

**IN THE IOWA ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS DIVISION
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

HEATHER D GARCIA
Claimant

APPEAL 24A-UI-03600-DZ-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

STEWART MEMORIAL COMM HOSP ASSN
Employer

OC: 02/25/24
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) – Timely Appeal
Iowa Code § 96.5(2)a – Discharge for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Heather D. Garcia, the claimant/appellant,¹ appealed the Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) March 13, 2024, (reference 01) unemployment insurance (UI) decision. IWD denied Ms. Garcia REGULAR (state) UI benefits because IWD concluded the employer discharged her from employment on February 16, 2024 for not following instructions in performing her job. On April 9, 2024, the Iowa Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing (DIAL), UI Appeals Bureau mailed a notice of hearing to Ms. Garcia and the employer for a telephone hearing scheduled for April 25, 2024.

The administrative law judge held a telephone hearing on April 25, 2024. Ms. Garcia participated in the hearing personally. The employer Lydia Larson, human resources director. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record.

The administrative law judge concludes Ms. Garcia did not appeal on time so the IWD decision denying her UI benefits stays in place.

ISSUES:

Did Ms. Garcia appeal on time?

Did the employer discharge Ms. Garcia from employment for disqualifying, job-related misconduct?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: IWD mailed the March 13, 2024 (reference 01) UI decision to Ms. Garcia at her correct mailing address. The UI decision states that it becomes final unless an appeal is postmarked or received by the IWD Appeals Section by Saturday, March 23, 2024. If the appeal deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the appeal period is extended to the next working day. So, the appeal deadline was extended to Monday, March 25, 2024.

¹ Claimant is the person who filed for UI benefits. Appellant is the person or employer who filed the appeal.

Ms. Garcia received the decision in the mail on Saturday, March 23 afternoon time. At that time, Ms. Garcia was experiencing mental health issues, and she did not have access to phone service or internet service. About two weeks later, on April 5, Ms. Garcia appealed online. The DIAL, UI Appeals Bureau received Ms. Garcia's appeal the same day.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes Ms. Garcia did not appeal the March 13, 2024, (reference 01) UI decision on time.

Iowa Code § 96.6(2) provides, in relevant part: "[u]nless 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."

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

2. 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:
 - (2) 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 of 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.

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.²

² *Franklin v. IDJS*, 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.³

Ms. Garcia received the March 13, 2024 (reference 01) UI decision before the appeal deadline and, therefore, could have appealed by the deadline. The notice provision of the decision was valid. Ms. Garcia's delay in appealing was not due to an error or misinformation from IWD or due to delay or other action of the United States Postal Service. Ms. Garcia has not established any other good cause reason for her delay in appealing. Ms. Garcia did not appeal the March 13, 2024 (reference 01) UI decision on time, so the administrative law judge does not have jurisdiction (authority) to decide the other issue in this matter.

DECISION:

Ms. Garcia did not appeal the March 13, 2024 (reference 01) UI decision on time. The March 13, 2024 (reference 01) UI decision that denied Ms. Garcia REGULAR (state) UI benefits is AFFIRMED.



Daniel Zeno
Administrative Law Judge

April 26, 2024
Decision Dated and Mailed

DZ/jkb

³ *Beardslee v. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d 373, 377 (Iowa 1979); see also *In re Appeal of Elliott* 319 N.W.2d 244, 247 (Iowa 1982).

APPEAL RIGHTS. If you disagree with this decision, you or any interested party may:

1. Appeal to the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days of the date under the judge's signature by submitting a written appeal via mail, fax, or online to:

**Employment Appeal Board
6200 Park Avenue Suite 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50321
Fax: (515)281-7191
Online: eab.iowa.gov**

The appeal period will be extended to the next business day if the last day to appeal falls on a weekend or a legal holiday.

AN APPEAL TO THE BOARD SHALL STATE CLEARLY:

- 1) The name, address, and social security number of the claimant.
- 2) A reference to the decision from which the appeal is taken.
- 3) That an appeal from such decision is being made and such appeal is signed.
- 4) The grounds upon which such appeal is based.

An Employment Appeal Board decision is final agency action. If a party disagrees with the Employment Appeal Board decision, they may then file a petition for judicial review in district court.

2. If no one files an appeal of the judge's decision with the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days, the decision becomes final agency action, and you have the option to file a petition for judicial review in District Court within thirty (30) days after the decision becomes final. Additional information on how to file a petition can be found at Iowa Code §17A.19, which is online at <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf> or by contacting the District Court Clerk of Court <https://www.iowacourts.gov/iowa-courts/court-directory/>.

Note to Parties: YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in the appeal or obtain a lawyer or other interested party to do so provided there is no expense to Workforce Development. If you wish to be represented by a lawyer, you may obtain the services of either a private attorney or one whose services are paid for with public funds.

Note to Claimant: It is important that you file your weekly claim as directed, while this appeal is pending, to protect your continuing right to benefits.

SERVICE INFORMATION:

A true and correct copy of this decision was mailed to each of the parties listed.

DERECHOS DE APELACIÓN. Si no está de acuerdo con la decisión, usted o cualquier parte interesada puede:

1. Apelar a la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo dentro de los quince (15) días de la fecha bajo la firma del juez presentando una apelación por escrito por correo, fax o en línea a:

**Employment Appeal Board
6200 Park Avenue Suite 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50321
Fax: (515)281-7191
En línea: eab.iowa.gov**

El período de apelación se extenderá hasta el siguiente día hábil si el último día para apelar cae en fin de semana o día feriado legal.

UNA APELACIÓN A LA JUNTA DEBE ESTABLECER CLARAMENTE:

- 1) El nombre, dirección y número de seguro social del reclamante.
- 2) Una referencia a la decisión de la que se toma la apelación.
- 3) Que se interponga recurso de apelación contra tal decisión y se firme dicho recurso.
- 4) Los fundamentos en que se funda dicho recurso.

Una decisión de la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo es una acción final de la agencia. Si una de las partes no está de acuerdo con la decisión de la Junta de Apelación de Empleo, puede presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el tribunal de distrito.

2. Si nadie presenta una apelación de la decisión del juez ante la Junta de Apelaciones Laborales dentro de los quince (15) días, la decisión se convierte en acción final de la agencia y usted tiene la opción de presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el Tribunal de Distrito dentro de los treinta (30) días después de que la decisión adquiera firmeza. Puede encontrar información adicional sobre cómo presentar una petición en el Código de Iowa §17A.19, que se encuentra en línea en <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf> o comunicándose con el Tribunal de Distrito Secretario del tribunal <https://www.iowacourts.gov/iowa-courts/court-directory/>.

Nota para las partes: USTED PUEDE REPRESENTARSE en la apelación u obtener un abogado u otra parte interesada para que lo haga, siempre que no haya gastos para Workforce Development. Si desea ser representado por un abogado, puede obtener los servicios de un abogado privado o uno cuyos servicios se paguen con fondos públicos.

Nota para el reclamante: es importante que presente su reclamo semanal según las instrucciones, mientras esta apelación está pendiente, para proteger su derecho continuo a los beneficios.

SERVICIO DE INFORMACIÓN:

Se envió por correo una copia fiel y correcta de esta decisión a cada una de las partes enumeradas.