

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

IN THE MATTER OF:

[REDACTED]

Reg. No.: 15-007888
Issue No.: 4009
Case No.: [REDACTED]
Hearing Date: July 22, 2015
County: BARRY

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Susanne E. Harris

HEARING DECISION

Following the 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 July 22, 2015, from Lansing, Michigan. Participants on behalf of the Claimant included the Claimant, [REDACTED] and his wife, [REDACTED]. Participants on behalf of the Department of Health and Human Services (Department) included Assistance Payments Supervisor, [REDACTED] and act Eligibility Specialist [REDACTED].

ISSUE

Whether the Department properly determined that the Claimant was not disabled for purposes of the State Disability Assistance (SDA) benefit 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 August 5, 2014, the Claimant applied for SDA.
2. On April 6, 2015, the Medical Review Team denied the Claimant's request.
3. On May 14, 2015, the Claimant submitted to the Department a request for hearing.
4. The Claimant is [REDACTED] years old.
5. The Claimant completed education through high school.
6. The Claimant has employment experience and last worked as a recruiter at a temporary company in 2013. Previous to that, the Claimant worked manufacturing jobs.

7. The Claimant's limitations have lasted for 12 months or more.
8. The Claimant suffers from ANCA-GPA/Wegener's granulomatosis with polyangiitis. As a result of this condition the Claimant also has severe shortness of breath, periorbital swelling of the left eye as well as hoarseness and dysphagia. The Claimant has no knee cap on his left knee, arthritis and cracked L1 and L2. The Claimant also suffers from mild anxiety and depression. The Claimant's weight has fluctuated in the last year.
9. The Claimant has significant limitations on physical activities involving standing, walking, bending, lifting, and squatting, mostly due to severe shortness of breath. The Claimant cannot look down or his airway becomes constricted.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

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

The Medical Assistance (MA) program is established by Title XIX of the Social Security Act, 42 USC 1396-1396w-5; 42 USC 1315; the Affordable Care Act of 2010, the collective term for the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Pub. L. No. 111-148, as amended by the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-152; and 42 CFR 430.10-.25. The Department (formerly known as the Family Independence Agency) administers the MA program pursuant to 42 CFR 435, MCL 400.10, and MCL 400.105-.112k.

The State Disability Assistance (SDA) program, which provides financial assistance for disabled persons, was established by 2004 PA 344. The Department administers the SDA program pursuant to 42 CFR 435, MCL 400.10 *et seq.* and Mich Admin Code, Rules 400.3151 – 400.3180. A person is considered disabled for SDA purposes if the person has a physical or mental impairment which meets federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability standards for at least ninety days. Receipt of SSI benefits based on disability or blindness, or the receipt of MA benefits based on disability or blindness, automatically qualifies an individual as disabled for purposes of the SDA program.

The Department conforms to State statute in administering the SDA program.

2000 PA 294, Sec. 604, of the statute states:

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 exempted from the supplemental security income citizenship requirement

who are at least 18 years of age or emancipated minors meeting 1 or more of the following requirements:

- (a) A recipient of supplemental security income, social security, or medical assistance due to disability or 65 years of age or older.
- (b) A person with a physical or mental impairment which meets federal supplemental security income 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.

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).

In this case, the Claimant testified that he has lost some of his focus and sharpness. The Claimant tries not to drive because he has difficulty seeing out of his left eye. The Claimant testifies that he does nothing that takes a lot of wind. Indeed, the testimony of the Department was that the Claimant was denied disability by the MRT because he had no official diagnosis. The Claimant was recently diagnosed by physicians at the University of Michigan and only then after five or six biopsies, in attempt to determine what was causing his throat condition. The objective medical evidence in the record contained a DHS-49, Medical Examination Report from the claimant's treating physician and was completed prior to the Claimant actually receiving his diagnosis from University of Michigan. The Claimant can stand or walk less than two hours in an eight-hour work day and is not limited by his extremities. The Claimant's treating physician indicates that the Claimant is not to engage in any lifting or prolonged exertion due to his shortness of breath. The Claimant's throat is so swollen that, during several of the biopsies, there were difficulties intubating him.

The Claimant's rheumatologist at University of Michigan reports that the Claimant was treated for epiglottic and supraglottic swelling and inflammation as well as left peri-orbital and sinus mucosal swelling and inflammation and that he had biopsies showing lymphocyte infiltration of those organs. The Rheumatologist indicates that this inflammatory process has had a marked impact on the Claimant's functioning. The Claimant has difficulty breathing with marked swelling of his supraglottis and compromise of his airway. The Claimant's airway is tenuous and he has had some closure with change of position. The Claimant cannot sit or lie in certain positions. The Claimant has difficulty swallowing.

In this case, this Administrative Law Judge finds that the Claimant may be considered presently disabled at the third step. The Claimant appears to meet listing 14.03 or its equivalent. This Administrative Law Judge will not continue through the remaining steps of the assessment. The Claimant's testimony and the medical documentation support the finding that the Claimant meets the requirements of a listing. Therefore, the Claimant is found to be disabled.

The Department's Bridges Eligibility Manual contains the following policy statements and instructions for caseworkers regarding the State Disability Assistance program: to receive State Disability Assistance, a person must be disabled, caring for a disabled person or age 65 or older. BEM, Item 261, p. 1. Because the Claimant meets the definition of disabled under the MA-P program and because the evidence of record establishes that the Claimant is unable to work for a period exceeding 90 days, the Claimant also meets the disability criteria for State Disability Assistance benefits.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Administrative Law Judge, based upon the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, decides that the Claimant is medically disabled as of August, 2014.

Accordingly, the Department's decision is hereby REVERSED and the Department is ORDERED to initiate a review of the application dated August 5, 2014, if not done previously, to determine the Claimant's non-medical eligibility. The Department shall inform the Claimant of the determination in writing. A review of this case shall be set for August, 2016.



Susanne E. Harris
Administrative Law Judge
for Nick Lyon, Director
Department of Health and Human Services

Date Signed: **7/27/2015**

Date Mailed: **7/27/2015**

SEH/sw

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:

