

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

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

[REDACTED]

Reg. No.: 15-004350  
Issue No.: 4009  
Case No.: [REDACTED]  
Hearing Date: May 12, 2015  
County: Wayne-District 35

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE:** Vicki 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 May 12, 2015, from Lansing, Michigan. Participants on behalf of Claimant included her mother, [REDACTED]. Participants on behalf of the Department of Health and Human Services (Department) included Hearing Facilitator [REDACTED].

**ISSUE**

Whether the Department properly determined that Claimant was not disabled for purposes of the State Disability Assistance (SDA) 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. On September 5, 2014, Claimant filed an application for SDA benefits alleging disability.
2. On December 23, 2014, the Medical Review Team (MRT) denied Claimant's application for SDA.
3. On January 5, 2015, the Department sent Claimant notice that her application for SDA had been denied.
4. On March 24, 2015, Claimant filed a request for a hearing to contest the department's negative action.
5. Claimant was appealing the denial of Social Security disability benefits at the time of the hearing.
6. Claimant is a 26 year old woman whose birthday is [REDACTED]. Claimant is 5'1" tall and weighs 150 lbs.

7. Claimant has a driver's license and is able to drive when she is not dizzy.
8. Claimant has a high school education but has problems reading due to the dizziness.
9. Claimant is not currently working. Claimant last worked in March, 2013.
10. Claimant alleges disability on the basis of fibromyalgia, herniated lumbar discs, lumbar radiculopathy, chronic pain syndrome, anxiety, depression, and panic attacks.
11. Claimant's impairments have lasted, or are expected to last, continuously for a period of twelve months or longer.
12. Claimant's complaints and allegations concerning her impairments and limitations, when considered in light of all objective medical evidence, as well as the record as a whole, reflect an individual who is so impaired as to be incapable of engaging in any substantial gainful activity on a regular and continuing basis.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

Department policies are contained in the Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), Department of Health and Human Services Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM), and Department of Human Services Reference Tables Manual (RFT).

The State Disability Assistance (SDA) program which provides financial assistance for disabled persons is established by 2004 PA 344. The Department of Human Services (DHS or department) administers the SDA program pursuant to MCL 400.10, *et seq.*, and Mich Admin Code, Rules 400.3151-400.3180. Department policies are found in the Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), the Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) and the Reference Tables Manual (RFT).

Current legislative amendments to the Act delineate eligibility criteria as implemented by department policy set forth in program manuals. 2004 PA 344, Sec. 604, establishes the State Disability Assistance program. It reads in part:

Sec. 604 (1) The department shall operate a state disability assistance program. Except as provided in subsection (3), persons eligible for this program shall include needy citizens of the United States or aliens exempt from the Supplemental Security Income citizenship requirement who are at least 18 years of age or emancipated minors meeting one or more of the following requirements:

(b) A person with a physical or mental impairment which meets federal SSI disability standards, except that the minimum duration of the disability shall be 90 days.

Substance abuse alone is not defined as a basis for eligibility.

Specifically, this Act provides minimal cash assistance to individuals with some type of severe, temporary disability which prevents him or her from engaging in substantial gainful work activity for at least ninety (90) days.

"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. [SDA = 90 day duration].

[As Judge] We are responsible for making the determination or decision about whether you meet the statutory definition of disability. In so doing, we review all of the medical findings and other evidence that support a medical source's statement that you are disabled. 20 CFR 416.927(e).

On [REDACTED], Claimant underwent an independent medical examination on behalf of the Department. Claimant has had chronic back and neck pain since 2001. She was involved in a motor vehicle accident as a passenger. She stated she had a head injury, lacerated liver, six broken ribs, bruised lung with pulmonary injuries, herniated and bulging discs. She has a limp on the left side and slightly decreased range of motion.

Claimant's treating physician completed a Medical Examination Report on behalf of the Department on [REDACTED]. The physician noted Claimant's condition is deteriorating. She is limited to occasionally lifting less than 10 pounds and standing and/or walking less than 2 hours in an 8-hour day. She is able to use her hands/arms to push and pull, but unable to use her feet or legs to operate foot/leg controls. She also has problems with sustained concentration due to her constant pain.

On [REDACTED], Claimant's treating orthopedist completed a Medical Examination Report on behalf of the Department. Claimant is diagnosed with left tibia/fibula fracture and limb pain. Her condition is stable. Her physical limitations are expected to last more than 90 days and include lifting less than 10 pounds frequently and 10 pounds occasionally during an 8-hour day. She can sit less than 6 hours and is only able to stand or walk for less than 2 hours in an 8-hour workday. She is restricted from repetitive pushing or pulling over 10 pounds. She also cannot use her legs repetitively due to constant pain, weakness, stiffness and limited range of motion. The orthopedist opined Claimant is unable to meet her own needs in the home and requires assistance with cleaning, housework, grocery shopping, washing dishes and cooking.

The credible testimony and medical records submitted at hearing verify Claimant was legally disabled for ninety (90) days. Moreover, Claimant's orthopedist opined that Claimant was disabled for longer than 90 days and was unable to meet her own needs

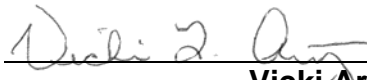
in the home. As such, the Department's denial of SDA pursuant to Claimant's September 5, 2014, SDA application cannot be upheld.

### **DECISION AND ORDER**

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides that the Department erred in determining that Claimant was not disabled by SDA eligibility standards.

Accordingly, the Department's decision is **REVERSED**, and this case is returned to the local office to determine whether Claimant met all the other financial and non-financial eligibility factors necessary to qualify for SDA.

**It is SO ORDERED.**

  
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**Vicki Armstrong**  
Administrative Law Judge  
for Nick Lyon, Director  
Department of Health and Human  
Services

Date Signed: **5/26/2015**

Date Mailed: **5/26/2015**

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**NOTICE OF APPEAL:** A party may appeal this Hearing Decision in the circuit court in the county in which he/she resides, or the circuit court in Ingham County, within 30 days of the receipt date.

A party may request a rehearing or reconsideration of this Hearing Decision from the Michigan Administrative Hearing System (MAHS) within 30 days of the mailing date of this Hearing Decision, or MAHS may order a rehearing or reconsideration on its own motion.

MAHS may grant a party's Request for Rehearing or Reconsideration 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 party requesting a rehearing or reconsideration 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 this Hearing Decision is mailed.

A written request may be faxed or mailed to MAHS. If submitted by fax, 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 48909-8139

cc:

