

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Livingston County DHS

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Aaron McClintic

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 September 6, 2011. The Claimant appeared along with her father [REDACTED] and both testified. The Department was represented by [REDACTED]

ISSUE

Was the Department correct in denying Claimant's MA-P and retroactive MA-P and SDA applications?

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 applied for SDA, MA-P and Retroactive MA November 30, 2010.
2. The Medical Review Team denied the application on May 11, 2011.
3. Claimant filed a request for hearing on June 1, 2011 regarding the MA denial.
4. A hearing was held on September 6, 2011.
5. On July 13, 2011 the State Hearing Review Team denied the application because the Claimant retains the capacity to perform simple, unskilled, light work.
6. Claimant is 5' 2" tall and weighs 190 pounds.

7. Claimant is [REDACTED] of age.
8. Claimant's impairments have been medically diagnosed as arthritis, right eye blindness, thyroid disorder, graves disease, anxiety and depression.
9. Claimant has the following symptoms: joint pain and swelling, crying spells, severe fatigue, racing thoughts.
10. Claimant completed high school and some culinary arts training.
11. Claimant is able to read, write, and perform basic math skills.
12. Claimant is not working. Claimant last worked as a cashier in a beauty supply store in 2010.
13. Claimant lives with her parents.
14. Claimant testified that she cannot perform household chores.
15. The Claimant's limitations have lasted for 12 months or more.
16. Claimant takes the following prescribed medications
 - a. Seroquel
 - b. Hydrocodone
 - c. Advair
 - d. Gabapentin
17. Claimant testified to experiencing an 8 pain level on a 10 point scale in the back, hips and legs with some pain always present at a 6 level on an every day basis.
18. Claimant's treating physician [REDACTED] wrote a letter dated June 21, 2011 stating "[REDACTED] suffers from severe joint pain and her blood work is positive for rheumatoid factor. She needs insurance for further work up & it will be hard for her to keep a job(in my opinion)."
19. Claimant uses a cane and wears wrist splints.
20. Claimant was found to have a GAF of 55 in a psychological examination in March 2011. She had diagnoses of panic disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder, borderline personality disorder with moderately severe psychosocial stressors. Claimant attempted suicide on several occasions.

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 administers the SDA program pursuant to MCL 400.10, *et seq.*, and MAC R 400.3151-400.3180. Department policies are found in the Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), the Program Eligibility Manual (BEM) and the Bridges Reference Manual (PRM).

The Medical Assistance (MA-P) 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 administers the MA-P 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).

The Department conforms to state statute in administering the SDA program.

2000 PA 294, Sec. 604, of the statute states:

Sec. 604. (1) The department shall operate a state disability assistance program. Except as provided in subsection (3), persons eligible for this program shall include needy citizens of the United States or aliens exempted from the supplemental security income citizenship requirement who are at least 18 years of age or emancipated minors meeting 1 or more of the following requirements:

- (a) A recipient of supplemental security income, social security, or medical assistance due to disability or 65 years of age or older.
- (b) A person with a physical or mental impairment which meets federal supplemental security income disability standards, except that the minimum duration of the disability shall be 90 days. Substance abuse alone is not defined as a basis for eligibility.

Pursuant to Federal Rule 42 CFR 435.540, the Department uses the Federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) policy in determining eligibility for disability under the MA-P 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 are 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.

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 symptoms, diagnosis and prognosis, what an individual can do despite impairment(s), and the physical or mental restrictions. 20 CFR 416.927(a)(2).

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).

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, Appendix 1, 12.00(C).

In this case, this Administrative Law Judge finds that Claimant may be considered presently disabled at the third step. Claimant meets listing 14.09 or its equivalent. This Administrative Law Judge will not continue through the remaining steps of the assessment. Claimant's testimony and the medical documentation support the finding that Claimant meets the requirements of the listing. Claimant has other significant health problems that were not fully addressed in this decision because Claimant is found to meet a listing for a different impairment.

Therefore, Claimant is found to be disabled.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides that Claimant is medically disabled as of August 2010.

Accordingly, the Department's decision is hereby REVERSED and the Department is ORDERED to initiate a review of the application for SDA, MA-P and retroactive MA dated November 30, 2010, if not done previously, to determine Claimant's non-medical eligibility. The Department shall inform Claimant of the determination in writing. A review of this case shall be set for September 2012.



Aaron McClintic
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: 9/26/11

Date Mailed: 9/26/11

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 60 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.

AM/ds

