

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

Reg. No.: 2012-5736
Issue No.: 4031
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: January 25, 2012
County: Wayne (82-18)

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Jonathan W. Owens

HEARING DECISION

This matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to MCL 400.9 and MCL 400.37 following Claimant's request for a hearing. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on January 25, 2012, from Detroit, Michigan. Participants on behalf of Claimant included Claimant and his representative, [REDACTED]. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included [REDACTED].

ISSUE

Whether the Department properly determined that Claimant is not "disabled" for purposes of the State Disability Assistance (SDA) program?

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 April 15, 2011, Claimant applied for SDA.
2. On August 31, 2011, the Medical Review Team denied Claimant's request.
3. On October 17, 2011, Claimant submitted to the Department a request for hearing regarding his denial for SDA only.
4. The State Hearing and Review Team (SHRT) denied Claimant's request.
5. Claimant is 41 years old.

6. Claimant completed education through a GED.
7. Claimant has employment experience (last worked 2006) in factory work and landscaping.
8. Claimant's limitations have lasted for 12 months or more.
9. Claimant suffers from major depressive disorder.
10. Claimant has significant limitations on understanding, carrying out, and remembering simple instructions; use of judgment; responding appropriately to supervision, co-workers and usual work situations; and dealing with changes in a routine work setting.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The 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 Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) and the Program Reference Manual (RFT).

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 MA-P. 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).

Claimant testified to the following symptoms: mood swings, easily aggravated, poor concentration, drowsy during the day due to medication, poor sleep, doesn't like being around people, isolates himself, crying spells and loss of weight. Claimant's therapist testified to witnessing Claimant's mood swings, isolative behavior, agitation and lack of interest in activities. This therapist testified that Claimant's behavior goes up and down. He appears motivated and focused then goes back into a withdrawal mode. This therapist indicated that Claimant would be unable to manage employment due to his depressive state impacting his concentration, focus and motivation.

The testimony given is supported by the medical evidence submitted for consideration. Claimant has been on his medications and has been in treatment over the years. Despite treatment, Claimant continues to suffer with symptoms impacting his ability to maintain daily activities. Claimant's therapist sees and treats the Claimant on a regular

basis and goes into his home. This provides a unique perspective into Claimant's ability to maintain simple daily activities. Given that Claimant's psychiatrist indicated a GAF of 45 and Claimant's condition was guarded, the evidence supports a finding that Claimant is unable to perform basic work functions.

In this case, this Administrative Law Judge finds that Claimant may be considered presently disabled at the third step. Claimant appears to meet listing 12.04 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 a listing.

Therefore, Claimant is found to be disabled for purposes of SDA. Claimant and/or his representative will need to reapply for Medical Assistance as this was not part of the hearing request before this Administrative Law Judge.

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 April 2011.

Accordingly, the Department's decision is hereby REVERSED and the Department is ORDERED to initiate a review of the application dated April 15, 2011, 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 March 2013.



Jonathan W. Owens
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: January 25, 2012

Date Mailed: January 25, 2012

NOTICE: Michigan Administrative Hearing System (MAHS) 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. MAHS 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. (60 days for FAP cases)

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.

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

JWO/pf

cc:

