

**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF INSPECTIONS AND APPEALS
ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS DIVISION, UI APPEALS BUREAU**

JAMES C HENRIKSEN
Claimant

VDB POURINGS LLC
Employer

APPEAL 23A-UI-05071-LJ-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
AMENDED DECISION**

**OC: 11/27/22
Claimant: Respondent (1)**

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Protest
Iowa Code § 96.7(2)a(6) – Appeal from the Statement of Charges

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

On May 13, 2023, VDB Pourings LLC (employer) filed an appeal from the statement of charges dated May 9, 2023, reference 04, for the first quarter of 2023. A hearing was held at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, June 5, 2023, pursuant to due notice. James C. Henriksen (claimant) did not participate. The employer did participate through Tiffany Van De Berg, Owner. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record.

This amended decision is being issued for the sole purpose of removing the “R” in the disposition code of the caption. An “R” in the disposition code indicates that an issue is being remanded back to Iowa Workforce Development. In this case, no issue was remanded back to Iowa Workforce Development. Therefore, the “R” that was included in the disposition code was erroneous. The outcome of this decision has not changed.

ISSUES:

Was the employer’s protest timely?
Was the employer’s appeal from the statement of charges timely?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The claimant separated from employment on November 21, 2022 and filed a claim for benefits effective November 27, 2022. The notice of claim was mailed to Luke Slade, the predecessor employer, at his address of record on December 5, 2022. The employer received that notice and returned it to Iowa Workforce Development (“IWD”) after the deadline, indicating he was not protesting the claim for benefits. On December 8, 2022, IWD issued a decision to the employer finding it was liable for all unemployment insurance contributions effective November 21, 2022. The decision states in relevant part: “You acquired all the business of [Luke Slade] effective 11/21/2022. All experience will transfer to your account. You are liable for any debt this employer may owe Iowa Workforce Development.”

The employer received a statement of charges mailed January 9, 2023 for the fourth quarter of 2022, listing claimant and charges to its account. The employer filed its appeal of that statement of charges. After a hearing, an administrative law judge found the employer failed to file a timely appeal to the statement of charges. See 23A-UI-02767-ED-T.

The employer next received a statement of charges mailed May 9, 2023 for the first quarter of 2023, listing claimant and charges to its account. The employer filed its appeal to that statement of charges on May 13, 2023.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes that no timely protest to the notice of claim was filed. Therefore, the conditions for appealing the statement of charges have not been met.

Iowa Code section 96.6(2) provides, in pertinent part:

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.

Another portion of this same Code section dealing with timeliness of an appeal from a representative's decision states that such an appeal must be filed within ten days after notification of that decision was mailed. In addressing an issue of timeliness of an appeal under that portion of this Code section, the Iowa Supreme Court held that this statute prescribing the time for notice of appeal clearly limits the time to do so, and that compliance with the appeal notice provision is mandatory and jurisdictional. *Beardslee v. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979). The administrative law judge considers the reasoning and holding of that court in that decision to be controlling on this portion of that same Iowa Code section which deals with a time limit in which to file a protest after notification of the filing of the claim has been mailed.

An exception exists to filing a response within ten days if there is credible evidence that the delay was due to agency error, misinformation or delay, or other action of the United States Postal Service pursuant to Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(2). If the employer has failed to file a timely protest pursuant to Iowa Code § 96.6(2), the administrative law judge lacks jurisdiction to make any determination with respect to the nature of the claimant's separation from employment. See *Beardslee*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979); *Franklin v. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979) and *Pepsi-Cola Bottling Co. v. Emp't Appeal Bd.*, 465 N.W.2d 674 (Iowa Ct. App. 1990).

In this case, Luke Slade failed to complete and return the statement of protest to Iowa Workforce Development prior to the due date listed on the notice of claim. If an employer fails to file a timely protest, Iowa Code § 96.7(2)a(6) is not applicable, given the fact that the statement of charges was not the first notification the employer received regarding the allowance of benefits to the claimant. VDB Pourings LLC became liable for all debt Luke Slade owed to Iowa Workforce Development by virtue of the Unemployment Insurance Tax Bureau decision issued on December 8, 2022 and cannot now attack charges to its account through an appeal to the statement of charges.

Iowa Code section 96.7(2)a(6) provides:

2. *Contribution rates based on benefit experience.*

a. (6) Within forty days after the close of each calendar quarter, the department shall notify each employer of the amount of benefits charged to the employer's account during that quarter. The notification shall show the name of each individual to whom benefits were paid, the individual's social security number, and the amount of benefits paid to the individual. *An employer which has not been notified as provided in section 96.6, subsection 2,* of the allowance of benefits to an individual, may within thirty days after the date of mailing of the notification appeal to the department for a hearing to determine the eligibility of the individual to receive benefits. The appeal shall be referred to an administrative law judge for hearing and the employer and the individual shall receive notice of the time and place of the hearing.

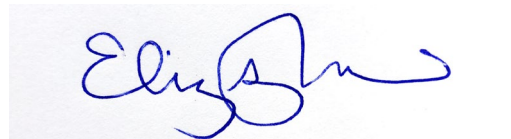
(Emphasis added).

An employer is only allowed to appeal the statement of charges if they were not previously notified pursuant to Iowa Code section 96.6(2) of the allowance of benefits. In this case, Luke Slade (the predecessor employer) was previously notified of the claim when the notice of claim was mailed to him on December 5, 2022. He failed to file a timely protest. As such, the conditions for appealing the statement of charges under Iowa Code section 96.7(2)a(6) have not been met. The statement of charges dated May 9, 2023 for the first quarter of 2023 must be affirmed.

NOTE: If the employer needs a copy of the successorship determination, please contact the IWD Tax Bureau directly.

DECISION:

The May 9, 2023, reference 04, statement of charges for the first quarter of 2023 is affirmed. The employer has not met the conditions for appealing the statement of charges.



Elizabeth A. Johnson
Administrative Law Judge

June 13, 2023
Decision Dated and Mailed

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APPEAL RIGHTS. If you disagree with the decision, you or any interested party may:

1. Appeal to the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days of the date under the judge's signature by submitting a written appeal via mail, fax, or online to:

**Employment Appeal Board
4th Floor – Lucas Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Fax: (515)281-7191
Online: eab.iowa.gov**

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.

AN APPEAL TO THE BOARD SHALL 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.

An Employment Appeal Board decision is final agency action. If a party disagrees with the Employment Appeal Board decision, they may then file a petition for judicial review in district court.

2. If no one files an appeal of the judge's decision with the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days, the decision becomes final agency action, and you have the option to file a petition for judicial review in District Court within thirty (30) days after the decision becomes final. Additional information on how to file a petition can be found at Iowa Code §17A.19, which is online at <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf> or by contacting the District Court Clerk of Court <https://www.iowacourts.gov/iowa-courts/court-directory/>.

Note to Parties: YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in the appeal or 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.

Note to Claimant: It is important that you file your weekly claim as directed, while this appeal is pending, to protect your continuing right to benefits.

SERVICE INFORMATION:

A true and correct copy of this decision was mailed to each of the parties listed.

DERECHOS DE APELACIÓN. Si no está de acuerdo con la decisión, usted o cualquier parte interesada puede:

1. Apelar a la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo dentro de los quince (15) días de la fecha bajo la firma del juez presentando una apelación por escrito por correo, fax o en línea a:

**Employment Appeal Board
4th Floor – Lucas Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Fax: (515)281-7191
En línea: eab.iowa.gov**

El período de apelación se extenderá hasta el siguiente día hábil si el último día para apelar cae en fin de semana o día feriado legal.

UNA APELACIÓN A LA JUNTA DEBE ESTABLECER CLARAMENTE:

- 1) El nombre, dirección y número de seguro social del reclamante.
- 2) Una referencia a la decisión de la que se toma la apelación.
- 3) Que se interponga recurso de apelación contra tal decisión y se firme dicho recurso.
- 4) Los fundamentos en que se funda dicho recurso.

Una decisión de la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo es una acción final de la agencia. Si una de las partes no está de acuerdo con la decisión de la Junta de Apelación de Empleo, puede presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el tribunal de distrito.

2. Si nadie presenta una apelación de la decisión del juez ante la Junta de Apelaciones Laborales dentro de los quince (15) días, la decisión se convierte en acción final de la agencia y usted tiene la opción de presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el Tribunal de Distrito dentro de los treinta (30) días después de que la decisión adquiriera firmeza. Puede encontrar información adicional sobre cómo presentar una petición en el Código de Iowa §17A.19, que se encuentra en línea en <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf> o comunicándose con el Tribunal de Distrito Secretario del tribunal <https://www.iowacourts.gov/iowa-courts/court-directory/>.

Nota para las partes: USTED PUEDE REPRESENTARSE en la apelación u obtener un abogado u otra parte interesada para que lo haga, siempre que no haya gastos para Workforce Development. Si desea ser representado por un abogado, puede obtener los servicios de un abogado privado o uno cuyos servicios se paguen con fondos públicos.

Nota para el reclamante: es importante que presente su reclamo semanal según las instrucciones, mientras esta apelación está pendiente, para proteger su derecho continuo a los beneficios.

SERVICIO DE INFORMACIÓN:

Se envió por correo una copia fiel y correcta de esta decisión a cada una de las partes enumeradas.