

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

CYNTHIA C NOLAN
Claimant

DJS INSURANCE LLC
Employer

APPEAL 16A-UI-12688-CL-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 10/23/16
Claimant: Respondent (1)

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal
Iowa Code § 96.5(1) – Voluntary Quitting
Iowa Code § 96.5(2)a – Discharge for Misconduct
Iowa Code § 96.3(7) – Recovery of Benefit Overpayment
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.10 – Employer/Representative Participation Fact-finding Interview

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The employer filed an appeal from the November 17, 2016, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that allowed benefits. The parties were properly notified about the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on December 29, 2016. Claimant participated. Employer participated through owner/agent Damien Shull.

ISSUES:

Is the appeal timely?

Did claimant voluntarily leave the employment with good cause attributable to the employer or did employer discharge the claimant for reasons related to job misconduct sufficient to warrant a denial of benefits?

Has the claimant been overpaid unemployment insurance benefits, and if so, can the repayment of those benefits to the agency be waived?

Can charges to the employer's account be waived?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: An unemployment insurance decision was mailed to the employer's last known address of record on November 17, 2016. Employer received the decision on November 21, 2016, within the appeal period. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Bureau by November 27, 2016. Because November 27 fell on a Sunday, the appeal was not due until Monday, November 28, 2016.

On Tuesday, November 29, 2016, employer called the appeals bureau regarding filing an appeal. Employer asked about the November 27 deadline. An agency employee informed employer the appeal would be considered timely if he filed it that day due to the deadline falling on a Sunday. Employer filed the appeal the same day on Tuesday, November 29, 2016.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow the administrative law judge concludes the employer's appeal is untimely.

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

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. . . . 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.

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. Bd. 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 unemployment insurance 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. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 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. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 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. Iowa Emp't Sec. Comm'n*, 217 N.W.2d 255 (Iowa 1974); *Smith v. Iowa Emp't Sec. Comm'n*, 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 administrative law judge concludes that failure to follow the clear written instructions 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 Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(2). On Tuesday, November 29, 2016, appellant was given inaccurate information that the appeal would be considered timely if he filed it that day due to the deadline falling on a Sunday. However, the appeal was not late because of the information provided by the agency as the appellant waited until after the deadline to contact the agency. The appeal was filed late due to inaction on the part of employer.

The administrative law judge 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. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979) and *Franklin v. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979).

DECISION:

The November 17, 2016, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect.

Christine A. Louis
Administrative Law Judge
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Bureau
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Decision Dated and Mailed

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