

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

CHRISTOPHER R WESTPHAL
Claimant

APPEAL 16A-UI-06030-JCT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

**IOWA WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

OC: 01/10/16
Claimant: Appellant (2)

Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Able and Available
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.2(1)e – Notice to Report
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(11) – Failure to Report

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant filed a timely appeal from the May 23, 2016, (reference 01) decision that denied benefits because of a failure to report as directed. After due notice was issued, a telephone conference hearing was set for June 16, 2016. The claimant participated. 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 arguments of the parties, and the law, the administrative law judge enters the following findings of fact, reasoning and conclusions of law, and decision.

ISSUE:

Did the claimant fail to report as directed or offer a good cause reason for failure to do so?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having heard the testimony and having examined the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: On May 4, 2016, a notice was mailed to the claimant to report to IWD by May 16, 2016, via mail about a reported work refusal. He did not report because he did not receive the notice until May 23, 2016. The claimant filed a weekly voice response claim and mistakenly pushed the button indicating he had refused work. The claimant did not receive his letter of inquiry sooner because his local post office was open two hours a day and he does not check his mail day.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the underlying issue was the result of a reporting error, and the claimant has established a good cause reason for having failed to report as directed.

Iowa Code § 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. 871-24.2(1)e provides:

e. In order to maintain continuing eligibility for benefits during any continuous period of unemployment, an individual shall report as directed to do so by an authorized representative of the department. If the individual has moved to another locality, the individual may register and report in person at a workforce development center at the time previously specified for the reporting.

The method of reporting and the payment of benefits, provided the individual is otherwise eligible, shall be on a biweekly basis by mail if the claimant files a Form 60-0151.

The method of reporting shall be weekly if a voice response continued claim is filed, unless otherwise directed by an authorized representative of the department. An individual who files a voice response continued claim will have the benefit payment automatically deposited weekly in the individual's financial institution's account or be paid by the mailing of a warrant on a biweekly basis.

In order for an individual to receive payment by direct deposit, the individual must provide the department with the appropriate bank routing code number and a checking or savings account number.

The department retains the ultimate authority to choose the method of reporting and payment.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(11) provides:

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

(11) Failure to report as directed to workforce development in response to the notice which was mailed to the claimant will result in the claimant being deemed not to meet the availability requirements.

Since he did not receive the notice before the due date, the claimant has established a good cause reason for failing to report as directed, benefits are allowed.

However, the administrative law judge would strongly recommend to the claimant that during periods that he files for unemployment benefits, he should be mindful of checking his mail on a more frequent basis, due to the time-sensitive nature of information sent. Further, in the event that the claimant should receive future mail (including a letter of inquiry) from IWD after the deadline to respond, he is directed to still contact IWD immediately to furnish any requested information.

DECISION:

The May 23, 2016, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is reversed. The claimant has established a good cause reason for failing to report as directed. The underlying issue was the result of a reporting error. Benefits are allowed effective May 15, 2016, provided he is otherwise eligible.

Jennifer L. Beckman
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

jlb/pjs