

**IN THE IOWA ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS DIVISION
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

JESUS F LEAL REYES
Claimant

SEABOARD TRIUMPH FOODS LLC
Employer

APPEAL 23A-UI-08955-PT-T
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 07/09/23
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal
Iowa Code § 96.5(1) – Voluntary Quitting

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

On September 19, 2023, claimant filed an appeal from a decision of a representative dated August 9, 2023, (reference 01) that held claimant ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits after a separation from employment. The parties were properly notified of the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on October 4, 2023. The claimant, Jesus Leal Reyes, participated personally with a Spanish interpreter. The employer, Seaboard Triumph Foods LLC, participated through Human Resources Supervisor Mary Hammer. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record.

ISSUES:

Whether claimant's appeal is timely.
Whether claimant quit for good cause attributable to the employer.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: A decision was mailed to the claimant's correct address of record on August 9, 2023, (reference 01). Claimant does not know precisely when he received the decision, but recalled checking his PO Box and opening the decision on September 1, 2023.

The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Bureau by August 19, 2023. However, if the due date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the appeal period is extended to the next working day. As August 19, 2023, was a Saturday, the deadline for claimant to submit his appeal was Monday, August 21, 2023. Claimant electronically submitted his appeal on September 19, 2023, which is after the extended appeal deadline noticed on the decision. Claimant explained that his appeal was untimely because he did not check his mail and receive the decision until after the deadline. Claimant explained that he then waited another eighteen days to file his appeal because he did not initially understand the decision and he did not realize he needed to file an appeal.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes claimant's appeal was untimely.

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) provides, in pertinent part: "[u]nless 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."

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(1) provides:

1. Except as otherwise provided by statute or by division rule, any payment, appeal, application, request, notice, objection, petition, report or other information or document submitted to the division shall be considered received by and filed with the division:

(a) If transmitted via the United States Postal Service on the date it is mailed as shown by the postmark, or in the absence of a postmark the postage meter mark of the envelope in which it is received; or if not postmarked or postage meter marked or if the mark is illegible, on the date entered on the document as the date of completion.

(b) If transmitted via the State Identification Data Exchange System (SIDES), maintained by the United States Department of Labor, on the date it was submitted to SIDES.

(c) If transmitted by any means other than [United States Postal Service or the State Identification Data Exchange System (SIDES)], on the date it is received by the division.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(2) provides:

2. The submission of any payment, appeal, application, request, notice, objection, petition, report or other information or document not within the specified statutory or regulatory period shall be considered timely if it is established to the satisfaction of the division that the delay in submission was due to division error or misinformation or to delay or other action of the United States postal service.

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 weight of the evidence in the record establishes that the August 9, 2023 unemployment insurance decision was delivered to the claimant's address of record on or around the August 21, 2023 appeal deadline, but claimant did not submit his appeal until nearly a month after the deadline. Even if claimant did not receive the decision until September 1, 2023, claimant did not promptly file an appeal. Rather claimant waited an additional eighteen days after receiving the decision to file his appeal because claimant did not initially realize that he

needed to appeal the decision. Claimant's eighteen-day delay in filing his appeal was not due to agency error or misinformation or delay of the United States Postal Service. Because the delay in this instance is attributable to the claimant, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant has shown no good cause reason for the delay. The claimant's appeal was not timely filed and the administrative law judge lacks jurisdiction to make a determination with respect to the nature of the appeal. See, *Beardslee v. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979); see also, *Franklin v. IDJS*, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979).

DECISION:

The August 9, 2023, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative that denied benefits remains in effect.



Patrick B. Thomas
Administrative Law Judge

October 9, 2023
Decision Dated and Mailed

pbt/scn

APPEAL RIGHTS. If you disagree with the decision, you or any interested party may:

1. Appeal to the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days of the date under the judge's signature by submitting a written appeal via mail, fax, or online to:

**Employment Appeal Board
4th Floor – Lucas Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Fax: (515)281-7191
Online: eab.iowa.gov**

The appeal period will be extended to the next business day if the last day to appeal falls on a weekend or a legal holiday.

AN APPEAL TO THE BOARD SHALL STATE CLEARLY:

- 1) The name, address, and social security number of the claimant.
- 2) A reference to the decision from which the appeal is taken.
- 3) That an appeal from such decision is being made and such appeal is signed.
- 4) The grounds upon which such appeal is based.

An Employment Appeal Board decision is final agency action. If a party disagrees with the Employment Appeal Board decision, they may then file a petition for judicial review in district court.

2. If no one files an appeal of the judge's decision with the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days, the decision becomes final agency action, and you have the option to file a petition for judicial review in District Court within thirty (30) days after the decision becomes final. Additional information on how to file a petition can be found at Iowa Code §17A.19, which is online at <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf> or by contacting the District Court Clerk of Court <https://www.iowacourts.gov/iowa-courts/court-directory/>.

Note to Parties: YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in the appeal or obtain a lawyer or other interested party to do so provided there is no expense to Workforce Development. If you wish to be represented by a lawyer, you may obtain the services of either a private attorney or one whose services are paid for with public funds.

Note to Claimant: It is important that you file your weekly claim as directed, while this appeal is pending, to protect your continuing right to benefits.

SERVICE INFORMATION:

A true and correct copy of this decision was mailed to each of the parties listed.

DERECHOS DE APELACIÓN. Si no está de acuerdo con la decisión, usted o cualquier parte interesada puede:

1. Apelar a la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo dentro de los quince (15) días de la fecha bajo la firma del juez presentando una apelación por escrito por correo, fax o en línea a:

**Employment Appeal Board
4th Floor – Lucas Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Fax: (515)281-7191
En línea: eab.iowa.gov**

El período de apelación se extenderá hasta el siguiente día hábil si el último día para apelar cae en fin de semana o día feriado legal.

UNA APELACIÓN A LA JUNTA DEBE ESTABLECER CLARAMENTE:

- 1) El nombre, dirección y número de seguro social del reclamante.
- 2) Una referencia a la decisión de la que se toma la apelación.
- 3) Que se interponga recurso de apelación contra tal decisión y se firme dicho recurso.
- 4) Los fundamentos en que se funda dicho recurso.

Una decisión de la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo es una acción final de la agencia. Si una de las partes no está de acuerdo con la decisión de la Junta de Apelación de Empleo, puede presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el tribunal de distrito.

2. Si nadie presenta una apelación de la decisión del juez ante la Junta de Apelaciones Laborales dentro de los quince (15) días, la decisión se convierte en acción final de la agencia y usted tiene la opción de presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el Tribunal de Distrito dentro de los treinta (30) días después de que la decisión adquiriera firmeza. Puede encontrar información adicional sobre cómo presentar una petición en el Código de Iowa §17A.19, que se encuentra en línea en <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf> o comunicándose con el Tribunal de Distrito Secretario del tribunal <https://www.iowacourts.gov/iowa-courts/court-directory/>.

Nota para las partes: USTED PUEDE REPRESENTARSE en la apelación u obtener un abogado u otra parte interesada para que lo haga, siempre que no haya gastos para Workforce Development. Si desea ser representado por un abogado, puede obtener los servicios de un abogado privado o uno cuyos servicios se paguen con fondos públicos.

Nota para el reclamante: es importante que presente su reclamo semanal según las instrucciones, mientras esta apelación está pendiente, para proteger su derecho continuo a los beneficios.

SERVICIO DE INFORMACIÓN:

Se envió por correo una copia fiel y correcta de esta decisión a cada una de las partes enumeradas.