

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

AGUET N PIODI
Claimant

APPEAL 24A-UI-03361-PT-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

**IOWA WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

**OC: 02/18/24
Claimant: Appellant (2)**

Iowa Code Section 96.4(3) – Ability to and Availability for Work
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22(2) – Able & Available – Benefits Eligibility Conditions
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.2(1)(e) – Able & Available – Report as Directed by Department

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant, Aguet Piodi, filed an appeal from the March 25, 2024 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that denied benefits effective February 18, 2024, based upon a determination that the claimant failed to provide verification of proof that he is a citizen or legally authorized to work in the United States. After due notice was issued, a telephone hearing was held on April 22, 2024. The claimant participated personally. CTS Language Link provided French interpretive services. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record.

ISSUES:

Whether the claimant is able to work and available for work effective February 18, 2024.

Whether the claimant has provided the requested proof of citizenship, or that he is currently legally authorized to work in the United States.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The claimant established an original claim for benefits that was effective February 18, 2024. He was not informed at this time that he needed to provide additional documentation of his authorization to work in the United States.

The claimant received a letter from Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) sometime in mid-March that stated he must provide documentation verifying his citizenship or authorization to work in the United States and provided a deadline of March 22, 2024. Prior to the March 22 deadline, the claimant went to the local IowaWORKS office and provided a copy of his permanent residence card. IowaWORKS staff made a copy of the documentation. For unknown reasons, the documentation was not entered into the system.

On March 25, 2024, IWD issued the reference 01 disqualification decision. Upon receiving this decision, the claimant went back to the local office to find out why he had been disqualified. At

that time, an employee at the local office informed the claimant that there was a second address to which he needed to send his verification documentation. The claimant faxed a copy of his permanent resident card to the second address that same day.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes:

Iowa Code section 96.4(3) provides:

An unemployed individual shall be eligible to receive benefits with respect to any week only if the department finds that:

3. The individual is able to work, is available for work, and is earnestly and actively seeking work...

Iowa Code section 96.5(10) provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits, regardless of the source of the individual's wage credits:

10. Aliens—disqualified. For services performed by an alien unless such alien is an individual who was lawfully admitted for permanent residence at the time such services were performed, was lawfully present for the purpose of performing such services, or was permanently residing in the United States under color of law at the time such services were performed, including an alien who is lawfully present in the United States as a result of the application of the provisions of section 212(d)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Any data or information required of individuals applying for benefits to determine whether benefits are not payable to them because of their alien status shall be uniformly required from all applicants for benefits. In the case of an individual whose application for benefits would otherwise be approved, no determination that benefits to such individuals are not payable because of the individual's alien status shall be made except upon a preponderance of the evidence.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22(2) provides:

Benefits eligibility conditions. For an individual to be eligible to receive benefits the department must find that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work. The individual bears the burden of establishing that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work.

(2) Available for work. The availability requirement is satisfied when an individual is willing, able, and ready to accept suitable work which the individual does not have good cause to refuse, that is, the individual is genuinely attached to the labor market. Since, under unemployment insurance laws, it is the availability of an individual that is required to be tested, the labor market must be described in terms of the individual. A labor market for an individual means a market for the type of service which the individual offers in the geographical area in which the individual offers the service. Market in that sense does not mean that job vacancies must exist; the purpose of unemployment insurance is to compensate for lack of job vacancies. It means only that the type of services which an individual is offering is generally performed in the geographical area in which the individual is offering the services.

o. Lawfully authorized work. An individual who is not lawfully authorized to work within the United States will be considered not available for work.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.60(2)a-c provides:

Alien. Any person who is not a citizen or a national of the United States. A national is defined as a person who lives in mandates or trust territories administered by the United States and owes permanent allegiance to the United States. An alien is a person owing allegiance to another country or government.

(2) It is required that information designed to identify illegal nonresident aliens shall be requested of all claimants for benefits. This shall be accomplished by asking each claimant at the time the individual establishes a benefit year whether or not the individual is a citizen.

a. If the response is "yes," no further proof is necessary and the claimant's records are to be marked accordingly.

b. If the answer is "no," the claimant shall be requested to present documentary proof of legal residency. Any individual who does not show proof of legal residency at the time it is requested shall be disqualified from receiving benefits until such time as the required proof of the individual's status is brought to the local office. The principal documents showing legal entry for permanent residency are the Form I-94, Arrival and Departure Record, and the Forms I-151 and I-551, Alien Registration Receipt Card. These forms are issued by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and should be accepted unless the proof is clearly faulty or there are reasons to doubt their authenticity. An individual will be required to provide the individual's alien registration number at the time of claim filing.

c. Any or all documents presented to the department by an alien shall be subject to verification with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. The citizenship question shall be included on the initial claim form so that the response will be subject to the provisions of rule 871-25.10(96), prosecution on overpayments.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(11) provides:

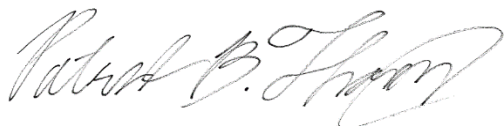
Availability disqualifications. The following are reasons for a claimant being disqualified for being unavailable for work.

(11) Failure to report as directed to workforce development in response to the notice which was mailed to the claimant will result in the claimant being deemed not to meet the availability requirements.

A claimant is considered to be available for work when proof of citizenship or work registration is provided. Here, the claimant has provided evidence which would support a finding he is authorized to work in the United States. He provided the information by the due date, but due to Iowa Workforce Development's error, the information was not updated in his claim. The claimant is considered to be available for work. Benefits are allowed effective February 18, 2024, provided the claimant is otherwise eligible.

DECISION:

The March 25, 2024 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is reversed. The claimant provided verification documentation in a timely manner and has established that he is legally authorized to work in the United States of America. Benefits are allowed effective February 18, 2024, provided the claimant is otherwise eligible.



Patrick B. Thomas
Administrative Law Judge

April 26, 2024
Decision Dated and Mailed

PBT/scn

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:

**Iowa Employment Appeal Board
6200 Park Ave Suite 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50321
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>.

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:

**Iowa Employment Appeal Board
6200 Park Ave Suite 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50321
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 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.