

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

LINDSEY SOJKA
Claimant

APPEAL 21A-UI-10785-DB-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

WHIRLPOOL CORPORATION
Employer

**OC: 03/07/21
Claimant: Appellant (4)**

Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Able to and Available for Work
Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal
Iowa Code § 96.19(38)B – Total, Partial, Temporary Unemployment
Iowa Code § 96.1(A)37 – Total, Partial, Temporary Unemployment
Iowa Code § 96.7(2)a(2) – Same Base Period Employment
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(26) – Same Hours and Wages

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant/appellant filed an appeal from the April 1, 2021 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that found claimant was not eligible for unemployment benefits because she was still employed at the same hours and same wages as her original contract of hire. The parties were properly notified of the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on July 2, 2021. The claimant participated personally. The employer did not participate. The administrative law judge took administrative notice of the claimant's unemployment insurance benefits records.

ISSUES:

Is the appeal timely?
Is the claimant eligible for total, partial, or temporary unemployment benefits?
Is claimant employed for the same hours and wages?
Is the claimant able to and available for work?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: A decision that found the claimant was not eligible for benefits was mailed to the claimant's correct address of record on April 1, 2021 (reference 01). Claimant received the decision in the mail. The decision stated the appeal deadline was April 11, 2021. Claimant telephoned Iowa Workforce Development in order to determine why her claim was locked. She was instructed to file an appeal. An appeal statement was taken over the telephone on April 7, 2021 and then faxed to the Appeals Bureau on April 8, 2021. Claimant filed another appeal online on April 20, 2021. Claimant started working for this employer on April 12, 2016. She is still employed with the employer to date. She works full-time as an assembler.

She filed an original claim for unemployment insurance benefits effective March 7, 2021. Her established weekly benefit amount was \$417.00. She filed weekly-continued claims from March

7, 2021 through April 10, 2021. She filed for benefits because her production line was shut down for three weeks between March 7, 2021 and April 10, 2021 due to lack of production.

For the week-ending March 13, 2021, the claimant worked her full-time hours and earned wages of \$440.00. For the week-ending March 20, 2021, the claimant did not work and did not earn any wages. For the week-ending March 27, 2021, the claimant did not work and did not earn any wages. For the week-ending April 3, 2021, the claimant worked her regular full-time hours and earned wages of \$544.00 and vacation pay of \$172.00. For the week-ending April 10, 2021, the claimant did not work and did not earn any wages. Claimant returned to her regular full-time hours beginning April 11, 2021. No further weekly-continued claims were filed after April 10, 2021. Claimant was able to work and available for work during the weeks in which she did not earn any wages and perform any services.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

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

The first issue is whether the claimant's appeal shall be considered timely. The administrative law judge finds that it shall.

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) provides:

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. 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. The claimant has the burden of proving that the claimant meets the basic eligibility conditions of § 96.4. The employer has the burden of proving that the claimant is disqualified for benefits pursuant to § 96.5, except as provided by this subsection. The claimant has the initial burden to produce evidence showing that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving § 96.5, subsection 10, and has the burden of proving that a voluntary quit pursuant to § 96.5, subsection 1, was for good cause attributable to the employer and that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving § 96.5, subsection 1, paragraphs "a" through "h". 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. If an administrative law judge affirms a decision of the representative, or the appeal board affirms a decision of the administrative law judge allowing benefits, the benefits shall be paid regardless of any appeal which is thereafter taken, but if the decision is finally reversed, no employer's account shall be charged with benefits so paid and this relief from charges shall apply to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding § 96.8, subsection 5.

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).

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

Date of submission and extension of time for payments and notices.

(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.

a. For submission that is not within the statutory or regulatory period to be considered timely, the interested party must submit a written explanation setting forth the circumstances of the delay.

b. The division shall designate personnel who are to decide whether an extension of time shall be granted.

c. No submission shall be considered timely if the delay in filing was unreasonable, as determined by the department after considering the circumstances in the case.

d. If submission is not considered timely, although the interested party contends that the delay was due to division error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United States postal service, the division shall issue an appealable decision to the interested party.

In this case, the claimant filed an appeal via telephone and thru fax on April 7, 2021 and April 8, 2021. Claimant then resubmitted another appeal online on April 20, 2021. Because an appeal was received on April 8, 2021, prior to the appeal deadline, her appeal shall be considered timely.

The next issue is whether the claimant was eligible for benefits. The administrative law judge finds that she was.

Iowa Code § 96.4(3) provides:

Required Findings.

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 Code § 96.19(38) was replaced by Iowa Code § 96.1A(37). Iowa Code § 96.1A(37) provides as follows:

Definitions. As used in this chapter, unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

37. "Total and partial unemployment".

a. An individual shall be deemed "totally unemployed" in any week with respect to which no wages are payable to the individual **and** during which the individual performs no services.

b. An individual shall be deemed "partially unemployed" in any week in which either of the following apply:

(1) While employed at the individual's then regular job, the individual works less than the regular full-time week and in which the individual earns less than the individual's weekly benefit amount plus fifteen dollars.

(2) The individual, having been separated from the individual's regular job, earns at odd jobs less than the individual's weekly benefit amount plus fifteen dollars.

c. An individual shall be deemed "temporarily unemployed" if for a period, verified by the department, not to exceed four consecutive weeks, the individual is unemployed due to a plant shutdown, vacation, inventory, lack of work, or emergency from the individual's regular job or trade in which the individual worked full-time and will again work full-time, if the individual's employment, although temporarily suspended, has not been terminated.

Iowa Code § 96.7(2)a(2)a provides:

Contribution rates based on benefit experience.

a. (2) The amount of regular benefits plus fifty percent of the amount of extended benefits paid to an eligible individual shall be charged against the account of the employers in the base period in the inverse chronological order in which the employment of the individual occurred.

(a) However, if the individual to whom the benefits are paid is in the employ of a base period employer at the time the individual is receiving the benefits, and the *individual is receiving the same employment from the employer that the individual received during the individual's base period*, benefits paid to the individual shall not be charged against the account of the employer. This provision applies to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding subparagraph (3) and section 96.8, subsection 5.

(emphasis added).

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.18 provides:

Wage-earnings limitation. An individual who is partially unemployed may earn weekly a sum equal to the individual's weekly benefit amount plus \$15 before being disqualified for excessive earnings. If such individual earns less than the individual's weekly benefit amount plus \$15, the formula for wage deductions shall be a sum equal to the individual's weekly benefit amount less that part of wages, payable to the individual with respect to that week and rounded to the lower multiple of one dollar, in excess of one-fourth of the individual's weekly benefit amount.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code § 96.3, 96.4 and 96.19(38).

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(23) provides:

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

(23) The claimant's availability for other work is unduly limited because such claimant is working to such a degree that removes the claimant from the labor market.

For the week-ending March 13, 2021, the claimant was working her regular full-time hours and she earned \$440.00 in wages. Because she earned wages in excess of her weekly-benefit amount, plus \$15.00 and worked to such a degree that removed her from the labor market, she was not eligible for benefits for that week. Iowa Code § 96.1A(37); Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(23); Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.18. Benefits are denied for that one-week period.

For the week-ending March 20, 2021, the claimant did not work and did not earn any wages due to lack of production. She was able to and available for work. As such, benefits are allowed for the week-ending March 20, 2021.

For the week-ending March 27, 2021, the claimant did not work and did not earn any wages due to lack of production. She was able to and available for work. As such, benefits are allowed for the week-ending March 27, 2021.

For the week-ending April 3, 2021, the claimant was working her regular full-time hours and she earned \$544.00 in wages and \$172.00 in vacation pay. Because she earned wages in excess of her weekly-benefit amount, plus \$15.00 and worked to such a degree that removed her from the labor market, she was not eligible for benefits for that week. Iowa Code § 96.1A(37); Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(23); Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.18. Benefits are denied for that one-week period.

For the week-ending April 10, 2021, the claimant did not work and did not earn any wages due to lack of production. She was able to and available for work. As such, benefits are allowed for the week-ending April 10, 2021.

DECISION:

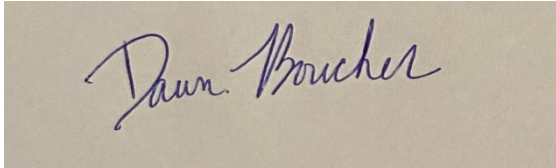
The appeal shall be considered timely. The April 1, 2021 (reference 01) decision is modified in favor of the appellant. Claimant was not totally, partially, or temporarily unemployed for the one-week period of March 7, 2021 through March 13, 2021 and benefits are denied for that one-week period.

For the week-ending March 20, 2021, the claimant was totally unemployed due to lack of production and established she was able to and available for work. Benefits are allowed for the week-ending March 20, 2021.

For the week-ending March 27, 2021, the claimant was totally unemployed due to lack of production and established she was able to and available for work. Benefits are allowed for the week-ending March 27, 2021.

For the week-ending April 3, 2021, the claimant was not totally, partially, or temporarily unemployed for the one-week period and benefits are denied for that one-week period.

For the week-ending April 10, 2021, the claimant was totally unemployed due to lack of production and established she was able to and available for work. Benefits are allowed for the week-ending April 10, 2021.

A rectangular area containing a handwritten signature in blue ink on a light brown background. The signature reads "Dawn Boucher" in a cursive script.

Dawn Boucher
Administrative Law Judge

July 15, 2021
Decision Dated and Mailed

db/kmj