

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

VIVIEN KARBBAR
Claimant

WESLEYLIFE
Employer

APPEAL 21A-UI-08670-SN-T
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 11/08/20
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Iowa Code § 96.5(1) – Voluntary Quit
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.26(4) – Intolerable working conditions

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant filed an appeal from the January 15, 2021, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that denied benefits based upon her voluntary quit. The parties were properly notified about the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on June 9, 2021. The claimant participated and testified. Employer participated through Hearing Representative Tanis Minters and Human Resources Manager Maddie Leonard. The administrative law judge took official notice of the agency records. Exhibits 1, D-1 and D-2 were received into the record.

ISSUES:

Was the claimant's appeal timely? Are there reasonable grounds to consider it otherwise timely?

Was the separation a layoff, discharge for misconduct or voluntary quit without good cause attributable to the employer?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds:

A disqualification decision was mailed to the claimant's last known address of record on January 15, 2021. The claimant did receive the decision within ten days. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Section by January 25, 2021. (Exhibit D-1) The appeal was not filed until March 29, 2021, which is after the date noticed on the disqualification decision. (Exhibit D-2)

She filed the appeal regarding the assessment for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance benefits she received on March 23, 2021. The claimant first filed it through Iowa Workforce Development's Online Appeal portal. That appeal only references her PUA claim. The claimant is stating she is eligible in a framework that is also aligned with PUA eligibility criteria, rather than with regular unemployment benefits. The claimant then faxed in another appeal on April 2, 2021, which reads in pertinent part, "I am appealing the decision of me being denied the PUA

benefits.” In that context, the claimant is referencing the assessment for PUA benefits, when she says the approximate date it was received was on March 26, 2021.

During the hearing, the claimant explained that she received the January 15, 2021, (reference 01), disqualifying decision in late-January 2021 or early-February 2021. She also clarified there was not a delay in appealing this claim because it was not her intent to appeal her regular unemployment claim.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The administrative law judge concludes the claimant's appeal is untimely. There are not reasonable grounds to consider it otherwise timely. The administrative law judge further concludes that he does not have jurisdiction to hear the merits of the claimant's separation.

Iowa Code section 96.6(2) provides:

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 issuing the notice of the filing of the claim to protest payment of benefits to the claimant. All interested parties shall select a format as specified by the department to receive such notifications. 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. The claimant has the burden of proving that the claimant meets the basic eligibility conditions of section 96.4. The employer has the burden of proving that the claimant is disqualified for benefits pursuant to section 96.5, except as provided by this subsection. The claimant has the initial burden to produce evidence showing that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving section 96.5, subsections 10 and 11, and has the burden of proving that a voluntary quit pursuant to section 96.5, subsection 1, was for good cause attributable to the employer and that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraphs “a” through “h”. Unless the claimant or other interested party, after notification or within ten calendar days after notification was issued, files an appeal from the decision, the decision is final and benefits shall be paid or denied in accordance with the decision. If an administrative law judge affirms a decision of the representative, or the appeal board affirms a decision of the administrative law judge allowing benefits, the benefits shall be paid regardless of any appeal which is thereafter taken, but if the decision is finally reversed, no employer's account shall be charged with benefits so paid and this relief from charges shall apply to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5.

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).

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

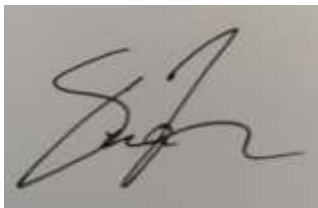
with appeal notice provisions is jurisdictional unless the facts of a case show that the notice was invalid. *Beardslee v. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d 373, 377 (Iowa 1979); see also *In re Appeal of Elliott*, 319 N.W.2d 244, 247 (Iowa 1982). The question in this case thus becomes whether the appellant was deprived 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).

The record shows that the appellant did have a reasonable opportunity to file a timely appeal. The claimant explained during the hearing that she never intended to appeal the denial of her regular unemployment claim. This reflects the notion she received notice of disqualification shortly after the date of the January 15, 2021, reference 01, decision and weighed her options regarding her regular unemployment claim and her PUA claim. After careful consideration, she opted only to file an appeal regarding her PUA claim.

The administrative law judge concludes that failure to file a timely appeal within the time prescribed by the Iowa Employment Security Law was not due to any Agency error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United States Postal Service pursuant to 871 IAC 24.35(2). The administrative law judge further concludes that the appeal was not timely filed pursuant to Iowa Code § 96.6(2), 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) and *Franklin v. IDJS*, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979).

DECISION:

The January 15, 2021, (reference 01), decision is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect.



Sean M. Nelson
Administrative Law Judge
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June 30, 2021
Decision Dated and Mailed

smn/ol