

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH
CAROLINA

Kelvin W. v. Commissioner of Social Security Administration

Kelvin W. · No. 0:25-2948-RMG-PJG · Decided April 20, 2026

SUMMARY

This Report and Recommendation addresses Kelvin W.’s appeal from the Commissioner of Social Security’s denial of Social Security benefits. The magistrate judge recommends reversal and remand under sentence four of 42 U.S.C. § 405(g), concluding that the ALJ inadequately explained the residual functional capacity assessment, particularly regarding concentration, persistence, and pace.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of South Carolina
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Paige J. Gossett
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of South Carolina
DECIDED	April 20, 2026
DOCKET	0:25-2948-RMG-PJG
DISPOSITION	reversed_and_remanded
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Report and recommendation on judicial review of the Commissioner of Social Security's denial of the plaintiff's claims for Supplemental Security Income and Disability Insurance Benefits.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviews whether the Commissioner's decision is supported by substantial evidence and whether the correct legal standards were applied. The court may not reweigh conflicting evidence, make credibility determinations, or substitute its judgment for the Commissioner's.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential
PARTIES	Kelvin W. v. Commissioner of Social Security Administration

TOPICS

- judicial review of agency action
- administrative law
- standard of review
- appellate procedure
- disability definition

PRACTICE AREAS

Social Security disability

administrative law

federal appellate and judicial review procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the ALJ's RFC assessment adequately accounted for the plaintiff's moderate limitation in concentration, persistence, or pace.
2. Whether the ALJ sufficiently explained the relationship between the evidence, the RFC limitations, and the vocational expert's testimony.
3. Whether the ALJ's hypothetical to the vocational expert omitted limitations that required remand.

HOLDINGS

1. The ALJ failed to sufficiently explain how the RFC accounted for the plaintiff's accepted moderate limitations in concentration, persistence, or pace, and the internal inconsistencies in the RFC analysis frustrated meaningful judicial review.
2. Reversal and remand under sentence four of 42 U.S.C. § 405(g) was warranted for further consideration of the plaintiff's RFC.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“However, there is no further discussion explaining which limitations, if any, accounted for Plaintiff’s accepted additional limitations in concentration.” (Tr. 27-28)

“The court is constrained to find that the ALJ’s analysis in this matter runs afoul of Mascio.” (Tr. 28)

“The ALJ’s RFC evaluation is internally inconsistent and it lacks sufficient explanation to enable the court to conduct meaningful review.” (Tr. 28)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The plaintiff alleged disability beginning July 2, 2018, based principally on anxiety, depression, right hip dysfunction, and a lumbar-spine disorder. The ALJ found moderate limitations in concentration, persistence, or pace and formulated an RFC for light work with physical, social, pace, and workplace-change restrictions. The ALJ nevertheless found that the plaintiff could not perform past relevant work but could perform jobs such as marker, router, and collator operator.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The Administrative Law Judge denied the plaintiff's claims after applying the five-step sequential evaluation and finding that the plaintiff could perform jobs existing in significant numbers in the national economy. The Appeals Council denied review on February 19, 2025. The plaintiff then sought review under 42 U.S.C. §§ 405(g) and 1383(c)(3), and the magistrate judge recommended reversal and remand under sentence four of 42 U.S.C. § 405(g).

DISPOSITION

reversed_and_remanded

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

Remand for further consideration of the plaintiff's residual functional capacity and the supporting evidence, including clarification of how the accepted limitations in concentration, persistence, or pace and other mental limitations are reflected in the RFC and, if necessary, in the vocational expert hypothetical.

CASES CITED

- Blalock v. Richardson, 483 F.2d 773 (4th Cir. 1973)
- McLain v. Schweiker, 715 F.2d 866, 868-69 (4th Cir. 1983)
- Hall v. Harris, 658 F.2d 260, 264-65 (4th Cir. 1981)
- Wilson v. Califano, 617 F.2d 1050, 1053 (4th Cir. 1980)
- Grant v. Schweiker, 699 F.2d 189, 192 (4th Cir. 1983)
- Craig v. Chater, 76 F.3d 585, 589 (4th Cir. 1996)
- Coffman v. Bowen, 829 F.2d 514, 517 (4th Cir. 1987)
- Brown v. Commissioner of Social Security Administration, 873 F.3d 251, 267 (4th Cir. 2017)
- Myers v. Califano, 611 F.2d 980, 982 (4th Cir. 1980)
- Biestek v. Berryhill, 139 S. Ct. 1148, 1154 (2019)
- Pearson v. Colvin, 810 F.3d 204, 207 (4th Cir. 2015)
- Hancock v. Astrue, 667 F.3d 470, 472 (4th Cir. 2012)
- Mascio v. Colvin, 780 F.3d 632, 636-38 (4th Cir. 2015)
- Cichocki v. Astrue, 729 F.3d 172, 177 (2d Cir. 2013)
- Monroe v. Colvin, 826 F.3d 176, 188-90 (4th Cir. 2016)
- Lewis v. Berryhill, 858 F.3d 858, 869 (4th Cir. 2017)
- Denton v. Astrue, 596 F.3d 419, 425 (7th Cir. 2010)
- Arakas v. Commissioner, 983 F.3d 83, 98 (4th Cir. 2020)
- Hays v. Sullivan, 907 F.2d 1453, 1456 (4th Cir. 1990)
- Boone v. Barnhart, 353 F.3d 203, 211 n.19 (3d Cir. 2003)
- Diamond v. Colonial Life & Accident Insurance Co., 416 F.3d 310 (4th Cir. 2005)
- Thomas v. Arn, 474 U.S. 140 (1985)
- Wright v. Collins, 766 F.2d 841 (4th Cir. 1985)
- United States v. Schronce, 727 F.2d 91 (4th Cir. 1984)

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