

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

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

[REDACTED]

Reg. No: 20139928  
Issue No: 2009; 4031  
Case No: [REDACTED]  
Hearing Date: February 20, 2013  
St Clair 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 Wednesday; February 20, 2013. Claimant appeared and provided testimony on her behalf. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included [REDACTED] and [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/SDA application on June 11, 2012 was denied on September 17, 2012 per BEM 260/261, with a hearing request on October 31, 2012.
2. Vocational factors: Age [REDACTED] high school or more education, and past unskilled work experience as cashier, factory maintenance, and security guard.
3. Claimant's last employment ended in July, 2009.
4. Claimant's medically diagnosed disorders are depression. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 153).
5. Claimant's disabling mental symptoms are difficulty getting over two friend's fighting against her, behind her back, and worried about people hacking into her cell phone.

6. Medical reports of exams state the claimant on:
  - a. November 8, 2011: States a GAF score of 45. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 17).
  - b. November 21, 2011: States has an update of 45. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 30).
  - c. December 22, 2011: Has a *moderate* impairment; that she has *no neuro deficient*; that her condition has *improved* and is *stable*. (DHS Exhibit A, Pgs. 48-49)
  - d. February 8, 2012: Has an *intact* memory; has *normal* concentration; insight/ judgment is *appropriate*; mental status is *normal*. (DHS Exhibit A, Pgs. 102-105)
  - e. June 11, 2012: She is not significantly limited in understanding and memory, sustained concentration and persistence, social interaction and adaptation; she is moderately limited in ability to perform activities within a schedule, maintain regular attendance, and be punctual within customary tolerances, and to complete a normal workday and worksheet without interruptions from psychologically based symptoms and to perform at a consistent pace without an unreasonable number and length of rest periods, to interact appropriate with the general public, and set realistic goals and make plans independently of others. (DHS Exhibit A, Pgs. 11 & 12).
7. State Hearing Review Team decision dated January 12, 2013 states the Claimant's impairments do not meet/equal a Social Security listing for the required duration. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 153).

#### **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.

The burden of proof is on the claimant to establish disability by the objective medical evidence of record that he is disabled in accordance with the five step sequential evaluation below. ...20 CFR 416.912(a).

The burden of proof shifts to the DHS at step five ....20 CFR 416.994 (b)(1)(v).

Acceptable medical verification sources about your impairments are by an M.D. or D.O. or fully licensed psychologist. BEM260. Medical reports would include:

- Your ability to do work-related activities such as sitting, standing, moving about, lifting, carrying, handling objects, hearing, speaking, and traveling.
- In cases of mental impairments, your ability to reason or make occupational, personal, or social adjustments. ...20 CFR 416.913(a)(b)(1) and (2).

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).

Step 1, disability is not denied. The objective medical evidence of record established the Claimant has not been engaged in substantial gainful activities since July, 2009. Therefore the sequential evaluation is required to continue to the next step.

Step 2, disability is denied. The objective medical evidence of record, on date of application, does not establish the Claimant's significant functional incapacity, based on the de minimus standard, to perform basic work activities due to a severe mental impairment for the required one year continuous duration, as defined below.

### **Severe/Non-Severe Impairment**

...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).

**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).

**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).

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, how do the Claimant's medically diagnosed disorders significantly incapacitate her functional ability to perform basic work activities for the required duration? Do the disorders impair the Claimant's ability slightly, mildly, moderately (non-severe impairment, as defined above) or severely, as defined above?

The claimant's disabling symptoms (Findings of Fact #5) are not supported by the objective medical evidence of record (Findings of Fact #6). The medical evidence states the Claimant's medical exams were normal and unremarkable; that her impairments were mild to moderate (not-severe) and that her condition is stable and improving.

Claimant had a GAF score of 45 in November, 2011 and June, 2012. This is considered a severe mental impairment with occupational-functioning. DSM IV (4<sup>th</sup> edition-revised).

The medical evidence of record does not establish the claimant's abnormal mental findings have persisted on repeated examinations for a reasonable presumption to be made that a severe mental impairment has lasted or expected to last for at least one continuous year.

To the contrary, the mental residual functional capacity assessment in June, 2012 shows that the claimant is not significantly limited/moderately limited (not severely limited). Otherwise, the medical evidence shows that the claimant's memory is intact; that she has normal concentration; that her insight/judgment is appropriate; and that her mental status is normal.

Therefore, this ALJ gives less evidentiary weight to the GAF scores and finds that a severe mental impairment was not established for the required one year continuous duration.

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.

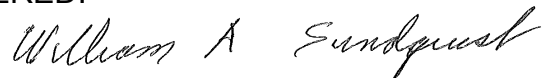
Therefore, the sequential evaluation is required to stop at Step 2.

Therefore, claimant has not sustained her burden of proof to establish disability, as defined above, 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  
Administrative Law Judge  
For Maura D. Corrigan, Director  
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: April 5, 2013

Date Mailed: April 5, 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.

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cc:

