

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
INDIANA, FORT WAYNE DIVISION

Amanda Rhodes v. Commissioner of Social Security

Rhodes · No. 1:24-cv-00401-ALT · Decided January 15, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana grants Amanda Rhodes’s motion for attorney fees under the Equal Access to Justice Act following remand of her Social Security benefits appeal. The court awards \$8,582.16 and explains that the award belongs to Rhodes, subject to offset for qualifying federal debts, with payment potentially directed to her counsel if no offset applies.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana, Fort Wayne Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Andrew L. Teel
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana, Fort Wayne Division
DECIDED	January 15, 2026
DOCKET	1:24-cv-00401-ALT
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff moved for attorney fees under the Equal Access to Justice Act after the court remanded her appeal from the denial of Disability Insurance Benefits and Supplemental Security Income to the Social Security Administration. The Commissioner did not oppose the requested award.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown
PARTIES	Amanda Rhodes v. Commissioner of Social Security

TOPICS

- attorney fees
- judicial review of agency action
- administrative law
- remedies
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

- Social Security
- administrative law
- attorney fees
- civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Plaintiff was entitled to an award of \$8,582.16 in attorney fees and expenses under the Equal Access to Justice Act.
2. Whether the EAJA award belongs to Plaintiff and may be offset against any pre-existing debt owed by Plaintiff to the United States, with payment to counsel permissible if no offset applies and Plaintiff's assignment is honored.

HOLDINGS

1. Plaintiff's motion for attorney fees under the Equal Access to Justice Act was granted, and Plaintiff was awarded \$8,582.16 for attorney fees and expenses.
2. EAJA fees are payable to Plaintiff, not directly to Plaintiff's attorney, and may be offset against any pre-existing debt Plaintiff owes the United States. If no qualifying debt exists, the Commissioner may direct payment to Salus Law, LLC under Plaintiff's EAJA assignment.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"Therefore, Plaintiff's motion for attorney fees pursuant to the of EAJA (ECF 22) is GRANTED." (Opinion and Order)

"Any fees paid belong to Plaintiff Amanda Rhodes and not Plaintiff's attorney and can be offset to satisfy any pre-existing debt that the litigant owes the United States." (Opinion and Order)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Amanda Rhodes sought judicial review of the denial of Disability Insurance Benefits and Supplemental Security Income. The court previously remanded the matter to the Social Security Administration for further proceedings. Her counsel requested \$8,582.16 under the Equal Access to Justice Act, representing 32.8 hours of attorney work and 1.4 hours of paralegal work, and the Commissioner did not oppose the request.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On September 24, 2025, the court remanded Plaintiff's Social Security appeal to the Social Security Administration for further proceedings. Plaintiff then moved for \$8,582.16 in EAJA attorney fees and expenses. The Commissioner responded that she did not oppose the request, and the court granted the motion.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- *Astrue v. Ratliff*, 560 U.S. 586 (2010)

OPINION

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT NORTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA FORT WAYNE
DIVISION AMANDA RHODES,)) Plaintiff,)) v.) Cause No. 1:24-cv-00401-ALT)
COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL SECURITY,)) Defendant.) OPINION AND ORDER On
September 24, 2025, this Court entered an Opinion and Order remanding this appeal of Plaintiff
Amanda Rhodes' denial of Disability Insurance Benefits and Supplemental Security Income to the
Social Security Administration for further proceedings.

(ECF 20). On December 23, 2025, Plaintiff's counsel, Maren M. Bam, filed a motion for attorney
fees pursuant to the Equal Access to Justice Act ("EAJA"), 28 U.S.C. § 2412 (ECF 22), together
with supporting documentation (ECF 23), seeking \$8,582.16 in attorney fees for 32.8 hours of
attorney work and 1.4 hours of paralegal work (Id. at 2).

On January 15, 2026, Defendant filed its response and does not oppose Plaintiff's request. (ECF
26). The EAJA provides: Except as otherwise specifically provided by statute, a court shall award
to a prevailing party other than the United States fees and other expenses... incurred by that party
in any civil action..., including proceedings for judicial review of agency action, brought by or
against the United States in any court having jurisdiction of that action, unless the court finds that
the position of the United States was substantially justified or that special circumstances make an
award unjust.

28 U.S.C. § 2412(d)(1)(A). Here, Defendant the Commissioner of Social Security concedes that an
award of \$8,582.16 is appropriate. (ECF 26). Therefore, Plaintiff's motion for attorney fees
pursuant to the of EAJA (ECF 22) is GRANTED. Plaintiff is awarded \$8,582.16 for attorney fees
and expenses in full satisfaction of any and all claims that may be payable to Plaintiff in this
matter under the Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA), 28 U.S.C. § 2412.

Any fees paid belong to Plaintiff Amanda Rhodes and not Plaintiff's attorney and can be offset to
satisfy any pre-existing debt that the litigant owes the United States. *Astrue v. Ratliff*, 560 U.S.
586 (2010). If Defendant can verify that Plaintiff does not owe a pre-existing debt to the
government subject to the offset, Defendant will direct that the award be made payable to Salus
Law, LLC pursuant to the EAJA assignment duly signed by Plaintiff.

(See ECF 22; ECF 23-3). If payment is mailed, as compared to electronically deposited, it shall be
mailed to counsel's address of record: 723 The Parkway, Richland, WA 99352. SO ORDERED.
Entered this 15th day of January 2026. /s/ Andrew L. Teel Andrew L. Teel United States
Magistrate Judge