

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

**JACOB P WILEY**  
Claimant

**MENARD INC**  
Employer

**APPEAL 22A-UI-05607-AR-T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**OC: 11/15/20**  
**Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Ability to and Availability for Work  
Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

The claimant filed an appeal from the February 12, 2021, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that denied benefits based upon the determination that claimant was not able to or available for work due to illness. The parties were properly notified of the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on April 13, 2022, and was consolidated with hearings for appeal numbers 22A-UI-05608-AR-T and 22A-UI-05609-AR-T. The claimant, Jacob P. Wiley, participated personally. The employer, Menard, Inc., participated through Kaitlyn Tulliani. Department's Exhibit D-1 was admitted. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record.

**ISSUES:**

Is the claimant's appeal timely?

Is the claimant able to and available for work effective November 15, 2020?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant initially became employed with this employer in April 2017. He remains employed, though in a different location, at the time of his unemployment appeal hearing.

On November 15, 2020, claimant fell ill with what he thought was a cold. He was speaking with a coworker who was telling him about the coworker's family member who contracted COVID-19. Claimant began to worry that he had COVID-19. He spoke to his supervisor and left work early that day. He obtained and took a rapid test, which returned a positive result. He informed the employer of the positive COVID-19 test the following day. According to the employer's positive at the time, claimant was required to quarantine for 14 days. He was not paid during the period when he was out of work. Claimant returned to work with the same hours, wages, and position as before the leave on December 1, 2020.

A disqualification decision was mailed to claimant's last known address of record on February 12, 2021. Claimant confirmed the decision was mailed to the address at which he was

receiving mail in February 2021. Claimant did not receive the decision. He submitted his appeal on February 25, 2022, after he received an overpayment decision springing from this disqualification decision.

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

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes that the claimant is not able to work and available for work for the period in question.

The first issue to be considered in this appeal is whether the appeal is timely. The administrative law judge determines it is.

Iowa Code section 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. 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 appellant did not have an opportunity to appeal the fact-finder's decision because the decision was not received. Without notice of a disqualification, no meaningful opportunity for appeal exists. See *Smith v. Iowa Emp't Sec. Comm'n*, 212 N.W.2d 471, 472 (Iowa 1973). The claimant timely appealed the overpayment decision, which was the first notice of disqualification. Therefore, the appeal shall be accepted as timely.

Iowa Code section 96.4(3) provides:

An unemployed individual shall be eligible to receive benefits with respect to any week only if the department finds that:

3. The individual is able to work, is available for work, and is earnestly and actively seeking work. This subsection is waived if the individual is deemed partially unemployed, while employed at the individual's regular job, as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "b", unnumbered paragraph (1), or temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "c". The work search requirements of this subsection and the disqualification requirement for failure to apply for, or to accept suitable work of section 96.5, subsection 3 are waived if the individual is not disqualified for benefits under section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraph "h".

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871—24.22(2) provides:

Benefits eligibility conditions. For an individual to be eligible to receive benefits the department must find that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work. The individual bears the burden of establishing that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work.

(2) Available for work. The availability requirement is satisfied when an individual is willing, able, and ready to accept suitable work which the individual does not have good cause to refuse, that is, the individual is genuinely attached to the labor market. Since, under unemployment insurance laws, it is the availability of an individual that is required to be tested, the labor market must be described in terms of the individual. A labor market for an individual means a market for the type of service which the individual offers in the geographical area in which the individual offers the service. Market in that sense does not mean that job vacancies must exist; the purpose of unemployment insurance is to compensate for lack of job vacancies. It means only that the type of services which an individual is offering is generally performed in the geographical area in which the individual is offering the services.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871—24.23(1) provides:

Availability disqualifications. The following are reasons for a claimant being disqualified for being unavailable for work.

(1) An individual who is ill and presently not able to perform work due to illness.

For an unemployed individual to be eligible to receive benefits, she must be able to work, available for work, and actively seeking work as required by the unemployment insurance law. Iowa Code § 96.4(3). The burden is on the claimant to establish that she is able and available for work within the meaning of the statute. Iowa Code § 96.6(2); Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22. Here, claimant was ill with COVID-19 during the two weeks he was off work. Accordingly, he was not available to work during the period in which he was convalescing. Benefits are denied.

**DECISION:**

The February 12, 2021, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The claimant's appeal is timely. The claimant is not able to work and available for work effective November 15, 2020. Benefits are denied.



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Alexis D. Rowe  
Administrative Law Judge

April 20, 2022  
Decision Dated and Mailed

ar/scn

**NOTE TO CLAIMANT:** This decision determines you are not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits. 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.

Individuals who do not qualify for regular unemployment insurance benefits and were unemployed between February 2, 2020, and June 12, 2021 for reasons related to COVID-19 may qualify for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). **You will need to apply for PUA to determine your eligibility under the program.** To apply for PUA go to <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/unemployment-insurance-appeals> and click the link in the last paragraph under "WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE HEARING." **The authorization number is 1 , the pin number you used for the hearing.**

If this decision becomes final and you are not eligible for PUA, you may have an overpayment of benefits.