

**IN THE IOWA ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS DIVISION
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

GINA T NELSON
Claimant

**IOWA WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

APPEAL 25A-UI-00936-AR-T
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 10/06/24
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Able and Available/Work Search
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871—24.15(3) – Earnest and Active Search for Work

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

On February 4, 2025, the claimant filed an appeal from the January 30, 2025, (reference 03) unemployment insurance decision that denied benefits for the benefit week ending December 7, 2024, due to inadequate work search. The parties were properly notified about the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on February 19, 2025. Appeal numbers 25A-UI-00935-AR-T and 25A-UI-00936-AR-T were heard together and created one record. Claimant, Gina T. Nelson, participated. The agency, Iowa Workforce Development (IWD), participated by RESEA Career Planner Samantha Alinea. IWD Exhibits 1 through 4 were admitted. Department's Exhibit D-1 was admitted. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record.

ISSUES:

Is the claimant able to and available for work?
Did the claimant fail to make an active work search?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant filed a claim for unemployment insurance benefits with an effective date of October 6, 2024. She filed a weekly continuing claim for the benefit week ending December 7, 2024. In a decision dated October 15, 2024, (reference 01), claimant was warned that future failure to make adequate work searches would result in the denial of benefits.

During the week ending December 7, 2024, claimant intended to apply for three jobs and participated in two other reemployment activities. However, she did not successfully apply for a position with Van Wall. When Alinea followed up because claimant lacked a confirmation email from Van Wall, the employer told her that it had no application from anyone by claimant's name.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes:

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 96.1A, subsection 37, paragraph "b", subparagraph (1), or temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.1A, subsection 37, 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—24.16(25) provides:

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

(25) Failure to make an adequate work search after having been previously warned and instructed to expand the work search.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871—24.15(3) provides:

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

(3) *Earnestly and actively seeking work.* Mere registration at a workforce development center does not establish that the individual is earnestly and actively seeking work. It is essential that the individual personally and diligently search for work. It is difficult to establish definite criteria for defining the words earnestly and actively. Much depends on the estimate of the employment opportunities in the area. The number of employer contacts which might be appropriate in an area of limited opportunity might be totally unacceptable in other areas. When employment opportunities are high an individual may be expected to make more than the usual number of contacts. Unreasonable limitations by an individual as to salary, hours or conditions of work can indicate that the individual is not earnestly seeking work. The department expects each individual claiming benefits to conduct themselves as would any normal, prudent individual who is out of work.

a. Basic requirements. An individual shall be ineligible for benefits for any period for which the department finds that the individual has failed to make an earnest and active search for work. The circumstances in each case are considered in determining whether an earnest and active search for work has been made. Subject to the foregoing, applicable actions of the following kind are considered an earnest and active search for work if found by the department to constitute a

reasonable means of securing work by the individual, under the facts and circumstances of the individual's particular situation:

(1) Applying with employers reasonably expected to have suitable openings.

(2) Registering with a placement facility of a school, college, or university if one is available in the individual's occupation or profession.

(3) Applying or testing for openings in the civil service of a governmental entity with reasonable prospects of suitable work for the individual.

(4) Responding to appropriate "want ads" for work which appears suitable to the individual if the response is made in writing, in person, or electronically.

(5) Any other action which the department finds to constitute an effective means of securing work suitable to the individual.

(6) No individual is denied benefits solely on the ground that the individual has failed or refused to register with a private employment agency or at any other placement facility which charges the job-seeker a fee for its services. However, an individual may count as one of the work contacts required for the week an in-person contact with a private employment agency.

(7) An individual is considered to have failed to make an effort to secure work if the department finds that the individual has followed a course of action designed to discourage prospective employers from hiring the individual in suitable work.

b. Number of employer contacts. "Earnestly and actively" may be interpreted in different manners, depending on the estimate of employment opportunities in the area. The number of employer contacts which might be appropriate in an area of limited opportunities might be totally unacceptable in another area. The number of required contacts is dependent upon the condition of the local labor market, the duration of benefit payments, a change in the individual's characteristics, job prospects in the community, and other factors as the department deems necessary. Reemployment activities must be recorded as directed by the department.

c. Exceptions.

(1) Members of unions or professional organizations who normally obtain their employment through union or professional organizations are considered as earnestly and actively seeking work if they maintain active contact with the union's business agent or with the placement officer in the professional organization. A paid-up membership must be maintained if this is a requirement for placement service. The trade, profession or union to which the individual belongs must have an active hiring hall or placement facility, and the trade, profession or union must be the source customarily used by employers in filling their job openings. Registering with the individual's union hiring or placement facility is sufficient, except when all benefit rights to regular benefits are exhausted and Iowa is in an extended benefit period or similar program such as the federal supplemental compensation program. Mere registration at a union or reporting to a union hiring hall or registration with a placement facility of the individual's professional organization does not satisfy the extended benefit systematic and sustained effort to find work, and individuals complete reemployment activities.

(2) The requirement for seeking work is waived if all of the following conditions apply:

1. The individual is attached to a regular job or industry.

2. The individual is a high-skilled worker. For purposes of this numbered paragraph, "high-skilled worker" means a worker whose job or position requires licensing, credentials, or specialized training.
3. The individual is on a short-term temporary layoff. For purposes of this numbered paragraph, "short-term layoff" means a layoff period of 16 weeks or less due to seasonal weather conditions that impacts the ability to perform work related to highway construction, repair, or maintenance with a specific return-to-work date verified by the employer.
4. The individual otherwise qualifies for unemployment insurance benefits.
 - d. *Week-to-week disqualification.* Disqualification due to failure to conduct reemployment activities is made on a week-to-week basis and is not permanent.
 - e. *Seniority rights.* An individual who fails to exercise seniority rights to replace another employee with less seniority has the work search requirement waived during a period of regular benefits. This waiver does not apply to the individual who is receiving extended benefits or similar federal program benefits.
 - f. *Search for work.*
 - (1) The group code is used to determine which individuals are required to make personal applications for work. Other factors, such as the condition of the local labor market, the duration of benefit payments, and a change in claimant characteristics, are also taken into consideration on a weekly basis.
 - (2) Individuals receiving partial benefits are exempt from making personal applications for work in any week they have worked and received wages from their regular employer. Individuals involved in hiring hall practices must keep in weekly touch with the business agent of that union in which they maintain membership. All other individuals must make contacts with such frequency as the department considers advisable, after considering job prospects in the community, the condition of the labor market and any other factors which may have a bearing on the individual's reemployment. A sincere effort must be made to find a job. A contact made merely for the sake of complying with the law is not good enough.
 - g. *Job search assistance.* Job search assistance classes, including reemployment services, that are sponsored by the department may be counted as one of the individual's work search contacts for that week.

Though claimant intended to adhere to the requirements regarding job contacts and reemployment activities, she did not successfully apply to at least three jobs during the week ending December 7, 2024. Accordingly, benefits must be denied.

DECISION:

The January 30, 2025, (reference 03) unemployment insurance decision is AFFIRMED. Claimant did not make an active and earnest search for work for the benefit week ending December 7, 2024. Claimant was not able to and available for work. Benefits are denied.



Alexis D. Rowe
Administrative Law Judge

February 20, 2025
Decision Dated and Mailed

ar/scn

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:

**Iowa Employment Appeal Board
6200 Park Avenue Suite 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50321
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> or by contacting the District Court Clerk of Court <https://www.iowacourts.gov/iowa-courts/court-directory/>.

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:

**Iowa Employment Appeal Board
6200 Park Avenue Suite 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50321
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 adquiriera firmeza. Puede encontrar información adicional sobre cómo presentar una petición en el Código de Iowa §17A.19, que se encuentra en línea en <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf> o comunicándose con el Tribunal de Distrito Secretario del tribunal <https://www.iowacourts.gov/iowa-courts/court-directory/>.

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.