

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

Reg. No.: 2012-54036
Issue No.: 2009
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: August 15, 2012
County: Wayne (82)

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Susan C. Burke

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 hearing was conducted in Detroit, Michigan on August 15, 2012. Claimant appeared and testified. Witnesses for Claimant were Maynard Burnett and James Gores. Claimant's Authorized Hearing Representative, [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] Inc., was also present. Oriana Alston, ES, appeared on behalf of the Department of Human Services ("Department").

During the hearing, Claimant waived the time period for the issuance of this decision in order to allow for the submission of additional medical records. Medical evidence at the hearing was received, reviewed, and forwarded to the State Hearing Review Team (SHRT) for consideration. On October 8, 2012, this office received the SHRT determination which found Claimant not disabled. This matter is now before the undersigned for a final decision.

ISSUE

Whether the Department properly determined that Claimant was not disabled for purposes of the Medical Assistance ("MA-P") benefit program.

FINDINGS OF FACT

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

1. Claimant submitted an application for public assistance seeking MA-P and Retro-MAP on January 4, 2012.

2. On February 29, 2012, the Medical Review Team (MRT) determined that Claimant was not disabled.
3. The Department notified Claimant of the MRT determination on February 18, 2012 (premature notice, but accepted by Claimant.)
4. On May 11, 2012, the Department received Claimant's timely written request for hearing.
5. On June 28, 2012, SHRT found Claimant not disabled.
6. During the hearing, Claimant waived the time period for the issuance of this decision in order to allow for the submission of additional medical records. The evidence was received, reviewed, and forwarded to SHRT for consideration. On October 8, 2012, this office received the SHRT determination, which found Claimant not disabled.
7. At the time of the hearing, Claimant was 40 years old with a birth date of [REDACTED]
8. Claimant earned his General Education Development (GED) certification.
9. Claimant is currently working two days per week, with assistance.
10. Claimant suffers from insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus with peripheral vascular disease and peripheral neuropathy, hypertension with dyslipidemia, coronary artery disease, cerebrovascular accident, and ulcer with osteomyelitis. (A2) Claimant also suffers from glaucoma and degenerative disk disease. (A4, A49)
11. Claimant's impairments have lasted, or are expected to last, continuously for a period of twelve months or longer.
12. Claimant's complaints and allegations concerning his impairments and limitations, when considered in light of all objective medical evidence, as well as the record as a whole, reflect an individual who is so impaired as to be incapable of engaging in any substantial gainful activity on a regular and continuing basis.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Medical Assistance program is established by Subchapter XIX of Chapter 7 of The Public Health & Welfare Act, 42 USC 1397, and is administered by the Department of Human Services, formerly known as the Family Independence Agency, pursuant to MCL 400.10 *et seq.* and MCL 400.105. Department policies are found in the Bridge s

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Administrative Manual (“BAM”), the Bridges Eligibility Manual (“BEM”), and the Bridges Reference Tables (“RFT”).

Federal regulations require that the Department use the same operative definition for “disabled” as used for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) under Title XVI of the Social Security Act. 42 CFR 435.540(a).

“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.

In determining whether an individual is disabled, 20 CFR 416.920 requires the trier of fact to follow a sequential evaluation process by which current work activity, the severity of the impairment(s), statutory listings of medical impairments, residual functional capacity, and vocational factors (i.e., age, education, and work experience) are assessed in that order. When a determination that an individual is or is not disabled can be made at any step in the sequential evaluation, evaluation under a subsequent step is not necessary.

First, the trier of fact must determine if the individual is working and if the work is substantial gainful activity. (SGA) 20 CFR 416.920(b).

In this case, Claimant is currently working, but the work is not substantial gainful activity, as he earns less than \$1,010.00 per month. See 20 CFR 416.974. Therefore, Claimant is not disqualified for MA at this step in the sequential evaluation process.

Second, in order to be considered disabled for purposes of MA, a person must have a severe impairment. 20 CFR 416.920(c). A severe impairment is an impairment expected to last twelve months or more (or result in death) which significantly limits an individual’s physical or mental ability to perform basic work activities. The term “basic work activities” means 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 purpose of the second step in the sequential evaluation process is to screen out claims lacking in medical merit. *Higgs v. Bowen* 880 F.2d 860, 862 (6th Cir, 1988). As a result, the Department may only screen out claims at this level which are “totally groundless” solely from a medical standpoint. The *Higgs* court used the severity requirement as a “*de minimus* hurdle” in the disability determination. The *de minimus* standard is a provision of a law that allows the court to disregard trifling matters.

In this case, medical evidence has clearly established that Claimant suffers from insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus with peripheral vascular disease and peripheral neuropathy, hypertension with dyslipidemia, coronary artery disease, cerebrovascular accident, and ulcer with osteomyelitis. (A2) Claimant also suffers from glaucoma and degenerative disk disease. (A4, A49)

In the third step of the sequential analysis of a disability claim, the trier of fact must determine if the Claimant’s impairment, or combination of impairments, meets or medically equals the criteria of an impairment listed in Appendix 1 of Subpart P of 20 CFR, Part 404. (20 CFR 416.920 (d), 416.925, and 416.926.) This Administrative Law Judge finds that the Claimant’s medical record will support a finding that Claimant’s impairment(s) is a “listed impairment” or is medically equal to a listed impairment. See Appendix 1 of Subpart P of 20 CFR, Part 404, Part A.

Listing 4.11 states in part:

Chronic venous insufficiency of a lower extremity with incompetency or obstruction of the deep venous system and one of the following:

A. Extensive brawny edema (see 4.00G3) involving at least two-thirds of the leg between the ankle and knee or the distal one-third of the lower extremity between the ankle and hip.

OR

B. Superficial varicosities, stasis dermatitis, and either recurrent ulceration or persistent ulceration that has not healed following at least 3 months of prescribed treatment.

In the present case, Claimant was hospitalized on [REDACTED] and was assessed with having osteomyelitis, right hallux. (A2) On [REDACTED], Claimant underwent cardiac catheterization. (A54) On May 4, 2012, Claimant was treated for blisters on his right foot. (A65) On May 7, 2012, Claimant underwent revascularization. (A57) On [REDACTED] Claimant was hospitalized and found to have skin abnormality (right foot lesion, open blisters.) (A134)

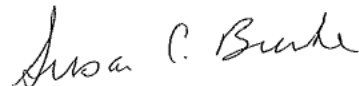
In light of the foregoing, it is found that the Claimant's impairment meets, or is the medical equivalent thereof, of a listed impairment within 4.11. Accordingly, Claimant is found disabled at Step 3 with no further analysis required.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based on the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, finds the Claimant disabled for purposes of the MA-P benefit program as of December 1, 2011.

Accordingly, it is ORDERED:

1. The Department's determination is REVERSED.
2. The Department shall initiate processing of the January 4, 2012 application to determine if all other non-medical criteria are met and inform Claimant of the determination in accordance with Department policy.
3. The Department shall review Claimant's continued eligibility in November of 2013, in accordance with Department policy.



Susan C. Burke
Administrative Law Judge
For Maura Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: October 15, 2012

Date Mailed: October 15, 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 mailing date of the rehearing decision.

Claimant may request a rehearing or reconsideration for the following reasons:

- A rehearing **MAY** be granted if there is newly discovered evidence that could affect the outcome of the original hearing decision.
- A reconsideration **MAY** be granted for any of the following reasons:
 - misapplication of manual policy or law in the hearing decision,
 - typographical errors, mathematical error, or other obvious errors in the hearing decision that effect the substantial rights of the Claimant:
 - the failure of the ALJ to address other relevant issues in the hearing decision.

Request must be submitted through the local DHS office or directly to MAHS by mail at
Michigan Administrative hearings
Reconsideration/Rehearing Request
P. O. Box 30639
Lansing, Michigan 48909-07322

SCB/ctl

cc: [REDACTED]
Wayne County DHS (82)/1843

S. [REDACTED]
Burke