

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

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**MICHAELA OEHLER**  
Claimant

**SCRATCH CUPCAKERY, LLC**  
Employer

**APPEAL 21A-UI-16862-DZ-T**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**OC: 04/19/20**  
**Claimant: Appellant (1R)**

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Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timely Appeal  
Iowa Code §96.5(2)a – Discharge for Misconduct  
Iowa Code § 96.5(1) – Voluntary Quit

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Micheala Oehler, the claimant/appellant, filed an appeal from the July 24, 2020, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that denied REGULAR unemployment insurance benefits. The parties were properly notified of the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on September 23, 2021. Ms. Oehler participated and testified. Patrick Oehler, Ms. Oehler's father, participated and testified on Ms. Oehler's behalf. The employer participated through Samantha Allison-Rodriguez, director of business administration. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record.

**ISSUES:**

Is Ms. Oehler's appeal filed on time?  
Did Ms. Oehler voluntarily quit without good cause attributable to the employer?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having reviewed the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The Unemployment Insurance Decision was mailed to Ms. Oehler at the correct address on July 24, 2020. The decision states that it becomes final unless an appeal is postmarked or received by Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) Appeals Section by August 3, 2020. Ms. Oehler received the decision in the mail, but it was after the deadline. Ms. Oehler did not appeal the decision when she received it.

In May 2020, Ms. Oehler had called IWD to inform the agency that she worked as an independent contractor. Ms. Oehler applied for (federal) Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits on May 5, 2020. IWD has not issued a decision about Ms. Oehler's PUA eligibility.

IWD issued a different decision finding Ms. Oehler was overpaid benefits. That decision was dated February 9, 2021 (reference 02). Ms. Oehler received that decision in the mail. Ms.

Oehler filed an appeal via letter sent by her father, which was postmarked on March 19, 2021. The appeal was received by Iowa Workforce Development on March 23, 2021.

### **REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the Ms. Oehler's appeal of the July 24, 2020 (reference 01) decision was not filed on time.

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) provides, in pertinent part: "[u]nless 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(1) provides:

1. Except as otherwise provided by statute or by division rule, any payment, appeal, application, request, notice, objection, petition, report or other information or document submitted to the division shall be considered received by and filed with the division:

(a) If transmitted via the United States Postal Service on the date it is mailed as shown by the postmark, or in the absence of a postmark the postage meter mark of the envelope in which it is received; or if not postmarked or postage meter marked or if the mark is illegible, on the date entered on the document as the date of completion.

(b) If transmitted via the State Identification Data Exchange System (SIDES), maintained by the United States Department of Labor, on the date it was submitted to SIDES.

(c) If transmitted by any means other than [United States Postal Service or the State Identification Data Exchange System (SIDES)], on the date it is received by the division.

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

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.

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).

Ms. Oehler did not receive the decision in the mail before the deadline and, therefore, could not have filed an appeal prior to the appeal deadline. The notice provision of the decision was invalid. Once Ms. Oehler did receive the reference 01 decision, her delay in filing her appeal of the decision was not due to an error or misinformation from the Department or due to delay or other action of the United States Postal Service. No other good cause reason has been

established for the delay in filing her appeal before the deadline. Ms. Oehler's appeal of the reference 01 decision was not filed on time and the administrative law judge lacks jurisdiction (authority) to decide the other issue in this matter.

**DECISION:**

Ms. Oehler's appeal of the July 24, 2020, (reference 01) decision was not filed on time. The July 24, 2020, (reference 01) decision is affirmed.

**REMAND:**

This matter is remanded (sent back) to the Benefits Bureau of Iowa Workforce Development for investigation and a decision on Ms. Oehler's eligibility for (federal) PUA benefits.



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Daniel Zeno  
Administrative Law Judge  
Iowa Workforce Development  
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Bureau  
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September 27, 2021  
Decision Dated and Mailed

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