

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

68-0157 (9-06) - 3091078 - EI

NEDZAD JAKUPOVIC
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 09A-UI-04246-HT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

BURGER KING CORPORATION
Employer

**Original Claim: 09/28/08
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Section 96.5(1) – Quit
Section 96.6-2 – Timeliness of Appeal

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant, Nedzad Jakupovic, filed an appeal from a decision dated October 30, 2008, reference 01. The decision disqualified him from receiving unemployment benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held by telephone conference call on April 13, 2009. The claimant participated on his own behalf. The employer, Burger King, did not provide a telephone number where a witness could be contacted and did not participate. Exhibit D-1 was admitted into the record.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether the appeal is timely.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

A disqualification decision was mailed to the claimant's last known address of record on October 30, 2008. The claimant received the decision. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Section by November 9, 2008. The appeal was not filed until March 16, 2009, which is after the date noticed on the decision.

The claimant was in jail from October 13 until December 1, 2008, in Marshall County. The decision in this case arrived to his address of record and his wife contacted him in jail. He instructed her to open it and read it to him and she did, telling him he was denied.

When he was released from jail, he could not find the copy of the decision sent to him. He did not contact Iowa Workforce Development to inquire about his status until March 16, 2009, at which time he filed the appeal.

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 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. Board of Adjustment, 239 N.W.2d 873, 92 A.L.R.3d 304 (Iowa 1976).

Pursuant to rules 871 IAC 26.2(96)(1) and 871 IAC 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 did have a reasonable opportunity to file a timely appeal.

The claimant may not have been able to file an appeal from this decision while he was incarcerated. However, he delayed three and one-half months after his release from jail before contacting Iowa Workforce Development about the matter. The administrative law judge considers this to be an unreasonable amount of time to file the appeal.

DECISION:

The decision of the representative dated October 30, 2008, reference 01, is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect. The claimant is disqualified for unemployment benefits.

Bonny G. Hendricksmeier
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

bgh/kjw