

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
OHIO, WESTERN DIVISION

Catherine L. v. Frank Bisignano, Commissioner of Social Security

Civil Action No. 3:24-cv-00140-WHR-SKB · No. 3:24-cv-00140-WHR-SKB · Decided November 25, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio approved the parties' joint stipulation for an award of attorney's fees under the Equal Access to Justice Act. The order awarded \$6,300 in attorney's fees and no costs, addressed potential offset for preexisting federal debt, and stated that the case remained terminated.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio, Western Division
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio
DECIDED	November 25, 2025
DOCKET	3:24-cv-00140-WHR-SKB
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The court considered the parties' joint stipulation for an award of attorney's fees and costs under the Equal Access to Justice Act after the underlying Social Security case had been resolved.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown
PARTIES	Catherine L. v. Frank Bisignano, Commissioner of Social Security

TOPICS

- attorney fees
- costs
- civil procedure
- administrative law

PRACTICE AREAS

- Social Security
- administrative law
- attorney's fees

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

- Whether the court should accept the parties' joint stipulation for an Equal Access to Justice Act award of attorney's fees and costs.

2. Whether payment of the EAJA award must be subject to verification of any preexisting debt eligible for offset.

HOLDINGS

1. The court accepted the parties' joint stipulation and ordered the Commissioner to pay Plaintiff \$6,300 in attorney's fees and \$0 in costs.
2. The parties must verify whether Plaintiff owes a preexisting debt subject to offset; if no such debt exists, Defendant must pay the award directly to Plaintiff's counsel pursuant to Plaintiff's EAJA assignment.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The parties submitted a joint stipulation seeking an award under the Equal Access to Justice Act. The stipulated award was \$6,300 in attorney's fees and \$0 in costs. The order also addressed potential offset of the award against any preexisting debt owed by Plaintiff.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The parties jointly moved for approval of an Equal Access to Justice Act fee award. The court accepted the stipulation, ordered payment of \$6,300 in attorney's fees and no costs, directed the parties to verify whether Plaintiff owed a debt subject to offset, and kept the case terminated on the docket.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Astrue v. Ratliff, 130 S. Ct. 2521, 560 U.S. 586 (2010)

OPINION

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO
WESTERN DIVISION Catherine L.,) Plaintiff,)) Civil Action No.: 3:24-cv-00140-WHR-SKB
Vv.)) Judge Rice Frank Bisignano,) Commissioner of Social Security,) Magistrate Judge
Bowman Defendant.)) ORDER This cause coming before the Court on the joint motion of the
parties, due notice having been given, and the Court being fully advised, IT IS THEREFORE
ORDERED THAT: 1.

The Parties' Joint Stipulation for an Award of Attorney's Fees under the Equal Access to Justice Act is accepted and the Commissioner shall pay Plaintiff's attorney fees in the amount of \$6,300.00 and costs in the amount of \$0, for a total award of \$6,300.00; 2. Counsel for the parties shall verify whether or not Plaintiff owes a preexisting debt subject to offset, consistent with Astrue v. Ratliff, 130 S.Ct.

2521, 560 586 (2010) and 31 U.S.C. §§ 3701(b), 3711, 3716. If no such pre-existing debt exists, Defendant shall pay the EAJA award directly to Plaintiff's counsel pursuant to the EAJA assignment signed by Plaintiff; and 3.

The case remains terminated on the docket of this Court. IT IS SO ORDERED. Date: SY -25-AS
Entered: (fo LAH Rue _