

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

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

██████████  
██████████  
██████████

Reg. No.: 2013-42196  
Issue No.: 2009  
Case No.: ██████████  
Hearing Date: August 1, 2013  
County: Mason-00

**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, an in-person hearing was held on August 1, 2013. Claimant and Claimant's Authorized Hearings Representative, ██████████, through ██████████, appeared for the Claimant. The Department was represented by Mary Lou Martinez.

**ISSUE**

Did the Department properly deny Claimant's Medical Assistance application?

**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 on November 9, 2012, with a request for retroactive coverage back to September 2012.
2. The Medical Review Team denied the application on January 22, 2013.
3. Claimant filed a Request for Hearing on April 15, 2013, regarding the MA denial.
4. An in-person hearing was held on August 1, 2013.
5. On February 14, 2013, the State Hearing Review Team determined that Claimant retains the capacity to perform a wide range of simple, unskilled, light work.
6. Claimant is 5' 5" tall and weighs 300.
7. Claimant is 49 years of age.
8. Claimant's impairments have been medically diagnosed as back injury, diabetes, hypertension, depression, and obesity.

9. Claimant has the following symptoms: pain, fatigue, insomnia, memory and concentration problems.
10. Claimant completed high school.
11. Claimant is able to read, write, and perform basic math skills.
12. Claimant is not working. Claimant last worked full time in January 2010 as a systems monitor. Claimant previously worked as a cashier.
13. Claimant lives with her mother.
14. Claimant testified that she cannot perform household chores.
15. Claimant takes the following prescribed medications:
  - a. Insulin
  - b. Simvastatin
  - c. Lisinipril
  - d. Lyrica
  - e. Cymbalta
  - f. Furosemide
  - g. Xanax
  - h. Flexeril
  - i. Fentanyl
16. Claimant testified to experiencing pain, at a high level of 10, on an everyday basis, with some pain always present at a low level of 1-2.
17. Claimant testified to the following physical limitations:
  - i. Sitting: 45 minutes
  - ii. Standing: 4-5 minutes
  - iii. Walking: 50 feet
  - iv. Bend/stoop: some difficulty
  - v. Lifting: 5.
  - vi. Grip/grasp: no limitations
18. Claimant's treating physician completed a medical examination report dated March 26, 2013, finding that Claimant can lift less than 10 pounds occasionally. This report also states "at this point is mostly bed ridden". Her condition was also found to be deteriorating.
19. Claimant uses a walker and wheelchair to ambulate.

## 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).

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 the severity of the impairment. In order to qualify the impairment must be considered severe, which is defined as an impairment that 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 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. Listings 9.00, 1.04 and 12.04 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 systems monitor and cashier. Working as a systems monitor and cashier as described by Claimant at hearing would be considered light work. The Claimant's impairments would prevent her from doing past relevant work. This Administrative Law Judge will continue through step 5.

In the final step of the analysis, the trier of fact must determine: if the Claimant's impairment(s) prevent the Claimant from doing other work. 20 CFR 416.920(f). This determination is based upon the Claimant's:

1. residual functional capacity defined simply as “what can you still do despite your limitations? 20 CFR 416.945;
2. age, education, and work experience, 20 CFR 416.963-965; and
3. the kinds of work which exist in significant numbers in the national economy which the Claimant could perform despite her limitations. 20 CFR 416.966.

The residual functional capacity is what an individual can do despite limitations. All impairments will be considered in addition to ability to meet certain demands of jobs in the national economy. Physical demands, mental demands, sensory requirements and other functions will be evaluated.... 20 CFR 416.945(a).

To determine the physical demands (exertional requirements) of work in the national economy, we classify jobs as sedentary, light, medium and heavy. These terms have the same meaning as they have in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, published by the Department of Labor.... 20 CFR 416.967.

**Sedentary work:** Sedentary work involves lifting no more than 10 pounds at a time and occasionally lifting or carrying articles like docket files, ledgers, and small tools. Although a sedentary job is defined as one which involves sitting, a certain amount of walking and standing is often necessary in carrying out job duties. Jobs are sedentary if walking and standing are required occasionally and other sedentary criteria are met. 20 CFR 416.967(a).

**Light work:** Light work involves lifting no more than 20 pounds at a time with frequent lifting or carrying of objects weighing up to 10 pounds. Even though the weight lifted may be very little; a job is in this category when it requires a good deal of walking or standing, or when it involves sitting most of the time with some pushing and pulling of arm or leg controls.... 20 CFR 416.967(b).

**Medium work:** Medium work involves lifting no more than 50 pounds at a time with frequent lifting or carrying of objects weighing up to 25 pounds. If someone can do medium work, we determine that he or she can also do sedentary and light work. 20 CFR 416.967(c).

**Heavy work:** Heavy work involves lifting no more than 100 pounds at a time with frequent lifting or carrying of objects weighing up to 50 pounds. If someone can do heavy work, we determine that he or she can also do medium, light, and sedentary work. 20 CFR 416.967(d).

See *Felton v DSS* 161 Mich. App 690, 696 (1987). Once the Claimant makes it to the final step of the analysis, the Claimant has already established a prima facie case of disability. *Richardson v Secretary of Health and Human Services*, 732 Fd2 962 (6<sup>th</sup> Cir, 1984). Moving forward the burden of proof rests with the state to prove by substantial

evidence that the Claimant has the residual function capacity for substantial gainful activity.

After careful review of Claimant's extensive medical record and the Administrative Law Judge's personal interaction with Claimant at the hearing, this Administrative Law Judge finds that Claimant's exertional and non-exertional impairments render Claimant unable to engage in a full range of even sedentary work activities on a regular and continuing basis. 20 CFR 404, Subpart P, Appendix 11, Section 201.00(h). See Social Security Ruling 83-10; *Wilson v Heckler*, 743 F2d 216 (1986). The Department has failed to provide vocational evidence which establishes that Claimant has the residual functional capacity for substantial gainful activity and that, given Claimant's age, education, and work experience, there are significant numbers of jobs in the national economy which the Claimant could perform despite Claimant's limitations.

Accordingly, this Administrative Law Judge concludes that Claimant is disabled for purposes of the MA-P program as of September 2012. Claimant's testimony regarding her limitations and ability to sit, stand, walk, lift and carry is credible and supported by substantial medical evidence.

Therefore, Claimant is found to be disabled.

#### **DECISION AND ORDER**

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides that Claimant is medically disabled as of September 2012.

ACCORDINGLY, the Department's decision is hereby **REVERSED** and the Department is ORDERED to:

1. Initiate a review of the application for MA and Retro MA dated November 9, 2012, if not done previously, to determine Claimant's non-medical eligibility.
2. The Department shall inform Claimant of the determination in writing. A review of this case shall be set for August 2014.



**Aaron McClintic**  
Administrative Law Judge  
for Maura Corrigan, Director  
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: 08/19/2013

Date Mailed: 08/20/2013

**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 60 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/pw

cc: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
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