

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

MICHEL MUTABAZI
Claimant

APPEAL 22A-UI-16531-JT-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT**

**OC: 04/11/21
Claimant: Appellant (6)**

Iowa Code § 96.3(7) – Overpayment
P.L. 116-136, § 2104 – Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation Overpayment
Iowa Code § 17A.12(3) – Default Decision
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-26.14(7) – Dismissal of Appeal on Default

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

On August 26, 2022, Michel Mutabazi (claimant) filed a late appeal from the April 26, 2022 (reference 07) unemployment insurance decision. The reference 07 decision held the claimant was overpaid \$10,846.00 in regular state benefits for 22 weeks between April 11, 2021 and October 16, 2021. The reference 07 decision held the claimant was overpaid \$2,700.00 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) for nine weeks between April 11, 2021 and June 12, 2021. The reference 07 decision stated the overpayments were due to the reference 04 decision that stated the claimant was not able to perform work according to his physician and not available for work. A notice of hearing was mailed to the claimant's last-known address of record for a telephone hearing scheduled for 1:05 p.m. on September 22, 2022. The hearing in this matter was consolidated with the hearing in Appeal Number 22A-UI-16529-JT-T. The claimant did not comply with the hearing notice instructions to call the toll-free number at the time of the hearing and did not participate in the appeal hearing. Based upon the claimant/appellant's failure to participate in the hearing and the law, the administrative law judge enters the following findings of fact, reasoning and conclusions of law and decision.

ISSUE:

Whether the appeal should be dismissed based on the claimant/appellant's failure to appear and participate.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The claimant is the appellant in this matter and in a companion appeal number. The claimant was properly notified of the scheduled hearing for this appeal. The claimant/appellant failed to call the toll-free number listed on the hearing notice at the time of the hearing. The appellant did not participate or request a postponement of the hearing as required by the hearing notice.

The hearing notice instruction advised the claimant of the date and time of hearing. It also stated:

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

YOU MUST CALL the toll-free number: **866-783-7021** at the time of the hearing. When instructed, enter the PIN Number ... followed by the pound key [#] and wait for the administrative law judge to begin the hearing.

The administrative law judge **WILL NOT** call you for the hearing, you **MUST** call into the number provided above to participate. **Failure to participate in the hearing may result in the dismissal of your appeal.**

The back page of the hearing notice provides further instruction and warning:

Failure to Participate or Register for Appeal Hearing

If you do not participate in the hearing, the judge may dismiss the appeal or issue a decision without considering your evidence. The Appeals Bureau will not call you to participate in the hearing. Instructions for participating are on the other side of this page. 871 IAC 26.14(7)

As a courtesy to the appellant the record was left open until 1:30 p.m. to give the appellant a reasonable opportunity to participate.

The April 26, 2022 (reference 07) unemployment insurance decision held the claimant was overpaid \$10,846.00 in regular state benefits for 22 weeks between April 11, 2021 and October 16, 2021. The reference 07 decision held the claimant was overpaid \$2,700.00 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) for nine weeks between April 11, 2021 and June 12, 2021. The reference 07 decision stated the overpayments were due to the reference 04 decision that stated the claimant was not able to perform work according to his physician and not available for work.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The Iowa Administrative Procedure Act at Iowa Code § 17A.12(3) provides that if a party fails to appear or participate in a hearing after proper service of notice, the judge may enter a default decision or proceed with the hearing and make a decision in the absence of the party.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-26.14(7) provides:

(7) If a party has not responded to a notice of telephone hearing by providing the appeals bureau with the names and telephone numbers of the persons who are participating in the hearing by the scheduled starting time of the hearing or is not available at the telephone number provided, the presiding officer may proceed with the hearing. If the appealing party fails to provide a telephone number or is unavailable for the hearing, the presiding officer may decide the appealing party is in default and dismiss the appeal as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.12(3). The record may be reopened if the absent party makes a request to reopen the hearing in writing under subrule 26.8(3) and shows good cause for reopening the hearing.

The claimant/appellant did not call the toll-free number listed on the hearing notice at the time of the hearing. The appellant is in default. The appeal is to be dismissed.

If the appellant disagrees with this decision, the appellant may appeal the decision pursuant to the instructions on the last page of this decision.

DECISION:

The claimant defaulted on the appeal. The appeal is dismissed. The April 26, 2022 (reference 07) overpayment decision remains in effect.



James E. Timberland
Administrative Law Judge

October 11, 2022
Decision Dated and Mailed

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Note to Claimant: This decision determines you have been overpaid \$2,700.00 in FPUC under the CARES Act. If you disagree with this decision, you may file an appeal by following the instructions on the final page of this decision. Additionally, instructions for requesting a waiver of this FPUC overpayment can be found at <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/unemployment-insurance-overpayment>. If this decision becomes final and you are not eligible for a FPUC waiver, you will have to repay the FPUC benefits you received.

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.