

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

RANDY J LONG
Claimant

APPEAL 20A-UI-15457-CL-T
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

**IOWA WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

OC: 04/19/20
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Iowa Code § 96.3(7) – Recovery of Benefit Overpayment
Iowa Code § 96.6(2) - Timeliness of Appeal

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

On November 20, 2020, the claimant filed an appeal from the November 9, 2020, (reference 05) unemployment insurance decision that found the claimant overpaid benefits. The claimant was properly notified about the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on January 25, 2021. Claimant participated personally and through general manager Jeremy Oneil. Department Exhibit 1 was received.

ISSUES:

Is the appeal timely?
Was the claimant overpaid unemployment insurance benefits?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: On November 9, 2020, Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) issued a reference 05 unemployment insurance decision finding claimant overpaid regular unemployment insurance benefits. The decision warned that an appeal was due by November 19, 2020. On November 10, 2020, IWD issued a reference 06 unemployment insurance decision finding claimant overpaid Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation benefits. The reference 06 decision warned that an appeal was due by November 20, 2020. Although claimant had the decisions for about one week, he did not file an appeal until November 20, 2020, after an appeal for the reference 05 decision was due because he failed to closely read the decision.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow the administrative law judge concludes the claimant's appeal is untimely.

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 begins 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. Bd. of Adjustment*, 239 N.W.2d 873, 92 A.L.R.3d 304 (Iowa 1976).

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 unemployment insurance 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. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 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. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 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. Iowa Emp't Sec. Comm'n*, 217 N.W.2d 255 (Iowa 1974); *Smith v. Iowa Emp't Sec. Comm'n*, 212 N.W.2d 471, 472 (Iowa 1973).

Claimant did have a reasonable opportunity to file that appeal in a timely manner and he did not do so because of his own error—which is not a reason to count the appeal as timely under the law.

The record shows that the appellant did have a reasonable opportunity to file a timely appeal. The administrative law judge concludes that failure to follow the clear written instructions 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 § 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. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979) and *Franklin v. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979).

DECISION:

The November 9, 2020, (reference 05) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect.



Christine A. Louis
Administrative Law Judge
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February 9, 2021
Decision Dated and Mailed

cal/scn