

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

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**KELLI BROWN**  
Claimant

**VERMEER MANUFACTURING COMPANY  
INC**  
Employer

**APPEAL 21A-UI-23802-SN-T**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**OC: 03/22/20**  
**Claimant: Appellant (1)**

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Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal  
Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Ability to and Availability for Work  
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22 – Able & Available - Benefits Eligibility Conditions

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

The claimant filed an appeal from the January 4, 2021, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that denied benefits based upon the conclusion she was not able and available for work effective March 22, 2020. After due notice was issued, a telephone conference hearing was scheduled to be held on January 12, 2022. The hearing was held jointly with appeal 21A-UI-23805-SN-T, 21A-UI-23803-SN-T, 21A-UI-23806-SN-T, 21A-UI-23807-SN-T, 21A-UI-23808-SN-T, and 21A-UI-23809-SN-T. The claimant participated. Exhibits D-1, D-2, and A were received into the record. The employer participated through Human Resources Business Partner II Amanda Carnahan.

**ISSUES:**

Whether the claimant's appeal was timely? Whether the claimant's appeal has reasonable grounds to be considered otherwise timely?

Was the claimant able to work, available for work, and actively and earnestly seeking work the week ending September 20, 2020?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

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

A disqualification decision was mailed to claimant's last known address of record on January 4, 2021. The claimant did receive the decision within ten days. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Section by January 14, 2021. (Exhibit D-1) The appeal was not filed until October 26, 2021, which is after the date noticed on the disqualification decision. (Exhibit D-2)

The claimant excused the delay in filing her appeal on being busy with being a single mother and attending various medical appointments.

## REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The administrative law judge finds the claimant's appeal is untimely. He further concludes he does not have jurisdiction to evaluate the merits of the claimant's appeal.

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 issuing 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.

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. Board of Adjustment*, 239 N.W.2d 873, 92 A.L.R.3d 304 (Iowa 1976).

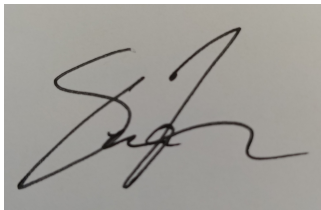
The record in this case shows that more than ten calendar days elapsed between the mailing date and the date this appeal was filed. The Iowa Supreme Court has declared that there is a mandatory duty to file appeals from representatives' decisions within the time allotted by statute, and that the administrative 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). 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. IESC*, 217 N.W.2d 255 (Iowa 1974); *Smith v. IESC*, 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 claimant received notice of disqualification at the time of mailing. The claimant excused the delay in her filing to circumstances attributable wholly to her. These circumstances do not toll the appeal period because the claimant had sufficient notice of disqualification to make this decision during the appeal period. The administrative law judge is sympathetic to the hustle and bustle of the claimant's life, but that is wholly irrelevant to whether she would be denied a reasonable opportunity to appeal to be held to the appeal period on the decision itself.

The administrative law judge concludes that failure 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 871 IAC 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. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979) and *Franklin v. IDJS*, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979).

**DECISION:**

The January 4, 2021, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The claimant's appeal is untimely. The decision of the representative will remain in effect.



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Sean M. Nelson  
Administrative Law Judge  
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Bureau  
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February 7, 2022  
Decision Dated and Mailed

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