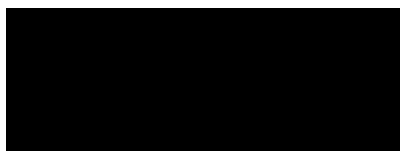


Jan 29, 2016

Office of Appeal Hearings
Dept. of Children and Families

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
OFFICE OF APPEAL HEARINGS



APPEAL NO. 15F-07509

PETITIONER,

Vs.



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
CIRCUIT: 13 Hillsborough
UNIT: 883DT


RESPONDENT.

_____ /

FINAL ORDER

The undersigned convened an administrative hearing by phone in the above-referenced matter on November 17, 2015 at 10:29 a.m. One continuance was granted for the respondent.

APPEARANCES

For Petitioner:  pro se

For Respondent: Christine McKee, Economic Self Sufficiency Specialist II

STATEMENT OF ISSUE

At issue is whether respondent's action in denying petitioner's application for SSI-Related Medicaid benefits is correct. The burden of proof is assigned to the petitioner by the preponderance of the evidence.

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

Petitioner was present and testified. Petitioner submitted one exhibit, which was accepted into evidence and marked as Petitioner's Exhibit "1". Respondent was

represented by Christine McKee with the Department of Children and Families (hereafter "DCF", "Respondent" or "Agency"). Respondent submitted four exhibits, which were accepted into evidence and marked as Respondent's Exhibits "1" through "4".

On November 4, 2015, the respondent filed a Motion for Dismissal requesting petitioner's appeal be dismissed as she had requested a judicial review of the Final Order for appeal 15F-00051, which addressed the respondent's action to deny petitioner's application for SSI-Related Medicaid benefits effective July 2014 and ongoing. The second District Court of Appeals dismissed petitioner's appeal of the Final Order for 15F-00051 as untimely. The undersigned denied the respondent's Motion for Dismissal as petitioner does not seek approval of SSI-Related Medicaid benefits for the time period addressed in 15F-00051.

The undersigned left the record open until November 30, 2015 to allow the respondent and the petitioner to provide additional documentation. On November 18, 2015, the petitioner submitted additional documentation that was marked and entered into evidence as Petitioner's Exhibit "2". On November 19, 2015, the respondent submitted additional documentation that was marked and entered into evidence as Respondent's Exhibits "5" through "11". On December 4, 2015, the petitioner contacted the undersigned requesting an extension of time for her to provide additional documentation. The undersigned granted the extension and the record was left opened until December 6, 2015. On December 8, 2015, the petitioner submitted additional documentation that was marked and entered into evidence as Petitioner's Exhibit "3". The record closed on December 8, 2015.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. On January 30, 2014, the petitioner applied for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits from the Social Security Administration (SSA). On April 23, 2014, SSA denied petitioner's SSI application using the code N32. N32 means "Non-pay-Capacity for substantial gainful activity – other work, no visual impairment". Petitioner is currently appealing the denial of her SSI application and has requested a hearing before an Administrative Law Judge.
2. Respondent utilized the State of Florida SSA State On-Line Query Screens (Respondent's Exhibit 3) to verify when petitioner's SSI application was denied by SSA. The Query screens verified petitioner's SSI application was denied in April 2014 and her hearing request was in October 2014.
3. On August 24, 2015, petitioner submitted an application for Food Assistance (FA) and Medicaid benefits. FA benefits are not an issue. The application listed petitioner as claiming to be disabled; and having prescription co-pays as an ongoing medical expense. However, the application did not report petitioner had a new or worse medical condition.
4. On August 26, 2015, the respondent mailed petitioner a Notice of Case Action indicating her Medicaid application dated August 24, 2015 was denied as, "You or a member(s) of your household do not meet the disability requirement" and "No household members are eligible for this program".
5. Respondent determined petitioner is not eligible for Family-Related Medicaid benefits as she has no children under the age of eighteen living with her and is not

pregnant; and is not eligible for SSI-Related Medicaid benefits as she is under the age of 65 and has not been determined disabled by SSA.

6. Petitioner argued she needs Medicaid benefits for her medical conditions. She asserted she has a new and worsening condition that has been reported to SSA.

7. Respondent offered to complete an interview with petitioner and then submit the necessary documentation and medical records to the Department of Health Division of Disability Determination (DDD) to determine if petitioner is disabled. Petitioner declined the respondent's offer to complete the interview.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

8. The Department of Children and Families, Office of Appeal Hearings has jurisdiction over the subject matter of this proceeding and the parties, pursuant to Fla. Stat § 409.285. This order is the final administrative decision of the Department of Children and Families under § 409.285, Fla. Stat.

9. This proceeding is a de novo proceeding pursuant to Florida Administrative Code R. 65-2.056.

10. The Fla. Admin. Code R. 65A-1.705(7)(c) Family-Related Medicaid General Eligibility Criteria, in part states:

If assistance is requested for the parent of a deprived child, the parent and any deprived children who have no income must be included in the SFU. Any deprived siblings who have income, or any other related fully deprived children, are optional members of the SFU. If the parent is married and the spouse lives in the home, income must be deemed from the spouse to the parent. For the parent to be eligible, there must be at least one child under age 18, with or without income, in the SFU, or who would be in the SFU if not receiving SSI...

11. According to the above authority, to be eligible for Family-Related Medicaid

benefits, petitioner must have a minor child under age 18 living in the household with her or she must be pregnant. Since petitioner does not have a minor child under age 18 living in the household and since she is not pregnant, she does not meet the technical requirement to be eligible for Family-Related Medicaid benefits.

12. Fla. Admin. Code R. 65A-1.710 sets forth the rules of eligibility for SSI-Related Medicaid Coverage Groups. The MEDS-AD Demonstration Waiver is a coverage group for aged and disabled individuals (or couples), as provided in 42 U.S.C. § 1396a(m).

For an individual less than 65 years of age to receive benefits, he or she must meet the disability criteria of Title XVI of the Social Security Act appearing in 20 C.F.R. § 416.905 and states, in part:

(a) The law defines disability 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. To meet this definition, you must have a severe impairment(s) that makes you unable to do your past relevant work (see § 416.960(b)) or any other substantial gainful work that exists in the national economy.

13. Pursuant to the above authority, to be eligible for SSI-Related Medicaid, petitioner must be determined to be disabled as she is under the age of 65.

14. Federal Regulation at 42 C.F.R. § 435.541 provides standards for state disability determinations and states, in part:

(a) Determinations made by SSA. The following rules and those under paragraph (b) of this section apply where an individual has applied for Medicaid on the basis of disability.

....

(2) The agency may not make an independent determination of disability if SSA has made a disability determination within the time limits set forth in §435.912 on the same issues presented in the Medicaid application. A determination of eligibility for SSI payments based on disability that is

made by SSA automatically confers Medicaid eligibility, as provided for under §435.909.

(b) Effect of SSA determinations. (1) Except in the circumstances specified in paragraph (c)(3) of this section—

(i) An SSA disability determination is binding on an agency until the determination is changed by SSA.

(ii) If the SSA determination is changed, the new determination is also binding on the agency.

(2) The agency must refer to SSA all applicants who allege new information or evidence affecting previous SSA determinations of ineligibility based upon disability for reconsideration or reopening of the determination, except in cases specified in paragraph (c)(4) of this section.

(c) Determinations made by the Medicaid agency. The agency must make a determination of disability in accordance with the requirements of this section if any of the following circumstances exist:

(1) The individual applies for Medicaid as a non-cash beneficiary and has not applied to SSA for SSI cash benefits, whether or not a State has a section 1634 agreement with SSA; or an individual applies for Medicaid and has applied to SSA for SSI benefits and is found ineligible for SSI for a reason other than disability.

(2) The individual applies both to SSA for SSI and to the State Medicaid agency for Medicaid, the State agency has a section 1634 agreement with SSA, and SSA has not made an SSI disability determination within 90 days from the date of the individual's application for Medicaid.

(3) The individual applies to SSA for SSI and to the State Medicaid agency for Medicaid, the State does not have a section 1634 agreement with SSA, and either the State uses more restrictive criteria than SSI for determining Medicaid eligibility under its section 1902(f) option or, in the case of a State that uses SSI criteria, SSA has not made an SSI disability determination in time for the State to comply with the Medicaid time limit for making a prompt determination on an individual's application for Medicaid.

(4) The individual applies for Medicaid as a non-cash beneficiary, whether or not the State has a section 1634 agreement with SSA, and—

(i) Alleges a disabling condition different from, or in addition to, that considered by SSA in making its determination; or

(ii) Alleges more than 12 months after the most recent SSA determination denying disability that his or her condition has changed or deteriorated since that SSA determination and alleges a new period of disability which meets the durational requirements of the Act, and has not applied to SSA for a determination with respect to these allegations.

(iii) Alleges less than 12 months after the most recent SSA determination denying disability that his or her condition has changed or deteriorated since that SSA determination, alleges a new period of disability which meets the durational requirements of the Act, and—

(A) Has applied to SSA for reconsideration or reopening of its disability decision and SSA refused to consider the new allegations ; and/or

(B) He or she no longer meets the nondisability requirements for SSI but may meet the State's nondisability requirements for Medicaid eligibility.

15. Petitioner was denied SSI benefits on April 23, 2014 pursuant to code N32. On August 25, 2015, the petitioner applied for Medicaid benefits with the respondent. Respondent offered to complete an interview with petitioner as she asserted a new or worsening condition; however, the petitioner refused the respondent's offer to complete an interview. Since petitioner refused to complete an interview, the respondent was unable to submit the required documentation and medical records to DDD to determine if petitioner is disabled.

16. Respondent was correct to deny petitioner's application for Medicaid benefits as she does not meet the technical requirements to receive either Family-Related or SSI-Related Medicaid benefits.

17. In careful review of the cited authorities and evidence, the undersigned concludes the petitioner has not met her burden of proof to indicate the respondent incorrectly denied her August 24, 2015 application for SSI-Related Medicaid benefits.

18. Petitioner is encouraged to continue appealing her Supplemental Security Income denial with the Social Security Administration, so she can derive eligibility for Medicaid benefits through an approval of her Supplemental Security Income application.

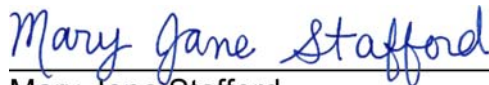
DECISION

Based upon the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the appeal is DENIED.


NOTICE OF RIGHT TO APPEAL

This decision is final and binding on the part of the Department. If the petitioner disagrees with this decision, the petitioner may seek a judicial review. To begin the judicial review, the petitioner must file one copy of a "Notice of Appeal" with the Agency Clerk, Office of Legal Services, Bldg. 2, Rm. 204, 1317 Winewood Blvd., Tallahassee, FL 32399-0700. The petitioner must also file another copy of the "Notice of Appeal" with the appropriate District Court of Appeal. The Notices must be filed within thirty (30) days of the date stamped on the first page of the final order. The petitioner must either pay the court fees required by law or seek an order of indigency to waive those fees. The petitioner is responsible for any financial obligations incurred as the Department has no funds to assist in this review.

DONE and ORDERED this 29 day of January, 2016,
in Tallahassee, Florida.



Mary Jane Stafford
Hearing Officer
Building 5, Room 255
1317 Winewood Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0700
Office: 850-488-1429
Fax: 850-487-0662
Email: Appeal.Hearings@myflfamilies.com

Copies Furnished To:  Petitioner
Office of Economic Self Sufficiency
Eugeme Rehak, Esq.