

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

68-0157 (9-06) - 3091078 - EI

AMBER BRADSHAW
Claimant

APPEAL NO: 11A-UI-09926-BT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

**IOWA WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

OC: 11/02/08
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Iowa Code § 96.3-7 - Overpayment
Iowa Code § 96.6-2 - Timeliness of Appeal

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Amber Bradshaw (claimant) appealed an unemployment insurance decision dated June 23, 2011, reference 07, which held that she was overpaid \$10,977.00 in unemployment insurance benefits as a result of a disqualification decision. After a hearing notice was mailed to the party's last-known address of record, a telephone hearing was held on August 22, 2011. The claimant participated in the hearing. Exhibit D-1 was admitted into evidence. This hearing was held simultaneously with Appeal Number 11A-UI-09925-BT. The employer participated through Joyce Karns, Team Leader of Supported Community Living. Based on the evidence, the arguments of the parties, and the law, the administrative law judge enters the following findings of fact, reasoning and conclusions of law, and decision.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether the claimant's appeal is timely.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and 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 June 23, 2011. The claimant received the decision but contends she received it after the due date. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Section by July 3, 2011. The appeal was not filed until July 27, 2011, which is after the date noticed on the disqualification decision.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

Iowa Code § 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 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. 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, subsection 10, 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 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. 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).

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

The claimant testified she received the overpayment decision after its due date. She testified she did not receive the June 23, 2011 overpayment decision until July 25, 2011 but she wrote directly on the overpayment decision that she received it on July 21, 2011. The claimant later changed her testimony as to when she received the overpayment statement. To further support that she did not timely receive the overpayment decision, she provided a copy of the Iowa Workforce envelope in which the overpayment decision was presumably sent as it has a postmark date of June 23, 2011. The claimant testified that the envelope was returned so she

did not receive it on time. However, the envelope has a circle where the address should be listed and the bottom lines were marked out but the envelope does not show that it was returned to sender or non-deliverable as addressed. Proof that a document was properly mailed raises a presumption that it was received. *Cf. Montgomery Ward, Inc. v. Davis*, 398 N.W.2d 869, 870 (Iowa 1987). The preponderance of the evidence fails to establish the claimant did not receive the overpayment decision in a timely manner.

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 unemployment insurance decision dated June 23, 2011, reference 07, is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect. The claimant was overpaid unemployment insurance benefits in the amount of \$10,977.00.

Susan D. Ackerman
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

sda/pjs