

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

Reg. No: 201135248  
Issue No: 2009, 4031  
Case No: [REDACTED]  
Hearing Date: August 31, 2011  
Lapeer County DHS

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE:** Landis Y. Lain

**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, a telephone hearing was held on August 31, 2011. Claimant personally appeared and testified.

**ISSUE**

Did the Department of Human Services (the department) properly deny claimant's application for Medical Assistance (MA-P) and State Disability Assistance (SDA)?

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

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

- (1) On February 11, 2011, claimant filed an application for Medical Assistance, State Disability Assistance and Retroactive Medical benefits alleging disability.
- (2) On March 21, 2011, the Medical Review Team denied claimant's application stating that claimant could perform other work pursuant to Medical Vocational Rule 203.28.
- (3) On March 24, 2011, the department caseworker sent claimant notice that her application was denied.
- (4) On May 13, 2011, claimant filed a request for a hearing to contest the department's negative action.
- (5) On June 20, 2011, the State Hearing Review Team again denied claimant's application stating in its analysis and recommendation: The objective medical evidence supports the findings of the MRT. The claimant's impairments do not meet/equal the intent or severity of a Social Security listing. The medical evidence of record indicates that the claimant retains the capacity to perform a wide range of medium exertional work

that avoids the use of ropes, ladders and scaffolding and more than concentrated exposure to unprotected heights and dangerous machinery. Therefore, based on the claimant's vocational profile of 21 years old, a high school education and a history of less than gainful employment MA-P is denied using Vocational Rule 203.28 as a guide. Retroactive MA-P was considered in this case and is also denied. SDA is denied per PEM 261 because the nature and severity of the claimant's impairments would not preclude work activity at the above stated level for 90 days. Listings 5.06, 9.08, 11.02, 11.03 and 13.23 were considered in this determination.

- (6) Claimant is a 21-year-old woman whose birth date is [REDACTED]. Claimant is 5'5" tall and weighs 160 pounds. Claimant is a high school graduate and does have 6 months of college. Claimant is able to read and write and does have the ability to do addition and count money. Claimant has never worked at a job.
- (7) Claimant alleges as disabling impairments: Ovarian Cysts, epilepsy, diabetes mellitus and gall bladder problems.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

The regulations governing the hearing and appeal process for applicants and recipients of public assistance in Michigan are found in the Michigan Administrative Code, MAC R 400.901-400.951. An opportunity for a hearing shall be granted to an applicant who requests a hearing because his or her claim for assistance has been denied. MAC R 400.903(1). Clients have the right to contest a department decision affecting eligibility or benefit levels whenever it is believed that the decision is incorrect. The department will provide an administrative hearing to review the decision and determine the appropriateness of that decision. BAM 600.

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 Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), the Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) and the Program Reference Manual (PRM).

Pursuant to Federal Rule 42 CFR 435.540, the Department of Human Services uses the federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) policy in determining eligibility for disability under the Medical Assistance program. Under SSI, disability is defined as:

...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

A set order is used to determine disability. Current work activity, severity of impairments, residual functional capacity, past work, age, or education and work experience is reviewed. If there is a finding that an individual is disabled or not disabled at any point in the review, there will be no further evaluation. 20 CFR 416.920.

If an individual is working and the work is substantial gainful activity, the individual is not disabled regardless of the medical condition, education and work experience. 20 CFR 416.920(c).

If the impairment or combination of impairments do not significantly limit physical or mental ability to do basic work activities, it is not a severe impairment(s) and disability does not exist. Age, education and work experience will not be considered. 20 CFR 416.920.

Statements about pain or other symptoms do not alone establish disability. There must be medical signs and laboratory findings which demonstrate a medical impairment.... 20 CFR 416.929(a).

...Medical reports should include –

- (1) Medical history.
- (2) Clinical findings (such as the results of physical or mental status examinations);
- (3) Laboratory findings (such as blood pressure, X-rays);
- (4) Diagnosis (statement of disease or injury based on its signs and symptoms).... 20 CFR 416.913(b).

In determining disability under the law, the ability to work is measured. An individual's functional capacity for doing basic work activities is evaluated. If an individual has the ability to perform basic work activities without significant limitations, he or she is not considered disabled. 20 CFR 416.994(b)(1)(iv).

Basic work activities are 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).

Medical findings must allow a determination of (1) the nature and limiting effects of your impairment(s) for any period in question; (2) the probable duration of the impairment; and (3) the residual functional capacity to do work-related physical and mental activities. 20 CFR 416.913(d).

Medical evidence may contain medical opinions. Medical opinions are statements from physicians and psychologists or other acceptable medical sources that reflect judgments about the nature and severity of the impairment(s), including your symptoms, diagnosis and prognosis, what an individual can do despite impairment(s), and the physical or mental restrictions. 20 CFR 416.927(a)(2).

All of the evidence relevant to the claim, including medical opinions, is reviewed and findings are made. 20 CFR 416.927(c).

The Administrative Law Judge is responsible for making the determination or decision about whether the statutory definition of disability is met. The Administrative Law Judge reviews all medical findings and other evidence that support a medical source's statement of disability.... 20 CFR 416.927(e).

A statement by a medical source finding that an individual is "disabled" or "unable to work" does not mean that disability exists for the purposes of the program. 20 CFR 416.927(e).

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).

At Step 1, claimant is not engaged in substantial gainful activity and is not disqualified from receiving disability at Step 1.

The subjective and objective medical evidence on the record indicates that claimant testified that she lives with her mother in a apartment and her mother and father support her. Claims she is single and has no children under 18 and no income. She receives no benefits form the Department of Human Services. Claimant has testified that she has no driver's license because of she has epilepsy and her mother takes her where she needs to go. Claimant testified she doesn't cook or grocery shop but she does make the bed, vacuum and do the dishes sometimes. Claimant testified her hobbies are reading and watching television, she usually watches television 5 hours per day. Claimant testified she can stand from 1-2 hours at a time and can sit for 5 hours at a time. Claimant testified she can walk a mile and she can squat, bend at the waist, shower and dress herself, tie her shoes and touch her toes. Claimant testified her knees and back are fine but that she needs supervision because she has seizures. Claimant testified that she has no pain and that she is right handed and that her hands and arms are fine and her legs and feet are fine. Claimant testified that she does smoke 2-3 cigarettes per day and her doctor told her not to smoke too much. Claimant testified she does not drink or do any illegal drugs. Claimant stated in a typical day she gets up and cleans, watches

television, takes a 2-3 hour nap and eats and goes for a walk. Claimant testified she has a seizure approximately 1 time per month.

On February 9, 2011 Family First Health Care progress report indicates that claimant does smoke every day at that she should smoke fewer cigarettes per day. (Pg 15)

On February 4, 2011 the medical report indicates that claimant's weight was 193.8 pounds, her height was 66", and her temperature was 98.3, blood pressure 106/66, respiration 12, pulse 92, BMI 31.3. Claimant was in no distress and was alert and oriented x 3 and was assessed with a staph infection which was resolving in her upper abdomen. (Pg. 16)

A neurological evaluation of claimant dated May 6, 2009 indicates that her vital signs were stable. Blood pressure was 106/70 with the heart rate of 100 per minute. Head and neck examination revealed a bite mark on the right side of the tongue. Chest was clear to auscultation and percussion. Cardiac exam revealed normal heart sounds. Abdomen was soft with no rebound or tenderness. Extremities revealed no pitting edema. Peripheral pulses were intact in the upper and lower extremities. Skin was warm with normal turgor. Back examination was normal to palpation. There was no tenderness or deformity in the thoracic or lumbar spine. The patient was alert and oriented to time, place and person. Speech was fluent; there was no apasia, dyspahasia, dysarthria, or dysphonia. Judgment, insight and perception within normal limits to the patient's age. Recent and remote memory function within normal range. (Pg 63)

Neurological examination was normal. Visual field, visual acuity, ophthalmoscopic examination within normal limits. Pupils were equal, round and reactive to light and accommodation. Extraocular movement was normal. Sensation in face was intact. Corneal and jaw reflexes within normal limits. Neurological assessment nerve VII normal upper and lower facial muscles moved symmetrically. Taste at the anterior tongue was normal. Hearing was grossly intact. Equilibrium was normal. Palate elevated symmetrically, taste at the posterior third of the tongue was normal. Motor strength was normal in the sternocleidomastoid and trapezius muscles. Tongue protrude in the midline without atrophy or fasciculations. There was normal muscle bulk and tone with normal strength. No muscle atrophy, fasciculations or involuntary movements of the limbs were noted. Finger-to-nose, heel-to-shin and rapid alternating movements within normal range. No ataxia or dysmetria was detected. Sensory examination: Touch, pinprick, vibration, position and temperature sensations within normal range. Gait and tandem gait were normal. The patient was able to walk on toes and heels without difficulties. The Romberg test was normal. Reflexes: Muscle stretch reflexes were 2+/4+ in the upper and lower extremities. Plantar response was flexor bilaterally. The impression was a 19-year-old female with generalized tonic/clonic seizures. (Pg. 65)

A Cytopathology Gyn report dated May 27, 2010 indicates that it was negative for intraepithelial lesion or malignancy. (Pg 107)

An office visit dated March 19, 2010 indicates that claimant status was basically normal. (Pg. 71)

At Step 2, claimant has the burden of proof of establishing that she has a severely restrictive physical or mental impairment that has lasted or is expected to last for the duration of at least 12 months. There is insufficient objective clinical medical evidence in the record that claimant suffers a severely restrictive physical or mental impairment. Claimant has reports of pain in multiple areas of her body; however, there are no corresponding clinical findings that support the reports of symptoms and limitations made by the claimant. There are no laboratory or x-ray findings listed in the file which support claimant's contention of disability. The clinical impression is that claimant is stable. There is no medical finding that claimant has any muscle atrophy or trauma, abnormality or injury that is consistent with a deteriorating condition. In short, claimant has restricted herself from tasks associated with occupational functioning based upon her reports of pain (symptoms) rather than medical findings. Reported symptoms are an insufficient basis upon which a finding that claimant has met the evidentiary burden of proof can be made. This Administrative Law Judge finds that the medical record is insufficient to establish that claimant has a severely restrictive physical impairment.

Claimant alleges the following disabling mental impairments: Seizures.

For mental disorders, severity is assessed in terms of the functional limitations imposed by the impairment. Functional limitations are assessed using the criteria in paragraph (B) of the listings for mental disorders (descriptions of restrictions of activities of daily living, social functioning; concentration, persistence, or pace; and ability to tolerate increased mental demands associated with competitive work).... 20 CFR, Part 404, Subpart P, App. 1, 12.00(C).

There is insufficient objective medical/psychiatric evidence in the record indicating claimant suffers severe mental limitations. There is no mental residual functional capacity assessment in the record. There is insufficient evidence contained in the file of depression or a cognitive dysfunction that is so severe that it would prevent claimant from working at any job. Claimant was oriented to time, person and place during the hearing. Claimant was able to answer all of the questions at the hearing and was responsive to the questions. The evidentiary record is insufficient to find that claimant suffers a severely restrictive mental impairment. For these reasons, this Administrative Law Judge finds that claimant has failed to meet her burden of proof at Step 2. Claimant must be denied benefits at this step based upon her failure to meet the evidentiary burden.

If claimant had not been denied at Step 2, the analysis would proceed to Step 3 where the medical evidence of claimant's condition does not give rise to a finding that she would meet a statutory listing in the code of federal regulations.

If claimant had not already been denied at Step 2, this Administrative Law Judge would have to deny her again at Step 4 based upon her ability to perform her past relevant work. There is no evidence upon which this Administrative Law Judge could base a finding that claimant is unable to perform work in which she has engaged in, in the past. Therefore, if claimant had not already been denied at Step 2, he would be denied again at Step 4.

The Administrative Law Judge will continue to proceed through the sequential evaluation process to determine whether or not claimant has the residual functional capacity to perform some other less strenuous tasks than in her prior jobs.

At Step 5, the burden of proof shifts to the department to establish that claimant does not have residual functional capacity.

The residual functional capacity is what an individual can do despite limitations. All impairments will be considered in addition to ability to meet certain demands of jobs in the national economy. Physical demands, mental demands, sensory requirements and other functions will be evaluated.... 20 CFR 416.945(a).

To determine the physical demands (exertional requirements) of work in the national economy, we classify jobs as sedentary, light, medium and 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).

Light work. Light work involves lifting no more than 20 pounds at a time with frequent lifting or carrying of objects weighing up to 10 pounds. Even though the weight lifted may be very little, a job is in this category when it requires a good deal of walking or standing, or when it involves sitting most of the time with some pushing and pulling of arm or leg controls.... 20 CFR 416.967(b).

Claimant has submitted insufficient objective medical evidence that she lacks the residual functional capacity to perform some other less strenuous tasks than in her prior employment or that she is physically unable to do light or sedentary tasks if demanded of her. Claimant's activities of daily living do not appear to be very limited and she should be able to perform light or sedentary work even with her impairments. Claimant has failed to provide the necessary objective medical evidence to establish that she has a severe impairment or combination of impairments which prevent her from performing any level of work for a period of 12 months. The claimant's testimony as to her limitations indicates that she should be able to perform light or sedentary work.



There is insufficient objective medical/psychiatric evidence contained in the file of depression or a cognitive dysfunction that is so severe that it would prevent claimant from working at any job. Claimant was able to answer all the questions at the hearing and was responsive to the questions. Claimant was oriented to time, person and place during the hearing. Claimant's complaints of pain, while profound and credible, are out of proportion to the objective medical evidence contained in the file as it relates to claimant's ability to perform work. Therefore, this Administrative Law Judge finds that the objective medical evidence on the record does not establish that claimant has no residual functional capacity. Claimant is disqualified from receiving disability at Step 5 based upon the fact that she has not established by objective medical evidence that she cannot perform light or sedentary work even with her impairments. Under the Medical-Vocational guidelines, a younger individual (age 21 ), with a more than high school education and an unskilled work history who is limited to light work is not considered disabled pursuant to Medical Vocational Rule 203.28.

It should be noted that claimant continues to smoke despite the fact that her doctor has told her to quit. Claimant is not in compliance with her treatment program.

If an individual fails to follow prescribed treatment which would be expected to restore their ability to engage in substantial activity without good cause there will not be a finding of disability.... 20 CFR 416.994(b)(4)(iv).

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 Department has established by the necessary competent, material and substantial evidence on the record that it was acting in compliance with department policy when it determined that claimant was not eligible to receive Medical Assistance and/or State Disability Assistance.

### **DECISION AND ORDER**

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides that the department has appropriately established on the record that it was acting in compliance with department policy when it denied claimant's application for Medical Assistance, retroactive Medical Assistance and State Disability Assistance benefits. The claimant should be able to perform a wide range of light or sedentary work even with her impairments. The department has established its case by a preponderance of the evidence.

Accordingly, the department's decision is **AFFIRMED**.

/s/

Landis Y. Lain  
Administrative Law Judge  
for Maura D. Corrigan, Director  
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: September 12, 2011

Date Mailed: September 13, 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 mailing 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.

LYL/cr

cc:

