



GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS  
MICHIGAN OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS AND RULES

ORLENE HAWKS  
DIRECTOR

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██████████████████████, MI ██████████

Date Mailed: July 8, 2020  
MOAHR Docket No.: 20-003034  
Agency No.: ██████████  
Petitioner: █████ █████

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE:** Aaron McClintic

**HEARING DECISION**

Following Petitioner'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. After due notice, a telephone hearing was held on June 11, 2020, from Lansing, Michigan. The Petitioner was represented by herself. Joanne Johnson appears and testified for the Petitioner. The Department of Health and Human Services (Department) was represented by Dawn Elford, FIM. Department Exhibit 1, pp. 1-143 was received and admitted.

**ISSUE**

Whether the Department properly determined that Petitioner 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. Petitioner applied for SDA on ██████████ 2019.
2. The Medical Review Team denied the application on February 26, 2020.
3. Petitioner filed a request for hearing on May 4, 2020, regarding the SDA denial.
4. A telephone hearing was held on June 11, 2020.
5. Petitioner is █████" tall and weighs █████ pounds.
6. Petitioner is █████ years old.

7. Petitioner's impairments have been medically diagnosed as vision problems, back pain, rheumatoid arthritis, Asperger's, PTSD, anxiety and depression.
8. Petitioner has the following symptoms: pain, fatigue, crying spells, social isolation, panic attacks, memory and concentration problems, night terrors.
9. Petitioner completed high school and some college.
10. Petitioner is able to read, write, and perform basic math skills.
11. Petitioner is not working. Petitioner last worked in 2016 as a childcare worker. Petitioner previously worked as a retail clerk.
12. Petitioner testified that she cannot perform some household chores.
13. Petitioner testified to the following physical limitations:
  - i. Sitting: 120 minutes
  - ii. Standing: 5-10 minutes
  - iii. Walking: 1 block
  - iv. Bend/stoop: some difficulty
  - v. Lifting: 10 lbs.
  - vi. Grip/grasp: some difficulty
14. Petitioner takes the following prescribed medications:
  - a. sertraline
  - b. buspirone
  - c. trazodone
15. In a psychological examination from April 2020, Petitioner's prognosis was found to be fair and she was found capable of managing her own affairs. (Ex. 1, pp. 47-50)
16. An X-ray report of Petitioner's back from November 14, 2019, showed the following under impression: "1. Minimal discogenic and facet degenerative disease in the lower lumbar spine. 2. Erosions versus subchondral resorptive changes at the inferior aspect of both sacroiliac joints, which can be seen in the setting of spondyloarthropathy or hyperparathyroidism." (ex. 1, p.57)
17. Petitioner testified to experiencing pain at a high level of 8 on an everyday basis with some pain always present at a low level of 4-5.

## 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 Health and Human Services Reference Tables Manual (RFT).

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.

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

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), 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. 20 CFR 416.920(b). In this case, the Petitioner is not working, therefore, the Petitioner is not disqualified at this step in the evaluation.

The second step to be determined in considering whether the Petitioner is considered disabled is the severity of the impairment. In order to qualify the impairment must be considered severe which is defined as an impairment which significantly limits an individual's physical, or mental, ability to perform basic work activities. Examples of these include:

1. Physical functions such as walking, standing, sitting, lifting, pushing, 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).

In the third step of the analysis, the trier of fact must determine if the Petitioner's impairment (or combination of impairments) is listed in Appendix 1 of Subpart P of 20 CFR, Part 404. This Administrative Law Judge finds that the Petitioner's medical record does not support a finding that the Petitioner's impairment(s) is a "listed impairment" or equal to a listed impairment. See Appendix 1 of Subpart P of 20 CFR Part 404, Part A. Listings 1.02, 12.06 and 12.04 were considered.

The person claiming a physical, or mental, disability has the burden to establish it through the use of competent medical evidence from qualified medical sources such as clinical/laboratory findings, diagnosis/prescribed treatment, prognosis for a recovery and/or medical assessment of ability to do work-related activities, or ability to reason and to make appropriate mental adjustments, if a mental disability is being alleged. 20 CFR 416.913. A conclusory statement by a physician, or mental health professional, that an individual is disabled, or blind, is not sufficient without supporting medical evidence to establish disability. 20 CFR 416.927.

The fourth step of the analysis to be considered is whether the Petitioner has the ability to perform work previously performed by the Petitioner within the past 15 years. The trier of fact must determine whether the impairment(s) presented prevent the Petitioner from doing past relevant work. In the present case, the Petitioner previously worked as a day care provider and retail clerk this work would be on the light exertional level. The Petitioner's impairments would not prevent Petitioner from doing past relevant work.

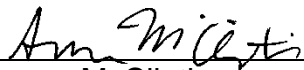
Petitioner testified that she lost her last job because she had personal conflict with the mother of the child, she was providing childcare to, and not due to her medical problems. Petitioner could not adequately explain why she would not be able to return to her previous work. Petitioner's testimony regarding her physical limitations was not supported by substantial medical evidence. Petitioner failed to present substantial medical evidence that she has an ongoing psychological impairment that is significantly limiting.

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 Petitioner not disabled for purposes of the SDA benefit program.

**DECISION AND ORDER**

Accordingly, the Department's determination is AFFIRMED.

AM/nr

  
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Aaron McClintic  
Administrative Law Judge  
for Robert Gordon, Director  
Department of Health and Human Services

**NOTICE OF APPEAL:** A party may appeal this Order in circuit court within 30 days of the receipt date. A copy of the circuit court appeal must be filed with the Michigan Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules (MOAHR).

A party may request a rehearing or reconsideration of this Order if the request is received by MOAHR within 30 days of the date the Order was issued. The party requesting a rehearing or reconsideration must provide the specific reasons for the request. MOAHR will not review any response to a request for rehearing/reconsideration.

A written request may be mailed or faxed to MOAHR. If submitted by fax, the written request must be faxed to (517) 763-0155; Attention: MOAHR Rehearing/Reconsideration Request.

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

Michigan Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules  
Reconsideration/Rehearing Request  
P.O. Box 30639  
Lansing, Michigan 48909-8139

**DHHS**

Joleen Peck  
701 S. Elmwood Suite 19  
Traverse City, MI  
49684

Grand Traverse County DHHS- via  
electronic mail

BSC1- via electronic mail

L. Brewer-Walraven- via electronic mail

**Petitioner**

[REDACTED]  
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