

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF  
KENTUCKY, CENTRAL DIVISION AT LEXINGTON

Cassandra May v. Frank Bisignano, Commissioner of Social Security

May · No. 5:25-249-DCR · Decided February 9, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky upheld the Social Security Administration’s denial of Cassandra May’s claims for Disability Insurance Benefits and Supplemental Security Income. The court concluded that the ALJ properly evaluated the medical opinion evidence, May’s subjective symptoms, and her residual functional capacity, and that substantial evidence supported the finding that she was not disabled. May’s motion for judgment was denied, the Commissioner’s motion was granted, and the action was dismissed.

CASE DETAILS

|                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| COURT                 | United States District Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky, Central Division at Lexington                                                                                                                                                                    |
| WRITING FOR THE COURT | Danny C. Reeves                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| JURISDICTION          | United States District Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky, Central Division at Lexington                                                                                                                                                                    |
| DECIDED               | February 9, 2026                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| DOCKET                | 5:25-249-DCR                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| DISPOSITION           | dismissed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| PROCEDURAL POSTURE    | Judicial review of the Commissioner of Social Security's final decision denying applications for Disability Insurance Benefits and Supplemental Security Income.                                                                                                    |
| STANDARD OF REVIEW    | The court reviews whether the ALJ applied the proper legal standards and whether the decision is supported by substantial evidence. The court may not conduct de novo review, resolve evidentiary conflicts, reweigh the evidence, or decide credibility questions. |
| PRECEDENTIAL VALUE    | Unknown; district-court memorandum opinion                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| PARTIES               | Cassandra May v. Frank Bisignano, Commissioner of Social Security                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

TOPICS

judicial review of agency action

administrative law

agency adjudication

disability definition

ada / disability

## PRACTICE AREAS

Social Security disability

administrative law

federal judicial review

## QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the ALJ adequately evaluated the supportability and consistency of Dr. Emily Skaggs's medical opinion and incorporated the total limiting effects of May's impairments into the residual functional capacity assessment.
2. Whether substantial evidence supported the ALJ's evaluation of May's subjective descriptions of her symptoms and functional limitations.
3. Whether the Commissioner's denial of DIB and SSI was supported by substantial evidence and made under the proper legal standards.

## HOLDINGS

1. The ALJ adequately explained the supportability and consistency factors and reasonably declined to adopt Dr. Skaggs's assessment of moderate-to-marked limitations in May's ability to tolerate workplace stress.
2. The ALJ properly applied the two-step framework for evaluating subjective symptoms, and substantial evidence supported the conclusion that May's statements concerning the intensity, persistence, and limiting effects of her symptoms were not entirely consistent with the record.
3. The ALJ applied the proper five-step legal framework, and the Commissioner's denial of benefits was supported by substantial evidence.

## KEY QUOTATIONS

*“While May argues that the ALJ’s explanation was inadequate, Holsclaw was not required to adopt the limitations May preferred or to discuss the evidence in greater detail than necessary.”* (Record No. 6-2 at 27–28)

*“considering the claimant’s age, education, work experience, and residual functional capacity, [May] is capable of making a successful adjustment to other work that exists in significant numbers in the national economy.”* (Record No. 6-2 at 30)

## FACTUAL BACKGROUND

May was 24 years old at the alleged onset of disability and had prior work experience as a cashier, food preparer, customer service agent, and stocker. She alleged disability from seizures, depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. The ALJ found severe impairments involving seizures and mental-health disorders, but determined that May retained the residual functional capacity for work at all exertional levels subject to restrictions concerning hazards, driving, simple instructions, social interaction, and workplace changes. The ALJ

found that May had no past relevant work but could perform other jobs, including office cleaner, laundry folder, router, table worker, and small product inspector.

### PROCEDURAL HISTORY

May applied for DIB and SSI, alleging disability beginning June 1, 2018, based on seizures, depression, and anxiety. After the claims were denied initially and on reconsideration, an ALJ conducted hearings, denied benefits, and found that May could perform other work existing in significant numbers in the national economy. The Appeals Council denied review, making the ALJ's decision the Commissioner's final decision. May sought review under 42 U.S.C. §§ 405(g) and 1383(c)(3), and the district court denied her motion, granted the Commissioner's motion, and dismissed the action.

### DISPOSITION

dismissed

### CASES CITED

- *Cruse v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec.*, 502 F.3d 532, 539 (6th Cir. 2007)
- *Combs v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec.*, 459 F.3d 640, 642 (6th Cir. 2006) (en banc)
- *Jones v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec.*, 336 F.3d 469, 474 (6th Cir. 2003)
- *Mokbel-Aljahmi v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec.*, 732 F. App'x 395, 399 (6th Cir. 2018)
- *Wilson v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec.*, 378 F.3d 541, 548 (6th Cir. 2004)
- *Rogers v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec.*, 486 F.3d 234, 241 (6th Cir. 2007)
- *Ulman v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec.*, 693 F.3d 709, 713–14 (6th Cir. 2012)
- *Richardson v. Perales*, 402 U.S. 389, 401 (1971)
- *Bass v. McMahon*, 499 F.3d 506, 509 (6th Cir. 2007)
- *Elizabeth A. v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec.*, No. 2:22-cv-2313, 2023 WL 5924414, at \*4 (S.D. Ohio Sept. 12, 2023)
- *Eckert v. O'Malley*, No. 22-CV-316, 2024 WL 841765, at \*5 (E.D. Ky. Feb. 28, 2024)
- *Terhune v. Kijakazi*, No. 21-CV-37, 2022 WL 2910002, at \*3 (E.D. Ky. July 22, 2022)