

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF
TENNESSEE

Sheila T. v. Frank Bisignano, Commissioner of Social Security
Administration

Sheila T. v. Bisignano, No. 25-cv-02390-TTMP (W.D. Tenn. Jan. 12, 2026) · No. 2:25-cv-02390 · Decided
January 12, 2026

SUMMARY

The court reversed and remanded the Commissioner of Social Security’s decision denying Sheila T.’s application for Title II disability insurance benefits. The court held that the Administrative Law Judge failed to properly consider the claimant’s fibromyalgia under Social Security Ruling 12-2p, including the condition’s waxing and waning symptoms and related pain and fatigue limitations. The court did not reach the claimant’s remaining arguments concerning the residual functional capacity assessment and mental restrictions.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Western District of Tennessee
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Tu M. Pham
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Western District of Tennessee
DECIDED	January 12, 2026
DOCKET	2:25-cv-02390
DISPOSITION	reversed_and_remanded
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Judicial review of final decision of Commissioner of Social Security denying Title II disability benefits
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Substantial evidence; whether the Commissioner used proper legal criteria (42 U.S.C. § 405(g))
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished
PARTIES	Sheila T. v. Frank Bisignano, Commissioner of Social Security Administration

TOPICS

judicial review of agency action

exhaustion of remedies

administrative law

ada / disability

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

social security

disability benefits

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the ALJ erred in failing to consider Plaintiff's fibromyalgia diagnosis in accordance with SSR 12-2p
2. Whether the ALJ's residual functional capacity finding was supported by substantial evidence
3. Whether the ALJ failed to account for Plaintiff's mental restrictions

HOLDINGS

1. The ALJ committed reversible error by failing to take into account the unique features of fibromyalgia in evaluating Plaintiff's claim, running afoul of SSR 12-2p, requiring reversal and remand.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff Sheila T. filed for Title II disability and disability insurance benefits alleging onset date of March 31, 2016, due to physical impairments including asthma, scoliosis, degenerative disc disease, obesity, polyarthralgia, osteoarthritis, and Sjogren's syndrome, as well as mental impairments. The ALJ found severe impairments but determined Plaintiff retained residual functional capacity for light work and could perform past relevant work as a bookkeeper. The ALJ did not list fibromyalgia as a severe impairment, and the court found the ALJ failed to apply SSR 12-2p regarding evaluation of fibromyalgia.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff applied for disability insurance benefits; application denied initially and on reconsideration; ALJ hearing held; ALJ found Plaintiff not disabled; Appeals Council denied review; Plaintiff sought judicial review in district court.

DISPOSITION

reversed_and_remanded

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

Remand for further proceedings consistent with the court's opinion, specifically for the ALJ to properly apply SSR 12-2p in evaluating Plaintiff's fibromyalgia.

CASES CITED

- Cardew v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 896 F.3d 742 (6th Cir. 2018)

- Cole v. Astrue, 661 F.3d 931 (6th Cir. 2011)
- Rollins v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., No. 24-1180, 2025 WL 2710577 (W.D. Tenn. Sept. 23, 2025)
- Kirk v. Sec'y of Health & Human Servs., 667 F.2d 524 (6th Cir. 1981)
- Richardson v. Perales, 402 U.S. 389 (1971)
- Moats v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., Moats v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 42 F.4th 558 (6th Cir. 2022)
- Abbott v. Sullivan, 905 F.2d 918 (6th Cir. 1990)
- Garner v. Heckler, 745 F.2d 383 (6th Cir. 1984)
- Foltz obo R.B.K.F. v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., No. 23-3362, 2023 WL 7391701 (6th Cir. Nov. 8, 2023)
- Barker v. Shalala, 40 F.3d 789 (6th Cir. 1994)
- Smith v. Sec'y of Health & Human Servs., 893 F.2d 106 (6th Cir. 1989)
- Marquitta B. v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec. Admin., No. 23-cv-1276, 2025 WL 959946 (W.D. Tenn. Mar. 31, 2025)
- Ulman v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 693 F.3d 709 (6th Cir. 2012)
- Bass v. McMahon, 499 F.3d 506 (6th Cir. 2007)
- Floyd v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., No. 23-2036, 2024 WL 3103757 (6th Cir. June 24, 2024)
- Walters v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 127 F.3d 525 (6th Cir. 1997)
- Crum v. Sullivan, 921 F.2d 642 (6th Cir. 1990)
- Robbins v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., No. 24-3201, 2024 WL 4603964 (6th Cir. Oct. 29, 2024)
- Oliver v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 415 F. App'x 681 (6th Cir. 2011)
- Dameon W. v. O'Malley, 24-cv-1072, 2025 WL 880255 (W.D. Tenn. Mar. 21, 2025)
- Napier v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 127 F.4th 1000 (6th Cir. 2025)
- Born v. Sec'y of Health & Human Servs., 923 F.2d 1168 (6th Cir. 1990)
- Griffith v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 582 F. App'x 555 (6th Cir. 2014)
- Kalmbach v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 409 F. App'x 852 (6th Cir. 2011)
- Stedman's Medical Dictionary for the Health Professions and Nursing (5th ed. 2005)
- Minor v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 513 F. App'x 417 (6th Cir. 2013)
- Gursky v. Colvin, No. 16-CV-2654-TMP, 2017 WL 6493149 (W.D. Tenn. Dec. 19, 2017)
- Rogers v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 486 F.3d 234 (6th Cir. 2007)
- Partlow v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., No. 2:18-CV-1702, 2019 WL 5257541 (S.D. Ohio Oct. 17, 2019)
- Stankoski v. Astrue, 532 F. App'x 614 (6th Cir. 2013)
- Sarchet v. Chater, 78 F.3d 305 (7th Cir. 1996)
- Torres v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 490 F. App'x 748 (6th Cir. 2012)
- Vance v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 260 Fed. App'x. 801 (6th Cir. 2008)
- Cabrera v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., No. 1:20-CV-01947-JG, 2021 WL 8015645 (N.D. Ohio Dec. 21, 2021)
- Riddle v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., No. 17-10905, 2018 WL 822428 (E.D. Mich. Feb. 12, 2018)
- Storman v. Saul, No. 19-1152-TMP, 2020 WL 3542195 (W.D. Tenn. June 30, 2020)
- Keeton v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 583 F. App'x 515 (6th Cir. 2014)
- Rabbers v. Comm'r Soc. Sec. Admin., 582 F.3d 647 (6th Cir. 2009)

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