

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

KRISTINA M BUCHANAN
Claimant

SALON ARIA LLC
Employer

APPEAL NO. 21A-UI-23292-B2T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 03/14/21
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Iowa Code § 96.6-2 – Timeliness of Appeal
871 IAC r. 24.28(6) – Previously Adjudicated Issue

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Claimant filed an appeal from the August 31, 2021, reference 01, decision that denied benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held on December 13, 2021. The claimant did participate and had husband/witness Kai Buchanan. The employer did participate through Christine McClimon. Claimant and employer agreed to waive time and notice to have the issue of whether this matter was previously adjudicated substituted for the separation issues listed on the notice of appeal.

ISSUES:

Whether the appeal is timely?
Whether the issue was previously adjudicated?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: A decision was mailed to the claimant's last known address of record on August 31, 2021. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Section by September 10, 2021. The appeal was not filed until October 19, 2021, which is after the date noticed on the disqualification decision. Claimant stated she did not receive the decision.

This matter was adjudicated in a decision dated December 13, 2021, and by appeal number 21A-UI-23292-B2-T.

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 begin 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 Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-26.2(96)(1) and Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(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 not have a reasonable opportunity to file a timely appeal as she did not receive the decision.

The administrative law judge concludes that failure to file a timely appeal within the time prescribed by the Iowa Employment Security Law was potentially due to an 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). The administrative law judge further concludes that the appeal was therefore deemed timely filed pursuant to Iowa Code Section 96.6-2, and the administrative law judge retains jurisdiction to make a determination with respect to the nature of the appeal. See, *Beardslee v. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979) and *Franklin v. IDJS*, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979).

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.28(6) provides:

Voluntary quit requalifications and previously adjudicated voluntary quit issues.

(6) The claimant voluntarily left employment. However, there shall be no disqualification under Iowa Code section 96.5(1) if a decision on this same separation has been made on a prior claim by a representative of the department and such decision has become final.

In this matter, the evidence has established that the claim was adjudicated in a decision dated December 13, 2021, and by appeal number 21A-UI-23292-B2-T. The bureau is without authority to rehear this matter as a decision was issued on the merits and the previous decision remains in effect. The issue cannot be adjudicated a second time.

DECISION:

The August 31, 2021, reference 01, decision is affirmed. Although the appeal in this case was deemed timely, the decision of the representative remains in effect as 21A-UI-23292-B2-T previously decided the matter.



Blair A. Bennett
Administrative Law Judge

January 14, 2022
Decision Dated and Mailed

bab/mh