

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

BECCA J. WITZKE
Claimant

GRAPETREE MEDICAL STAFFING INC.
Employer

APPEAL 22A-UI-02290-CS-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

**OC: 12/12/21
Claimant: Respondent (1)**

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Protest

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

On January 5 , 2021, Grapetree Medical Staffing Inc. (employer) filed an appeal from the December 30, 2021, reference 05, unemployment insurance decision that found the protest untimely and allowed Becca J. Witzke (claimant) to receive benefits. After due notice was issued, a telephone hearing was held on February 17, 2021. The claimant did not call in to participate. The employer participated through Human Resource Manager, Erin Stevens. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record, including the notice of claim and protest.

ISSUE:

Is the employer's protest timely?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The claimant separated from employment on August 4, 2020 and filed a claim for benefits effective December 12, 2021.

The notice of claim was provided to the employer in the SIDES system with an e-mail alert on December 16, 2021. The notice of claim contains a warning that the employer protest response is due ten days from the initial notice date and gave a response deadline of December 27, 2021. The employer did not file a protest response until December 29, 2021, which is after the ten-day period had expired. The employer does not know why it was late and thinks it just got missed.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes that employer has failed to file protest response within the time period prescribed by the Iowa Employment Security Law.

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

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 mailing the notice of the filing of the claim by ordinary mail to the last known address to protest payment of benefits to the claimant.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(1) provides:

1. Except as otherwise provided by statute or by division rule, any payment, appeal, application, request, notice, objection, petition, report or other information or document submitted to the division shall be considered received by and filed with the division:

(a) If transmitted via the United States Postal Service on the date it is mailed as shown by the postmark, or in the absence of a postmark the postage meter mark on the envelope in which it is received; or if not postmarked or postage meter marked or if the mark is illegible, on the date entered on the document as the date of completion.

(b) If transmitted via the State Identification Data Exchange System (SIDES), maintained by the United States Department of Labor, on the date it was submitted to SIDES.

(c) If transmitted by any means other than [United States Postal Service or the State Identification Data Exchange System (SIDES)], on the date it is received by the division.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(2) provides:

2. The submission of any payment, appeal, application, request, notice, objection, petition, report or other information or document not within the specified statutory or regulatory period shall be considered timely if it is established to the satisfaction of the division that the delay in submission was due to division error or misinformation or to delay or other action of the United States postal service.

Another portion of this same Code section dealing with timeliness of an appeal from a representative's decision states that such an appeal must be filed within ten days after notification of that decision was mailed. In addressing an issue of timeliness of an appeal under that portion of this Code section, the Iowa Supreme Court held that this statute prescribing the time for notice of appeal clearly limits the time to do so, and that compliance with the appeal notice provision is mandatory and jurisdictional. *Beardslee v. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979). The administrative law judge considers the reasoning and holding of the Iowa Supreme Court in that decision to be controlling on this portion of that same Iowa Code section which deals with a time limit in which to file a protest after notification of the filing of the claim has been mailed.

The delay was not due to any Agency error, misinformation or delay or other action of the United States Postal Service pursuant to Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.35(2). No other good cause reason has been established for the delay. As the employer has failed to timely protest pursuant to Iowa Code § 96.6(2), the administrative law judge lacks jurisdiction to make a determination with respect to the nature of the claimant's termination of employment. See, *Beardslee v. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979); *Franklin v. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979) and *Pepsi-Cola Bottling Co. v. Emp't Appeal Bd.*, 465 N.W.2d 674 (Iowa Ct. App. 1990).

In this case, the employer received the notice of claim through SIDES. The employer failed to submit a response by the deadline of December 27, 2021. As a result, the protest is untimely.

DECISION:

The December 30, 2021, reference 05, unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The employer has failed to file a timely protest response, and the decision of the representative shall stand and remain in full force and effect.



Carly Smith
Administrative Law Judge

March 9, 2022
Decision Dated and Mailed

cs/scn

