

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

SIGNE-ROSE C NEWMAN
Claimant

BROADLAWNS MEDICAL CENTER
Employer

APPEAL 17A-UI-08676-CL-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 07/09/17
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal
Iowa Code § 96.5(1) – Voluntary Quitting

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant filed an appeal from the July 27, 2017, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that denied benefits based upon a separation from employment. The parties were properly notified about the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on September 12, 2017. Claimant participated. Employer participated through Julie Kilgore, Nicole Killam, and Shelly Farrell. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record, including the appeal and the date it was filed.

ISSUES:

Is the appeal timely?

Did claimant voluntarily quit the employment with good cause attributable to employer?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: A reference 01 unemployment insurance decision disqualifying claimant from receiving benefits was mailed to the claimant's last known address of record on July 27, 2017. A reference 03 summary decision explaining that claimant may have received conflicting decisions, but ultimately she was denied benefits unless she followed the appeal instructions on her separate decision letters sent on July 31, 2017. Claimant received both decisions before the appeal deadline of August 6, 2017. The reference 01 decision disqualifying claimant from receiving benefits contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Bureau by August 6, 2017. The appeal was not filed until August 22, 2017, which is after the date noticed on the unemployment insurance decision. Claimant waited to file the appeal because she was gathering information to support her case and because she initially did not understand the online appeal system. When claimant contacted the agency for help, she was given accurate information and was not instructed to wait to file the appeal.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

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

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 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).

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 unemployment insurance 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 follow the clear written instructions 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).

DECISION:

The July 27, 2017, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect.

Christine A. Louis
Administrative Law Judge
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Decision Dated and Mailed

cal/scn