

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

ELKE ZIEBOLZ

Claimant

**GLENWOOD COMMUNITY SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

Employer

APPEAL 22A-UI-05891-CS-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 05/31/20

Claimant: Appellant (1)

Iowa Code § 96.4(5) – Reasonable Assurance
Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

On March 4, 2022, the claimant/appellant filed an appeal from the February 10, 2021, (reference 02) unemployment insurance decision that denied benefits based on claimant being unemployed during a customary vacation or holiday recess. Benefits were denied as of May 31, 2020. The parties were properly notified about the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on April 18, 2022. The hearing was held together with appeals 22A-UI-05889-CS-T; 22A-UI-05893-CS-T; 22A-UI-05894-CS-T; 22A-UI-05896-CS-T; 22A-UI-05897-CS-T; 22A-UI-05898-CS-T; 22A-UI-05899-CS-T; 22A-UI-05900-CS-T; 22A-UI-05901-CS-T; and 22A-UI-05904-CS-T, and combined into one record. Claimant participated. Employer participated through Superintendent, Devin Embray. Administrative notice was taken of claimant's unemployment insurance benefits records.

ISSUES:

Is the Claimant eligible for benefits between academic years?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: An unemployment insurance decision was mailed to the claimant's last known address of record on February 10, 2021. Claimant received the decision within the appeal period. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Bureau by February 10, 2021. The appeal was not filed until March 4, 2022, which is after the date noticed on the unemployment insurance decision because she spoke to the employer and based on their opinion she would not be eligible for benefits. Claimant did not call or visit Iowa Workforce Development to verify this information. Claimant receive overpayment decisions and filed the appeals in response to the overpayment decisions.

The claimant worked for the employer during the 2019-2020 school year. The claimant was hired as a full-time bus driver. Claimant's contract began in August 2019 through June 30, 2020. In May 2020 the employer contacted claimant and asked her if she wanted to return for the 2020-2021 school year as a school bus driver. The claimant accepted the offer to return to work.

Claimant signed a contract with the employer in August 2020. Claimant returned to work on August 24, 2020. The claimant has no other regular non-educational institution employment wage credits in the base period.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

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

Iowa Code § 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 § 96.4. The employer has the burden of proving that the claimant is disqualified for benefits pursuant to § 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 § 96.5, subsection 10, and has the burden of proving that a voluntary quit pursuant to § 96.5, subsection 1, was for good cause attributable to the employer and that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving § 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 § 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). Pursuant to rules Iowa Admin. Code r. 871- 26.2(96)(1) and 871 IAC 24.35(96)(1), appeals are considered filed when postmarked, if mailed. *Messina v. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 341 N.W.2d 52 (Iowa 1983). The postage meter mark on the last day for filing does not perfect a timely appeal if the postmark affixed by the United States Postal Service is beyond the filing date. *Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company of Cedar Rapids v. Emp't Appeal Bd.*, 465 N.W.2d 674 (Iowa Ct. App. 1990).

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 concludes that 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). Benefits are denied.

If the appeal was deemed timely the administrative law judge would have affirmed the underlying decision that denied benefits.

DECISION:

The February 10, 2021, (reference 02) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carly Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The signature is contained within a light gray rectangular box.

Carly Smith
Administrative Law Judge
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Bureau

April 25, 2022

Decision Dated and Mailed

cs/mh

NOTE TO CLAIMANT:

- This decision determines you are not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits under state law. If you disagree with this decision you may file an appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by following the instructions on the first page of this decision.