

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

MATTHEW SHEPHERD
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 15A-UI-07852-TN-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OZARK AUTOMOTIVE DISTRIBUTORS INC
Employer

OC: 06/07/15
Claimant: Respondent (1)

Section 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Protest

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Ozark Automotive Distributors, Inc. filed a timely appeal from the July 6, 2015, reference 01, representative's decision that allowed benefits to the claimant and found the employer's protest untimely. After due notice was issued, a telephone hearing was held on August 10, 2015. The claimant participated. The employer participated by Ms. Susan Yount, Unemployment Specialist.

ISSUE:

The issue in this matter is whether the employer's protest is timely.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The administrative law judge, having considered all of the evidence in the record, finds: The claimant's notice of claim was mailed to the employer's address of record on June 11, 2015, and received by the employer within ten days. The notice of claim contains a warning that any protest must be postmarked, faxed or returned not later than ten days from the initial mailing date. The employer did not effect a protest until June 30, 2015, which is after the ten-day period had expired and no good cause reason has been established for the delay.

The employee who normally handles official correspondence had taken time away from work for a vacation and that individual's duties had not been assigned or completed by anyone else within the company.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

Iowa Code § 96.6-2 provides in pertinent part:

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.

Another portion of this same Code section dealing with timeliness of an appeal from a representative's decision states that such an appeal must be filed within ten days after notification of that decision was mailed. In addressing an issue of timeliness of an appeal under that portion of this Code section, the Iowa Supreme Court held that this statute prescribing the time for notice of appeal clearly limits the time to do so, and that compliance with the appeal notice provision is mandatory and jurisdictional. Beardslee v. IDJS, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979).

The administrative law judge considers the reasoning and holding of that court in that decision to be controlling on this portion of that same Iowa Code section which deals with a time limit in which to file a protest after notification of the filing of the claim has been mailed. The employer has not shown any good cause for not complying with the jurisdictional time limit. Therefore, the administrative law judge is without jurisdiction to entertain any appeal regarding the separation from employment.

The administrative law judge concludes the employer failed to effect a timely protest within the time period prescribed by the Iowa Employment Security Law, and the delay 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 employer has failed to effect a timely protest 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 claimant's termination of employment. See Beardslee v. IDJS, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979); Franklin v. IDJS, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979) and Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company v. Employment Appeal Board, 465 N.W.2d 674 (Iowa App. 1990).

DECISION:

The July 6, 2015, reference 01, decision is affirmed. The employer has failed to file a timely protest, and the decision of the representative shall stand and remain in full force and effect. Benefits are allowed, provided claimant satisfies all other conditions of eligibility.

Terence P. Nice
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

pjs/pjs