

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEVADA

Sherylabigail Elissa Castro Santillan v. Frank J. Bisignano,
Commissioner of Social Security

Castro Santillan v. Bisignano · No. 2:25-cv-02356-MDC · Decided December 30, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the District of Nevada grants Sherylabigail Elissa Castro Santillan’s amended application to proceed in forma pauperis in her Social Security disability appeal. The court screens the complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e), finds that it states a plausible claim challenging the Commissioner’s denial of Disability Insurance Benefits, and directs service of the complaint.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of Nevada
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Maximilian D. Couvillier II
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of Nevada
DECIDED	December 30, 2025
DOCKET	2:25-cv-02356-MDC
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff filed a Social Security appeal challenging the Commissioner's denial of Disability Insurance Benefits and applied to proceed in forma pauperis. After denying her initial IFP application, the court ordered her to submit a long-form application or pay the filing fee. The court granted the amended IFP application, screened the complaint under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e), found a plausible claim, and ordered service.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	For IFP eligibility, the court considered whether the financial affidavit demonstrated that plaintiff was unable to pay filing fees or provide security. For screening under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e), the court applied the plausibility standard: accepting material allegations as true and construing them in the light most favorable to plaintiff, the complaint must contain sufficient factual matter to state a claim that is plausible on its face.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished district court order; nonprecedential

PARTIES

Sherylabigail Elissa Castro Santillan v. Frank J. Bisignano,
Commissioner of Social Security

TOPICS

judicial review of agency action

administrative law

pleadings

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

Social Security

Federal civil procedure

In forma pauperis proceedings

Administrative law

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether plaintiff's long-form financial affidavit demonstrated that she was unable to pay the filing fee or provide security and therefore qualified to proceed in forma pauperis.
2. Whether plaintiff's Social Security complaint stated a plausible claim for judicial review of the Commissioner's denial of Disability Insurance Benefits under 42 U.S.C. § 405(g).

HOLDINGS

1. Plaintiff qualified to proceed in forma pauperis because her long-form application showed that she was unable to pay the filing fee or provide security while providing for the necessities of life.
2. The complaint stated a claim upon which relief could be granted because plaintiff alleged that she was disabled, had applied for Disability Insurance Benefits, had been denied benefits, and challenged the evidentiary support for the Administrative Law Judge's decision.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“To survive a motion to dismiss, a complaint must contain sufficient factual matter, accepted as true, to state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face.” (at 3)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff alleged that she is disabled under the Social Security Act and had applied for Disability Insurance Benefits under Title II. The Commissioner denied her application, and plaintiff alleged that the Administrative Law Judge's decision was not supported by the evidence. In support of her IFP application, plaintiff reported Section 8 benefits, food stamps, rent of \$1,550 per month paid through Section 8, monthly expenses of \$2,196, and financial assistance from her boyfriend for utilities.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff appealed an unfavorable decision of the Commissioner of Social Security to the District of Nevada. The court previously denied plaintiff's initial IFP application because it omitted or inadequately disclosed certain financial information. Plaintiff then filed a long-form IFP application. The court granted that application, accepted the complaint for filing, found that the complaint stated a plausible claim for review under 42 U.S.C. § 405(g), and directed service on the Commissioner.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Escobedo v. Applebees, 787 F.3d 1226, 1235 (9th Cir. 2015)
- Adkins v. E.I. DuPont de Nemours & Co., 335 U.S. 331, 339 (1948)
- United States v. McQuade, 647 F.2d 938, 940 (9th Cir. 1981)
- Marin v. Hahn, 271 Fed. Appx. 578 (9th Cir. 2008)
- Kennedy v. Huibregtse, 831 F.3d 441, 443-44 (7th Cir. 2016)
- Greco v. NYE Cty. Dist. Judge Robert Lane, No. 2:15-cv-001370-MMD-PAL, 2016 WL 7493981, at *3 (D. Nev. Nov. 9, 2016)
- Greco v. Lake, No. 2:15-cv-001370-MMD-PAL, 2016 WL 7493963 (D. Nev. Dec. 30, 2016)
- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)
- Russell v. Landrieu, 621 F.2d 1037, 1039 (9th Cir. 1980)
- Cato v. United States, 70 F.3d 1103, 1106 (9th Cir. 1995)
- Thomas v. Arn, 474 U.S. 140, 142 (1985)
- Martinez v. Yist, 951 F.2d 1153, 1157 (9th Cir. 1991)
- Britt v. Simi Valley United Sch. Dist., 708 F.2d 452, 454 (9th Cir. 1983)

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