

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON

Angella M. K. v. Commissioner Social Security Administration

No. 6:24-cv-02142-AR (D. Or. Feb. 17, 2026) · No. 6:24-cv-02142-AR · Decided February 17, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the District of Oregon affirmed the Commissioner of Social Security’s decision denying Angella M. K.’s application for disability benefits. The court held that the Administrative Law Judge properly evaluated the consultative psychologist’s limitations, the therapist’s opinions, and the plaintiff’s subjective symptom testimony. The court concluded that the residual functional capacity determination was supported by substantial evidence and that the ALJ did not err at step five.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of Oregon
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Jeff Armistead, United States Magistrate Judge
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of Oregon
DECIDED	February 17, 2026
DOCKET	6:24-cv-02142-AR
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff sought judicial review under 42 U.S.C. § 405(g) of the Commissioner's final decision denying Social Security disability benefits.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court must affirm the Commissioner's decision if the Commissioner applied proper legal standards and the findings are supported by substantial evidence in the record. The ALJ's evaluation of subjective symptom testimony required specific, clear, and convincing reasons in the absence of affirmative evidence of malingering.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished
PARTIES	Angella M. K. v. Commissioner Social Security Administration

TOPICS

- judicial review of agency action
- administrative law
- agency adjudication

PRACTICE AREAS

Social Security

administrative law

judicial review of agency action

disability benefits

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the ALJ adequately translated Dr. Scott Alvord's moderate psychological limitations into the RFC and vocational-hypothetical limitations.
2. Whether the ALJ properly found Kimberly Richards's opinions unpersuasive based on their lack of supportability and consistency with the record.
3. Whether the ALJ provided specific, clear, and convincing reasons for discounting Plaintiff's subjective symptom testimony concerning sitting, standing, social interaction, and concentration.
4. Whether the RFC and step-five determination were supported by substantial evidence.

HOLDINGS

1. The ALJ did not err by translating Dr. Alvord's clinical findings into the RFC and vocational-expert hypothetical through limitations such as occasional direct interaction with the public, coworkers, and supervisors and no fast-paced or production work.
2. The ALJ did not err in finding Richards's opinions unpersuasive because they were not well supported by her treatment notes and were inconsistent with the overall record.
3. The ALJ provided specific, clear, and convincing reasons for discounting Plaintiff's testimony that fibromyalgia and arthritis limited her to sitting or standing for approximately 10 to 15 minutes at a time.
4. The ALJ provided specific, clear, and convincing reasons for discounting Plaintiff's testimony concerning social-interaction and concentration limitations.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"The district court must affirm the Commissioner's decision if the Commissioner applied proper legal standards and the findings are supported by substantial evidence in the record." (2)

"But the ALJ is "responsible for translating and incorporating clinical findings" by Dr. Alvord "into a succinct RFC" and when posing questions to the vocational expert." (2)

"Neither mention of dysregulation was related to work, and the ALJ was entitled to conclude that the sparse mention of dysregulation in the treatment notes did not support Richards' opinion as to plaintiff's dysregulation relating to her ability to work." (4)

"Accordingly, the ALJ's analysis provides specific, clear and convincing reasons to discount plaintiff's subjective symptom testimony." (7)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff alleged disabling mental and physical limitations, including difficulties with concentration, social interaction, anxiety, auditory hallucinations, fibromyalgia, and arthritis. A consultative psychologist, Dr. Scott Alvord, assessed moderate limitations, while Plaintiff's therapist, Kimberly Richards, opined that Plaintiff would

be off-task, absent, or unable to perform portions of the workday because of severe psychological symptoms and dysregulation. The ALJ adopted an RFC limiting Plaintiff to occasional direct interaction with the public, coworkers, and supervisors, no fast-paced or production work, and other limitations, but discounted portions of the medical opinions and Plaintiff's testimony based on the treatment record, clinical findings, symptom control with medication, and activities.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The Commissioner denied Plaintiff's application for Social Security disability benefits. Plaintiff sought review in the United States District Court for the District of Oregon, challenging the ALJ's residual-functional-capacity determination, evaluation of therapist Kimberly Richards's opinions, and evaluation of Plaintiff's subjective symptom testimony. The court held that the ALJ applied the proper legal standards and that the decision was supported by substantial evidence, and affirmed.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- Ford v. Saul, 950 F.3d 1141, 1154 (9th Cir. 2020)
- Rounds v. Commissioner Social Security Administration, 807 F.3d 996, 1006 (9th Cir. 2015)
- Tommasetti v. Astrue, 533 F.3d 1035, 1041 (9th Cir. 2008)
- Stubbs-Danielson v. Astrue, 539 F.3d 1169, 1174 (9th Cir. 2008)
- Woods v. Kijakazi, 32 F.4th 785, 792 (9th Cir. 2022)
- Brown-Hunter v. Colvin, 806 F.3d 487, 488-89 (9th Cir. 2015)
- Smartt v. Kijakazi, 53 F.4th 489, 498 (9th Cir. 2022)
- Molina v. Astrue, 674 F.3d 1104, 1113 (9th Cir. 2012)
- Light v. Social Security Administration, 119 F.3d 789, 792 (9th Cir. 1997)
- Garrison v. Colvin, 759 F.3d 995, 1017 (9th Cir. 2014)

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