

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

**ROBERT R CLAY**  
Claimant

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT**

**APPEAL NO. 23A-UI-01304-JT-T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**OC: 10/25/15  
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Iowa Code Section 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal  
Iowa Code Section 96.5(8) – Administrative Penalty

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

On February 9, 2023, Robert Clay (claimant) filed a late appeal from the January 20, 2016 (reference 02, o.c. 10/25/15) decision that held the claimant was subject to an administrative penalty that rendered him ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits for the period of January 17, 2016 through February 27, 2016, based on the fraud investigator's conclusion the claimant made false statements concerning his employment and earnings in order to receive benefits for the period of May 31, 2015 through August 22, 2015. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held on February 28, 2023. Claimant participated. Daniel Noonan, Workforce Program Coordinator – UI Fraud, represented Iowa Workforce Development Investigation & Recovery Unit. There were four appeal numbers set for a consolidated hearing: 23A-UI-01303-JT-T, 23A-UI-01304-JT-T, 23A-UI-01305-JT-T, and 23A-UI-013036-JT-T. Exhibit A, the faxed appeal form, was received into evidence. IWD's proposed Exhibits 1-1 through 3-1 were not received into evidence. The administrative law judge took official notice of the following IWD administrative records: the January 21 2016 (reference 04, o.c. 10/26/14) decision, the January 20, 2016 (reference 02, o.c. 10/25/15) decision, the May 14, 2021 (reference 01, o.c. 04/25/21) decision, the February 3, 2023 (reference 01, o.c. 01/29/23) decision, KCCO, and NMRO.

**ISSUE:**

Whether the appeal was timely. Whether there is good cause to treat the appeal as timely.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

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

On January 20, 2016, Iowa Workforce Development mailed the January 20, 2016 (reference 02, o.c. 10/25/15) decision to the claimant's Burlington, Iowa last known address of record. The reference 02 decision held the claimant was subject to an administrative penalty that rendered him ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits for the period of January 17, 2016 through February 27, 2016, based on the fraud investigator's conclusion the claimant made false statements concerning his employment and earnings in order to receive benefits for the period

of May 31, 2015 through August 22, 2015. The reference 02 decision stated the decision would become final unless an appeal was postmarked by January 30, 2016 or was received by the Appeals Section by that date. The decision stated that if the deadline for appeal fell on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, the deadline would be extended to the next working day. January 30, 2016 was a Saturday and the next working day was Monday, February 1, 2016. The decision included clear and concise instructions for appeal.

On January 21, 2016, IWD mailed the January 21 2016 (reference 04, o.c. 10/26/14) decision to the claimant's Burlington, Iowa last-known address of record. The reference 04 decision held he was overpaid \$2,605.00 in unemployment insurance benefits for 12 weeks between May 31, 2015 and August 22, 2015, based on the investigator's determination the claimant failed to report wages earned with Manpower U.S., Inc. The reference 04 decision further held that a 15% penalty would be added to the overpayment amount, based on the investigator's determination the claimant misrepresented his wages. The reference 04 decision further held that the overpayment balance and penalty must be repaid before any further unemployment insurance benefits could be paid to the claimant. The reference 04 decision stated the decision would become final unless an appeal was postmarked by January 31, 2016 or was received by the Appeals Section by that date. The decision stated that if the deadline for appeal fell on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, the deadline would be extended to the next working day. January 31, 2016 was a Sunday and the next working day was Monday, February 1, 2016. The decision included clear and concise instructions for appeal.

The January 21 2016 (reference 04, o.c. 10/26/14) decision, the January 20, 2016 (reference 02, o.c. 10/25/15) decisions were issued after the claimant met with an IWD investigator on January 19, 2016 and signed a written statement on that date. Contrary to the claimant's vague, unsubstantiated assertion, the claimant was not incarcerated at the time the reference 02 and 04 decisions were mailed to the claimant. The weight of the evidence indicates the claimant received both decisions in a timely manner, prior to the February 1, 2016 extended appeal deadline that applied to both. The claimant did not take steps to file an appeal from the decisions on or before February 1, 2016 or at any time prior to February 9, 2023.

After a number of years had passed since the issuance of the January 21 2016 (reference 04, o.c. 10/26/14) decision and the January 20, 2016 (reference 02, o.c. 10/25/15) decision, the claimant established a new original claim that was effective May 14, 2021. The claimant provided an updated Burlington, Iowa address at the time he established the new original claim. The claimant started filing weekly claims immediately after he established the new original claim.

On May 14, 2021, Iowa Workforce Development mailed the May 14, 2021 (reference 01, o.c. 04/25/21) decision to the claimant's Burlington, Iowa last-known address of record. The reference 01 decision held the claimant was not eligible for unemployment insurance benefits in connection with the April 25, 2021 original claim because the claimant had an outstanding unpaid fraud overpayment balance. The decision held the claimant must repay the entire fraud overpayment balance, including penalty, interest, and lien fees before any additional benefits could be paid to him. The decision held Iowa unemployment insurance benefits could not be used to offset the fraud overpayment balance. The decision stated the claimant must meet all other eligibility requirements. The reference 01 decision stated the decision would become final unless an appeal was postmarked by May 24, 2021 or was received by the Appeals Section by that date. The claimant received the reference 01 decision in a timely manner, prior to the May 24, 2021 deadline for appeal. The decision included clear and concise instructions for filing an appeal. The claimant did not take steps to file an appeal from the decision by the May 24, 2021 appeal deadline or at any point prior to February 9, 2023. Based on the denial of benefits,

the claimant discontinued his weekly claims after filing a claim for the week that ended May 29, 2021. The claimant elected not to respond to the Overpayment Statements he periodically received from IWD, in which IWD demanded repayment.

The claimant established a new original claim for benefits that was effective January 29, 2023. On February 3, 2023, Iowa Workforce Development mailed the February 3, 2023 (reference 01, o.c. 01/29/23) decision to the claimant's Burlington, Iowa address of record. The new reference 01 decision held the claimant was not eligible for unemployment insurance benefits in connection with the January 29, 2023 original claim because the claimant had an outstanding unpaid fraud overpayment balance. The decision held the claimant must repay the entire fraud overpayment balance, including penalty, interest, and lien fees before any additional benefits could be paid to him. The decision held Iowa unemployment insurance benefits could not be used to offset the fraud overpayment balance. The decision stated the claimant must meet all other eligibility requirements. The reference 01 decision included a February 13, 2023 deadline for appeal.

On February 9, 2023, the claimant went to the Burlington IowaWORKS Center and completed an appeal form in response to the February 3, 2023 (reference 01, o.c. 01/29/23) decision. The claimant delivered the appeal form to the Center staff. The Center staff faxed the appeal form to the Appeals Bureau. The Appeals Bureau received the appeal on February 9, 2023 and treated it as an appeal from the January 21 2016 (reference 04, o.c. 10/26/14) decision, the January 20, 2016 (reference 02, o.c. 10/25/15) decision, the May 14, 2021 (reference 01, o.c. 04/25/21) decision, and the February 3, 2023 (reference 01, o.c. 01/29/23).

## **REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

Iowa Code section 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, subsections 10 and 11, 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-day deadline for appeal begins to run on the date Workforce Development mails the decision to the parties. The "decision date" found in the upper right-hand portion of the Agency 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. Board of Adjustment*, 239 N.W.2d 873, 92 A.L.R.3d 304 (Iowa 1976).

An appeal submitted by mail is deemed filed on the date it is mailed as shown by the postmark or in the absence of a postmark the postage meter mark of the envelope in which it was received, or if not postmarked or postage meter marked or if the mark is illegible, on the date entered on the document as the date of completion. See Iowa Administrative Code rule 871-24.35(1)(a). See also *Messina v. IDJS*, 341 N.W.2d 52 (Iowa 1983). An appeal submitted by any other means is deemed filed on the date it is received by the Unemployment Insurance Division of Iowa Workforce Development. See Iowa Administrative Code rule 871-24.35(1)(b).

The evidence in the record establishes 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 representatives' 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. IDJS*, 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. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d 373, 377 (Iowa 1979); see also *In re Appeal of Elliott*, 319 N.W.2d 244, 247 (Iowa 1982). One 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. IESC*, 217 N.W.2d 255 (Iowa 1974); *Smith v. IESC*, 212 N.W.2d 471, 472 (Iowa 1973).

No submission shall be considered timely if the delay in filing was unreasonable, as determined by the division after considering the circumstances in the case. See Iowa Administrative Code rule 871-24.35(2)(c).

The evidence in the record establishes an untimely appeal from the January 20, 2016 (reference 02) administrative penalty decision. The evidence establishes that the claimant received the decision in a timely manner, had a reasonable opportunity to file an appeal by the February 1, 2016 extended appeal deadline, but unreasonably delayed filing the appeal to February 9, 2023. The late filing of the appeal was not attributable to the Iowa Workforce Development error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United States Postal Service. There is not good cause to treat the late appeal as a timely appeal. See Iowa Administrative Code rule 871-24.35(2). Because the appeal was untimely, the administrative law judge lacks jurisdiction to disturb the decision from which the appellant appeals in the present matter. See *Beardslee v. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979) and *Franklin v. IDJS*, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979).

**DECISION:**

The claimant's appeal from the January 20, 2016 (reference 02) administrative decision was untimely. The administrative penalty decision remains in effect.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James E. Timberland". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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James E. Timberland  
Administrative Law Judge

March 6, 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](http://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](http://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 adquiera 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.