

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**DENNIS L BEECHUM**

Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 07A-UI-08095-JTT**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**WEST LIBERTY FOODS LLC**

Employer

**OC: 07/22/07 R: 04  
Claimant: Respondent (1-R)**

871 IAC 26.8(5) - Decision on the Record

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

West Liberty Foods appealed from an unemployment insurance decision dated August 14, 2007, reference 01, that allowed benefits. A telephone hearing was scheduled for September 10, 2007. The appellant provided a telephone number for the hearing, but was not available at that number at the scheduled time of the hearing. The claimant was available for the hearing. Based on the appellant's failure to participate in the hearing, the administrative file, and the law, the administrative law judge enters the following findings of fact, reasoning and conclusions of law and decision.

**ISSUE:**

Decision on the record.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

The parties were properly notified of the scheduled hearing on this appeal. The appellant, West Liberty Foods, responded to the hearing notice instructions and provided a telephone number at which a representative could be reached for the hearing: Jamie Ruess and Brian Ralston at 319-627-6142. However, at the scheduled time of the hearing, no one was available at the telephone number the employer had provided. The appellant did not request a postponement of the hearing as required by the hearing notice. The administrative law judge made two attempts to reach the employer at the number provided for the hearing. On each attempt, the administrative law judge made contact with Ms. Ruess' voice mail box and left an appropriate message that included a request for an immediate return call and the Appeals Sections toll-free number. The employer did not respond to the messages left by the administrative law judge or otherwise make itself available for a hearing.

The administrative law judge has conducted a careful review of the administrative file to determine whether the unemployment insurance decision should be affirmed.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

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.

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.

The fact-finder's notes indicate that on August 13, 2007, the claimant indicated he was working and elected not to participate in the fact-finding interview. That issue was not before the administrative law judge. This matter will be remanded for a determination of whether the claimant has been available for work or work referrals since establishing his claim for benefits.

**DECISION:**

The Agency representatives August 14, 2007, reference 01, decision is affirmed. The decision allowing benefits remains in effect. 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. The matter is remanded to a claims representative for

determination of whether the claimant has been available for work since establishing his claim for benefits.

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James E. Timberland  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

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