

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

Reg. No: 201217152
Issue No: 2009, 4031
Case No: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: May 2, 2012
Manistee 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 3-way telephone hearing was held on Wednesday, May 2, 2012. Claimant appeared with his authorized representative, [REDACTED]. The Department's witnesses were [REDACTED].

The record was held open for 90 days for a 2nd SHRT review of medical reports introduced at the hearing (Claimant Exhibit A).

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. Claimant's MA-P/SDA application on September 8, 2011 was denied on November 21, 2011 per BEM 260/261, with a hearing request on December 2, 2011.
2. Claimant was age 50, with a 12th grade education, and unskilled/semi-skilled work history.
3. Claimant ended his last employment in March 2007.
4. Claimant alleges disability due to a combination of physical impairments.

5. Medical reports state that Claimant on:
 - a. January 25, 2011, his lumbar vertebrae alignment is satisfactory; that there is no obvious disk space narrowing; and that examination of lumbar spine was unremarkable (Medical Packet, Page 229).
 - b. February 14, 2011, has an L5-S1 mild disk bulge and tiny focal central disk herniation (Medical Packet, Page 227).
 - c. July 28, 2011 and July 30, 2011, had an improved and stable condition upon discharge (Medical Packet, Page 49).
 - d. August 1, 2011, was able to provide resistance with his infraspinatus supraspinatus; that his shoulder scars are well healed; and that it is hard for him to do any work (Claimant's Exhibit A, Page 10).
 - e. September 2, 2011, was well-developed, well-nourished, thin, and in no acute distress (Medical Packet, Page 44).
6. SHRT report dated January 23, 2012, states the Claimant's impairments do not meet/equal a Social Security listed impairment (Medical Packet, Page 324).

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 Claimant has the burden of proof to establish disability as defined above by the preponderance of the evidence of record and in accordance with the 5 step process below. 20 CFR 416.912(a).

When determining disability, the federal regulations are used as a guideline and 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).

Disability is not denied at Step 1. The evidence of record established the Claimant has not been engaged in substantial gainful work since March 2007.

Disability is denied at Step 2. The medical evidence of record, on date of application, does not establish the Claimant's significant functional incapacity to perform basic work activities due to a combination severe physical impairment for a 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
6. Dealing with changes in a routine work setting. 20 CFR 416.921(b).

Severe Impairment

To qualify for MA-P, claimant must first satisfy both the gainful work and the duration criteria (20 CFR 416.920(a)) before further review under severity criteria. If claimant does not have any impairment or combination of impairments which significantly limits physical or mental ability to do basic work activities, an ultimately favorable disability determination cannot result. (20 CFR 416.920(c)).

The medical opinion of record in August 2011 states that it would be hard for the Claimant to do any work due to a combination of physical impairments. What kind of work is the physician referring to? Claimant's past heavy work, medium work, light work or sedentary work, as defined below?

Heavy work. Heavy work involves lifting no more than 100 pounds at a time with frequent lifting or carrying of objects weighing up to 50 pounds. If someone can do heavy work, we determine that he or she can also do medium, light, and sedentary work. 20 CFR 416.967(d).

Medium work. Medium work involves lifting no more than 50 pounds at a time with frequent lifting or carrying of objects weighing up to 25 pounds. If someone can do medium work, we determine that he or she can also do sedentary and light work. 20 CFR 416.967(c).

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).

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).

A statement by a medical source finding that "it could be hard for the Claimant to do any work" does not mean that disability exists for the purposes for a program.

The medical reports of record are mostly examination, diagnostic and treatment reports, and do not provide medical assessments of Claimant's physical limitations relative to her functional incapacity to perform basic work activities, as defined above. 20 CFR 416.913(c)(1) and (2). Stated differently, does the combination physical impairment impair the Claimant slightly, mildly, moderately (non-severe impairment, as defined above) or severely, as defined above?

If disability had not been denied at Step 2, the analysis would proceed to Step 3. The medical evidence of record does not establish the Claimant's impairment meet/equal a Social Security listed impairment for the duration requirement.

The Listing of impairments describes for each of the major body systems, impairment that are considered severe enough to prevent a person from doing any gainful activity. Most of the listed impairments are permanent or expected to result in death, or a specific statement of duration is made. For all others, the evidence must show the one year continuous duration. 20 CFR 416.925(a).

Claimant introduced no medical evidence of record by a treating, examining, or non-examining physician addressing that Claimant's impairments do meet the requirements for any Social Security listed impairment. To the contrary, the SHRT medical consultant addressed the matter and found insufficient medical evidence that a disability under a Social Security listing(s).

If disability had not already been denied at Step 2, it would have been denied at Step 4. The medical evidence of record, on date of application, does not establish Claimant's inability, despite his impairments, to perform any of his past work for the required 1 year continuous duration.

If disability had not already been denied at Step 2, it would have been denied at Step 5. The medical evidence of record, on date of application, does not establish the Claimant was without a residual functional capacity (RFC), despite his impairments, to perform any other work in the National Economy for the required one year continuous duration.

...Your residual functional capacity is what you can still do despite limitations. If you have more than one impairment, we will consider all of your impairment(s) of which we are aware. We will consider your ability to meet certain demands of jobs, such as physical demands, mental demands, sensory requirements, and other functions, as described in paragraphs (b), (c) and (d) of this section. Residual functional capacity is an assessment based on all of the relevant evidence.... 20 CFR 416.945(a).

...To determine the physical exertion requirements of work in the national economy, we classify jobs as sedentary, light,

medium, heavy, and very 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).

The medical evidence of record, on date of application, does not establish the Claimant was without a RFC for less strenuous work than his past work, such as sedentary work, as defined above. Under the Medical-Vocational Guidelines, a younger individual age 48, with a high school education, and unskilled/semi-skilled work history who is limited to sedentary work is not considered disabled.

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 and also not been established at Steps 3, 4 and 5 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.

201217152/WAS

Accordingly, MA-P/SDA denial is **UPHELD**.

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

Date Signed: June 12, 2012

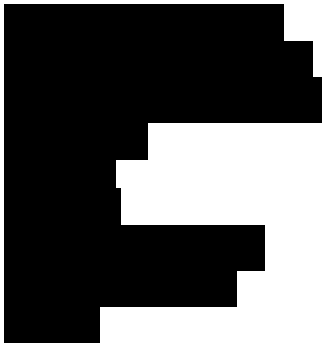
Date Mailed: June 13, 2012

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

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