

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

Reg. No: 20135303
Issue No: 2009, 4031

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Aaron McClintic

DECISION AND ORDER

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 [REDACTED]. Claimant appeared and testified. The Department was represented by [REDACTED].

ISSUE

Did the Department properly deny Claimant's Medical Assistance (MA-P) program and State Disability Assistance (SDA) applications?

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 applied for MA-P and SDA on [REDACTED].
2. The Medical Review Team denied the application on [REDACTED].
3. Claimant filed a request for hearing on [REDACTED], regarding the MA and SDA denials.
4. A telephone hearing was held on [REDACTED].
5. On [REDACTED] the State Hearing Review Team denied the application because the medical evidence of record indicates that the claimant retains the capacity to perform light exertional tasks and her past relevant work.
6. Claimant is 5' 11" tall and weighs 180 pounds having lost 40 pounds in the last year.

7. Claimant is 44 years of age.
8. Claimant's impairments have been medically diagnosed as back pain, wrist injury, migraine headaches, asthma, and carpal tunnel syndrome.
9. Claimant has the following symptoms: pain, fatigue, shortness of breath.
10. Claimant completed 11th grade and a GED.
11. Claimant is able to read, write, and perform basic math skills.
12. Claimant is not working. Claimant last worked as a nail technician in [REDACTED]. Claimant previously worked as a bartender.
13. Claimant lives alone.
14. Claimant testified that she cannot perform some household chores.
15. Claimant takes the following prescribed medications:
 - a. [REDACTED]
 - b. [REDACTED]
 - c. [REDACTED]
16. Claimant testified to the following physical limitations:
 - i. Sitting: 20 minutes
 - ii. Standing: 10 minutes
 - iii. Walking: 1/2 block
 - iv. Bend/stoop: no difficulty
 - v. Lifting: 11 lbs.
 - vi. Grip/grasp: no limitations
17. Claimant's most recent MRI report dated [REDACTED], gave the following findings: "There is slight loss of the normal cervical lordosis. The cervical vertebral bodies are of normal configuration, size and signal. The bone marrow signal is normal without osseous destructive process. The craniocervical junction is normal. Atlantoaxial joint is normal. The cord is normal in course, caliber and signal. C2/C3: Normal disc height and hydration. Disc contour is normal. No evidence of disc bulge or protrusion. The central canal is normal in AP diameter. The neural foramina and exiting nerve roots show no abnormality. C3/C4: Diffuse disc bulge with effacement of the ventral subarachnoid space. The central canal is normal in AP diameter. The neural foramina and exiting nerve roots show no abnormality. C4/C5: Normal disc height and hydration with

diffuse disc bulge and effacement of the ventral subarachnoid space. The central canal is normal in AP diameter. The neural foramina and exiting nerve roots show no abnormality. C5/C6: Normal disc height and hydration with diffuse disc bulge and effacement of the ventral subarachnoid space. The central canal is normal in AP diameter. The neural foramina and exiting nerve roots show no abnormality. C6/C7: Normal disc height and hydration with mild diffuse disc bulge. The neural foramen is narrowed on right. The left neural foramen is normal. The central canal is normal in AP diameter. C7/T1: Normal disc height and hydration. Disc contour is normal. No evidence of disc bulge or protrusion. The central canal is normal in AP diameter. The neural foramina and exiting nerve roots show no abnormality. Vascular structures and upper portions of the airway are normal.”

18. An MRI report of Claimant’s left knee dated [REDACTED] stated the following under impressions: “1. Grade 1 chondromalacia at the medial tibiofemoral joint surfaces. 2. Sprain of the distal anterior cruciate ligament. 3. Parameniscal cyst in relation to posterior horn of lateral meniscus. 4. Mild synovial effusion with small Baker’s cyst in formation.”
19. An MRI report of Claimant’s right knee dated [REDACTED] states the following under impressions: “Possible osteochondral type injury at medial femoral condyle with thinning of overlying articular cartilage. No intra-articular loose fragments. 2. Intr substance high signals within posterior horn medial meniscus not involving the articular surface-follow up MRI at 3 months interval can be beneficial to establish stability. 3. Mild joint effusion with Baker’s cyst.”

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The regulations governing the hearing and appeal process for applicants and recipients of public assistance in Michigan are found in the Michigan Administrative Code, MAC R 400.901-400.951. An opportunity for a hearing shall be granted to an applicant who requests a hearing because his or her claim for assistance has been denied. MAC R 400.903(1). Clients have the right to contest a department decision affecting eligibility or benefit levels whenever it is believed that the decision is incorrect. The department will provide an administrative hearing to review the decision and determine the appropriateness of that decision. BAM 600.

The Medical Assistance (MA-P) 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 administers the MA-P 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 Program Reference Manual (PRM).

The State Disability Assistance (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 Program Eligibility Manual (BEM) and the Bridges Reference Manual (PRM).

The Department conforms to state statute in administering the SDA program. 2000 PA 294, Sec. 604, of the statute states:

- (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 the MA-P program. 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.

Federal regulations require that the department use the same operative definition for "disabled" as used for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) under Title XVI of the Social Security Act. 42 CFR 435.540(a).

"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.

In determining whether an individual is disabled, 20 CFR 416.920 requires the trier of fact to follow a sequential evaluation process by which current work activity, the severity of the impairment(s), residual functional capacity, and vocational factors (i.e., age, education, and work experience) are assessed in that order. When a determination that an individual is or is not disabled can be made at any step in the sequential evaluation, evaluation under a subsequent step is not necessary.

First, the trier of fact must determine if the individual is working and if the work is substantial gainful activity. 20 CFR 416.920(b). In this case, the Claimant is not working therefore, the Claimant is not disqualified at this step in the evaluation.

The second step to be determined in considering whether the Claimant is considered disabled is whether the severity of the impairment. In order to qualify the impairment must be considered severe which is defined as an impairment which significantly limits an individual's physical or mental ability to perform basic work activities. Examples of these include:

1. Physical functions such as walking, standing, sitting, lifting, pushing, 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).

In this case, the Claimant's medical evidence of record supports a finding that Claimant has significant physical and mental limitations upon Claimant's ability to perform basic work activities such as walking, standing, sitting, lifting, pushing, pulling, reaching, carrying, or handling; Medical evidence has clearly established that the Claimant has an impairment (or combination of impairments) that has more than a minimal effect on the Claimant's work activities. See Social Security Rulings: 85-28, 88-13, and 82-63.

In the third step of the analysis, the trier of fact must determine if the Claimant's impairment (or combination of impairments) is listed in Appendix 1 of Subpart P of 20 CFR, Part 404. This Administrative Law Judge finds that the Claimant's medical record does not support a finding that the Claimant's impairment(s) is a "listed impairment" or

equal to a listed impairment. See Appendix 1 of Subpart P of 20 CFR Part 404, Part A. Listing 1.04 and 3.03 were considered.

The person claiming a physical or mental disability has the burden to establish it through the use of competent medical evidence from qualified medical sources such as clinical/laboratory findings, diagnosis/prescribed treatment, prognosis for a recovery and/or medical assessment of ability to do work-related activities or ability to reason and to make appropriate mental adjustments, if a mental disability is being alleged. 20 CFR 416.913. A conclusory statement by a physician or mental health professional that an individual is disabled or blind is not sufficient, without supporting medical evidence, to establish disability. 20 CFR 416.927.


The fourth step of the analysis to be considered is whether the Claimant has the ability to perform work previously performed by the Claimant within the past 15 years. The trier of fact must determine whether the impairment(s) presented prevent the Claimant from doing past relevant work. In the present case, the Claimant's past employment was as a nail technician. This work based on testimony presented at hearing would be considered light exertional work. Claimant would be able to perform her past relevant work because it is she is not able to do the requisite lifting, standing and walking for light exertional work. Therefore, Claimant's appeal is denied at Step 4.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides that Claimant is not medically disabled for the purposes of MA-P and SDA eligibility.

Accordingly, the Department's decision is hereby **AFFIRMED**.

Aaron
Administrative
for
Department


McClintic
Law Judge
Maura Corrigan, Director
of Human Services

Date Signed: 03/29/2013

Date Mailed: 03/29/2013

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 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

AM/kl

cc:

