

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

Reg. No: 201326631
Issue No: 2009
Case No: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: May 9, 2013
Allegan 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, May 9, 2013. Claimant appeared and provided testimony on his behalf with [REDACTED]. 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 (3 months retro) application on October 15, 2012 was denied on September 20, 2012 per BEM 260, with a hearing request on December 26, 2012.
2. Vocational factors: Age 30, high school or more education, and past 15 year work experience as a certified auto mechanic and semiskilled construction worker with on the job training,
3. Last employment ended in November, 2009.
4. Claimant alleges disability due to fractured left clavicle, scapula, and hand, arthritis, and post traumatic stress disorder. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 210).
5. Claimant's disabling symptoms are panic attacks being around a lot of people, angers easily, chronic pain/weakness in left collar bone area, and chronic shoulder pops/pain.

6. Medical reports of exams state the claimant on:
 - a. July 15, 2012: Is well developed, well nourished, and in no acute distress; that his HEENT is *unremarkable*; that his should er revealed a little bit of a road rash that was scabbed over; that his neurovascular was otherwise *intact*. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 196).
 - b. August 25, 2012: Has a GAF of 35. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 67).
 - c. August 28, 2012: His cranial nerves II-XII are *intact*; that his gait is *normal*. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 71).
 - d. October 7, 2012: Has a GAF score of 45; that he was alert and oriented to person, place, time, and situation; that his speech was clear, coherent, and non pressured; that his affect was congruent; that his thought process is logical, linear, and future oriented; that his insight and judgment were *improved*. (DHS Exhibit A, Pgs. 8-10).
 - e. October 22, 2012: That his general examination regarding gait, fatigue, and pain level were *normal*; that his neuro was *normal*; that his condition was *stable*; that he was limited to lifting/carrying frequently 25 pounds and occasionally 50 pounds or more; that he needs no assistance device for ambulation; that he is able to use his left upper extremity for reaching, and pushing/pulling; that he is able to use his upper extremities for repetitive reaching, and pushing/pulling activities; and that he has *no mental limitations*. (DHS Exhibit A, Pgs. 102-103).
7. State Hearing Review Team decision dated April 4, 2013 states the Claimant's impairments do not meet/equal a Social Security listing for the required duration. (DHS Exhibit A, Pg. 209).

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 November, 2009. 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's medical examinations were normal and unremarkable; that his impairments were mild to moderate (not severe); and that his condition is stable (not deteriorating).

Claimant has acceptable medical GAF scores of 35 in August, 2012 and 45 in October, 2012. And then later, in October, 2012 he had no mental limitations. The unacceptable scores range from a serious impairment in occupational functioning to the most recent score of 51 who is a person with a moderate (not severe) impairment with occupational functioning. DSM IV (4th edition-revised).

The Claimant's abnormal mental findings haven't persisted on a regular and continued basis with repeated examinations for a reasonable presumption to be made that a severe mental impairment has lasted or is expected to last for at least one continuous year.

The Claimant testified that he is limited to lifting/carrying 2 gallons of milk (approximately 16 pounds). This is inconsistent with the medical evidence stating that he is able to lift/carry 25 pounds frequently and 50 pounds or more occasionally.

The Claimant has not sustained his burden of proof to establish a severe physical or mental impairment in combination, instead of a non-severe impairment, for the required 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: May 15, 2013

Date Mailed: May 15, 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:

