

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

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

[REDACTED]

Reg. No: 201320302  
Issue No: 2009  
Case No: [REDACTED]  
Hearing Date: April 9, 2013  
Saginaw 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, an in person hearing was held on April 9, 2013. Claimant appeared and provided testimony on his/her behalf with [REDACTED]. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included [REDACTED].

**ISSUE**

Was medical recovery 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 September 10, 2012 Claimant had his most recent favorable medical decision.
2. On November 2, 2012 the DHS terminated the Claimant's MA-P based on medical recovery per BEM 260 with a hearing request on December 28, 2012.
3. Vocational Factors: Age 44, a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education, and unskilled work experience.
4. Alleged continuing disabling medical disorders: Diabetes, arthritis in back and shoulders, depression, knee problems, and hepatitis.
5. Disabling symptoms: depression with suicidal thoughts, chronic pain, weakness and tiredness, and limited to lifting/carrying two gallons of milk.

6. Medical reports since Claimant's most recent favorable medical decision state on:  
  
September 12, 2012: Had a GAF score of 40. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 6).  
  
March 5, 2013: Had a GAF score of 31. (Client Exhibit 1, Pg. 17).
7. State Hearing Review Team report dated February 20, 2013 states the Claimant's impairments do not meet/equal a Social Security listing for the required duration. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 110).

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

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).

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.

...Ability to engage in substantial gainful activity. In most instances, we must show that you are able to engage in substantial gainful activity before your benefits are stopped. When doing this, we will consider all your current impairments not just that impairment(s) present at the time of the most recent favorable determination.... 20 CFR 416.994(b)(1)(v).

...To assure that disability reviews are carried out in a uniform manner, that a decision of continuing disability can be made in the most expeditious and administratively efficient way, and that any decision to stop disability benefits are made objectively, neutrally and are fully documented, we will follow specific steps in reviewing the question of whether your disability continues. Our review may cease and benefits may be continued at any point if we determine there is sufficient evidence to find that you are still unable to engage in substantial gainful activity. 20 CFR 416.994(b)(5).

The steps are:

Step 1. Do you have an impairment or combination of impairments which meets or equals the severity of an impairment listed in Appendix 1 of Subpart P of Part 404 of this chapter? If you do, your disability will be found to continue. 20 CFR 416.994(b)(5)(i).

Step 2. If you do not, has there been a medical improvement as defined in paragraph (b)(1)(i) of this section? If there has been medical improvement as shown by a decrease in medical severity, see Step 3 in paragraph (b)(5)(iii) of this section. If there has been no decrease in medical severity, there has been no medical improvement. (see Step 4 in paragraph (b)(5)(iv) of this section.) 20 CFR 416.994(b)(5)(ii).

Step 3. If there has been medical improvement, we must determine whether it is related to your ability to do work in accordance with paragraphs (b)(1)(I) through (b)(1)(iv) of this section; i.e., whether or not there has been an increase in the residual functional capacity based on the impairment(s) that was present at the time of the most recent favorable medical determination. If medical improvement is not related to your ability to do work, see Step 5 in paragraph (b)(5)(v) of this section. 20 CFR 416.994(b)(5)(iii).

Step 4. If we found in Step 2 in paragraph (b)(5)(ii) of this section that there has been no medical improvement or if we found at Step 3 in paragraph (b)(5)(iii) of this section that the medical improvement is not related to your ability to work, we consider whether any of the exceptions in paragraphs (b)(3) and (b)(4) of this section apply. If none of them apply, your disability will be found to continue. If any of the first group of exceptions to medical improvement applies, see Step 5 in paragraph (b)(5)(v) of this section. If an exception from the second group of exceptions to medical improvement applies, your disability will be found to have ended. The second group of exceptions to medical improvement may be considered at any point in this process. 20 CFR 416.994(b)(5)(iv).

Step 5. If medical improvement is shown to be related to your ability to do work or if any of the first group of exceptions to medical improvement applies, we will determine whether all your current impairments in combination are severe (see Sec. 416.921). This

determination will consider all your current impairments and the impact of the combination of these impairments on your ability to function. If the residual functional capacity assessment in Step 3 in paragraph (b)(5)(iii) of this section shows significant limitation to your ability to do basic work activities, see Step 6 in paragraph (b)(5)(iv) of this section. When the evidence shows that all your current impairments in combination do not significantly limit your physical or mental abilities to do basic work activities, these impairments will not be considered severe in nature. If so, you will no longer be considered disabled. 20 CFR 416.994(b)(5)(v).

Step 6. If your impairment(s) is severe, we will assess your current ability to engage in substantial gainful activity in accordance with 416.961. That is, we will assess your residual functional capacity based on all your current impairments and consider whether you can still do work that you have done in the past. If you can do such work, disability will be found to have ended. 20 CFR 416.994(b)(5)(vi).

Step 7. If you are not able to do work you have done in the past, we will consider one final step. Given the residual functional capacity assessment and considering your age, education, and past work experience, can you do other work? If you can, disability will be found to have ended. If you cannot, disability will be found to continue. 20 CFR 416.994(b)(5)(vii).

...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.

## Step 1

### LISTING OF IMPAIRMENTS

Where claimant proves an impairment(s) satisfying duration criteria that is so severe as to either meet or equal a set of criteria in the Social Security Regulations, Listing of Impairment, Appendix 1, a favorable disability determination is required without considering age, education and work experience. (20 CFR 416.920(d)).

The objective medical evidence of record does not establish a continuing disability at Step 1. Therefore, the sequential evaluation is required to continue to the next step.

## Step 2

...If you are entitled to disability benefits as a disabled person age 18 or over (adult) there are a number of factors we consider in deciding whether your disability continues. We must determine if there has been any medical improvement in your impairment(s) and, if so, whether this medical improvement is related to your ability to work. If your impairment(s) has not so medically improved, we must consider whether one or more of the exceptions to medical improvement applies. If medical improvement related to your ability to work has not occurred and no exception applies, your benefits **will continue**. Even where medical improvement related to your ability to work has occurred or an exception applies, in most cases, we must also show that you are currently able to engage in substantial gainful activity before we can find that you are no longer disabled. 20 CFR 416.994(b).

The Claimant had GAF scores of 40 in September, 2012 and 31 in March, 2013. These scores are considered a major (more than severe) mental impairment with occupational functioning and a person who is unable to work. DSM-IV (4<sup>th</sup> edition-revised).

The objective medical evidence of record does not establish that Claimant's medical impairments have decreased in medical severity. Therefore, the sequential evaluation is required to stop and disability continues.

## **DECISION AND ORDER**

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides medical recovery was not established.

Accordingly, MA-P termination is **REVERSED** and so ORDERED.

/s/

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

Date Signed: June 28, 2013

Date Mailed: July 1, 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:

