

**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**

**LINDA M STAPLEFORD
440 – 34TH AVE SW
ALTOONA IA 50009**

**USA STAFFING INC
LABOR WORLD OF IOWA
3921 NE 14TH ST
DES MOINES IA 50313**

**Appeal Number: 05A-UI-12009-HT
OC: 10/02/05 R: 02
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)

871 IAC 26.8(5) - Decision on the Record

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

An appeal was filed from an unemployment insurance decision dated November 18, 2005, reference 03, that concluded the claimant was disqualified. A telephone hearing was scheduled for December 13, 2005. The appellant did not participate in the hearing. Based on the appellant's failure to participate in the hearing, the administrative file, and the law, the administrative law judge enters the following findings of fact, reasoning and conclusions of law and decision.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The parties were properly notified of the scheduled hearing on this appeal. The appellant failed to provide a telephone number at which she could be reached for the hearing and did not

participate in the hearing or request a postponement of the hearing as required by the hearing notice.

The appellant did receive the notice of the hearing as she consulted with Iowa Legal Aid regarding representation in the hearing, as evidenced by a letter from the Central Iowa Regional Office received on November 28, 2005. However, Iowa Legal Aid did not indicate to the administrative law judge whether it had decided to represent Ms. Stapleford. In any event, neither the claimant nor anyone on her behalf contacted the Iowa Workforce Development Appeals Section prior to the hearing to provide a telephone number where she could be contacted, as required by the notice and Iowa law.

The record was closed at 10:13 a.m. At 10:36 a.m. the appellant called and required to participate. She had received the notice of the hearing but had not read and followed the instructions to provide a telephone number prior to the hearing.

The administrative law judge has conducted a careful review of the administrative file to determine whether the unemployment insurance decision should be affirmed.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

871 IAC 26.8(3), (4) and (5) provide:

Withdrawals and postponements.

(3) If, due to emergency or other good cause, a party, having received due notice, is unable to attend a hearing or request postponement within the prescribed time, the presiding officer may, if no decision has been issued, reopen the record and, with notice to all parties, schedule another hearing. If a decision has been issued, the decision may be vacated upon the presiding officer's own motion or at the request of a party within 15 days after the mailing date of the decision and in the absence of an appeal to the employment appeal board of the department of inspections and appeals. If a decision is vacated, notice shall be given to all parties of a new hearing to be held and decided by another presiding officer. Once a decision has become final as provided by statute, the presiding officer has no jurisdiction to reopen the record or vacate the decision.

(4) A request to reopen a record or vacate a decision may be heard ex parte by the presiding officer. The granting or denial of such a request may be used as a grounds for appeal to the employment appeal board of the department of inspections and appeals upon the issuance of the presiding officer's final decision in the case.

(5) If good cause for postponement or reopening has not been shown, the presiding officer shall make a decision based upon whatever evidence is properly in the record.

The administrative law judge has carefully reviewed evidence in the record and concludes that the unemployment insurance decision previously entered in this case is correct and should be affirmed.

The next issue is whether the record should be reopened. The judge concludes it should not.

871 IAC 26.14(7) provides:

(7) If a party has not responded to a notice of telephone hearing by providing the appeals section with the names and telephone numbers of its witnesses by the scheduled time of the hearing, the presiding officer may proceed with the hearing.

a. If an absent party responds to the hearing notice while the hearing is in progress, the presiding officer shall pause to admit the party, summarize the hearing to that point, administer the oath, and resume the hearing.

b. If a party responds to the notice of hearing after the record has been closed and any party which has participated is no longer on the telephone line, the presiding officer shall not take the evidence of the late party. Instead, the presiding officer shall inquire as to why the party was late in responding to the notice of hearing. For good cause shown, the presiding officer shall reopen the record and cause further notice of hearing to be issued to all parties of record. The record shall not be reopened if the presiding officer does not find good cause for the party's late response to the notice of hearing.

c. Failure to read or follow the instructions on the notice of hearing shall not constitute good cause for reopening the record.

The first time the appellant called the Appeals Section for the December 13, 2005 hearing was after the hearing had been closed. Although the appellant may have intended to participate in the hearing, the appellant failed to read or follow the hearing notice instructions and did not contact the Appeals Section as directed prior to the hearing. The rule specifically states that failure to read or follow the instructions on the hearing notice does not constitute good cause to reopen the hearing. The appellant did not establish good cause to reopen the hearing. Therefore, the appellant's request to reopen the hearing is denied.

DECISION:

The unemployment insurance decision dated November 18, 2005, reference 03, is affirmed. The decision disqualifying the claimant from receiving benefits remains in effect. This decision will become final unless a written request establishing good cause to reopen the record is made to the administrative law judge within 15 days of the date of this decision.

bgh/pjs