

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

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

[REDACTED]

Reg. No.: 2013-67099  
Issue No(s): 2009  
Case No.: [REDACTED]  
Hearing Date: April 7, 2014  
County: Oakland

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE:** Susan C. Burke

**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 hearing was held on April 7, 2014, in Walled Lake, Michigan. Participants on behalf of Claimant included Claimant and Claimant's Authorized Hearing Representative, [REDACTED]. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included [REDACTED], ES.

**ISSUE**

Whether the Department properly determined that Claimant was not disabled for purposes of the Medical Assistance (MA) benefit program.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

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

1. Claimant submitted an application for public assistance seeking MA and Retroactive MA on [REDACTED].
2. On [REDACTED], the Medical Review Team (MRT) determined that Claimant was not disabled.
3. The Department notified Claimant of the MRT determination on [REDACTED].
4. On [REDACTED], the Department received Claimant's timely written request for hearing.

5. On [REDACTED], the State Hearing Review Team (SHRT) found Claimant not disabled.
6. At the time of the hearing, Claimant was 54 years old with a birth date of [REDACTED].
7. Claimant has a high school education.
8. Claimant is not currently working.
9. Claimant has a work history as a bus driver and in maintenance.
10. Claimant was diagnosed with delirium tremens, acute pancreatitis, acute seizures, hypocalcemia, hypomagnesemia, hypocalbuminemia and hypokalemia. (Exhibit 1, p.13).

### **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.

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), statutory listings of medical impairments, 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. (SGA) 20 CFR 416.924(b).

In this case, Claimant is not currently working. Claimant testified credibly that he is not currently working and the Department presented no contradictory evidence. Therefore, Claimant is not disqualified for MA at this step in the sequential evaluation process.

Second, in order to be considered disabled for purposes of MA, a person must have a severe impairment. 20 CFR 416.920(c). A severe impairment is an impairment expected to last twelve months or more (or result in death) which significantly limits an individual's physical or mental ability to perform basic work activities. The term "basic work activities" means 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 purpose of the second step in the sequential evaluation process is to screen out claims lacking in medical merit. *Higgs v. Bowen* 880 F2d 860, 862 (6<sup>th</sup> Cir, 1988). As a result, the Department may only screen out claims at this level which are "totally groundless" solely from a medical standpoint. The *Higgs* court used the severity requirement as a "*de minimus* hurdle" in the disability determination. The *de minimus* standard is a provision of a law that allows the court to disregard trifling matters.

In this case, medical evidence has not clearly established that Claimant has an impairment (or combination of impairments) that has more than a minimal effect on Claimant's work activities. In April of 2013, Claimant was hospitalized for ten days and

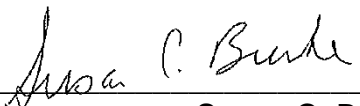
had a discharge diagnosis of delirium tremens, acute pancreatitis, acute seizures, hypocalcemia, hypomagnesemia, hypocalbuminemia and hypokalemia. (Exhibit 1, p.13) Claimant did not present medical evidence to substantiate that Claimant continued to suffer impairments related to this diagnosis. There is no medical evidence that this condition is expected to last for the twelve-month duration required by the regulations.

In Claimant's application, Claimant alleged liver failure, pancreatitis, and back pain. Claimant testified to debilitating shoulder, back, and hip pain which he said started occurring on and off in 2010 or 2011. Claimant said he also suffers from left foot numbness. Claimant did not assert that these pains were a result of the above-detailed diagnosis. Rather, Claimant stated that his doctor said the pain in his hips is probably due to arthritis. A Medical Examination Report dated [REDACTED] shows that as to musculoskeletal issues, Claimant had a resting tremor in his right hand, but otherwise musculoskeletal was normal. Claimant was found to be stable and could meet his needs at home. (Exhibit 1, pp. 3, 4) Without medical substantiation of Claimant's shoulder, back, and hip pain and left foot numbness, Claimant has not presented the required competent, material, and substantial evidence which would support a finding that he has an impairment or combination of impairments which would significantly limit the physical or mental ability to do basic work activities. 20 CFR 416.920(c).

The Administrative Law Judge, based on the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and for the reasons stated on the record, if any, finds Claimant not disabled for purposes of the MA benefit program.

**DECISION AND ORDER**

Accordingly, the Department's determination is AFFIRMED.

  
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Susan C. Burke  
Administrative Law Judge  
For Maura Corrigan, Director  
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: 4/21/2014

Date Mailed: 4/21/2014

**NOTICE OF APPEAL:** 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).

2012-8593/SCB

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.

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.

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

SCB/hw

cc:

