

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

IN THE MATTER OF:



Reg. No.: 2014-23269
Issue No.: 2009
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: June 5, 2014
County: Genesee-02

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Vicki L. Armstrong

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 June 5, 2014, from Lansing, Michigan. Claimant personally appeared and testified. Participants on behalf of the Department of Human Services (Department) included Hearing Facilitator [REDACTED].

ISSUE

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

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 September 10, 2013, Claimant filed an application for MA/Retro-MA benefits alleging disability.
2. On December 14, 2013, the Medical Review Team (MRT) denied Claimant's application for MA/Retro-MA indicating Claimant was capable of performing other work. (Dept Ex. A, pp 1-2).
3. On December 17, 2013, the Department sent Claimant notice that his application for MA/Retro-MA had been denied.
4. On January 22, 2014, Claimant filed a request for a hearing to contest the Department's negative action.

5. On April 8, 2014, the State Hearing Review Team (SHRT) found Claimant was not disabled and that he retained the capacity to perform unskilled work. (Dept Ex. B, pp 1-2).
6. Claimant was appealing the denial of Social Security benefits at the time of the hearing.
7. Claimant is a 57 year old man born on [REDACTED].
8. Claimant is 5'8" tall and weighs 160 lbs.
9. Claimant last used drugs in 2010. Claimant drinks socially and smokes a pack of cigarettes a day.
10. Claimant has a driver's license and is able to drive.
11. Claimant has a high school equivalent education.
12. Claimant last worked in 2006 as a grounds keeper.
13. Claimant alleges disability on the basis of depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety, degenerative disc disease, schizophrenia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and a seizure.

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 (RFT).

In order to receive MA benefits based upon disability or blindness, claimant must be disabled or blind as defined in Title XVI of the Social Security Act (20 CFR 416.901). DHS, being authorized to make such disability determinations, utilizes the SSI definition of disability when making medical decisions on MA applications. MA-P (disability), also is known as Medicaid, which is a program designated to help public assistance claimants pay their medical expenses. Michigan administers the federal Medicaid program. In assessing eligibility, Michigan utilizes the federal regulations.

Relevant federal guidelines provide in pertinent part:

"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.

The federal regulations require that several considerations be analyzed in sequential order:

. . . 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 regulations require that if disability can be ruled out at any step, analysis of the next step is not required. These steps are:

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). If no, the analysis continues to Step 2.
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 416.909(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 that meets the duration requirement? If no, the analysis continues to Step 4. If yes, MA is approved. 20 CFR 416.920(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. Sections 200.00-204.00(f)?
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? This step considers the residual functional capacity, age, education, and past work experience to see if the client can do other work. If yes, the analysis ends and

the client is ineligible for MA. If no, MA is approved. 20 CFR 416.920(g).

At application Claimant has the burden of proof pursuant to:

. . . You must provide medical evidence showing that you have an impairment(s) and how severe it is during the time you say that you are disabled. 20 CFR 416.912(c).

Federal regulations are very specific regarding the type of medical evidence required by claimant to establish statutory disability. The regulations essentially require laboratory or clinical medical reports that corroborate claimant's claims or claimant's physicians' statements regarding disability. These regulations state in part:

Medical reports should include --

- (1) Medical history.
- (2) Clinical findings (such as the results of physical or mental status examinations);
- (3) Laboratory findings (such as ultrasounds, X-rays);
- (4) Diagnosis (statement of disease or injury based on its signs and symptoms). 20 CFR 416.913(b).

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 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).

Information from other sources may also help us to understand how your impairment(s) affects your ability to work. 20 CFR 416.913(e). You can only be found disabled if you are unable 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. See 20 CFR 416.905. Your impairment must result from anatomical, physiological, or psychological abnormalities which are demonstrable by medically acceptable clinical and laboratory diagnostic techniques. 20 CFR 416.927(a)(1).

Applying the sequential analysis herein, Claimant is not ineligible at the first step as Claimant is not currently working. 20 CFR 416.920(b). The analysis continues.

The second step of the analysis looks at a two-fold assessment of duration and severity. 20 CFR 416.920(c). This second step is a *de minimus* standard.

The medical information indicates that Claimant suffers from depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety, degenerative disc disease, schizophrenia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and a seizure. Ruling any ambiguities in Claimant's favor, this Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) finds that Claimant meets duration and severity. The analysis continues.

The third step of the analysis looks at whether an individual meets or equals one of the Listings of Impairments. 20 CFR 416.920(d). Claimant does not. The analysis continues.

The fourth step of the analysis looks at the ability of the applicant to return to past relevant work. This step examines the physical and mental demands of the work done by Claimant in the past. 20 CFR 416.920(f). In this case, Claimant has a history of working as a grounds keeper.

In this case, it was determined that Claimant retained the capacity to perform unskilled work and Claimant's past work as a grounds keeper is considered unskilled. Moreover, Claimant's treating psychiatrist since 2008, opined in his evaluation of Claimant in November, 2013, that his medications control his target symptoms and Claimant has been doing quite well since he has been on these medications. Diagnosis: Axis I: Bipolar Disorder; Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder; polysubstance dependence; cocaine dependence; Axis IV; economic problems, problems accessing healthcare; problem related to social environment; problem related to interaction with legal system; Axis V: GAF=70. According to the DSM-IV, 4th Ed., a GAF of 70 indicates some mild symptoms (e.g., depressed mood and mild insomnia) *or* some difficulty in social, occupational, or school functioning (e.g., occasional truancy, or theft within the household), but generally functioning pretty well, has some meaningful interpersonal relationships.

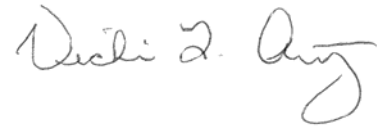
Therefore, based on the medical evidence presented during the hearing, Claimant retains the capacity to perform his past relevant work and no further analysis is required. MA is denied per 20 CFR 416.920(e) due to Claimant's capacity to perform past relevant work.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides the Department erred in determining Claimant is not currently disabled for MA/Retro-MA eligibility purposes.

Accordingly, the Department's decision is **UPHELD**.

It is SO ORDERED.



Vicki L. Armstrong
Administrative Law Judge
for Maura D. Corrigan, Director
Department of Human Services

Date Signed: June 18, 2014

Date Mailed: June 18, 2014

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.

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.

2014-23269/VLA

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

VLA/las

cc:

