

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Section
1000 East Grand—Des Moines, Iowa 50319
DECISION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
68-0157 (7-97) – 3091078 - EI**

**BERNISHA L JACKSON
839 LOGAN AVE
WATERLOO IA 50703**

**APAC CUSTOMER SERVICES INC
C/o TALX UC EXPRESS
PO BOX 283
ST LOUIS MO 63166-0283**

**Appeal Number: 06A-UI-05752-HT
OC: 10/16/06 R: 03
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

This Decision Shall Become Final, unless within fifteen (15) days from the date below, you or any interested party appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by submitting either a signed letter or a signed written Notice of Appeal, directly to the **Employment Appeal Board, 4th Floor—Lucas Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319**.

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.

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.

YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in this appeal or you may 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. It is important that you file your claim as directed, while this appeal is pending, to protect your continuing right to benefits.

(Administrative Law Judge)

(Decision Dated & Mailed)

Section 96.6(2) – Timeliness

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant, Bernisha Jackson, filed an appeal from a decision dated February 7, 2006, reference 03. The decision disqualified her from receiving unemployment benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was scheduled to be held by telephone conference call on June 20, 2006. The claimant provided a telephone number of (319) 234-4343. That number was dialed at 1:00 p.m. and the only response was a voicemail. A message was left indicating the hearing would proceed without her participation unless she called the toll-free number prior to the close of the record. By the time the record was closed at 1:13 p.m. the claimant had not responded and did not participate. The employer, APAC, did not provide a telephone number where a representative could be contacted and did not participate. Exhibit D-1 was admitted into the record.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The administrative law judge, having considered all of the evidence in the record, finds that: A disqualification decision was mailed to the claimant's last known address of record on February 7, 2006. The claimant received the decision. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Section by February 17, 2006. The appeal was not filed until May 26, 2006, which is after the date noticed on the decision.

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).

(1) The record shows that the appellant did have a reasonable opportunity to file a timely appeal.

DECISION:

The decision of the representative dated February 7, 2006, reference 03, is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect. The claimant is disqualified for unemployment benefits.

bgh\pjs