

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**JANICE K SIEVERS**  
Claimant

**APPEAL NO: 10A-UI-08932-DWT**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**SKYLINE CENTER INC**  
Employer

**OC: 05/02/10**  
**Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge  
Section 96.6-2 – Timeliness of Appeal

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

The claimant appealed a representative's June 7, 2010 decision (reference 01) that disqualified her from receiving benefits and held the employer's account exempt from charge because the claimant had been discharged for disqualifying reasons. A telephone hearing was held on August 10, 2010. The claimant participated in the hearing. Jennifer Green and Lisa Hammond appeared on the employer's behalf. Based on the evidence, the arguments of the parties, and the law, the administrative law judge enters the following findings of fact, reasoning and conclusions of law, and decision.

**ISSUE:**

Did the claimant file a timely appeal or establish a legal excuse for filing a late appeal?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

The claimant established a claim for benefits during the week of May 2, 2010. On June 7, 2010 a representative's decision was mailed to the claimant and employer. The decision held the claimant disqualified from receiving benefits as of May 2, 2010. The decision also informed the parties that the decision became final unless an appeal was postmarked or received by the Appeals Section by June 17, 2010.

The claimant received the decision on June 11, 2010. The claimant did not agree with the decision and immediately made a doctor's appointment to support her case. The claimant's doctor's appointment was on June 20, 2010.

When the claimant received the representative's decision, she did not read all the information on the decision that indicated she had to file an appeal by June 17, 2010 or the decision was considered final. The claimant filed her appeal on June 23, 2010.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

Unless the claimant or other interested party, after notification or within ten calendar days after a representative's decision is mailed to the parties' last-known address, files an appeal from the decision, the decision is final. Benefits shall then be paid or denied in accordance with the representative's decision. Iowa Code section 96.6-2. 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 Iowa Supreme Court has ruled that appeals from unemployment insurance decisions must be filed within the time limit set by statute and the administrative law judge has **no** authority to **review a decision if a timely appeal is not filed**. *Franklin v. IDJS*, 277 N.W.2d 877, 881 (Iowa 1979); *Beardslee v. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979). (Emphasis supplied.) In this case, the claimant's appeal was filed after the June 17, 2010 deadline for appealing expired.

The next question is whether the claimant had a reasonable opportunity to file 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 evidence establishes the claimant had a reasonable opportunity to file a timely appeal, but did not.

The claimant's failure to file a timely appeal was not due to any Agency error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United States Postal Service, which under 871 IAC 24.35(2) would excuse the delay in filing an appeal. Since the claimant did not establish a legal excuse for filing a late appeal, the Appeals Section has no legal jurisdiction to make a decision on the merits of the appeal.

**DECISION:**

The representative's June 7, 2010 decision (reference 01) is affirmed. The claimant did not file a timely appeal or establish a legal excuse for filing a late appeal. The Appeals Section has no legal jurisdiction to address the merits of her appeal. This means the claimant remains disqualified from receiving unemployment insurance benefits as of May 2, 2010. This disqualification continues until she has been paid ten times her weekly benefit amount for insured work, provided she is otherwise eligible. The employer's account will not be charged.

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Debra L. Wise  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

dlw/pjs