

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

Reg. No: 201330546
Issue No: 2009
Case No: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: June 11, 2013
Wayne County DHS #17

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 Tuesday, June 11, 2013. Claimant appeared and provided testimony on his behalf. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included [REDACTED]

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 application September 18, 2012 was denied on February 5, 2013 per BEM 260, with a hearing requested on February 15, 2013.
2. Vocational factors: Age 41, with a high school education, and unskilled work experience.
3. Claimant's last employment ended before September 18, 2012.
4. Claimant's alleged disabling symptoms are depression, chronic low back and right knee pain; and that he cannot do any reaching and is limited to no lifting/carrying of any weight.
5. Claimant alleged disabling medical disorders left ear deafness, headaches, and learning impairment.
6. Medical reports of exams state the claimant on:

- a. October 12, 2012: Has a GAF score of 48; is well-developed, well-nourished, cooperative, and in no acute distress; that he is alert and oriented times three; that he answers questions fairly well; that inspection of the ears and nose reveal *no* evidence of acute *abnormality*; that he has no obvious spinal deformity, swelling, or muscle spasm; that he does not use a cane for walking; that he is able to get on and off the table slowly; that tandem walk, heel walk, and toe walk are done slowly; that he is able to squat to 70% of the distance and recover and bend to 70% of the distance and recover; that function of knees is 0-150; that he has *mild* depression and is not taking medication for this problem at the current time; that he has a normal range of motion of the lumbar spine; that he is able to sit, stand, bend, stoop, carry, push, pull, button clothes, dress-undress, dial telephone, make a fist, pick up coin, pick up pencil, squat and arise from squatting, get on and off examination table, and climb stairs; that he is able to walk on heels and toes in tandem; that gait is stable and within normal limits; that he does not need walking aide. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 15-21).
 - b. March 20, 2013: Has a *mild* mental impairment in understanding, remembering, and carrying out simple instructions; and that he has the ability to interact appropriately with supervision around coworkers and public as well as responding to changes in the routine work setting; effective by impairments. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 43).
7. State Hearing Review Team decision dated April 27, 2013 states the Claimant's impairments do not meet/equal a Social Security listing for the required duration. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 62).

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.

...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).

The claimant had the burden of proof to establish disability in accordance with steps 1-4 above... 20CFR 416.912 (a). The burden of proof shifts to the DHS at Step 5... 20CFR 416.960 (c)(2).

[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 before September, 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 minimally, mildly, moderately (non-severe impairment, as defined above) or severely, as defined above for a one year continuous duration.

The claimant's disabling symptoms (Findings of Fact #4) 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).

Claimant had a GAF score of 48 in October, 2012. This is considered a severe mental impairment with occupational functioning. DSM-IV (4th edition-revised). This is inconsistent with the medical evidence of record. The medical assessment of March, 2013 states the Claimant is mildly to moderately (not severe) impaired in understanding, remembering, and carrying out simple instructions (not complex instructions).

The medical evidence of record has not established the Claimant's abnormal mental findings have persisted on a regular and continuing basis on repeated examinations for

a reasonable presumption to be made that a severe mental impairment has lasted or is expected to last for at least a one year continuous duration.

The medical reports (Findings of Fact #6) state that Claimant's examinations were within normal limitations; that his impairments were mild to moderate (not severe); and that his condition is stable (not deteriorating).

No evidentiary weight was given to Claimant Exhibit 1, because it was not by an acceptable medical verification source.

The Claimant has not sustained his burden of proof to establish a severe mental impairment in combination, instead of a non-severe impairment, for the required one year continuous duration.

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

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.

/s/

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

Date Signed: June 18, 2013

Date Mailed: June 19, 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

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cc:

