

STATE OF MICHIGAN
STATE OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS AND RULES

ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

IN THE MATTER OF: [REDACTED],
Claimant

Reg. No: 2008-18758
Issue No: 2009
Case No: [REDACTED]
Load No: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date:
June 3, 2009
Tuscola County DHS

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: William A. Sundquist

HEARING DECISION

This matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to MCL 400.9 and MCL 400.37 upon claimant's request for a hearing. After due notice, an in-person hearing was held on June 3, 2009.

The below D&O was delayed for a second SHRT review of additional medical reports presented at the hearing (Claimant Exhibit A).

ISSUE

Was disability medically established?

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the competent, material and substantial evidence on the whole record, finds as material fact:

(1) Negative action: Medicaid application on February 15, 2008 was denied on March 26, 2008 based on nondisability for PEM 260.

- (2) Vocational factors: age 34, 10th grade education, and unskilled work as a restaurant waitress, unskilled house painter, semi-skilled adult caregiver.
- (3) Substantial gainful work: Not since 2004 when she quit her job.
- (4) Disabling statements/complaints: Pain radiating from back around right side ribcage to stomach area after sitting 15 minutes, weakness in both hands/legs after standing 15 minutes, walking/sitting 15 minutes, muscle weakness when pushing/pulling activities, able to perform reaching activities, limited to lifting/carrying one gallon of milk because of hand weakness, and incontinent bowel movements.
- (5) Medical exams:

[Physical Impairments Only]

- (a) Report February 27, 2008 states the claimant has normal muscle bulk and tone throughout; that muscle strength is 5/5 in her extremities; that she is able to perform heel to shin solely and accurately without dysmegria; that her gait is narrow based; and that she is able to walk on heels, toes in tandem (Medical Packet, page 38).

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Medical Assistance (MA) program is established by Title XIX of the Social Security Act and is implemented by Title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The Department of Human Services (DHS or department) administers the MA program pursuant to MCL 400.10, *et seq.*, and MCL 400.105. Department policies are found in the Program Administrative Manual (PAM), the Program Eligibility Manual (PEM) and the Program Reference Manual (PRM).

The facts above are undisputed.

"Disability" is:

...the inability to do any substantial gainful activity by reason of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment which can be expected to result in death or which has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months.... 20 CFR 416.905.

When determining disability, the federal regulations require that several considerations be analyzed in sequential order. If disability can be ruled out at any step, analysis of the next step is not required. These steps are:

1. Does the client perform Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA)? If yes, the client is ineligible for MA. If no, the analysis continues to Step 2. 20 CFR 416.920(b).
2. Does the client have a severe impairment that has lasted or is expected to last 12 months or more or result in death? If no, the client is ineligible for MA. If yes, the analysis continues to Step 3. 20 CFR 416.920(c).
3. Does the impairment appear on a special listing of impairments or are the client's symptoms, signs, and laboratory findings at least equivalent in severity to the set of medical findings specified for the listed impairment? If no, the analysis continues to Step 4. If yes, MA is approved. 20 CFR 416.290(d).
4. Can the client do the former work that he/she performed within the last 15 years? If yes, the client is ineligible for MA. If no, the analysis continues to Step 5. 20 CFR 416.920(e).
5. Does the client have the Residual Functional Capacity (RFC) to perform other work according to the guidelines set forth at 20 CFR 404, Subpart P, Appendix 2, Sections 200.00-204.00? If yes, the analysis ends and the client is ineligible for MA. If no, MA is approved. 20 CFR 416.920(f).

The burden of proof is on the claimant to establish disability by the preponderance of the medical evidence. PEM 260.

Step 1: Current Work Activity

...If you are working and the work you are doing is substantial gainful activity, we will find that you are not disabled regardless of your medical condition or your age, education, and work experience. 20 CFR 416.920(b).

The claimant was not working on the date of application, nor currently. Therefore, the sequential evaluation continues to Step 2.

Step 2: Impairment Severity/Duration

...If you do not have any impairment or combination of impairments which significantly limits your physical or mental ability to do basic work activities, we will find that you do not have a severe impairment and are, therefore, not disabled. We will not consider your age, education, and work experience. 20 CFR 416.920(c).

A *de minimus* standard is used in the determination of a severe impairment----any ambiguities are decided in the claimant's favor.

Non-severe impairment(s). An impairment or combination of impairments is not severe if it does not significantly limit your physical or mental ability to do basic work activities. 20 CFR 416.921(a).

Basic work activities. When we talk about basic work activities, we mean the abilities and aptitudes necessary to do most jobs. Examples of these include --

- (1) Physical functions such as walking, standing, sitting, lifting, pushing, pulling, reaching, carrying, or handling;
- (2) Capacities for seeing, hearing, and speaking;
- (3) Understanding, carrying out, and remembering simple instructions;
- (4) Use of judgment;
- (5) Responding appropriately to supervision, co-workers and usual work situations; and

- (6) Dealing with changes in a routine work setting. 20 CFR 416.921(b).

...[The impairment]...must have lasted or must be expected to last for a continuous period of at least 12 months. We call this the duration requirement. 20 CFR 416.909.

On date of application, the above medicals do not establish a severe physical impairment for the required duration nor support claimant's disabling symptoms/complaints stated above.

Also most of the medical reports of record are diagnostic/treatment reports, and do not address the claimant's physical limitations in order to determine whether she was significantly limited in performing basic work activities.

Because both severity and duration must be established at Step 2 before further review, an ultimate favorable disability determination cannot result. Therefore, Step 2 has not been established.

Therefore, this ALJ is not persuaded that disability has been established by the preponderance of the medical evidence.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides that physical disability was not medically established.

Accordingly, Medicaid denial is UPHELD.

/s/
William A. Sundquist
Administrative Law Judge
for Ismael Ahmed, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: July 20, 2009

Date Mailed: July 20, 2009

2008-18758/was

NOTICE: Administrative Hearings may order a rehearing or reconsideration on either its own motion or at the request of a party within 30 days of the mailing date of this Decision and Order. Administrative Hearings will not order a rehearing or reconsideration on the Department's motion where the final decision cannot be implemented within 90 days of the filing of the original request.

The Claimant may appeal the Decision and Order to Circuit Court within 30 days of the receipt of the Decision and Order or, if a timely request for rehearing was made, within 30 days of the receipt date of the rehearing decision.

WAS/tg

cc:

