

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

**IN THE MATTER OF:**



Reg. No: 201143983  
Issue No: 2009, 4031  
Case No: [REDACTED]  
Hearing Date: November 2, 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 Wednesday, November 2, 2011. Claimant appeared and provided testimony on his behalf.

Medical reports (Claimant Exhibit A) submitted at the hearing delayed the D&O below.

**ISSUE**

Was disability, as defined below, 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. In August 2010, Claimant ended his last employment.
2. In August 2010, Claimant alleges onset of disability due to degenerative disc disease and for herniated disc.
3. Medical exam on August 18, 2010, states the Claimant has mild degenerative disc disease at L3-L4 and L4-L5 largely due to minimal disc bulge (medical packet, page 23).
4. Medical exam on January 11, 2011, states the Claimant is well-developed, well-nourished with normal mood and effect; that she has a generalized weakness of the bilateral lower extremities, the right greater than the left; that there is mild bilateral neuroforaminal narrowing at this level; that she has mild degenerative disc disease at the L3-L4 and L4-L5 largely due to

minimal disc bulge; and that she has low back pain, lumbar disc degeneration, lumbar spondylosis and lumbar facets syndrome (medical packet, page 20).

5. On February 1, 2011, Claimant applied for MA-P/SDA, was denied per BEM 260/261, with a hearing request on July 22, 2011.
6. Medical exam on May 23, 2011, states the Claimant is well-developed, well-nourished, and in no apparent distress; that musculoskeletally the Claimant's gait is affected by a right leg limp and uses cane; that tone and strength are 4/5; that she has a painless range of motion of all major muscle groups and joints with no laxity or subluxation of any joints; that neurologically her cranial nerves II-XII are grossly intact (medical packet, page 43).
7. Medical exam on July 6, 2011, states the Claimant has mild degenerative changes in the lower lumbar spine; and that vertebral body heights are preserved in the lumbar spine (medical packet, page 47).
8. Medical exam on October 3, 2011, states that the Claimant's range of motion in the lower extremity is otherwise full; that strength is 5/5 with concerted effort in bilateral lower extremities; that straight leg raise, sitting and supine is negative; and that gait shows unassisted normal heel strike and toe off (Claimant Exhibit A, page 4).

### **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 (BAM), the Program Eligibility Manual (BEM) 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 (BAM), the Program Eligibility Manual (BEM) and the Program Reference Manual (PRM).

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.

...We follow a set order to determine whether you are disabled. We review any current work activity, the severity of your impairment(s), your residual functional capacity, your past work, and your age, education and work experience. If we can find that you are disabled or not disabled at any point in the review, we do not review your claim further.... 20 CFR 416.920.

The burden of proof is on the claimant to establish disability in accordance with the 5 step process below. ...20 CFR 460.912(a).

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, disability is not denied. The evidence of record establishes that the Claimant was not engaged in substantial gainful work on date of application, nor currently.

At Step 2, disability is denied. The medical evidence of record, on date of application, does not establish the Claimant's significantly inability to perform basic physical work activities, as defined above, for the required duration of one continuous year, as stated below.

### **Severe/Non-Severe Impairment**

...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).

**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 Claimant's testimony regarding her disabling impairments, alone, is insufficient evidence to prove disability. It must be supported by competent, material and substantial medical evidence on the whole record.

The medical of reports of record are (mostly) examination, diagnostic and treatment reports. They do not provide medical assessments of Claimant's basis work limitations/restrictions in order to determine whether she has a severe impairment, as defined above. Do the medical diagnosed impairments significantly impair the Claimant's ability to perform basic work activities, as defined above? If not, then, the Claimant has established a non-severe impairment only, as defined above, instead of a severe impairment, as defined above. Said in another way, do the Claimant's diagnosed impairments impair her slightly, mildly, moderately (non-severe) or severely related to performance of basic work activities, as defined above?

#### **Duration of Impairment**

You cannot be determined disabled without medically establishing the duration requirement, as defined below.

...[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.

The medical evidence of record, on date of application, does not establish a severe physical impairment that had lasted or was expected to last for a one year **continuous** duration.

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.

Therefore, disability has not been established at Step 2 by the 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, Medicaid/SDA denial is **UPHELD**.

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

Date Signed: May 11, 2012

Date Mailed: May 11, 2012

**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.

WAS/tb

cc:

