

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

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

[REDACTED]

Reg. No: 201210278  
Issue No: 2009, 4031  
Case No: [REDACTED]  
Hearing Date: January 12, 2012  
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 the claimant's request for a hearing. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on Thursday, January 12, 2012. Claimant personally appeared with her authorized representative, [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

**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. On July 1, 2011, claimant applied for MA-P\SDA, was denied September 23, 2011 per BEM 264/261, and requested a hearing on October 28, 2011.
2. On date of application, claimant was age 32, had a high school education and past work experience as a semi-skilled semi-truck and box-truck driver.
3. In November 2010, claimant's last job ended due to seasonal job driving truck.
4. In November 2010, claimant alleges disability due to back problems.
5. Medical exam on February 16, 2011, states the claimant seems to be ambulating with an antalgic gait on the right; that he is walking in a

stooped fashion; that he has muscle spasms in his lumbar spine; that he has mechanical findings of positive straight leg raised at 45 degrees bilateral; that he has absent ankle reflexes; that he has sensory changes more in an L5 distribution; that he has recurrent disk herniation at the L5-S1 level, which problematic and disabling; and that he is unable to work (Medical Packet, Page 35).

6. In May 2011, the claimant underwent a laminectomy and spinal fusion (SHRT Report dated December 12, 2011)(Medical Packet, Page 84).
7. Medical exam on June 15, 2011, states the claimant seems to be coming along real well; that the severe pain is completely gone out of his leg; that occasionally he does get some achiness and numbness; that back pain is doing better; and that for the most part, his neurologic status is stable; that he has progressed well since his surgical decompression and spinal fusion; that he is making good progress, and we will be seeing him back here in about two to three months; and that his incisions are healing well (Medical Packet, Page 63).

### **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. Claimant has not been engaged in substantial gainful work since November 2010.

At Step 2, disability is denied. The medical evidence of record, on date of application, does not establish the claimant's significant inability to perform basic physical work activities for the required one year continuous duration, as defined 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
7. Dealing with changes in a routine work setting.  
20 CFR 416.921(b).

The question in this case is whether the claimant's medically diagnosed disorders and disabling complaints, on date of application, significantly limit his ability to perform basic work activities, as defined above.

Said in another way, do the diagnosed disorders impair the claimant slightly, mildly, moderately (non-severe) or severely, as defined above?

### **Duration of Impairment**

...[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, as defined above by the competent, material and substantial material 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/  
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William A. Sundquist  
Administrative Law Judge  
For Maura D. Corrigan, Director  
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: March 6, 2012

Date Mailed: March 7, 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

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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:

