

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
MICHIGAN, SOUTHERN DIVISION

Hawraa A. v. Commissioner of Social Security

Hawraa A. · No. 25-cv-10763 · Decided January 29, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan reviews the denial of Hawraa A.'s application for supplemental security income. The court grants the plaintiff's motion for summary judgment, denies the Commissioner's motion, and remands under sentence four of 42 U.S.C. § 405(g) because the ALJ did not adequately connect the evidence to the assessed residual functional capacity and inaccurately characterized the severity of the plaintiff's spinal conditions.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Elizabeth A. Stafford
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division
DECIDED	January 29, 2026
DOCKET	25-cv-10763
DISPOSITION	reversed_and_remanded
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff sought review under 42 U.S.C. § 405(g) of the Commissioner's denial of supplemental security income. The parties filed cross-motions for summary judgment after consenting to magistrate-judge jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 636(c).
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviews whether the Commissioner's decision is supported by substantial evidence and made in conformity with proper legal standards. The court may not independently weigh the evidence or substitute its judgment for the Commissioner's, but the ALJ must provide an accurate and logical bridge between the evidence and the residual-functional-capacity finding sufficient to permit meaningful judicial review.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished, nonprecedential district-court opinion

PARTIES

Hawraa A. v. Commissioner of Social Security

TOPICS

judicial review of agency action

administrative law

summary judgment

remedies

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

Social Security disability

administrative law

federal civil procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the ALJ's adult-standard RFC analysis adequately explained the connection between the evidence and the functional limitations assessed.
2. Whether the ALJ accurately considered the medical evidence concerning plaintiff's scoliosis, kyphosis, pain, and movement limitations.
3. Whether remand was required under sentence four of 42 U.S.C. § 405(g).

HOLDINGS

1. An ALJ's RFC finding must provide an accurate and logical bridge between the evidence and the functional limitations assessed, with enough explanation to allow meaningful judicial review.
2. Judicial review under 42 U.S.C. § 405(g) is limited to determining whether the Commissioner applied proper legal standards and whether the decision is supported by substantial evidence; the reviewing court may not reweigh the evidence.
3. An ALJ must accurately consider and explain material medical evidence bearing on a claimant's functional limitations, including evidence of progressive kyphosis, scoliosis, pain, and restricted movement.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"The ALJ's RFC analysis offers no explanation tying the evidence to the functional limitations assessed."
(PageID.601)

"The Court cannot discern why the ALJ concluded from this evidence that plaintiff could perform light work or occasional stooping, kneeling, crouching, and crawling—postural maneuvers that involve squatting or bending, which Dr. Mansour stated that plaintiff could not do." (PageID.601)

"Still, an ALJ's decision must 'provide an accurate and logical bridge between the evidence' and the RFC."
(PageID.597-601)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff was diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma at age seven and underwent chemotherapy, radiation, removal of four ribs and part of her right lung, and reconstruction of her right chest wall. She later developed scoliosis and substantial kyphosis, with documented back pain, restricted movement, and increasing spinal curvature; she also

experienced severe depression and PTSD related to her cancer treatment. The ALJ assessed an RFC for light work with postural, reaching, environmental, and social limitations, but the district court found that the ALJ did not adequately connect the medical evidence and plaintiff's testimony to those limitations and inaccurately summarized the severity of her spinal conditions.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff previously received child disability benefits, which were discontinued in 2018. After plaintiff applied for SSI in 2020, an ALJ found her not disabled under the childhood standard; the Appeals Council denied review, and the parties stipulated to remand following plaintiff's first appeal. After a second ALJ hearing in January 2025, the ALJ again found plaintiff not disabled under both childhood and adult standards. The district court granted plaintiff's motion for summary judgment, denied the Commissioner's motion, and remanded under sentence four of 42 U.S.C. § 405(g).

DISPOSITION

reversed_and_remanded

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

The Commissioner's decision was remanded under sentence four of 42 U.S.C. § 405(g) for further consideration of the evidence and clarification of how plaintiff's spinal conditions and other impairments translate into functional limitations under both the childhood and adult disability standards.

CASES CITED

- Gentry v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 741 F.3d 708, 722 (6th Cir. 2014)
- Biestek v. Berryhill, 139 S. Ct. 1148, 1154 (2019)
- Hatmaker v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 965 F. Supp. 2d 917, 930 (E.D. Tenn. 2013)
- Cutlip v. Sec'y of Health & Hum. Servs., 25 F.3d 284, 286 (6th Cir. 1994)
- Mokbel-Aljahmi v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 732 F. App'x 395, 401 (6th Cir. 2018)
- Gross v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 247 F. Supp. 3d 824, 829-30 (E.D. Mich. 2017)
- Tucker v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 775 F. App'x 220, 226 (6th Cir. 2019)
- Cortes v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., No. 18-13347, 2020 WL 2812761, at *10 (E.D. Mich. May 29, 2020)
- Smith-Johnson v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., 579 F. App'x 426, 435 n.9 (6th Cir. 2014)
- Bledsoe v. Barnhart, 165 F. App'x 408, 411 (6th Cir. 2006)
- McCaig ex rel. McCaig v. Comm'r of Soc. Sec., No. 16-11419, 2017 WL 4211047, at *9 (E.D. Mich. Aug. 25, 2017)