

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**RANDALL A BIONDI**  
Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 07A-UI-07591-JTT**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**IOWA WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

**OC: 06/10/07 R: 02  
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Iowa Code Section 96.6(2) - Timeliness of Appeal

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Randall Biondi filed an appeal from the July 18, 2007, reference 03, decision that he had been overpaid benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held by telephone conference call on August 22, 2007. Mr. Biondi participated. Department Exhibits D-1, D-2 and D-3 were received into evidence. The hearing in this matter was consolidated with the hearing in appeal number 07A-UI-07590-JTT and Tracy Taylor of TALX UC eXpress represented the employer in that matter.

**ISSUES:**

Whether the claimant's appeal was timely.

Whether there is good cause to deem the claimant's late appeal timely.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Randall Biondi established a claim for benefits that was effective June 10, 2007. Mr. Biondi received benefits until July 7, 2007, at which time the benefits stopped as a result of the July 13, 2007, reference 01, decision denying benefits. Mr. Biondi did not participate in the fact-finding interview scheduled for July 11, 2007. The July 13, 2007, reference 01, decision was mailed to Randall Biondi's last-known address of record on July 13, 2007. The address of record was and is the correct address for Mr. Biondi's residence. The greater weight of the evidence indicates that Mr. Biondi received the decision in a timely fashion, prior to the deadline for appeal. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Section by July 23, 2007. The appeal was not filed until August 7, 2007, when Mr. Biondi delivered the appeal to his local Workforce Development Center.

On July 18, 2007, the reference 03 overpayment decision was mailed to Mr. Biondi's address of record. The greater weight of the evidence indicates that Mr. Biondi received the reference 03 decision in a timely fashion, prior to the deadline. The decision contained a warning that an appeal must be postmarked or received by the Appeals Section by July 28, 2007. The appeal

was not filed until August 7, 2007, when Mr. Biondi delivered the appeal to his local Workforce Development Center.

### **REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

Iowa Code section 96.6-2 provides:

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. The representative shall promptly examine the claim and any protest, take the initiative to ascertain relevant information concerning the claim, and, on the basis of the facts found by the representative, shall determine whether or not the claim is valid, the week with respect to which benefits shall commence, the weekly benefit amount payable and its maximum duration, and whether any disqualification shall be imposed. The claimant has the burden of proving that the claimant meets the basic eligibility conditions of section 96.4. The employer has the burden of proving that the claimant is disqualified for benefits pursuant to section 96.5, except as provided by this subsection. The claimant has the initial burden to produce evidence showing that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving section 96.5, subsection 10, and has the burden of proving that a voluntary quit pursuant to section 96.5, subsection 1, was for good cause attributable to the employer and that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraphs "a" through "h". Unless 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. If an administrative law judge affirms a decision of the representative, or the appeal board affirms a decision of the administrative law judge allowing benefits, the benefits shall be paid regardless of any appeal which is thereafter taken, but if the decision is finally reversed, no employer's account shall be charged with benefits so paid and this relief from charges shall apply to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5.

The ten-day deadline for appeal begins to run on the date Workforce Development mails the decision to the parties. The "decision date" found in the upper right-hand portion of the Agency representative's decision, unless otherwise corrected immediately below that entry, is presumptive evidence of the date of mailing. Gaskins v. Unempl. Comp. Bd. of Rev., 429 A.2d 138 (Pa. Comm. 1981); Johnson v. Board of Adjustment, 239 N.W.2d 873, 92 A.L.R.3d 304 (Iowa 1976).

An appeal submitted by mail is deemed filed 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 was 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. See 871 AC 24.35(1)(a). See also Messina v. IDJS, 341 N.W.2d 52 (Iowa 1983). An appeal submitted by any other means is deemed filed on the date it is received by the Unemployment Insurance Division of Iowa Workforce Development. See 871 IAC 24.35(1)(b). No appeal shall be considered timely if the delay in filing was unreasonable, as determined by the division after considering the circumstances in the case. See 871 IAC 24.35(2)(c).

The evidence in the record establishes that more than ten calendar days elapsed between the mailing date and the date this appeal was filed. 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. 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. 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). The question in this case thus becomes whether the appellant was deprived of a reasonable opportunity to assert 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 record shows that the appellant did have a reasonable opportunity to file a timely appeal.

Mr. Biondi's testimony at the hearing was consistently inconsistent. Mr. Biondi initially denied receiving a copy of the administrative file that included the decisions in question, but later indicated he had received a copy. Mr. Biondi initially asserted he had no contact with the Agency between the day he established his claim in June and August 7, 2007, when he filed his appeal. On cross-examination by the employer's representative, Mr. Biondi acknowledged he had indicated in his appeal letter that he had contact with the Agency on July 31. Mr. Biondi had asserted in his appeal letter that at the time he contacted the Agency on July 31 an agency representative had looked up his claim and advised him he had been approved for benefits. This assertion was not credible. Mr. Biondi asserted he had not received (1) the written notice for the fact-finding interview, (2) the July 13 disqualification decision, and (3) the July 18 overpayment decision, all of which were mailed to the correct address of record. The administrative law judge found Mr. Biondi's testimony wholly lacking in credibility.

The administrative law judge concludes that failure to file a timely appeal within the time prescribed by the Iowa Employment Security Law was not due to any Agency error or misinformation or delay or other action of the United States Postal Service. See 871 IAC 24.35(2). The administrative law judge further concludes that the appeal was not timely filed pursuant to Iowa Code section 96.6(2), and the administrative law judge lacks jurisdiction to make a determination with respect to the nature of the appeal. See, Beardslee v. IDJS, 276 N.W.2d 373 (Iowa 1979) and Franklin v. IDJS, 277 N.W.2d 877 (Iowa 1979).

**DECISION:**

The Agency representative's July 18, 2007, reference 03, overpayment decision is affirmed. The appeal in this case was not timely, and the decision of the representative remains in effect.

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James E. Timberland  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

jet/pjs

