

**BEFORE THE
EMPLOYMENT APPEAL BOARD
Lucas State Office Building
Fourth floor
Des Moines, Iowa 50319**

BERIHU K MEDHANE

Claimant

and

SMITHFIELD FARMLAND CORP

Employer

HEARING NUMBER: 17BUI-09738

**EMPLOYMENT APPEAL BOARD
DECISION**

SECTION: 10A.601 Employment Appeal Board Review

D E C I S I O N

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The notice of hearing in this matter was mailed September 27, 2017. The notice set a hearing for October 9, 2017. The Claimant did not appear for or participate in the hearing. The reason he didn't participate was because he did not provide a telephone number at which he could be reached, and did not receive a call to participate. The Claimant had gone to the Denison office for assistance and was provided with the incorrect number to contact the administrative law judge. It wasn't until about an hour after the scheduled start of the hearing, he was able to successfully call.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

Iowa Code section 10A.601(4) (2015) provides:

4. Appeal board review. The appeal board may on its own motion affirm, modify, or set aside any decision of a administrative law judge on the basis of the evidence previously submitted in such case, or direct the taking of additional evidence, or may permit any of the parties to such decision to initiate further appeals before it. The appeal board shall permit such further appeal by any of the parties interested in a decision of an administrative law judge and by the representative whose decision has been overruled or modified by the administrative law judge. The appeal board shall review the case pursuant to rules adopted by the appeal board. The appeal board shall promptly notify the interested parties of its findings and decision.

Here the Claimant did not participate in the hearing because he had not provided a telephone number for the administrative law judge to call. When the Claimant did not receive a call, he contacted the local office for assistance, but was given the incorrect number. This hindered his ability to timely gain access to participate. Based on this circumstance, we find the Claimant has established his intention to follow through with the appeals process. For this reason, the matter will be remanded for another hearing before an administrative law judge so that the Claimant may avail himself of his due process right.

We caution the Claimant that, barring exceptional circumstances, we will not again excuse a failure to call in a number where the Claimant could be reached.

DECISION:

The decision of the administrative law judge dated October 10, 2017 is not vacated and remains in force unless and until the Department makes a differing determination pursuant to this remand. This matter is remanded to an administrative law judge in the Workforce Development Center, Appeals Section. The administrative law judge shall conduct a hearing following due notice. After the hearing, the administrative law judge shall issue a decision which provides the parties appeal rights.

Kim D. Schmett

Ashley R. Koopmans

James M. Strohman

AMG/fnv