

STATE OF MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING SYSTEM
ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

IN THE MATTER OF:



Reg. No: 201115839
Issue No: 2009;4031
Case No: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: April 19, 2011
Ingham 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 the claimant's request for a hearing. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on April 19, 2011. The claimant appeared and testified.

Medical reports (Claimant Exhibit A) submitted at hearing for second SHRT review delayed the Decision & Order below.

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) Claimant is currently unemployed.
- (2) Three years ago the claimant was laid off from his last job and became a recipient of Unemployment Compensation Benefits (UCB) until exhausted in December 2008.
- (3) Claimant's vocational factors are: age 51, 9th grade education, and past work experience as a manager of a car wash doing sedentary office work, and a caregiver.

- (4) On August 14, 2009, the claimant applied for MA/SDA, was denied on November 22, 2010, per BEM 260/261, and requested a hearing on January 24, 2011.
- (5) Claimant alleges disability due to anxiety/depression and chronic back and shoulders pain.
- (6) Psychological exam on [REDACTED], states the claimant is currently working as a caretaker, but is not being paid; that he was responsive, outgoing, and cooperative; that his responses were spontaneous, clear, and on target; that he presented with an appropriate affect throughout the testing session; that he is oriented to person, place, and time; that the claimant's ability to understand, retain, and follow simple instructions, and perform basic, routine, and tangible tasks appears to be moderately impaired; that his ability to interact with coworkers, supervisors, and the public appears to be adequate (Medical Packet, p. 10).
- (7) Medical exam on [REDACTED], states the claimant is alert, awake and oriented x3; that speech is normal; that power is 5/5 in all extremities; that muscle bulk and tone are normal in all extremities bilaterally; that gait shows slight limping on the left ankle; that no assistive device is needed for ambulation; that he can walk on heels, toes, and squat down; that he can get up onto the examination table independently; that hand grip is 100-pound bilaterally; that range of motion is normal for the wrist, elbows, shoulders, cervical and lumbosacral spines, disc, knees, and ankles (Medical Packet, p.5).
- (8) Medical exam on [REDACTED], states the claimant is relatively healthy, although he does have some issues with alcoholism, hypertension, and subsequent hyperglycemia; and that he has a history of alcohol abuse (Medical Packet, pgs. 73 and 74).
- (9) SHRT report dated February 24, 2011, states the claimant's impairments do not meet/equal a Social Security listing (Medical Packet, p. 170).

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The State Disability Assistance (SDA) program which provides financial assistance for disabled persons is established by 2004 PA 344. The Department of Human Services (DHS or department) administers the SDA program pursuant to MCL 400.10, *et seq.*, and MAC R 400.3151-400.3180. Department policies are found in the Program Administrative Manual (PAM), the Program Eligibility Manual (PEM) and the Program Reference Manual (PRM).

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 as a guideline 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).

At Step 1, the evidence establishes that the claimant is not currently engaged in substantial gainful activity. Therefore, disability is not denied at this step.

At Step 2, the objective medical evidence of record establishes that the claimant is significantly limited in performing basic physical work activities based on the *de minimus* standard, but not for the duration stated below. The objective medical evidence does not establish the claimant has a severe mental impairment, as defined below.

...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).

...[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.

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).

Therefore, disability is denied at this step based on physical duration, non-severe mental impairment.

At Step 3, the objective medical evidence does not establish the claimant's impairments meet/equal a Social Security listing.

At Step 4, the objective medical evidence does not establish the claimant's inability to do any of his past physical work for the required duration, despite his severe physical impairment. His past physical work as an office manager doing sedentary work falls within his medical limitations. Therefore, disability is denied at this step.

At Step 5, the objective medical evidence does not establish that the claimant is without a Residual Functional Capacity (RFC) for other work in the national economy for the required duration.

...Your residual functional capacity is what you can still do despite limitations. If you have more than one impairment, we will consider all of your impairment(s) of which we are aware. We will consider your ability to meet certain demands of jobs, such as physical demands, mental demands, sensory requirements, and other functions, as described in paragraphs (b), (c) and (d) of this section. Residual functional capacity is an assessment based on all of the relevant evidence.... 20 CFR 416.945(a).

...To determine the physical exertion requirements of work in the national economy, we classify jobs as sedentary, light, medium, heavy, and very heavy. These terms have the same meaning as they have in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, published by the Department of Labor.... 20 CFR 416.967.

Sedentary work. Sedentary work involves lifting no more than 10 pounds at a time and occasionally lifting or carrying articles like docket files, ledgers, and small tools. Although a sedentary job is defined as one which involves sitting, a certain amount of walking and standing is often necessary in carrying out job duties. Jobs are sedentary if walking and standing are required occasionally and other sedentary criteria are met. 20 CFR 416.967(a).

Claimant's disabling complaints above that he has no RFC for any work is not supported by the objective medical evidence of record. Sedentary work, as defined above, falls within the claimant's medical limitations. Therefore, the claimant would be able to perform, at least, sedentary work. At this level, considering the claimant's vocational profile (age 51, 9th grade education, and past semi-skilled work experience) he is not considered disabled under Vocational Rule 201.11. Therefore, disability is denied at Steps 2, 4, and 5.

The department's program eligibility manual contains the following policy statements and instructions for caseworkers regarding the State Disability Assistance Program: to receive State Disability Assistance, a person must be disabled, caring for a disabled

person or age 65 or older. BEM, Item 261, p. 1. Because the claimant does not meet the definition of disabled under the MA-P program and because the evidence of record does not establish that claimant is unable to work for a period exceeding 90 days, the claimant does not meet the disability criteria for State Disability Assistance Benefits either.

The psychological evidence of record shows that in [REDACTED], the claimant was currently working as a caregiver, but not being paid. This shows a RFC for work.

Therefore, the claimant has not established disability, as defined above, by the necessary competent, material, and substantial evidence on the whole record.

DECISION AND ORDER

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

Accordingly, MA/SDA denial is UPHELD.

/s/

William Sundquist
Administrative Law Judge
For Maura D. Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: June 22, 2011

Date Mailed: June 23, 2011

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/ar

cc:

[REDACTED]

201115839/WAS

W. A. Sundquist
Administrative Hearings