

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

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**CRUZ MATA**  
Claimant

**APPEAL 22A-UI-00995-CS-T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**IOWA WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

**OC: 11/17/19  
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

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Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timeliness of Appeal  
PL 116-136, Sec. 2107 – Federal Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

On December 1, 2021, claimant filed an appeal from the September 2, 2020 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that denied Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) benefits. Claimant was properly notified of the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on February 2, 2022. Appeal numbers 22A-UI-00994-CS-T, 22A-UI-00996-CS-T, 22A-UI-00997-CS-T and 22A-UI-00998-CS-T were heard together and created one record. Claimant participated at the hearing through a CTS Language Link Spanish Interpreter, Inaky (Identification No. 13766). Official notice was taken of the administrative record.

**ISSUE:**

Is claimant's appeal timely?

Whether claimant is eligible for Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation benefits.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: A unemployment insurance decision was mailed to the claimant's last known address of record on September 2, 2020. Claimant was living at the address but does not recall if he received the decision. Claimant was away during this time period because he was vacationing. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Bureau by September 12, 2020. Claimant acknowledges he receive the overpayment decisions dated August 24, 2021. However he did not open the letters to realize he had been disqualified from PEUC benefits and he had been overpaid PEUC, FPUC, and LWAP benefits. Claimant received a bill for the overpayments in December 2021 and that is what prompted him to appeal. The appeal was not filed until December 1, 2021.

Claimant filed an initial claim for regular unemployment insurance (UI) benefits in Iowa effective November 17, 2019. Claimant exhausted his maximum UI benefit amount in the benefit week ending March 7, 2020. (DBIN-2).

The administrative record reflects that claimant earned wages in Virginia in the amount of \$6,832.00 in 3rd quarter of 2019. (Exhibit D-1). These wages were transferred to and used in Iowa. (Exhibit D-1).

### **REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

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

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).

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. 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 claimant testified that he did not receive the decision disqualifying him from benefits. However claimant did receive the overpayment decisions that made him aware that he was disqualified. Claimant chose not to open the decisions that informed him that he had been overpaid benefits. Claimant chose to ignore the letters. An additional three months passed before claimant filed an appeal of the disqualifying decision and the overpayment decisions.

The administrative law judge concludes that failure 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 September 2, 2020, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect.



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Carly Smith  
Administrative Law Judge  
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Bureau

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February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022  
Decision Dated and Mailed

cs/rs

**NOTE TO CLAIMANT:**

- This decision determines you are not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits under state law. If you disagree with this decision you may file an appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by following the instructions on the first page of this decision.