

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

ONTARIO WHITESIDE

Claimant

APPEAL 21A-UI-15356-DB-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

MASTERSON PERSONNEL INC

Employer

OC: 04/19/20

Claimant: Appellant (1R)

Iowa Code § 96.5(1) – Voluntary Quitting
Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant/appellant filed an appeal from the June 11, 2021 (reference 08) unemployment insurance decision that found that the claimant was not eligible for unemployment insurance benefits effective February 8, 2021 due to a voluntary quitting of work. The parties were properly notified of the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on August 31, 2021. The claimant participated personally. The employer participated through witness Jim Robertson. The administrative law judge took official notice of the claimant's administrative records. The hearing was consolidated with Appeal No. 21A-UI-15362-DB-T and 21A-UI-15366-DB-T. The parties waived due notice of the issues of voluntarily quitting work under Iowa Code § 96.5(1) and timeliness of appeal under Iowa Code § 96.6(2).

ISSUE:

Did the claimant file a timely appeal?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: A decision that found the claimant was not eligible for unemployment insurance benefits was mailed to the claimant's correct address of record on June 11, 2021. The decision had found that the claimant had voluntarily quit work with this employer on February 8, 2021.

The claimant received the decision in the mail. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Section by June 21, 2021. The claimant filed the appeal on July 6, 2021, which was after the due date listed. The claimant filed the appeal after the deadline because he thought the matter had already been taken care of when he participated in a fact-finding interview.

Both parties agreed during the hearing that the claimant had two periods of employment with this employer. His first period of employment was from April 10, 2019 through May 8, 2019 when he completed his job assignment with Richelieu Foods and the second period of employment was from August 7, 2020 through August 12, 2020 when the claimant worked as a

full-time general laborer. Both parties agreed that the claimant did not work for this employer in 2021 and the claimant's wage records establish that he did not earn wages with this employer in 2021.

Further, claimant's administrative records establish that he may have earned ten times his weekly-benefit amount in insured wages following his separation from employment with this employer from Masterbrand Cabinets Inc. in the fourth quarter of 2020. That matter will be remanded to the Benefits Bureau for an initial investigation and determination.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes as follows:

Iowa Code section 96.6(2) provides:

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 issuing the notice of the filing of the claim to protest payment of benefits to the claimant. All interested parties shall select a format as specified by the department to receive such notifications. 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. The claimant has the burden of proving that the claimant meets the basic eligibility conditions of section 96.4. The employer has the burden of proving that the claimant is disqualified for benefits pursuant to section 96.5, except as provided by this subsection. The claimant has the initial burden to produce evidence showing that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving section 96.5, subsections 10 and 11, and has the burden of proving that a voluntary quit pursuant to section 96.5, subsection 1, was for good cause attributable to the employer and that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraphs "a" through "h". Unless the claimant or other interested party, after notification or within ten calendar days after notification was issued, files an appeal from the decision, the decision is final and benefits shall be paid or denied in accordance with the decision. If an administrative law judge affirms a decision of the representative, or the appeal board affirms a decision of the administrative law judge allowing benefits, the benefits shall be paid regardless of any appeal which is thereafter taken, but if the decision is finally reversed, no employer's account shall be charged with benefits so paid and this relief from charges shall apply to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5.

The ten calendar days for appeal begins running on the issuing 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. Bd. 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 issuing 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).

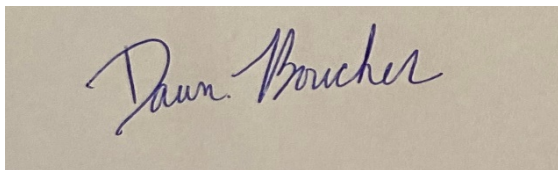
The claimant's failure to file a timely appeal within the time prescribed by the Iowa Employment Security Law was not due to any Agency error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United States Postal Service pursuant to Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(2). As such, the appeal was not timely 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). Because the administrative law judge does not have jurisdiction to hear the appeal, the underlying decision cannot be modified by the administrative law judge. However, the matter of whether the claimant has earned ten times his weekly-benefit amount in insured wages since his August 2020 separation from employment with this employer will be remanded to the Benefits Bureau for an investigation and determination.

DECISION:

The June 11, 2021 (reference 08) decision is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely and the decision of the representative remains in effect.

REMAND:

The issue of whether the claimant has earned ten times his weekly-benefit amount in insured wages after his August of 2020 separation from employment with this employer is remanded to the Benefits Bureau of Iowa Workforce Development for an initial investigation and determination, specifically referencing wages earned in the fourth quarter of 2020 from Masterbrand Cabinets Inc. and whether a ten times allowance decision should be issued.



Dawn Boucher
Administrative Law Judge

September 8, 2021
Decision Dated and Mailed

db/scn