at the individual's regular job, as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "b", unnumbered paragraph (1), or temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "c". The work search requirements of this subsection and the disqualification requirement for failure to apply for, or to accept suitable work of section 96.5, subsection 3 are waived if the individual is not disqualified for benefits under section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraph "h".

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22(2) provides:

Benefits eligibility conditions. For an individual to be eligible to receive benefits the department must find that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work. The individual bears the burden of establishing that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work.

(2) Available for work. The availability requirement is satisfied when an individual is willing, able, and ready to accept suitable work which the individual does not have good cause to refuse, that is, the individual is genuinely attached to the labor market. Since, under unemployment insurance laws, it is the availability of an individual that is required to be tested, the labor market must be described in terms of the individual. A labor market for an individual means a market for the type of service which the individual offers in the geographical area in which the individual offers the service. Market in that sense does not mean that job vacancies must exist; the purpose of unemployment insurance is to compensate for lack of job vacancies. It means only that the type of services which an individual is offering is generally performed in the geographical area in which the individual is offering the services.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(27) provides:

Availability disqualifications. The following are reasons for a claimant being disqualified for being unavailable for work.

(27) Failure to report on a claim that a claimant made any effort to find employment will make a claimant ineligible for benefits during the period. Mere registration at the workforce development center does not establish that a claimant is able and available for suitable work. It is essential that such claimant must actively and earnestly seek work.

At the time the claimant established the original claim for benefits, the application process required the claimant acknowledge an obligation to read, know and follow the information

contained in the Unemployment Insurance Claimant Handbook. The portion of the handbook regarding Continued Eligibility begins with the following notice:

#### WORK SEARCH REQUIREMENTS

**NOTICE:** AS OF JANUARY 9TH, 2022, REEMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES REQUIREMENTS CHANGED FROM TWO (2) TO FOUR (4). THREE (3) OF THOSE REEMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES ARE REQUIRED TO BE JOB APPLICATIONS. YOU ARE REQUIRED TO CREATE AN IOWAWORKS PROFILE AND CERTIFY YOUR REEMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES. YOU WILL UTILIZE IOWAWORKS TO CERTIFY YOUR REEMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES. YOU ARE REQUIRED TO CERTIFY YOUR REEMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES PRIOR TO FILING YOUR WEEKLY CLAIM.

Unemployment Insurance Claimant Handbook 2022. In addition, the confirmation page at the end of the initial application process would have provided similar information.

The claimant was able to work, available for work, and actively and earnestly engaged in a search for new employment during the week that ended March 4, 2023. During that week, the claimant met the work search/reemployment activities requirements by applying for four jobs in her field. The claimant is eligible for benefits for the week that ended March 4, 2023, provided she meets all other eligibility requirements. The work search warning decision is REVERSED.

#### **DECISION:**

The March 7, 2023 (reference 01) decision is REVERSED. The claimant was able to work, available for work, and actively and earnestly engaged in a search for new employment during the week that ended March 4, 2023. During that week, the claimant met the work search/reemployment activities requirements by applying for four jobs in her field. The claimant is eligible for benefits for the week that ended March 4, 2023, provided she meets all other eligibility requirements.



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James E. Timberland  
Administrative Law Judge

April 11, 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.