

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

ANDREW W CARLSON
Claimant

BLUE GLOVES LLC
Employer

APPEAL NO. 24A-UI-01166-JT-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

**OC: 12/24/23
Claimant: Respondent (2R)**

Iowa Code Section 96.6-2 - Timeliness of Protest

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

On January 29, 2024, the employer filed a timely appeal from the January 24, 2024 (reference 02) decision that allowed benefits to the claimant, provided the claimant was otherwise eligible, and that held the employer's account could be charged for benefits, based on the deputy's determination the employer's protest was untimely and therefore could not be considered. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held on February 20, 2024. Andrew Carlson (claimant) did not comply with the hearing notice instructions to call the designated toll-free number at the time of the hearing and did not participate. Susan Farber represented the employer. Exhibits 1 and 2 were received into evidence. The administrative law judge took official notice of the notice of claim/protest packet received and processed by Iowa Workforce Development.

ISSUES:

Whether the employer's protest of the claim for benefits was timely.
Whether there is good cause to deem the employer's late protest as timely.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds:

On January 2, 2024, Iowa Workforce Development mailed a notice of claim concerning the above claimant to the employer's Dubuque address of record. The notice of claim contained a warning that any protest must be postmarked, faxed, emailed or returned by the due date set forth on the notice, which was January 12, 2024. The employer's address of record is a United States Postal Service post office box.

The USPS delivered the notice of claim to the employer's post office box on January 17 or 18, 2024. Susan Farber, the business owner, collected the notice of claim from the post office box on January 18, 2024. Prior to collecting the mail on January 18, 2024, Ms. Farber had most recently collected the mail a day or two earlier, at which time the notice of claim correspondence had not yet been delivered to the post office box.

When Ms. Farber collected the notice of claim correspondence from the post office box, she noted that it arrived in a distressed, crumpled and marked envelope. The envelope bore no yellow USPS sticker explaining why delivery had been delayed.

On January 19, 2024, Ms. Farber finished assembling the employer's protest information. Ms. Farber signed the notice of claim form to certify the accuracy of the information she had added to the form. The employer noted an April 8, 2023 employment separation on the notice of claim form. Ms. Farber faxed and emailed the protest packet to Iowa Workforce Development on January 19, 2024. IWD received the protest on January 19, 2024, date-stamped it received that day, and marked it as late.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

Iowa Code section 96.6(2) provides, in pertinent part:

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.

Another portion of this same Code section dealing with timeliness of an appeal from a representative's decision states that such an appeal must be filed within ten days after notification of that decision was mailed. In addressing an issue of timeliness of an appeal under that portion of this Code section, the Iowa Supreme Court held that this statute prescribing the time for notice of appeal clearly limits the time to do so, and that compliance with the appeal notice provision is mandatory and jurisdictional. *Beardslee v. IDJS*, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979). The administrative law judge considers the reasoning and holding of the court to be controlling on this portion of that same Iowa Code section which deals with a time limit in which to file a protest after notification of the filing of the claim has been mailed.

Iowa Administrative Code Rule 87124.8(2)(a) and (b) provide as follows:

- (2) Responding by employing units to a notice of the filing of an initial claim or a request for wage and separation information and protesting the payment of benefits.
 - a. The employing unit which receives a Form 65-5317, Notice of Claim, or a Form 68-0221, Request for Wage and Separation Information, must, within ten days of the date of the notice or request, submit to the department wage or separation information that affects the individual's rights to benefits, including any facts which disclose that the individual separated from employment voluntarily and without good cause attributable to the employer or was discharged for misconduct in connection with employment.
 - b. The employing unit may protest the payment of benefits if the protest is postmarked within ten days of the date of the notice of the filing of an initial claim. In the event that the tenth day falls on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday, the protest period is extended to the next working day of the department. If the employing unit has filed a timely report of facts that might adversely affect the individual's benefit rights, the report shall be considered as a protest to the payment of benefits.

Iowa Administrative Code Rule 871-24.35(1) provides:

Date of submission and extension of time for payments and notices.

(1) 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:

a. 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 those outlined in paragraphs 24.35(1)"a" and "b", on the date it is received by the division.

Iowa Administrative Code Rule 871-24.35(2) provides:

Date of submission and extension of time for payments and notices.

(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.

a. For submission that is not within the statutory or regulatory period to be considered timely, the interested party must submit a written explanation setting forth the circumstances of the delay.

b. The division shall designate personnel who are to decide whether an extension of time shall be granted.

c. No submission shall be considered timely if the delay in filing was unreasonable, as determined by the department after considering the circumstances in the case.

d. If submission is not considered timely, although the interested party contends that the delay was due to division error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United States postal service, the division shall issue an appealable decision to the interested party.

The employer's appeal was timely. The evidence in the record establishes good cause to treat the employer's January 19, 2024 protest as a timely protest. The United States Postal Service delayed delivery of the correspondence to the employer until January 17 or 18, 2024, after the January 12, 2024 protest deadline had passed. For that reason, the employer did not have a reasonable opportunity to file a protest by the January 12, 2024 deadline. Once the employer received the notice of claim in the mail, the employer promptly acted on the matter and filed a protest within a day or two of late receipt of the notice of claim.

In light of the timely protest, this matter will be remanded to Iowa Workforce Development Benefits Bureau for a fact-finding interview to address the April 8, 2023 separation that the employer characterizes as a voluntary quit. The Benefits Bureau may also elect to enter a 10X

requalification decision in lieu of a fact-finding interview if the claimant met the 10X weekly benefit amount requalification requirement after separating from the employer and prior to establishing the December 24, 2023 original claim.

DECISION:

The January 24, 2024 (reference 02) decision is REVERSED. The employer's protest was timely.

REMAND:

This matter is REMANDED to Iowa Workforce Development Benefits Bureau for a fact-finding interview to address the April 8, 2023 separation that the employer characterizes as a voluntary quit. The Benefits Bureau may also elect to enter a 10X requalification decision in lieu of a fact-finding interview if the claimant met the 10X weekly benefit amount requalification requirement after separating from the employer and prior to establishing the December 24, 2023 original claim.



James E. Timberland
Administrative Law Judge

February 21, 2024
Decision Dated and Mailed

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APPEAL RIGHTS. If you disagree with the 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 Ave 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>.

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 Ave Suite 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50321
Fax: (515)281-7191
Online: 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 adquiriera firmeza. Puede encontrar información adicional sobre cómo presentar una petición en el Código de Iowa §17A.19, que está en línea en <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf>.

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.