

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

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**TERRY A WELLS**  
Claimant

**REBITRZER'S BAR & GRILL LLC**  
Employer

**APPEAL 18A-UI-02373-SC-T**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**OC: 12/24/17**  
**Claimant: Respondent (1)**

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Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Protest

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Rebitrzer's Bar & Grill, LLC (employer) filed an appeal from the February 12, 2018, reference 01, unemployment insurance decision that found the protest untimely and allowed benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held by telephone conference call on March 19, 2018. Terry A. Wells (claimant) did not answer at the phone number provided for the hearing and did not participate. The employer participated through General Manager Amy Behnke. The Employer's Exhibit 1 was admitted into the record.

**ISSUE:**

Is the employer's protest timely?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having reviewed the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The claimant filed his original claim for benefits on December 24, 2017. The notice of claim was mailed to employer's address of record on January 26, 2018, and was received by the employer at 1:00 p.m. on February 5, 2018, which was within ten days. The notice of claim contains a warning that the employer protest response is due ten days from the initial notice date and gave a response deadline of February 5, 2018. The employer did not file a protest response until February 6, 2018, which is after the ten-day period had expired because the employer does not check its mail on a daily basis and the location to where it was mailed does not have a fax machine. The owner's son, who works at a different location with a fax machine, did not get the notice of claim until later on the evening of February 5, 2018.

**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 § 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's choice to not check the mail on a daily basis and hold the protest for another employee while the business operations continued was a business decision. The delay was not 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). No other good cause reason has been established for the delay. As the employer has failed to timely protest pursuant to Iowa Code § 96.6(2), 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. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979); *Franklin v. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979) and *Pepsi-Cola Bottling Co. v. Emp't Appeal Bd.*, 465 N.W.2d 674 (Iowa Ct. App. 1990).

**DECISION:**

The February 12, 2018, reference 01, unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The employer has failed to file a timely protest response, and the decision of the representative shall stand and remain in full force and effect.

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Stephanie R. Callahan  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

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