

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

CAMMIE A NELSON
Claimant

**IOWA WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

APPEAL 17A-UI-02125-JCT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

**OC: 07/03/16
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Iowa Code § 96.6(1) – Filing Claims
Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal
Iowa Code § 96.3(5)b – Training Extension Benefits
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.40 Training Extension Benefits

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant appealed the February 8, 2017, (reference 06) unemployment insurance decision that denied training extension benefits. After due notice was issued, a telephone hearing was conducted from Des Moines, Iowa, on March 20, 2017. The claimant participated personally. Jim Nelson, father of the claimant, attended as an observer only. Department Exhibit D-1 was admitted into evidence. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record, including fact-finding documents. Based on the evidence, the argument presented, and the law, the administrative law judge enters the following findings of fact, reasoning and conclusions of law, and decision.

ISSUE:

Is the appeal timely?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: A disqualification decision was mailed to the claimant's last-known address of record on February 8, 2017. She did receive the decision within ten days. The first sentence of the decision states, The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Bureau by February 18, 2017. The appeal was not filed until February 24, 2017, which is after the date noticed on the disqualification decision (Department Exhibit D-1). The claimant asserted she received the reference 05 initial decision, which allowed Department Approved Training (DAT), within a day of receiving the reference 06 decision (which is the issue at hand for this case) denying Training Extension Benefits (TEB) and was confused. She also stated she threw away the reference 06 decision in error. It was not until the claimant received an unrelated letter from the Agency, dated February 21, 2017 regarding the ending of benefits, that she contacted the customer service phone number for assistance.

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:

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 mailing the notice of the filing of the claim by ordinary mail to the last known address to protest payment of benefits to the claimant. 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, subsection 10, 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 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. 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 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. 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 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). The record shows that the appellant did have a reasonable opportunity to file a timely appeal.

The administrative law judge is sympathetic to the claimant's position, but the credible evidence presented is the claimant received the initial decision within the prescribed appeal period. The claimant had adequate time to inquire with Iowa Workforce Development if she was unsure about the outcome of her benefits based on the received decision. The claimant did not inquire during the period to appeal. She further asserted she threw the initial decision away in error. Based on the evidence presented, the administrative law judge concludes that 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). 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 unemployment insurance decision dated February 8, 2017, (reference 06), is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the unemployment insurance decision denying the claimant's request for training extension benefits remains in effect.

Jennifer L. Beckman
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

jlb/rvs