

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

**MEGAN RECKER**

Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 21A-UI-14851-B2-T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**IOWA WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

**OC: 03/15/21  
Claimant: Appellant (1R)**

Iowa Code § 96.6-2 – Timeliness of Appeal

Iowa Code § 96.3-7 – Recovery of Overpayment of Benefits

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Claimant filed an appeal from the April 13, 2021, reference 02, decision that found claimant to have been overpaid benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held on August 21, 2021. The claimant did participate. Claimant's Exhibits A-H were admitted to the record.

**ISSUES:**

Whether the appeal is timely?

Whether claimant is overpaid unemployment insurance benefits?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: A decision was mailed to the claimant's last known address of record on April 13, 2021. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Section by April 23, 2021. The appeal was not filed until June 30, 2021, which is after the date noticed on the disqualification decision. Claimant stated she did receive the decision. She stated that after receiving the decision she contacted IWD and an attorney. She further attested that IWD told claimant she was on a list and she just needed to wait for the process to move forward. At no time was claimant told by IWD that she should not file an appeal in this matter. Claimant's attorney also told her to simply wait.

Claimant was found to be ineligible to receive benefits for the period between March 15, 2020 and July 18, 2020 in 21A-UI-00353-DB-T. This decision was upheld by the Employment Appeals Bureau. The total amount of her overpayment of state benefits is \$7,451.00. Of this amount, claimant received \$780.00 for the weeks prior to March 30, 2020.

Claimant was awarded PUA benefits on December 16, 2020 with an effective the date of March 29, 2020.

## 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 begin 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 Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-26.2(96)(1) and Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(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 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 Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(2). The administrative law judge further concludes that the appeal was not timely filed pursuant to Iowa Code Section 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).

Claimant was found to be ineligible to receive benefits for the period between March 15, 2020 and July 18, 2020 in 21A-UI-00353-DB-T. This decision was upheld by the Employment Appeals Bureau. The total amount of her overpayment of state benefits is \$7,451.00. Of this amount, claimant received \$780.00 for the weeks prior to March 30, 2020.

Claimant was awarded PUA benefits on December 16, 2020 with an effective the date of March 29, 2020.

This matter shall be remanded to the benefits bureau for a recalculation of the amount of overpayment of state benefits in light of claimant's award of PUA benefits.

**DECISION:**

The April 13, 2021, reference 02, decision is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect.

This matter shall be remanded to the benefits bureau for a recalculation of the amount of overpayment of state benefits in light of claimant's award of PUA benefits.



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Blair A. Bennett  
Administrative Law Judge

August 26, 2021  
Decision Dated and Mailed

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