

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

KELSY REYNAGA

Claimant

YOUTH & SHELTER SERVICES INC

Employer

APPEAL 17A-UI-07519-JP-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 04/23/17

Claimant: Respondent (1)

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Protest

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Employer filed an appeal from the July 19, 2017, (reference 05) decision that found the protest untimely and allowed benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held by telephone conference call on August 11, 2017. Claimant did not participate. The employer participated by human resources director Anna Andrews. Official notice was taken of the administrative record with no objection.

ISSUE:

Is the employer's protest timely?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant's notice of claim was provided to the employer in the SIDES system with an e-mail alert on April 25, 2017. The employer has been utilizing the SIDES system to receive notices of claims and file protests. The employer changed its e-mail addresses approximately six months ago. Ms. Andrews was aware that the employer's e-mail addresses had changed. When the employer's e-mail addresses changed, it did not update its e-mail address in the SIDES system. Ms. Andrews did not realize that the employer did not update its email address in the SIDES system until she received its quarterly report from Iowa Workforce Development in July 2017. After Ms. Andrews received the quarterly report, she saw claimant's name listed and she did not recall receiving a notice of claim for claimant. Ms. Andrews realized at this time that she had not been getting any e-mail alerts from the SIDES system since the employer changed its e-mail addresses. Ms. Andrews then started an investigation and discovered that the e-mail address in the SIDES system had not been updated since the employer changed its e-mail addresses. The e-mail notification for claimant's notice of claim went to the employer's old e-mail address. The notice of claim contains a warning that the employer protest response is due ten days from the initial notice date of April 25, 2017. The employer did not file a protest response until July 18, 2017, which is after the ten-day period had expired. On July 18, 2017, Ms. Andrews e-mailed Iowa Workforce Development about claimant's claim and updated the employer's e-mail address.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The administrative law judge concludes that employer has failed to protest response within the time period prescribed by the Iowa Employment Security 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.

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

Date of submission and extension of time for payments and notices.

(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 by any means other than the United States postal service on the date it is received by the division.

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

Date of submission and extension of time for payments and notices.

(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.

- a. For submission that is not within the statutory or regulatory period to be considered timely, the interested party must submit a written explanation setting forth the circumstances of the delay.

- b. The division shall designate personnel who are to decide whether an extension of time shall be granted.
- c. No submission shall be considered timely if the delay in filing was unreasonable, as determined by the department after considering the circumstances in the case.
- d. If submission is not considered timely, although the interested party contends that the delay was due to division error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United States postal service, the division shall issue an appealable decision to the interested party.

The employer's decision to update its e-mail addresses approximately six months ago was a business decision. However, the employer is responsible for ensuring Iowa Workforce Development has its correct and up-to-date contact information, including its e-mail address. The employer's failure to update its e-mail address in the SIDES system is not a good cause reason for failing to timely file its protest. The employer has not shown any good cause for failure to comply with the jurisdictional time limit or that the delay was due to any 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). Therefore, the administrative law judge lacks jurisdiction to make a determination with respect to the nature of the claimant's separation from employment or authority to remand for a fact-finding interview. Iowa Code § 96.6(2).

DECISION:

The July 19, 2017, (reference 05) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. Employer has failed to file a timely protest response, and the unemployment insurance decision shall stand and remain in full force and effect.

Jeremy Peterson
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

jp/rvs