IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU

BRIANNA M BLOCKER Claimant **EXPRESS SERVICES INC** Employer	**APPEAL 21A-UI-07315-S1-T** **ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE DECISION** **OC: 05/31/20** **Claimant: Respondent (6)**

Iowa Code § 96.19(38)a & b – Total and Partial Unemployment
Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Ability to and Availability for Work
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(26) – Able & Available – Availability Disqualifications
Iowa Code § 96.7(2)a(2) – Same Base Period Employment
Iowa Code § 17A.12(3) - Default Decision
871 IAC 26.14(7) - Dismissal of Appeal on Default

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

An appeal was filed from a representative's unemployment insurance decision dated March 5, 2021, (reference 01), that concluded the claimant/respondent was eligible for unemployment insurance benefits after a separation from employment from the employer/appellant. Notices of hearing were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record for a telephone hearing to be held at 8:00 a.m. on May 20, 2021. A review of the Appeals Bureau's conference call system indicates that the employer/appellant failed to respond to the hearing notice to provide a telephone number at which the employer/appellant could be reached for the hearing so no hearing was held.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether the underlying decision should be affirmed and the appeal should be effectively dismissed based upon the employer/appellant's failure to participate in the hearing.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The parties were properly notified of the scheduled hearing on this appeal. A Notice of Appeal and Hearing was mailed to both parties on April 12, 2021. There is no evidence suggesting the employer/appellant did not receive the hearing notice prior to the hearing scheduled on May 20, 2021.

The front page of the hearing notices states:

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

YOU MUST PROVIDE YOUR PHONE NUMBER TO THE APPEALS BUREAU AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. If you do not follow these instructions, the judge will not call you for the hearing.

The back page of the hearing notice provided further instruction and warning:

Register/Appeal Hearing Procedure

You must register a phone number for each hearing by following the instructions on the front of this notice.

Failure to Participate
If you do not participate in the hearing, the judge may dismiss the appeal or issue a decision without considering your evidence. The Appeals Bureau does not have a phone number for this hearing unless you provide it to us by following the instructions on the other side of this page. If you do not follow those instructions the judge will not call you for the hearing. 871 IAC 26.14(7).

The information quoted above was also provided in Spanish on the hearing notice.

The employer/appellant failed to provide a telephone number at which the employer/appellant could be reached for the hearing, did not participate in the hearing, or request a postponement of the hearing as required by the hearing notice. Therefore, no hearing was held.

The representative's decision concluded that the claimant/respondent was eligible for unemployment insurance benefits.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The Iowa Administrative Procedure Act at Iowa Code § 17A.12(3) provides that if a party fails to appear or participate in a hearing after proper service of notice, the judge may enter a default decision or proceed with the hearing and make a decision in the absence of the party. The statute further states that if a party makes a timely request to vacate the decision and shows good cause for failing to appear, the judge shall vacate the decision and conduct another hearing.

Agency rule 871 IAC 26.14(7) provides that if the appealing party has not responded to a notice of telephone hearing by providing the Appeals Bureau with the names and telephone numbers of the persons who are participating in the hearing by the scheduled starting time of the hearing or is not available at the telephone number provided, the judge may decide the appealing party is in default and dismiss the appeal as provided in Iowa Code § 17A.12(3). The record may be reopened if the absent party makes a request to reopen the hearing and shows good cause for reopening the hearing. The rule further states that failure to read or follow the instructions on the notice of hearing is not good cause for reopening the record. 871 IAC 26.14(7)c.

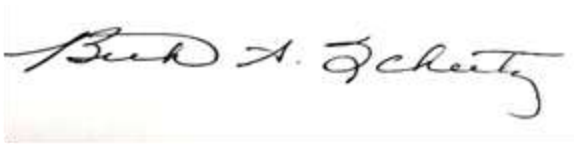
The employer/appellant appealed the unemployment insurance decision but failed to participate in the scheduled appeal hearing. The employer/appellant has therefore defaulted on the employer/appellant's appeal pursuant to Iowa Code § 17A.12(3) and 871 IAC 26.14(7), and the representative's decision remains in force and effect.

If the appellant disagrees with this decision, a written request to reopen the record must be made to the administrative law judge within 15 days after the mailing date of this decision. The

written request should be mailed to the administrative law judge at the address listed at the end of this decision and must explain the emergency or other good cause that prevented the appellant from participating in the hearing at the scheduled time. The appellant also has the option to appeal the decision directly to the Employment Appeal Board, whose address is listed at the beginning of the decision.

DECISION:

The representative's unemployment insurance decision dated March 5, 2021, (reference 01), is affirmed. The decision allowing benefits remains in effect.



Beth A. Scheetz
Administrative Law Judge
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Fax 515-478-3528

May 28, 2021
Decision Dated and Mailed

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