

ARKANSAS COURT OF APPEALS

DIVISION I

No. E-15-630

THE BANK OF FAYETTEVILLE NA
APPELLANT

V.

DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF
WORKFORCE SERVICES, and FRED
TANNER

APPELLEES

Opinion Delivered February 10, 2016

APPEAL FROM THE ARKANSAS
BOARD OF REVIEW
[NO. 2015-BR-01711]

APPEAL DISMISSED

CLIFF HOOFFMAN, Judge

Appellant the Bank of Fayetteville NA (“Bank of Fayetteville”) appeals from the Arkansas Board of Review’s September 18, 2015 decision, reversing the Appeal Tribunal and finding that the claimant, Fred Tanner, was entitled to benefits because he was discharged from employment for reasons other than misconduct connected with the work. We dismiss due to a lack of jurisdiction.

On October 16, 2015, Bank of Fayetteville filed its petition for appeal with this court. Although appellant has been represented by an attorney at all stages of this case, the executive-vice president, Robert King, signed the petition for appeal with this court. It is well-settled law that corporations must be represented by licensed attorneys. *Smithco Invs. of W. Memphis, Inc. v. Morgan Keegan & Co.*, 370 Ark. 477, 261 S.W.3d 454 (2007). Furthermore, our supreme court has held that where a party not licensed to practice law in this state attempts to represent the interests of others by submitting himself or herself to jurisdiction of a court,



Cite as 2016 Ark. App. 96

those actions, such as the filing of pleadings, are rendered a nullity. *Id.* Here, King is not an attorney and may not represent Bank of Fayetteville in this case. *Id.* Our case law makes it clear that invoking the process of a court of law constitutes the practice of law. *Stephens Prod. Co. v. Bennett*, 2015 Ark. App. 617. Because King was practicing law when he signed the petition, the petition is null and void. *Id.* As a result, we lack jurisdiction and dismiss this appeal.

Appeal dismissed.

GRUBER and WHITEAKER, JJ., agree.

Peel Law Firm, P.A., by: *Dustin K. Doty*, for appellant.

Phyllis Edwards, Associate General Counsel, for appellee.