

**BEFORE THE ARKANSAS WORKERS' COMPENSATION COMMISSION
CLAIM NO. H504216**

**LAKESHIA S. SMITH,
EMPLOYEE**

CLAIMANT

**TEDDY BEAR STRONG, LLC,
EMPLOYER**

RESPONDENT

**TECHNOLOGY INS. CO./
AMTRUST NORTH AMERICA,
CARRIER/TPA**

RESPONDENT

**OPINION FILED JUNE 12, 2026,
GRANTING RESPONDENTS' MOTION TO DISMISS WITHOUT PREJUDICE**

Hearing conducted on Thursday, June 11, 2026, before the Arkansas Workers' Compensation Commission (the Commission), Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) Mike Pickens, in El Dorado, Union County, Arkansas.

The claimant, Ms. Lakeshia S. Smith, pro se, of Strong, Union County, Arkansas, failed and/or refused to appear at the hearing.

The respondents were represented by the Honorable Willam C. (Bill) Frye, Frye Law Firm, P.A., North Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

A hearing was conducted on June 11, 2026, to determine whether this claim should be dismissed without prejudice pursuant to *Ark. Code Ann.* § 11-9-702(a)(4) (2025 Lexis Replacement) and 11 *CAR* Section 25-110(d) (2025 *Code of AR Regulations*), formerly cited as Commission Rule 099.13 (2025 Lexis Repl.)

The claimant initially was represented by counsel in this matter, Mr. Mark Peoples, of The Peoples Law Firm, in Little Rock. By Full Commission order filed March 26, 2026, the Commission granted Attorney Peoples's request to withdraw as the claimant's attorney of record.

(Respondents' Exhibit 1 at 4). Thereafter on April 2, 2026, the respondents filed a letter/email motion to dismiss this claim without prejudice for lack of prosecution (MTD) with the Commission. (RX1 at 3). The claimant was provided due and legal notice of both the respondents' MTD as well as the date, time, and place of the subject hearing; however, she failed and/or refused to either respond to the respondents' MTD in any way and/or refused to appear at the subject hearing. (Commission Exhibit 1; RX1 at 2; Reporter's Hearing Transcript). The respondents have controverted this claim in its entirety from its inception. (*See*, Form AR-C, RX1 at 2).

The record herein consists of the hearing transcript and any and all exhibits contained therein or attached thereto.

DISCUSSION

Consistent with **Ark. Code Ann.** § 11-9-702(a)(4) (2025 Lexis Replacement), as well as our court of appeals' ruling in *Dillard vs. Benton County Sheriff's Office*, 87 Ark. App. 379, 192 S.W.3d 287 (Ark. App. 2004), the Commission scheduled and conducted a hearing on the respondents' MTD filed April 2, 2026. Rather than recite a detailed analysis of the record, suffice it to say the preponderance of the evidence introduced at the hearing and contained in the record conclusively reveals the claimant has failed and/or refused to either actively prosecute his claim or to request a hearing within the last six (6) months.

Therefore, after a thorough consideration of the issues at bar, the applicable law as applied to the facts of this claim, and other relevant matters of record including the representations of credible counsel, I hereby make the following:

FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Commission has jurisdiction of this claim.

2. After having received due and legal notice of both the respondents' MTD without prejudice filed with the Commission on April 2, 2026, as well as due and legal notice of the date, time, and place of the subject hearing, the claimant failed and/or refused to respond to the MTD in any way and she failed and/or refused to appear at the subject hearing.
3. The claimant has not requested a hearing within the last six (6) months and has taken no steps to prosecute any issue(s) in this controverted claim.
4. Therefore, the preponderance of the evidence compels the decision the respondents' MTD without prejudice filed April 2, 2026, should be and hereby is GRANTED; and this claim is dismissed without prejudice to its refiling pursuant to the deadlines prescribed by **Ark. Code Ann.** Section 11-9-702(a) and (b) and 11 **CAR** Section 25-110(d) (2025 **Code of AR Regulations**), formerly cited as Commission Rule 099.13.

If they have not already done so, the respondents hereby are ordered to pay the court reporter's invoice within twenty (20) days of their receipt thereof.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Mike Pickens
Administrative Law Judge

MP/mp

