

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
ILLINOIS, EASTERN DIVISION

Judith T. v. Frank Bisignano, Commissioner of Social Security

Judith T. v. Frank Bisignano, Commissioner of Social Security · No. 1:23-cv-608 · Decided January 5, 2026

SUMMARY

The U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois reviewed the denial of Judith T.’s application for Supplemental Security Income benefits. The court denied the plaintiff’s motion for summary judgment and granted the Commissioner’s motion, holding that the ALJ’s evaluation of the medical opinions, residual functional capacity, and subjective symptom statements was supported by substantial evidence.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Jeannice W. Appenteng
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division
DECIDED	January 5, 2026
DOCKET	1:23-cv-608
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Judicial review under 42 U.S.C. § 405(g) of the Commissioner's final decision denying plaintiff's application for Supplemental Security Income benefits; the parties filed cross-motions for summary judgment.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviews the Commissioner's decision for substantial evidence and will not reweigh evidence, resolve debatable evidentiary conflicts, determine credibility, or substitute its judgment for the ALJ's determination when substantial evidence supports the decision. The court also requires an adequate explanation permitting meaningful judicial review, but ALJs are subject to only minimal articulation requirements.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished

TOPICS

judicial review of agency action

administrative law

PRACTICE AREAS

Social Security disability

administrative law

federal courts

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the ALJ properly evaluated the persuasiveness of the medical opinions, including the treating physician's restrictive RFC questionnaire and the state-agency reviewers' opinions.
2. Whether the ALJ's residual functional capacity determination was supported by substantial evidence, including the limitations on standing and walking, leg elevation, and the effects of obesity.
3. Whether the ALJ properly evaluated plaintiff's subjective statements concerning the intensity, persistence, and limiting effects of her symptoms.

HOLDINGS

1. The ALJ reasonably found Dr. Dumasia's highly restrictive opinion unpersuasive because it was inconsistent with her treatment notes and the other objective medical evidence, and reasonably found the state-agency reviewers' opinions persuasive while imposing additional restrictions.
2. The ALJ's RFC determination limiting plaintiff to a reduced range of light work, including no more than four hours of standing and walking, was supported by substantial evidence and did not require remand.
3. The ALJ's evaluation of plaintiff's subjective statements was not patently wrong because the ALJ considered the complaints and related evidence and reasonably found them inconsistent with the largely mild-to-moderate objective findings.
4. The Commissioner's final decision was supported by substantial evidence, and plaintiff was not entitled to reversal or remand.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"In reviewing an ALJ's decision, the Court "will not reweigh the evidence, resolve debatable evidentiary conflicts, determine credibility, or substitute [its] judgment for the ALJ's determination so long as substantial evidence supports it." (Discussion § A)

"Substantial evidence is "such relevant evidence as a reasonable mind might accept as adequate to support a conclusion." (Discussion § A)

"As long as an ALJ gives specific reasons supported by the record, [the Court] will not overturn a credibility determination unless it is patently wrong." (Discussion § B.3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff alleged disability based on a hernia, inability to lift more than ten pounds, left-side pain, and anemia. The ALJ found degenerative joint disease of the right ankle and knees and varicose veins with venous insufficiency to be severe impairments, but determined that plaintiff retained the residual functional capacity for a reduced range of light work. The medical record contained generally mild to moderate objective abnormalities, including knee, ankle, and lumbar degenerative changes, while examinations documented some antalgic gait, swelling, pain, and reduced right-ankle function but also generally preserved strength, sensation, and mobility. The ALJ found that plaintiff could perform a significant number of jobs in the national economy.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff protectively applied for SSI on October 21, 2020. The Social Security Administration denied the application initially and on reconsideration; following a March 29, 2022 hearing, the ALJ determined that plaintiff was not disabled. The Appeals Council denied review on November 29, 2022, making the ALJ's decision the Commissioner's final decision. The district court denied plaintiff's motion for summary judgment, granted the Commissioner's motion, and directed entry of judgment for the Commissioner.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Haynes v. Barnhart, 416 F.3d 621, 626 (7th Cir. 2005)
- Whitney v. Astrue, 889 F. Supp. 2d 1086, 1088 (N.D. Ill. 2012)
- Crespo v. Colvin, 824 F.3d 667, 673 (7th Cir. 2016)
- Butler v. Kijakazi, 4 F.4th 498, 501 (7th Cir. 2021)
- Melvin J. v. Kijakazi, No. 20 CV 3284, 2022 WL 2952819, at *2 (N.D. Ill. July 26, 2022)
- Warnell v. O'Malley, 97 F.4th 1050, 1052-54 (7th Cir. 2024)
- Gedatus v. Saul, 994 F.3d 893, 900 (7th Cir. 2021)
- Biestek v. Berryhill, 587 U.S. 97, 103 (2019)
- Morales v. O'Malley, 103 F.4th 469, 471 (7th Cir. 2024)
- Robert J. L. v. O'Malley, No. 20 CV 50444, 2024 WL 809091, at *2 (N.D. Ill. Feb. 27, 2024)
- Cain v. Bisignano, 148 F.4th 490, 496-97 (7th Cir. 2025)
- Pavlicek v. Saul, 994 F.3d 777, 781 (7th Cir. 2021)
- Alejandrina A. v. Kijakazi, No. 20 CV 4089, 2023 WL 2539239, at *12 (N.D. Ill. Mar. 16, 2023)
- Karr v. Saul, 989 F.3d 508, 512 (7th Cir. 2021)
- Thomas S. v. Kijakazi, No. 1:22-CV-270, 2023 WL 2783196, at *5 (N.D. Ind. Apr. 5, 2023)
- Stephanie A. v. Kijakazi, No. 21-CV-775-SPM, 2022 WL 1153464, at *8 (S.D. Ill. Apr. 19, 2022)
- Bridget T. M. v. O'Malley, No. 21 CV 50290, 2024 WL 4347193, at *2 (N.D. Ill. Sept. 30, 2024)
- Bronwen M. v. Kijakazi, No. 22 CV 50153, 2023 WL 6388207, at *2 (N.D. Ill. Sept. 29, 2023)
- Amey v. Astrue, No. 09 CV 2712, 2012 WL 366522, at *13 (N.D. Ill. Feb. 2, 2012)

- *Anders v. Saul*, 860 F. App'x 428, 434 (7th Cir. 2021)
- *Jacob W. v. Bisignano*, No. 22 CV 6520, 2025 WL 1787459, at *6 (N.D. Ill. June 27, 2025)
- *Hernandez v. Astrue*, 277 F. App'x 617, 624 (7th Cir. 2008)
- *Stewart v. Berryhill*, 731 F. App'x 509, 510 (7th Cir. 2018)
- *Salvador H. v. Kijakazi*, No. 22 CV 7254, 2023 WL 5017944, at *5 (N.D. Ill. Aug. 7, 2023)
- *Benito M. v. Kijakazi*, No. 20 CV 5966, 2022 WL 2828741, at *8 (N.D. Ill. July 20, 2022)
- *Grotts v. Kijakazi*, 27 F.4th 1273, 1278-79 (7th Cir. 2022)
- *Murphy v. Colvin*, 759 F.3d 811, 816 (7th Cir. 2014)
- *Gwendolyn B. v. Saul*, No. 20 CV 3244, 2021 WL 1812879, at *8 (N.D. Ill. May 6, 2021)
- *Britt v. Berryhill*, 889 F.3d 422, 426 (7th Cir. 2018)
- *Jeske v. Saul*, 955 F.3d 583, 592 (7th Cir. 2020)
- *Dawson v. Colvin*, No. 11 CV 6671, 2014 WL 1392974, at *10 (N.D. Ill. Apr. 10, 2014)
- *Schreiber v. Colvin*, 519 F. App'x 951, 961 (7th Cir. 2013)
- *Zoch v. Saul*, 981 F.3d 597, 602 (7th Cir. 2020)

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