

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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**MAHDERE E WELDEGEBREL**  
Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 21A-UI-20380-B2T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**IOWA WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

**OC: 06/07/20**  
**Claimant: Appellant (1)**

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Iowa Code § 96.6-2 – Timeliness of Appeal  
Iowa Code § 96.3-7 – Recovery of Overpayment of Benefits  
Fed Law PL 116-136, Sec. 2104 – Overpayment of FPUC

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Claimant filed an appeal from the June 29, 2021, reference 07, decision that found claimant to have been overpaid benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held on November 10, 2021. The claimant did participate.

**ISSUES:**

Whether the appeal is timely?

Whether claimant is overpaid FPUC benefits?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: A decision was mailed to the claimant's last known address of record on June 29, 2021. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Section by July 9, 2021. The appeal was not filed until September 15, 2021, which is after the date noticed on the disqualification decision. Claimant stated that he moved addresses to the address listed above and the mail was not forwarded to his new address until at or around the time he filed appeals in the overpayment matters.

The overpayment issue in this case was created by a ruling claimant was improperly paid FPUC unemployment benefits. Claimant was deemed to have been overpaid \$4,200.00 for the seven weeks ending July 25, 2020.

Claimant was determined to be ineligible to receive unemployment benefits from the date of June 7, 2020 in case number 21A-UI-20377-B2-T.

## REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

Iowa Code section 96.6(2) provides, in pertinent part:

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. . . . 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.

The ten calendar days for appeal begin 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. Board 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 Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(96)(1), appeals are considered filed when postmarked, if mailed. *Messina v. IDJS*, 341 N.W.2d 52 (Iowa 1983).

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. IDJS*, 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. IDJS*, 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. IESC*, 217 N.W.2d 255 (Iowa 1974); *Smith v. IESC*, 212 N.W.2d 471, 472 (Iowa 1973). The record shows that the appellant may not have had 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 potentially due to an 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 therefore deemed timely filed pursuant to Iowa Code Section 96.6-2, and the administrative law judge retains jurisdiction to make a determination with respect to the nature of the appeal. See, *Beardslee v. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979) and *Franklin v. IDJS*, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979).

PL116-136, Sec. 2104 provides, in pertinent part:

(b) Provisions of Agreement

(1) Federal pandemic unemployment compensation.--Any agreement under this section shall provide that the State agency of the State will make payments of

regular compensation to individuals in amounts and to the extent that they would be determined if the State law of the State were applied, with respect to any week for which the individual is (disregarding this section) otherwise entitled under the State law to receive regular compensation, as if such State law had been modified in a manner such that the amount of regular compensation (including dependents' allowances) payable for any week shall be equal to

(A) the amount determined under the State law (before the application of this paragraph), plus

(B) an additional amount of \$600 (in this section referred to as "Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation").

....

(f) Fraud and Overpayments

(2) Repayment.--In the case of individuals who have received amounts of Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation to which they were not entitled, the State shall require such individuals to repay the amounts of such Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation to the State agency except that the State agency may waive such repayment if it determines that

(A) the payment of such FPUC was without fault on the part of any such individual; and

(B) such repayment would be contrary to equity and good conscience.

Here, the claimant is disqualified from receiving regular unemployment insurance (UI) benefits as determined in case 21A-UI-20377-B2-T. Accordingly, this also disqualifies claimant from receiving Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC). The claimant was overpaid \$4,200.00 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC).

**DECISION:**

Although the appeal in this matter was deemed timely, the unemployment insurance decision dated June 29, 2021, (reference 07), is affirmed. The claimant was overpaid \$4,200.00 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC).



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Blair A. Bennett  
Administrative Law Judge

December 10, 2021  
Decision Dated and Mailed

bab/scn

**NOTE TO CLAIMANT:**

- This decision determines you have been overpaid FPUC 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.
- You may also request a waiver of this overpayment. The written request must include the following information:
  1. Claimant name & address.
  2. Decision number/date of decision.
  3. Dollar amount of overpayment requested for waiver.
  4. Relevant facts that you feel would justify a waiver.
- The request should be sent to:

Iowa Workforce Development  
Overpayment waiver request  
1000 East Grand Avenue  
Des Moines, IA 50319
- This Information can also be found on the Iowa Workforce Development website at: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/unemployment-insurance-overpayment-and-recovery>.
- If this decision becomes final and you are not eligible for a waiver, you will have to repay the benefits you received.