

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

MARY E GILBERT

Claimant

APPEAL NO. 07A-UI-11377-SWT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

ACKERMAN INVESTMENT CO

Employer

**OC: 10/07/07 R: 01
Claimant: Respondent (1)**

Section 17A.12-3 – Non-appearance of a Party
871 IAC 26.8(5) – Decision on the Record

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

An appeal was filed from an unemployment insurance decision dated December 5, 2007, reference 02, that concluded the claimant's discharge was not for work-connected misconduct. A telephone hearing was scheduled for December 27, 2007. The employer did not participate in the hearing. The claimant participated in the hearing and agreed that a decision could be made based on the information in the file. Based on the employer's failure to participate in the hearing, the file, and the law, the following findings of fact, reasoning and conclusions of law, and decision are entered.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The parties were properly notified of the scheduled hearing on this appeal. The employer failed to provide a telephone number at which a representative could be reached for the hearing and did not participate in the hearing or request a postponement of the hearing as required by the hearing notice.

A careful review of the information in the administrative file has been conducted to determine whether the unemployment insurance decision should be affirmed. The employer's account is not presently chargeable for benefits paid to the claimant since it is not a base period employer on the claim.

Troy Ficken called the Appeals Bureau on behalf of the employer at 10:41 a.m., after the hearing record had been closed. He admitted he had received the hearing notice before the hearing but had not followed the instructions on the hearing notice that required him to call in and provide his telephone number.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The Iowa Administrative Procedures Act Section 17A.12-3 provides in pertinent part:

If a party fails to appear or participate in a contested case proceeding after proper service of notice, the presiding officer may, if no adjournment is granted, enter a default decision or proceed with the hearing and make a decision in the absence of the party. ... If a decision is rendered against a party who failed to appear for the hearing and the presiding officer is timely requested by that party to vacate the decision for good cause, the time for initiating a further appeal is stayed pending a determination by the presiding officer to grant or deny the request. If adequate reasons are provided showing good cause for the party's failure to appear, the presiding officer shall vacate the decision and, after proper service of notice, conduct another evidentiary hearing. If adequate reasons are not provided showing good cause for the party's failure to appear, the presiding officer shall deny the motion to vacate.

871 IAC 26.8(3), (4) and (5) provide:

Withdrawals and postponements.

(3) If, due to emergency or other good cause, a party, having received due notice, is unable to attend a hearing or request postponement within the prescribed time, the presiding officer may, if no decision has been issued, reopen the record and, with notice to all parties, schedule another hearing. If a decision has been issued, the decision may be vacated upon the presiding officer's own motion or at the request of a party within 15 days after the mailing date of the decision and in the absence of an appeal to the employment appeal board of the department of inspections and appeals. If a decision is vacated, notice shall be given to all parties of a new hearing to be held and decided by another presiding officer. Once a decision has become final as provided by statute, the presiding officer has no jurisdiction to reopen the record or vacate the decision.

(4) A request to reopen a record or vacate a decision may be heard ex parte by the presiding officer. The granting or denial of such a request may be used as a grounds for appeal to the employment appeal board of the department of inspections and appeals upon the issuance of the presiding officer's final decision in the case.

(5) If good cause for postponement or reopening has not been shown, the presiding officer shall make a decision based upon whatever evidence is properly in the record.

The employer has not shown good cause for failing to call in for the hearing. The administrative law judge has carefully reviewed the information in the administrative file in the record and concludes that the unemployment insurance decision previously entered in this case is correct and should be affirmed.

The employer's account is not presently chargeable for benefits paid to the claimant, since it is not a base period employer on the claim. If the employer becomes a base period employer in a future benefit year, its account may be chargeable for benefits paid to the claimant based on this separation from employment.

DECISION:

The unemployment insurance decision dated December 5, 2007, reference 02, is affirmed. The decision holding the claimant qualified for benefits remains in effect.

Steven A. Wise
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

saw/kjw