

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

DANIEL J WALKER
Claimant

BEST BUY STORES LP
Employer

**APPEAL 22A-UI-06539-JC-T
ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

**OC: 04/18/21
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Iowa Code § 96.5(1) – Voluntary Quitting
Iowa Code § 96.5(2)a – Discharge for Misconduct
Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant filed an appeal from the August 10, 2021, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that denied benefits. After proper notice, a telephone hearing was conducted on April 26, 2022. The following six hearings were heard together, as a consolidated hearing: Appeals 22A-UI-06539-JC-T, 22A--UI-06540-JC-T, 22A--UI-06542-JC-T, 22A--UI-06543-JC-T, 22A--UI-06544-JC-T and 22A--UI-06545-JC-T. The claimant participated personally. Barbara Buss represented the employer. Daniel Creswell was the employer witness. Official notice of the administrative records was taken. Department Exhibit 1 was admitted.

ISSUES:

Is the appeal timely?
Did claimant voluntarily quit the employment with good cause attributable to employer?
Was the claimant discharged for disqualifying job-related misconduct?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The claimant filed a new claim for unemployment insurance benefits with an effective date of April 19, 2020. Claimant permanently separated from employment on August 26, 2020 with Best Buy Stores LP, and has not requalified for benefits.

An initial decision dated August 10, 2021 (reference 01) was mailed to the claimant's address of record. The decision contained a warning that an appeal was due by August 20, 2021. Claimant received the initial decision within the prescribed period to appeal. Claimant filed his appeal on March 13, 2022 by fax after receiving overpayment decisions dated March 3, 2022 (See Department Exhibit 1). No evidence was presented that claimant's delay in filing the appeal was due to agency or postal service error.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant's appeal is untimely.

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

Filing – determination – appeal.

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.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(2) provides:

Date of submission and extension of time for payments and notices.

(2) The submission of any payment, appeal, application, request, notice, objection, petition, report or other information or document not within the specified statutory or regulatory period shall be considered timely if it is established to the satisfaction of the division that the delay in submission was due to division error or misinformation or to delay or other action of the United States postal service.

a. For submission that is not within the statutory or regulatory period to be considered timely, the interested party must submit a written explanation setting forth the circumstances of the delay.

b. The division shall designate personnel who are to decide whether an extension of time shall be granted.

c. No submission shall be considered timely if the delay in filing was unreasonable, as determined by the department after considering the circumstances in the case.

d. If submission is not considered timely, although the interested party contends that the delay was due to division error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United States postal service, the division shall issue an appealable decision to the interested party.

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. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 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. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 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. Iowa Emp't Sec. Comm'n*, 217 N.W.2d 255 (Iowa 1974); *Smith v. Iowa Emp't Sec. Comm'n*, 212 N.W.2d 471, 472 (Iowa 1973).

Claimant in this case received the initial decision within the prescribed period to appeal. The record shows that the appellant did have a reasonable opportunity to file a timely appeal. The administrative law judge concludes that failure to follow the clear written instructions 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 § 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. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979) and *Franklin v. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979).

DECISION:

The August 10, 2021, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect.



Jennifer L. Beckman
Administrative Law Judge
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May 11, 2022
Decision Dated and Mailed

jlb/scn