

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

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

[REDACTED]

Reg. No: 201277988  
Issue No: 2009; 4031  
Case No: [REDACTED]  
Hearing Date: January 24, 2013  
County: Lenawee 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 24, 2013. Claimant appeared and provided testimony on his behalf with [REDACTED] representative, [REDACTED]. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included [REDACTED].

The record was extended 90 days at the Claimant's request for a 2<sup>nd</sup> SHRT review of additional medical reports submitted at the hearing. (Claimant Exhibit 1).

**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 May 8, 2012 was denied on July 8, 2012 per BEM 260/261, with a hearing request on September 17, 2012.
2. Vocational factors: Age 49, 12<sup>th</sup> grade education, and past 15 years of semiskilled/skilled work as a truck driver nationally and regionally, adult care giver, construction work, and farming.
3. Claimant was last employed in December, 2012.
4. Claimant alleges disability due to myocardial infarction. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 48).

5. Claimant's disabling symptoms are dizziness, fluctuating intensity chest pain, shortness of breath from walking, and chronic tiredness.
6. Medical reports of exams state the Claimant on:
  - a. March 20, 2012: Was in *no distress*; the cardiovascular examination revealed a regular rate without murmurs, rubs, or gallops; that lungs were *clear* to auscultation bilaterally .(DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 32).
  - b. May 11, 2012: Is not in respiratory distress; that lungs are clear to auscultation and percussion, that heart is regular without murmur, gallop, or rub; that musculoskeletal he has a non-tender chest wall. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 21).
  - c. May 24, 2012: Has a stable condition. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 19).
  - d. Was ruled out for a myocardial infarction; that he has *moderate* non-obstructive disease in the RCA; that his symptoms are not consistent with pulmonary embolism; that he ambulated and did very well; that he was discharged in stable condition; that his EKG was *normal*. (Claimant Exhibit 1, Pgs. 2 & 3).
7. State Hearing Review Team decision dated November 9, 2012 states the Claimant's impairments do not meet/equal a Social Security listing for the required duration. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 48).

### **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 Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), the Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) and the Bridges Reference Manual (BRM).

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 Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), the Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) and the Bridges Reference Manual (BRM).

The Adult Medical Program (AMP) is established by Title XXI of the Social Security Act; (1115)(a)(1) of the Social Security Act, and is administered by the Department of Human Services (DHS or department) pursuant to MCL 400.10, *et seq.* Department

policies are contained in the Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), the Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) and the Bridges Reference Manual (BRM).

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.

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).

[In reviewing your impairment]...We need reports about your impairments from acceptable medical sources.... 20 CFR 416.913(a).

Acceptable medical verification sources are licensed physicians, osteopaths, or certified psychologists ...20CFR 416.913(a)

...The medical evidence...must be complete and detailed enough to allow us to make a determination about whether you are disabled or blind. 20 CFR 416.913(d).

It must allow us to determine --

- (1) The nature and limiting effects of your impairment(s) for any period in question;
- (2) The probable duration of your impairment; and
- (3) Your residual functional capacity to do work-related physical and mental activities. 20 CFR 416.913(d).

### **Step 1**

...If you are working and the work you are doing is substantial gainful activity, we will find that you are not disabled regardless of your medical condition or your age, education, and work experience. 20 CFR 416.920(b).

The evidence of record established that the Claimant has not engaged in substantial gainful activity since December, 2012. Therefore, the sequential evaluation is required to continue to the next step.

### **Step 2**

... [The record must show a severe impairment] which significantly limits your physical or mental ability to do basic work activities.... 20 CFR 416.920(c).

**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).

**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).

...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).

The medical reports of record are mostly examination, diagnostic, treatment and progress reports. They do not provide medical assessments of Claimant's basic work limitations for the required duration. Stated differently, the medical reports do not establish whether the Claimant is impaired slightly, mildly, moderately (non-severe impairment, as defined above) or severely, as defined above?

The Claimant's disabling symptoms (Findings of Fact #5) are inconsistent with the objective medical evidence of record (Findings of Fact #6).

...Your symptoms, including pain, will be determined to diminish your capacity for basic work activities...to the extent that your alleged functional limitations and restrictions due to symptoms, such as pain, can reasonably be accepted as

consistent with the objective medical evidence and other evidence. 20 CFR 416.929(c)(4).

...Statements about your pain or other symptoms will not alone establish that you are disabled; there must be medical signs and laboratory findings which show that you have a medical impairment.... 20 CFR 416.929(a).

The medical evidence states the Claimant had a stable condition; that he had a moderate (not severe) impairment; it does not state any significant abnormal or remarkable examinations; that his condition is *stable*; and that there's no evidence establishing a deteriorating condition.

The Claimant has not sustained his burden of proof to establish a severe physical impairment, instead of a non-severe impairment, for the required duration.

Administrative law judges have no authority to make decisions on constitutional grounds, overrule statutes, overrule promulgated regulations or overrule or make exceptions to the department policy set out in the program manuals. Delegation of Hearing Authority, July 13, 2011, per PA 1939, Section 9, Act 280.

Therefore, the sequential evaluation is required to stop at Step 2.

If disability had not already been denied at Step 2, it would have also been denied at Steps 3, 4, & 5.

### **Step 3**

...If you have an impairment(s) which meets the duration requirement and is listed in Appendix 1 or is equal to a listed impairment(s), we will find you disabled without considering your age, education, and work experience. 20 CFR 416.920(d).

The Claimant introduced no objective medical evidence of record that his impairments meet/equal a social security listing.

### **Step 4**

...If we cannot make a decision on your current work activities or medical facts alone and you have a severe impairment, we will then review your residual functional capacity and the physical and mental demands of the work

you have done in the past. If you can still do this kind of work, we will find that you are not disabled. 20 CFR 416.920(e).

...We consider that your work experience applies when it was done within the last 15 years, lasted long enough for you to learn to do it, and was substantial gainful activity. We do not usually consider that work you did 15 year or more before the time we are deciding whether you are disabled applies.... 20 CFR 416.965(a).

The Claimant introduced no objective medical evidence of record of a severe impairment and inability to do past work.

### Step 5

If you cannot do any work you have done in the past because you have a severe impairment(s), we will consider your residual functional capacity and your age, education, and past work experience to see if you can do other work. If you cannot, we will find you disabled. 20 CFR 416.920(f)

...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).

**Younger person.** If you are under age 50, we generally do not consider that your age will seriously affect your ability to adapt to a new work situation.... 20 CFR 416.963(b).

...If you are unemployed because of your age and you can still do a significant number of jobs which exist in the national economy, we will find that you are not disabled.... 20 CFR 416.963(a).

Under Step 4, the Claimant introduced no objective medical evidence of record of a severe impairment and his inability to do his past work (Findings of Fact #2). Therefore, this ALJ finds that the Claimant should be able to do less strenuous work than his past work, such as sedentary work, as defined above. Under the Medical Vocational Guidelines, rule 201.21, a younger person, age 49 with a high school education and a semiskilled/skilled work history was limited to sedentary work is not considered disabled.

The department's Bridges 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, medical 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 disability was not medically established.

Accordingly, MA-P denial is **UPHELD** and so ORDERED.

*William A. Sundquist*

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

Date Signed: April 26, 2013

Date Mailed: April 26, 2013

**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/hj

cc:

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