

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

LATISHA R CLOUSE-BUSS
Claimant

APPEAL 17A-UI-01625-JP-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

MT HAMILL TAP INC
Employer

**OC: 09/04/16
Claimant: Respondent (1)**

Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Ability to and Availability for Work
Iowa Code § 96.19(38)b – Partial Unemployment
Iowa Code § 96.7(2)a(2) – Same Base Period Employment
Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The employer filed an appeal from the September 19, 2016, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that allowed benefits as of September 4, 2017. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held by telephone conference call on March 6, 2016. Claimant did not participate. Employer participated through Owner, Jackie Boone. Official notice was taken of the administrative record of claimant's wage and benefit payment history, with no objection.

ISSUE:

Is the appeal timely?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: An eligibility unemployment insurance decision was mailed to the employer's last-known address of record on September 19, 2016. The employer received the decision approximately three or four days after September 19, 2016. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Bureau by September 29, 2016. The appeal was not filed until February 13, 2017, which is after the date noticed on the unemployment insurance decision.

Ms. Boone testified she read the decision after the employer received it. Ms. Boone testified that because the decision stated "no charges will be made against [the employer's] account for benefits paid[.]" the employer did not to appeal the decision. Around February 13, 2017, the employer received a statement of charges letter (mailed February 9, 2017) from Iowa Workforce Development stating that the total charges for the quarter ending December 31, 2016 was a total of \$131.20 for claimant. After the employer received the statement of charges, the employer filed this appeal.

Claimant was hired in August 2013 and is still currently employed. Claimant was hired as a part-time waitress and was not guaranteed a set number of hours when she was hired. Claimant is on a sub list and just fills in when regular employees are absent. Claimant only worked nine times in 2016. Claimant has not worked in 2017, but the employer still considers her an employee on the sub list. Claimant has turned down hours if she was busy.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

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

Iowa Code § 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, subsection 10, 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 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).

The record shows that the appellant did have a reasonable opportunity to file a timely appeal. The employer did receive the unemployment insurance decision allowing benefits within the appeal period and decided not to appeal the decision until February 13, 2017. 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 September 19, 2016, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect.

The employer's appeal of the statement of charges as delineated in the findings of fact is noted and will be set for a hearing under a new appeal number on a new date and time. The parties will be notified about the new appeal hearing at their addresses of record.

Jeremy Peterson
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

jp/rvs