

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

JONATHAN STONE
Claimant

A&J SIEK INC
Employer

APPEAL 17A-UI-10623-NM-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

**OC: 09/17/17
Claimant: Respondent (1)**

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Protest

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Employer filed an appeal from the October 13, 2017, (reference 04) unemployment insurance decision that found the protest untimely and allowed benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held by telephone conference call on November 2, 2017. The claimant did not participate. The employer participated through Jamyra Siek. Department's Exhibit D-1 was received into evidence.

ISSUE:

Is the employer's protest timely?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant's notice of claim was mailed to employer's last known address of record on September 21, 2017. The address belonged to the employer's former agent, an accountant. The employer's former accountant then forwarded the notice to the employer via regular mail, but the employer did not look at the notice until, Sunday, October 1, 2017. The notice of claim contains a warning that the employer protest response is due ten days from the initial notice date and gave a response deadline of October 2, 2017. The employer mailed in its protest on October 5, 2017, which was after the ten-day period had expired. The employer has since updated its address of record to its new accountant's address, but made no attempt to update its address prior to October 4 or 5, 2017.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The administrative law judge concludes that employer has failed to protest response within the time period prescribed by the Iowa Employment Security Law.

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) provides, in pertinent part:

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.

Another portion of this same Code section dealing with timeliness of an appeal from a representative's decision states that such an appeal must be filed within ten days after notification of that decision was mailed. In addressing an issue of timeliness of an appeal under that portion of this Code section, the Iowa Supreme Court held that this statute prescribing the time for notice of appeal clearly limits the time to do so, and that compliance with the appeal notice provision is mandatory and jurisdictional. *Beardslee v. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979).

The administrative law judge considers the reasoning and holding of that court in that decision to be controlling on this portion of that same Iowa Code section which deals with a time limit in which to file a protest after notification of the filing of the claim has been mailed. The employer has not shown any good cause for not complying with the jurisdictional time limit. Therefore, the administrative law judge is without jurisdiction to entertain any appeal regarding the separation from employment.

It is the employer's responsibility to ensure that the agency has a correct address. Here, the employer made the business decision to switch agents/accountants, but failed to update Iowa Workforce Development with this information or provide a new mailing address. The delay was not due to any Agency error or delay or other action of the United States Postal Service pursuant to Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(2). No other good cause reason has been established for the delay. The administrative law judge further concludes that the employer has failed to timely protest 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 claimant's termination of employment. See, *Beardslee v. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979); *Franklin v. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979) and *Pepsi-Cola Bottling Co. v. Emp't Appeal Bd.*, 465 N.W.2d 674 (Iowa Ct. App. 1990).

DECISION:

The October 13, 2017, (reference 04) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. Employer has failed to file a timely protest response, and the decision of the representative shall stand and remain in full force and effect.

Nicole Merrill
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

nm/rvs