

**IN THE IOWA ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS DIVISION
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

KARI J PRUETT
Claimant

ENGLISH ESTATES INC
Employer

APPEAL 23A-UI-07921-DZ-T
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 06/11/23
Claimant: Respondent (1R)

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Protest
Iowa Code § 96.7(2)a(6) – Appeal from the Statement of Charges

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

English Estates Inc, the employer/appellant,¹ appealed the Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) August 9, 2023 statement of charges for the Second Quarter of 2023 that listed charges of \$830.00 to the employer’s account for UI benefits IWD paid to Ms. Pruett. On August 18, 2023, the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals UI Appeals Bureau mailed a notice of hearing to the employer, Ms. Pruett and IWD for a telephone hearing scheduled for August 31, 2023.

The undersigned administrative law judge held a telephone hearing on August 31, 2023. The employer participated through Page Johnson, director of finance, and Brook Fritchen, general manager. Ms. Pruett did not participate in the hearing. IWD did not participate in the hearing. The undersigned administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record.

ISSUE:

Did the employer file its protest on time?
Did the employer file its appeal from the notice on time?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed the evidence in the record, the undersigned finds: Ms. Pruett filed an initial UI claim effective June 11, 2023. IWD mailed a notice of Ms. Pruett’s claim to the employer at the employer’s correct address on June 14, 2023. The notice of claim contains a warning that the employer’s protest response is due ten days from the notice date and gave a due date of June 26, 2023. The employer did not receive the notice.

IWD mailed the August 9, 2023 statement of charges to the employer. The employer received the statement. This was the first time the employer learned about Ms. Pruett’s UI claim. The employer appealed the statement via email on August 15, 2023. The employer intended to protest Ms. Pruett’s claim based on the employer terminating her employment on June 7, 2023. IWD has not yet issued a decision on Ms. Pruett’s eligibility for UI benefits based on how her job ended with this employer.

¹ Appellant is the person or employer who filed the appeal.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the undersigned concludes as follows:

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 issuance of the notice of the filing of the claim to protest payment of benefits to the claimant. All interested parties shall select a format as specified by the department to receive such notifications. 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 issued, 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.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(2) provides:

Date of submission and extension of time for payments and notices.

(2) 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 division that the delay in submission was due to division error or misinformation or to delay or other action of the United States postal service.

a. For submission that is not within the statutory or regulatory period to be considered timely, the interested party must submit a written explanation setting forth the circumstances of the delay.

b. The division shall designate personnel who are to decide whether an extension of time shall be granted.

- c. No submission shall be considered timely if the delay in filing was unreasonable, as determined by the department after considering the circumstances in the case.
- d. If submission is not considered timely, although the interested party contends that the delay was due to division error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United States postal service, the division shall issue an appealable decision to the interested party.

Iowa Code section 96.7(2)a(6) provides:

- 2. Contribution rates based on benefit experience.
 - a. (6) Within forty days after the close of each calendar quarter, the department shall notify each employer of the amount of benefits charged to the employer's account during that quarter. The notification shall show the name of each individual to whom benefits were paid, the individual's social security number, and the amount of benefits paid to the individual. An employer which has not been notified as provided in section 96.6, subsection 2, of the allowance of benefits to an individual, may within thirty days after the date of mailing of the notification appeal to the department for a hearing to determine the eligibility of the individual to receive benefits. The appeal shall be referred to an administrative law judge for hearing and the employer and the individual shall receive notice of the time and place of the hearing.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.8(2) provides:

Notifying employing units of claims filed, requests for wage and separation information, and decisions made.

24.8(2) Responding by employing units to a notice of the filing of an initial claim or a request for wage and separation information and protesting the payment of benefits.

- a. The employing unit which receives a Form 65-5317, Notice of Claim, or Form 68-0221, Request for Wage and Separation Information, must, within ten days of the date of the notice or request, submit to the department wage or separation information that affects the individual's rights to benefits, including any facts which disclose that the individual separated from employment voluntarily and without good cause attributable to the employer or was discharged for misconduct in connection with employment.
- b. The employing unit may protest the payment of benefits if the protest is postmarked within ten days of the date of the notice of the filing of an initial claim. In the event that the tenth day falls on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday, the protest period is extended to the next working day of the department. If the employing unit has filed a timely report of facts that might adversely affect the individual's benefit rights, the report shall be considered as a protest to the payment of benefits.
- c. If the employing unit protests that the individual was not an employee and it is subsequently determined that the individual's name was changed, the employing unit shall be deemed to have not been properly notified and the employing unit shall again be provided the opportunity to respond to the notice of the filing of the initial claim.

d. The employing unit has the option of notifying the department under conditions which, in the opinion of the employing unit, may disqualify an individual from receiving benefits. The notification may be submitted electronically.

(1) The Notice of Separation, Form 60-0154, must be postmarked or received before or within ten days of the date that the Notice of Claim, Form 65-5317, was mailed to the employer. In the event that the tenth day falls on Saturday, Sunday or holiday, the protest period is extended to the next working day of the department. If a claim for unemployment insurance benefits has not been filed, the Notice of Separation may be accepted at any time.

Iowa Code section 96.6(2) addresses the timeliness of an appeal from an IWD representative's decision and states that an appeal must be filed within ten days after the date the decision was mailed to the parties. In addressing an issue of timeliness of an appeal, the Iowa Supreme Court concluded that when a statute creates a right to appeal and limits the time for appealing, compliance with the time limit is mandatory and jurisdictional.² This reasoning should also apply to the time limit for filing a protest after IWD sends a notice of claim to an employer.

Iowa Code section 96.7(2)a(6) provides that an employer who did not receive a notice of claim may file an appeal to determine the claimant's eligibility to receive UI benefits. But if the employer received notice of the claim, the employer cannot appeal the claimant's eligibility to receive UI benefits based on the employer receiving the statement of charges.

In this case, the employer did not receive the notice of claim for Ms. Pruettt's UI claim. The first notice the employer received that IWD had sent UI benefits to Ms. Pruettt was the August 9, 2023 statement of charges. The employer appealed the August 9, 2023 statement of charges on time.

The issues of Ms. Pruettt's eligibility for UI benefits based on how her job ended with this employer or any current employment and/or whether this employer's account should be charged should be remanded (sent back) to the IWD Benefits Bureau for investigation and a decision.

² *Beardslee v. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d. 373 (Iowa 1979).

DECISION:

The August 9, 2023 statement of charges for the Second Quarter of 2023 is AFFIRMED. The August 9, 2023 statement of charges is AFFIRMED, PENDING REMAND.

REMAND:

The issues of Ms. Pruet's eligibility for UI benefits based on how her job ended with this employer or any current employment and/or whether this employer's account should be charged is REMANDED (sent back) to the IWD Benefits Bureau for investigation and a decision.



Daniel Zeno
Administrative Law Judge

September 1, 2023
Decision Dated and Mailed

rvs

APPEAL RIGHTS. If you disagree with this 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
4th Floor – Lucas Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Fax: (515)281-7191
Online: 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> or by contacting the District Court Clerk of Court <https://www.iowacourts.gov/iowa-courts/court-directory/>.

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**

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 adquiriera firmeza. Puede encontrar información adicional sobre cómo presentar una petición en el Código de Iowa §17A.19, que se encuentra en línea en <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf> o comunicándose con el Tribunal de Distrito Secretario del tribunal <https://www.iowacourts.gov/iowa-courts/court-directory/>.

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.