

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**ROBIN JURGENS**

Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 09A-UI-15641-DT**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**SDH SERVICES WEST LLC**

Employer

**Original Claim: 08/30/09  
Claimant: Respondent (1)**

Section 96.19-38-b – Eligibility for Partial Unemployment Insurance Benefits  
Section 17A.12-3 – Non-appearance of Party  
871 IAC 26.8(5) – Decision on the Record

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

An appeal was filed from a representative's unemployment insurance decision dated October 5, 2009 (reference 01) that concluded Robin Jurgens (claimant/respondent) could be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits as she was not working her regular hours with SDH Services West, L.L.C. (employer/appellant). Notices of hearing were mailed to the parties' last known addresses of record for a telephone hearing to be held at 11:00 a.m. on November 19, 2009. The employer's representative received the hearing notice and responded by calling the Appeals Section on November 17, 2009. The representative indicated that Yaa Asante would be available at the scheduled time for the hearing at a specified telephone number. However, when the administrative law judge called that number at the scheduled time for the hearing, Ms. Asante was not available. Therefore, the employer/appellant did not participate in the hearing. Based on the appellant's failure to participate in the hearing, the available information, and the law, the administrative law judge enters the following findings of fact, reasoning and conclusions of law, and decision.

**ISSUE:**

Should the representative's decision be affirmed on a basis of a review of the available information?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

The parties were properly notified of the scheduled hearing on this appeal. The appellant failed to be available at the scheduled day and time set for the hearing and did not participate in the hearing or request a postponement of the hearing as required by the hearing notice. The administrative law judge has conducted a careful review of the available information to determine whether the unemployment insurance decision should be affirmed.

The claimant established an unemployment insurance benefit year effective August 30, 2009 because her hours were reduced from her regular full-time hours. Her weekly benefit amount was calculated to be \$309.00. She filed weekly claims for the weeks between August 30 and

October 17; however, for each of those weeks, she still earned and reported wages in excess of \$324.00 (\$309.00 + \$15.00), so at least for that period the reduction in her hours was not sufficient to result in a net eligibility for any unemployment insurance benefits.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

The Iowa Administrative Procedures Act § 17A.12-3 provides in pertinent part:

If a party fails to appear or participate in a contested case proceeding after proper service of notice, the presiding officer may, if no adjournment is granted, enter a default decision or proceed with the hearing and make a decision in the absence of the party. ... If a decision is rendered against a party who failed to appear for the hearing and the presiding officer is timely requested by that party to vacate the decision for good cause, the time for initiating a further appeal is stayed pending a determination by the presiding officer to grant or deny the request. If adequate reasons are provided showing good cause for the party's failure to appear, the presiding officer shall vacate the decision and, after proper service of notice, conduct another evidentiary hearing. If adequate reasons are not provided showing good cause for the party's failure to appear, the presiding officer shall deny the motion to vacate.

871 IAC 26.8(3), (4) and (5) provide:

Withdrawals and postponements.

(3) If, due to emergency or other good cause, a party, having received due notice, is unable to attend a hearing or request postponement within the prescribed time, the presiding officer may, if no decision has been issued, reopen the record and, with notice to all parties, schedule another hearing. If a decision has been issued, the decision may be vacated upon the presiding officer's own motion or at the request of a party within 15 days after the mailing date of the decision and in the absence of an appeal to the employment appeal board of the department of inspections and appeals. If a decision is vacated, notice shall be given to all parties of a new hearing to be held and decided by another presiding officer. Once a decision has become final as provided by statute, the presiding officer has no jurisdiction to reopen the record or vacate the decision.

(4) A request to reopen a record or vacate a decision may be heard ex parte by the presiding officer. The granting or denial of such a request may be used as a grounds for appeal to the employment appeal board of the department of inspections and appeals upon the issuance of the presiding officer's final decision in the case.

(5) If good cause for postponement or reopening has not been shown, the presiding officer shall make a decision based upon whatever evidence is properly in the record.

The administrative law judge has carefully reviewed evidence in the record and concludes that the unemployment insurance decision previously entered in this case is correct and should be affirmed. 871 IAC 26.8(5).

Pursuant to the rule, the appellant must make a written request to the administrative law judge that the hearing be reopened within 15 days after the mailing date of this decision. The written request should be mailed to the administrative law judge at the address listed at the beginning of this decision and must explain the emergency or other good cause that prevented the appellant from participating in the hearing at its scheduled time.

**DECISION:**

The representative's unemployment insurance decision dated October 5, 2009 (reference 01) is affirmed. The decision holding the claimant qualified for benefits remains in effect. Benefits are allowed for any week in which the claimant's hours are reduced by the employer to the point she earns less than \$324.00, if the claimant is then otherwise eligible. This decision will become final unless a written request establishing good cause to reopen the record is made to the administrative law judge within 15 days of the date of this decision.

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Lynette A. F. Donner  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

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