

IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Section
1000 East Grand—Des Moines, Iowa 50319
DECISION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
68-0157 (7-97) – 3091078 - EI

JASON L MCBRIDE
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LABOR READY MIDWEST INC
c/o TALX UC EXPRESS
PO BOX 283
ST LOUIS MO 63166-0283

Appeal Number: 05A-UI-01593-DT
OC: 12/12/04 R: 03
Claimant: Respondent (1)

This Decision Shall Become Final, unless within fifteen (15) days from the date below, you or any interested party appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by submitting either a signed letter or a signed written Notice of Appeal, directly to the **Employment Appeal Board, 4th Floor—Lucas Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319**.

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.

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.

YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in this appeal or you may 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. It is important that you file your claim as directed, while this appeal is pending, to protect your continuing right to benefits.

(Administrative Law Judge)

(Decision Dated & Mailed)

Section 96.6-2 – Timeliness of Protest

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Labor Ready Midwest, Inc. (employer) appealed a representative's February 1, 2005 decision (reference 03) that concluded Billy R. Hanover (claimant) was qualified to receive unemployment insurance benefits and the employer's account might be charged because the employer's protest was not timely filed. Hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record for a telephone hearing to be held at 9:30 a.m. on March 2, 2005. The employer indicated that John Bruce would participate in the hearing. When the administrative law judge contacted Mr. Bruce for the hearing, he acknowledged that he had no information regarding the preliminary necessary issue regarding the timing of the employer's protest, and agreed that the administrative law judge should make a determination on that issue based upon a review of the information in the administrative file. Based on a review of the information in the

administrative file and the law, the administrative law judge enters the following findings of fact, reasoning and conclusions of law, and decision.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The claimant established a claim for unemployment insurance benefits effective December 12, 2004. A notice of claim was mailed to the employer on December 14, 2004. No evidence was provided to rebut the presumption that the employer or the employer's agent received the notice within a few days thereafter. The notice contained a warning that a protest must be postmarked or received by the Agency by December 27, 2004. The protest was not filed until it was signed on December 28, 2004 and transmitted thereafter, which is after the date noticed on the notice of claim. No explanation was offered to account for the delay.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The issue in this matter is whether the employer filed a timely protest. The law provides that all interested parties shall be promptly notified about an individual filing a claim. The parties have ten days from the date of mailing the notice of claim to protest payment of benefits to the claimant. Iowa Code § 96.6-2. Another portion of Iowa Code § 96.6-2 dealing with timeliness of an appeal from a representative's decision states an appeal must be filed within ten days after notification of that decision was mailed. In addressing an issue of timeliness of an appeal under that portion of this Code section, the Iowa Supreme Court has held that this statute clearly limits the time to do so, and compliance with the appeal notice provision is mandatory and jurisdictional. Beardslee v. IDJS, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979).

The administrative law judge considers the reasoning and holding of the Beardslee court controlling on the portion of Iowa Code § 96.6-2 which deals with the time limit to file a protest after the notice of claim has been mailed to the employer. Compliance with the protest provisions is jurisdictional unless the facts of a case show that the notice was invalid. Beardslee, 276 N.W.2d 373, 377 (Iowa 1979); see also In re Appeal of Elliott, 319 N.W.2d 244, 247 (Iowa 1982). Pursuant to rules 871 IAC 26.2(96)(1) and 871 IAC 24.35(96)(1), protests are considered filed when postmarked, if mailed. Messina v. IDJS, 341 N.W.2d 52 (Iowa 1983). The question in this case thus becomes whether the employer was deprived of a reasonable opportunity to assert a protest 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 employer did have a reasonable opportunity to file a timely protest.

871 IAC 24.35(2) provides in pertinent part:

The submission of any payment, appeal, application, request, notice, objection, petition, report or other information or document not within the specified statutory or regulatory period shall be considered timely if it is established to the satisfaction of the department that the delay in submission was due to department error or misinformation or to delay or other action of the United States postal service or its successor.

The employer has not shown that the delay for not complying with the jurisdictional time limit was due to department error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United States Postal Service. Since the employer filed the protest late without any legal excuse, the employer did not file a timely protest. Since the administrative law judge concludes that the protest was not timely filed pursuant to Iowa Code § 96.6-2, the administrative law judge lacks jurisdiction to make a determination with respect to the nature of the protest and the reasons for the claimant's separation from employment, regardless of the merits of the employer's protest. See,

Beardslee v. IDJS, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979); Franklin v. IDJS, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979) and Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company v. Employment Appeal Board, 465 N.W.2d 674 (Iowa App. 1990).

DECISION:

The February 1, 2005 (reference 03) decision is affirmed. The protest in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect. Benefits are allowed, provided the claimant is otherwise eligible.

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