

**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF INSPECTIONS AND APPEALS
ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS DIVISION, UI APPEALS BUREAU**

FELICIA M SEAY
Claimant

APPEAL NO: 22A-UI-10388-SN-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

**IOWA WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

OC: 12/20/20
Claimant: Appellant (1R)

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal
Iowa Code § 96.3(7) – Recovery of Benefit Overpayment

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant filed an appeal from the March 8, 2022, (reference 02) unemployment insurance decision that concluded she was overpaid \$12,799.00 in regular unemployment insurance benefits. After proper notice, a telephone hearing was conducted on June 9, 2022. The hearing was held jointly with appeal 22A-UI-10389-SN-T. The claimant participated. Official notice of the administrative records was taken. Exhibits A, D-1 and D-2 were received into the record.

ISSUES:

Whether the claimant's appeal is timely?

Whether there are reasonable grounds to find the claimant's appeal otherwise timely?

Has the claimant been overpaid any unemployment insurance benefits?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds:

The claimant filed a new claim for unemployment insurance benefits with an effective date of June 7, 2020.

The claimant filed for and received a total of \$12,799.00 in regular, state unemployment insurance benefits for the weeks between December 27, 2020 and June 26, 2021. The claimant appealed this decision. An administrative law judge affirmed the decision in an appeal decision, 21A-UI-07550-S2-T. The claimant did not appeal this decision.

In March 2021, the claimant applied for and was approved for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance ("PUA"). The administrative record KLOG shows entries on March 30, 2021 and April 28, 2021 stating that PUA payments were pending. The earlier entry states PUA payments were pending until Iowa Workforce Development received the claimant's 2020 tax return. The latter entry dated April 28, 2021 reads, "PUA pending paying out reg UI."

The following section describes the findings of fact necessary to resolve the timeliness issue:

A disqualification decision was mailed to the claimant's address of record on March 8, 2022. (Exhibit D-1) The claimant did not receive the decision. The claimant did not receive the decision because the landlord had not properly maintained the mailbox. The US Postal Service refused to deliver mail to the claimant's address deeming it an "improper mailbox."

The claimant became aware that her pay was being garnished due to the improper debt on April 18, 2022. The claimant called Iowa Workforce Development that same day and spoke with a representative. The representative informed her to file an application to waive her federal overpayment.

On April 25, 2022, the claimant called Iowa Workforce Development because she had not heard about the status of her waiver. During the call, a representative informed the claimant of the right to appeal the decisions. The claimant sent her appeal by facsimile using an IowaWorks facsimile machine that same day. (Exhibit D-2)

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

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

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 issuance of 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 claimant 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 Employment Security Commission*, 212 N.W.2d 471, 472 (Iowa 1973). The claimant timely appealed when she was given notice of her right to appeal and informed of grounds for appeal. Therefore, the appeal shall be accepted as timely.

The issue in this case is whether the claimant was overpaid regular unemployment insurance benefits.

Iowa Code section 96.3(7) provides, in pertinent part:

7. Recovery of overpayment of benefits.

a. If an individual receives benefits for which the individual is subsequently determined to be ineligible, even though the individual acts in good faith and is not otherwise at fault, the benefits shall be recovered. The department in its discretion may recover the overpayment of benefits either by having a sum equal to the overpayment deducted from any future benefits payable to the individual or by having the individual pay to the department a sum equal to the overpayment.

Since the decision disqualifying the claimant has been affirmed, the claimant was overpaid \$12,799.00 in unemployment insurance benefits.

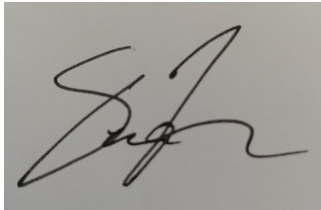
DECISION:

The unemployment insurance decision dated March 8, 2022, (reference 02), is affirmed. The claimant was overpaid \$12,799.00 in regular, state unemployment insurance benefits.

REMAND:

The administrative law judge is remanding to the Benefits Bureau the issue regarding a decision with appeal rights regarding the claimant's PUA eligibility. If the claimant is eligible for PUA benefits, the administrative law judge is remanding to the Benefits Bureau a determination of offsetting of this regarding overpayment by PUA payments she is owed consistent with PL 116-136, Sec. 2104.

The administrative law judge is also remanding to the Collections Unit the issue regarding waiver of the claimant's federal waiver application.



Sean M. Nelson
Administrative Law Judge
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Bureau
1000 East Grand Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0209
Fax (515) 725-9067

August 31, 2022
Decision Dated and Mailed

smn/kmj

APPEAL RIGHTS. If you disagree with the decision, you or any interested party may:

1. Appeal to the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days of the date under the judge's signature by submitting a written appeal via mail, fax, or online to:

**Employment Appeal Board
4th Floor – Lucas Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Fax: (515)281-7191
Online: eab.iowa.gov**

The appeal period will be extended to the next business day if the last day to appeal falls on a weekend or a legal holiday.

AN APPEAL TO THE BOARD SHALL STATE CLEARLY:

- 1) The name, address, and social security number of the claimant.
- 2) A reference to the decision from which the appeal is taken.
- 3) That an appeal from such decision is being made and such appeal is signed.
- 4) The grounds upon which such appeal is based.

An Employment Appeal Board decision is final agency action. If a party disagrees with the Employment Appeal Board decision, they may then file a petition for judicial review in district court.

2. If no one files an appeal of the judge's decision with the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days, the decision becomes final agency action, and you have the option to file a petition for judicial review in District Court within thirty (30) days after the decision becomes final. Additional information on how to file a petition can be found at Iowa Code §17A.19, which is online at <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf>.

Note to Parties: YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in the appeal or obtain a lawyer or other interested party to do so provided there is no expense to Workforce Development. If you wish to be represented by a lawyer, you may obtain the services of either a private attorney or one whose services are paid for with public funds.

Note to Claimant: It is important that you file your weekly claim as directed, while this appeal is pending, to protect your continuing right to benefits.

SERVICE INFORMATION:

A true and correct copy of this decision was mailed to each of the parties listed.

DERECHOS DE APELACIÓN. Si no está de acuerdo con la decisión, usted o cualquier parte interesada puede:

1. Apelar a la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo dentro de los quince (15) días de la fecha bajo la firma del juez presentando una apelación por escrito por correo, fax o en línea a:

**Employment Appeal Board
4th Floor – Lucas Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Fax: (515)281-7191
En línea: eab.iowa.gov**

El período de apelación se extenderá hasta el siguiente día hábil si el último día para apelar cae en fin de semana o día feriado legal.

UNA APELACIÓN A LA JUNTA DEBE ESTABLECER CLARAMENTE:

- 1) El nombre, dirección y número de seguro social del reclamante.
- 2) Una referencia a la decisión de la que se toma la apelación.
- 3) Que se interponga recurso de apelación contra tal decisión y se firme dicho recurso.
- 4) Los fundamentos en que se funda dicho recurso.

Una decisión de la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo es una acción final de la agencia. Si una de las partes no está de acuerdo con la decisión de la Junta de Apelación de Empleo, puede presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el tribunal de distrito.

2. Si nadie presenta una apelación de la decisión del juez ante la Junta de Apelaciones Laborales dentro de los quince (15) días, la decisión se convierte en acción final de la agencia y usted tiene la opción de presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el Tribunal de Distrito dentro de los treinta (30) días después de que la decisión adquiera firmeza. Puede encontrar información adicional sobre cómo presentar una petición en el Código de Iowa §17A.19, que está en línea en <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf>.

Nota para las partes: USTED PUEDE REPRESENTARSE en la apelación u obtener un abogado u otra parte interesada para que lo haga, siempre que no haya gastos para Workforce Development. Si desea ser representado por un abogado, puede obtener los servicios de un abogado privado o uno cuyos servicios se paguen con fondos públicos.

Nota para el reclamante: es importante que presente su reclamo semanal según las instrucciones, mientras esta apelación está pendiente, para proteger su derecho continuo a los beneficios.

SERVICIO DE INFORMACIÓN:

Se envió por correo una copia fiel y correcta de esta decisión a cada una de las partes enumeradas.