

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

LACEY A HELLE
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 11A-UI-07341-ST

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OPPORTUNITY VILLAGE
Employer

**OC: 03/20/11
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge
Section 96.6-2 – Timeliness of Appeal

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant appealed a department decision dated May 20, 2011, reference 02, that held she was discharged for misconduct on April 28, 2011, and which denied benefits. A telephone hearing was held on June 28, 2011. The claimant participated. Tina Leonard, personnel specialist, participated for the employer. Claimant Exhibit A was received as evidence.

ISSUE:

Whether the claimant filed a timely appeal.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony of the witnesses and having considered the evidence in the record, finds: The claimant received the department decision issued on May 20, 2011. The claimant mailed the appeal on May 26. The Postal Service returned the appeal to claimant on June 2, because of a lack of postage. The claimant re-mailed her appeal on June 2.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

Iowa Code Section 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. Board of Adjustment, 239 N.W.2d 873, 92 A.L.R.3d 304 (Iowa 1976).

Pursuant to rules 871 IAC 26.2(96)(1) and 871 IAC 24.35(96)(1), appeals are considered filed when postmarked, if mailed. Messina v. IDJS, 341 N.W.2d 52 (Iowa 1983).

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 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 record shows that the appellant did have a reasonable opportunity to file a timely appeal.

The administrative law judge concludes the claimant failed to file a timely appeal.

The claimant did have a reasonable opportunity to file a more timely appeal by noting the deadline date and mailing it with the correct postage required. Her failure to provide the postage is not a good cause for the appeal delay.

DECISION:

The department decision dated May 20, 2011, reference 02, is affirmed. The claimant failed to file a timely appeal. The claimant was discharged for misconduct on April 28, 2011. Benefits are denied until the claimant requalifies by working in and being paid wages for insured work equal to ten times her weekly benefit amount, provided she is otherwise eligible.

Randy L. Stephenson
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

rls/kjw