

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

68-0157 (9-06) - 3091078 - EI

**SCOTTIE R BROWN**  
Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 12A-UI-10477-JT**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**A-SUPERIOR SEAMLESS STEEL SIDING  
A-SUPERIOR SIDING LTD**  
Employer

**OC: 07/29/12**  
**Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Iowa Code Section 96.5(1) – Voluntary Quit  
Iowa Code Section 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Scottie Brown filed an appeal from the August 17, 2012, reference 01, decision that denied benefits. Mr. Brown requested an in-person hearing. After due notice was issued, an in-person hearing was held in Carroll on November 16, 2012. Mr. Brown participated. Kevin Schroeder represented the employer and presented additional testimony through Alex Schroeder. Department Exhibit D-1 and Exhibits One through Ten were received into evidence.

**ISSUE:**

Whether there is good cause to treat Mr. Brown's late appeal as a timely appeal.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: On August 17, 2012, Workforce Development mailed a copy of the August 17, 2012, reference 01 decision to Scottie Brown at his last-known address of record. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Section no later than August 27, 2012. Mr. Brown received the decision in a timely manner, prior to the deadline for appeal. Workforce Development did not mail a copy of the decision to Mr. Brown's worker's compensation attorney, Robert Tucker. Mr. Tucker had not participated in the fact-finding interview that led to the August 17, 2012 decision.

On August 29, 2012, Mr. Brown contacted the Carroll Workforce Development Center and spoke with Workforce Advisor William Myers. At that time, Mr. Brown asserted that he had just received a copy of the August 17, 2012, reference 01, decision from his worker's compensation attorney, Robert Tucker. Mr. Tucker is located in Des Moines. On August 29, Mr. Brown completed an appeal form and delivered the completed form to Mr. Myers. Mr. Myers faxed the appeal form to the Appeals Section that same day and the Appeals Section received the appeal that same day.

## 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, subsection 10, 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 871 AC 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 871 IAC 24.35(1)(b).

The appeal in question was filed on August 29, 2012, when Mr. Brown delivered the completed appeal form to the Carroll Workforce Development Center.

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). 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 administrative law judge concludes that Mr. Brown's testimony regarding when and how he received a copy of the August 17, 2012 decision is not credible. The decision indicates on its face the parties to whom the decision was mailed. Those parties were Mr. Brown and the employer only. Workforce Development did not have a reason to mail a copy of the decision to Mr. Tucker and did not in fact mail a copy of the decision to Mr. Tucker. The administrative law judge notes that Mr. Brown did not have Mr. Tucker participate in the hearing to assist with establishing good cause to treat the late appeal as a timely appeal. Mr. Brown did not offer so much as a written statement from Mr. Tucker to support his assertion that he received the decision belatedly from Mr. Tucker. Mr. Brown represented at the hearing that Mr. Tucker continues to represent him in a pending worker's compensation matter. It is much more likely that Mr. Brown received the decision in a timely manner, held onto the document and took the document with him to his next appointment with his attorney, and then filed an appeal beyond the appeal deadline. The administrative law judge concludes that Mr. Brown did have a reasonable opportunity to file a timely appeal.

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 Workforce Development error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United States Postal Service. See 871 IAC 24.35(2). The administrative law judge further concludes that the appeal was not timely filed pursuant to Iowa Code section 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 Agency representative's August 17, 2012, reference 01, decision is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect.

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James E. Timberland  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

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