

Railroad Retirement Board

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whether any action by the Board misled either of them. Examples of circumstances where good cause may exist include, but are not limited to:

(1) A serious illness which prevented the claimant from contacting the Board in person, in writing, or through a friend, relative or other person;

(2) A death or serious illness in the claimant's immediate family which prevented him or her from filing;

(3) The destruction of important and relevant records;

(4) A failure to be notified of a decision; or

(5) The existence of an unusual or unavoidable circumstance which demonstrates that either the claimant or the base-year employer(s) would not have known of the need to file timely or which prevented either of them from filing in a timely manner.

[56 FR 65679, Dec. 18, 1991]

§ 320.11 Request for waiver of recovery.

(a) *Time limitation.* The claimant shall have 30 days from the date of the notification of the erroneous payment determination in which to file a request for waiver, except that where an erroneous payment is not subject to waiver in accordance with §340.10(e) of this chapter, waiver may not be requested and recovery will not be stayed. Such requests shall be made in writing and be filed by mail or in person at any Board office. The claimant shall, along with the request, submit any evidence and argument which he or she would like to present in support of his or her case. A request solely for reconsideration of an overpayment shall not be considered a request for waiver under this section but shall be treated as a request for reconsideration under §320.10 of this part.

(b) *Recovery action.* Where a claimant has made a timely request for waiver of recovery, no action will be taken to recover the erroneous payment by setoff against current benefits prior to a decision on such request; *provided however*, That the Board may, prior to a decision, withhold the amount of the erroneous payment from benefit payments under any of the following circumstances:

(1) The claimant admits he or she was at fault in causing the overpayment;

(2) The claimant is found to have committed fraud;

(3) The claimant authorizes recovery by setoff or agrees to repayment; or

(4) The amount of erroneous payment is not subject to waiver or provided for in §340.10(e) of this chapter.

(c) *Review of evidence.* Upon request, the claimant shall have an opportunity to review all evidence and documents that pertain to the erroneous payment determination.

(d) *Decision.* The Director of Unemployment and Sickness Insurance shall make a decision on the claimant's request for waiver of recovery and shall notify the claimant accordingly. The decision of the Director shall include the basis of the decision, setting forth his or her reasons for the decision including the impact, if any, of any evidence submitted by the base-year or last employer. If the Director decides that waiver of recovery is not appropriate, the adjudicating office shall wait 15 days from the date of the notification of the waiver decision before taking any action to recover the erroneous payment. If the Director decides that recovery should be waived, any amount of the erroneous payment so waived but previously recovered by setoff shall be refunded to the claimant.

(e) *Appeal.* If the Director of Unemployment and Sickness Insurance decides that waiver of recovery is not appropriate, the claimant shall have the right to appeal such decision as provided under §320.12 of this part.

(f) *Requests made after 30 days.* Nothing in this section shall be taken to mean that waiver of recovery will not be considered in those cases where the request for waiver is not filed within 30 days, but action to recover the erroneous payment will not be deferred if such a request is not timely filed. Further, it shall not be considered that a claimant prejudices his or her request for waiver by tendering all or a portion of the erroneous payment or by selecting a particular method for repaying the debt. However, no waiver consideration will be given to any debt which is settled by compromise.

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(g) *Evidence provided by base-year employer(s) and most recent employer, if different.* In making a decision under paragraph (d) of this section, the Director of Unemployment and Sickness Insurance shall consider all evidence of record including any evidence submitted by the claimant's base-year employer(s) and the most recent employer, if different. Where a claimant has requested waiver the Director shall notify his or her base-year employer(s) and the most recent employer, if different, of the right to submit, within 30 days, any information which may be pertinent to the waiver decision.

[56 FR 65680, Dec. 18, 1991]

§ 320.12 Appeal to the Bureau of Hearings and Appeals.

Any party aggrieved by a decision under § 320.10 of this part or a claimant aggrieved by decision under § 320.11 of this part may appeal such decision to the Bureau of Hearings and Appeals. Such an appeal shall be made by filing the form prescribed by the Board. The appeal must be filed with the Bureau of Hearings and Appeals within 60 days from the date upon which the notice of the decision on reconsideration or waiver of recovery was mailed to either a claimant or the base-year employer(s). If no appeal is filed within the time limits specified in this section, the decision of the adjudicating office under § 320.10 or § 320.11 of this part shall be considered final and no further review of such decision shall be available unless the hearings officer finds that there was good cause for the failure to file a timely appeal as described in § 320.10 of this part.

[56 FR 65680, Dec. 18, 1991]

§ 320.18 Hearings officer.

Within a reasonable time after a party has filed a properly executed appeal, the Director of Hearings and Appeals shall appoint a hearings officer to act in the appeal. Such hearings officer shall not have any interest in the parties or in the outcome of the proceeding, shall not have directly participated in the initial determination from which the appeal is made, and shall not have any other interest in the matter which might prevent a fair and impar-

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tial hearing. In any case in which employee status or creditability of compensation is an issue, the hearings officer shall receive evidence and report to the Board thereon with recommendations. In all other cases, the hearings officer shall consider and decide the appeal; in each such case where the hearings officer determines that an issue of fact exists, the parties shall have the right to a hearing.

[56 FR 65680, Dec. 18, 1991]

§ 320.19 Election to participate.

(a) *Claimant files an appeal.* Where the claimant has filed an appeal under § 320.12 of this part the hearings officer shall notify the claimant's base-year employer(s) that such an appeal has been filed and shall provide the base-year employer with a statement of issues on appeal. The hearings officer shall inform the base-year employer(s) that such employer(s) shall have a right to be present at any hearing which is to be held under this part and the right to submit evidence with respect to the issues on appeal. Within 30 days of the date of such notice a base-year employer shall provide the hearings officer with a statement in writing which summarizes the evidence which such employer intends to present with respect to the issues on appeal, which indicates whether the employer wishes to be present at any hearing which may be held, and which designates who will represent the employer with respect to the appeal. An employer who fails to respond in the time prescribed shall be barred from further participation in the appeal and shall forfeit any further right to review as provided for in this part.

(b) *Base-year employer files an appeal.* Where a base-year employer files an appeal under § 320.12 of this part, the hearings officer shall notify the claimant that such an appeal has been filed and shall provide the claimant with a statement of issues on appeal. The hearings officer shall inform the claimant that he or she or a duly authorized representative shall have a right to be present at any hearing which is to be held under this part and the right to submit evidence with respect to the issues on appeal. Within 30 days of the date of such notice the claimant shall