

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

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

████████████████████  
████████████████████  
████████████████████

Reg. No.: 2013-60868  
Issue No.: 2009  
Case No.: ██████████  
Hearing Date: November 13, 2013  
County: Wayne (82-57)

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE:** Jonathan W. Owens

**HEARING DECISION**

Following Claimant's request for a hearing, this matter is before the undersigned Administrative Law Judge pursuant to MCL 400.9 and 400.37; 42 CFR 431.200 to 431.250; and 45 CFR 205.10. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on November 13, 2013, from Detroit Michigan. Participants on behalf of Claimant included Claimant and ██████████. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included ██████████  
████████████████████

**ISSUE**

Whether the Department properly determined that Claimant is not "disabled" for purposes of the Medical Assistance (MA-P) program?

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the competent, material and substantial evidence on the whole record, finds as material fact:

1. On May 6, 2013, Claimant applied for MA-P and retro MA-P to February 2013.
2. On July 3, 2013, the Medical Review Team denied Claimant's request.
3. On July 29, 2013, Claimant submitted to the Department a request for hearing.
4. The State Hearing Review Team (SHRT) denied Claimant's request.
5. Claimant is 55 years old.

6. Claimant completed education through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
7. Claimant has employment experience (last worked 2010) as a direct care worker (required 6-7 hours of standing, 1-2 hours of sitting and lifting over 100 lbs).
8. Claimant's limitations have lasted for 12 months or more.
9. Claimant suffers from a heart attack, rheumatoid arthritis, asthma, high blood pressure and heart defect from birth.
10. Claimant has significant limitations on physical activities involving sitting, standing, walking, bending, lifting, and stooping.
11. On [REDACTED] Claimant passed away after suffering a cardiac arrest.
12. The Claimant was 5'4" tall and weighed 287 pounds yielding a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 49.3.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

The Medical Assistance (MA) program is established by the Title XIX of the Social Security Act, 42 USC 1396-1396w-5, and is implemented by 42 CFR 400.200 to 1008.59. The Department of Human Services (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers the MA program pursuant to MCL 400.10 and MCL 400.105. Department policies are found in the Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), the Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) and the Bridges Reference Manual (RFT).

Pursuant to Federal Rule 42 CFR 435.540, the Department uses the Federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) policy in determining eligibility for disability under MA-P. 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.

A set order is used to determine disability. Current work activity, severity of impairments, residual functional capacity, past work, age, or education and work experience are reviewed. If there is a finding that an individual is disabled or not disabled at any point in the review, there will be no further evaluation. 20 CFR 416.920.

Medical evidence may contain medical opinions. Medical opinions are statements from physicians and psychologists or other acceptable medical sources that reflect judgments about the nature and severity of the impairment(s), including symptoms,

diagnosis and prognosis, what an individual can do despite impairment(s), and the physical or mental restrictions. 20 CFR 416.927(a)(2).

The Administrative Law Judge is responsible for making the determination or decision about whether the statutory definition of disability is met. The Administrative Law Judge reviews all medical findings and other evidence that support a medical source's statement of disability. 20 CFR 416.927(e).

For mental disorders, severity is assessed in terms of the functional limitations imposed by the impairment. Functional limitations are assessed using the criteria in paragraph (B) of the listings for mental disorders (descriptions of restrictions of activities of daily living, social functioning; concentration, persistence or pace; and ability to tolerate increased mental demands associated with competitive work). 20 CFR, Part 404, Subpart P, Appendix 1, 12.00(C).

Social Security Ruling 02-01 directs adjudicators to consider that the combined effects of obesity with other impairments may be greater than the non-obesity impairment alone. The National Institute of Health Clinical Guidelines for Obesity define three levels of obesity. Level I includes BMIs of 30.0-34.9; Level II includes BMIs of 35.0-39.9; and Level III extreme obesity is considered over 40.0. Obesity at Level III represents a condition which creates the greatest risk for developing obesity-related impairments. Claimant's weight was 287 pounds and she was 5'4 in height. Claimant's obesity as measured by her BMI may be calculated using the Center for Disease Control and Prevention Body Mass Index calculation found at: [http://cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/bmi/adult\\_BMI/english\\_bmi\\_calculator/bmi\\_calculator.htm](http://cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/bmi/adult_BMI/english_bmi_calculator/bmi_calculator.htm).

The formula for calculating BMI is as follows: calculate BMI by dividing weight in pounds by height in inches squared and multiplying by a conversion factor of 703. This formula, as applied to Claimant's height and weight, yields a BMI of 49.3 or Level III obesity. This level of obesity surely impacts Claimant's heart condition.

Social Security Ruling SSR-02 provides in pertinent part:

Because there is no listing for obesity, we will find that an individual with obesity "meets" the requirements of a listing if he or she has another impairment that, by itself, meets the requirements of a listing. We will also find that a listing is met if there is an impairment that, in combination with obesity, meets the requirements of a listing. For example, obesity may increase the severity of coexisting or related impairments to the extent that the combination of impairments meets the requirements of a listing. This is especially true of musculoskeletal, respiratory, and cardiovascular impairments. It may also be true for other coexisting or related impairments, including mental disorders.

In this case, this Administrative Law Judge finds that Claimant may be considered presently disabled at the third step. Claimant appears to meet listing 4.02 or its equivalent. This Administrative Law Judge will not continue through the remaining steps of the assessment. Claimant's testimony and the medical documentation support the finding that Claimant meets the requirements of a listing.

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 February 2013.

Accordingly, the Department's decision is hereby REVERSED and the Department is ORDERED to initiate a review of the application dated May 6, 2013, if not done previously, to determine Claimant's non-medical eligibility. A review of this case is not necessary as the Claimant has passed away.



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**Jonathan W. Owens**  
Administrative Law Judge  
for Maura Corrigan, Director  
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: December 4, 2013

Date Mailed: December 4, 2013

**NOTICE OF APPEAL:** 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 or Reconsideration was made, within 30 days of the receipt date of the Decision and Order of Reconsideration or Rehearing Decision.

Michigan Administrative Hearing System (MAHS) 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. MAHS 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 (60 days for FAP cases).

A Request for Rehearing or Reconsideration may be granted when one of the following exists:

- Newly discovered evidence that existed at the time of the original hearing that could affect the outcome of the original hearing decision;
- Misapplication of manual policy or law in the hearing decision which led to a wrong conclusion;
- Typographical, mathematical or other obvious error in the hearing decision that affects the rights of the client;
- Failure of the ALJ to address in the hearing decision relevant issues raised in the hearing request.

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The Department, AHR or the claimant must specify all reasons for the request. MAHS will not review any response to a request for rehearing/reconsideration. A request must be *received* in MAHS within 30 days of the date the hearing decision is mailed.

The written request must be faxed to (517) 335-6088 and be labeled as follows:

Attention: MAHS Rehearing/Reconsideration Request

If submitted by mail, the written request must be addressed as follows:

Michigan Administrative Hearings  
Reconsideration/Rehearing Request  
P.O. Box 30639  
Lansing, Michigan 48909-07322

JWO/pf

cc: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]