

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**BRADLEY W GUSTAFSON**  
Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 14A-UI-00613-NT**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**AURELIA COMMUNITY SCHOOL**  
Employer

**OC: 12/15/13  
Claimant: Respondent (1)**

Section 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Protest

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Aurelia Community School District filed an appeal from a representative's decision dated January 7, 2014, reference 01, which held that the protest concerning Bradley Gustafson's separation on December 15, 2013 (corrected date) was not timely filed. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held by telephone on February 10, 2014. The claimant did not participate. The employer participated by Mr. Kevin Evans, Superintendent.

**ISSUE:**

At issue in this matter is whether the employer filed a timely protest as required by law.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

The administrative law judge, having considered all of the evidence in the record, finds that: The claimant's notice of claim was mailed to the employer's address of record on December 23, 2013, and received by the employer within ten days. The notice of claim contains a warning that any protest must be postmarked or returned not later than ten days from the initial mailing date. The employer did not effect a protest until January 3, 2014, which is after the ten-day period had expired.

The Aurelia Community School District offices were closed for the between semester break and holidays from December 21, 2013 through January 3, 2014. When staff reported on Friday, January 3, 2014, the employer's protest was completed and sent by facsimile to Iowa Workforce Development.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

Iowa Code section 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 employer's protest in this case was late because the school district did not staff its administrative offices between December 21, 2013 and January 3, 2014. The late filing of this protest was not attributable to Agency error or delay of the United States Postal Service.

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 decision of the representative dated January 7, 2014, reference 01, 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 the claimant satisfies all other conditions of eligibility.

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Terence P. Nice  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

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