

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
OHIO, EASTERN DIVISION

Gwenette Jackson v. Commissioner of Social Security

No. 1:25-CV-00534-JRA, United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division
(February 13, 2026)

SUMMARY

This Report and Recommendation addresses Gwenette Jackson’s challenge under 42 U.S.C. § 405(g) to the Commissioner of Social Security’s denial of her applications for Period of Disability and Disability Insurance Benefits. The magistrate judge recommends affirming the Commissioner’s decision, concluding that the administrative law judge properly evaluated the opinion evidence and that the decision was supported by substantial evidence.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Jonathan D. Greenberg
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division
DECIDED	February 13, 2026
DOCKET	1:25-CV-00534-JRA
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Report and recommendation on judicial review of the Commissioner's final decision denying applications for Period of Disability and Disability Insurance Benefits.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviews the Commissioner's decision to determine whether it is supported by substantial evidence and made pursuant to proper legal standards. The court does not reweigh evidence, make credibility determinations, or conduct de novo review, and must review the record as a whole.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential
PARTIES	Gwenette Jackson v. Commissioner of Social Security

TOPICS

judicial review of agency action

agency adjudication

administrative law

PRACTICE AREAS

Social Security disability

administrative law

judicial review of agency action

medical opinion evidence

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the ALJ properly evaluated the persuasiveness of the state-agency psychological opinion concerning Jackson's social-interaction limitations under 20 C.F.R. § 404.1520c.
2. Whether the ALJ properly evaluated the persuasiveness of Dr. Hochman's medical source opinion concerning Jackson's physical limitations and alleged off-task time under 20 C.F.R. § 404.1520c.
3. Whether substantial evidence and proper legal standards supported the ALJ's residual-functional-capacity finding and determination that Jackson was not disabled.

HOLDINGS

1. The ALJ properly found Dr. Fernandez's opinion only partially persuasive and adequately explained why the proposed limitation to brief and superficial interactions was not fully supported, while accounting for Jackson's social limitations by restricting her to occasional interaction with coworkers and the public.
2. The ALJ properly found Dr. Hochman's opinion unpersuasive because the proposed lifting, carrying, pushing, pulling, and off-task limitations were overstated or unsupported by the record, while recognizing that some of the opinion's limitations were supported.
3. The Commissioner's final decision denying Jackson's applications was supported by substantial evidence and made under proper legal standards; the magistrate judge therefore recommended affirmance.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Substantial evidence has been defined as “‘more than a scintilla of evidence but less than a preponderance; it is such relevant evidence as a reasonable mind might accept as adequate to support a conclusion.’”
(Standard of Review)

*“For the foregoing reasons, the Magistrate Judge recommends that the Commissioner’s final decision be **AFFIRMED.**”* (Conclusion)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Jackson alleged disability beginning February 13, 2021, based primarily on left upper-extremity and wrist impairments, depression, anxiety, and ADHD. Medical evidence showed reduced but generally 4 to 4+ out of 5 strength in the left upper extremity, wrist and shoulder symptoms, and mental-health diagnoses, while Jackson remained able to perform activities of daily living, drive, shop, perform household tasks, and work part time. The ALJ found that she could perform a restricted range of light work with limitations on use of the nondominant left upper extremity, social interaction, pace, and workplace hazards.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Jackson applied for Period of Disability and Disability Insurance Benefits in January 2022. Her applications were denied initially and on reconsideration; following a November 16, 2023 administrative hearing, the ALJ found her not disabled on January 17, 2024. The Appeals Council denied further review on January 14, 2025, and Jackson filed this action on March 19, 2025. After briefing, the magistrate judge recommended affirming the Commissioner's decision.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- Ealy v. Commissioner of Social Security, 594 F.3d 504, 512 (6th Cir. 2010)
- Abbott v. Sullivan, 905 F.2d 918, 923 (6th Cir. 1990)
- Mullis v. Bowen, 861 F.2d 991, 994 (6th Cir. 1988)
- Henry v. Gardner, 381 F.2d 191, 195 (6th Cir. 1967)
- Reynolds v. Commissioner of Social Security, 424 F. App'x 411, 414 (6th Cir. 2011)
- White v. Commissioner of Social Security, 572 F.3d 272, 281 (6th Cir. 2009)
- Rogers v. Commissioner of Social Security, 486 F.3d 234, 241 (6th Cir. 2007)
- Cutlip v. Secretary of Health and Human Services, 25 F.3d 284, 286 (6th Cir. 1994)
- Brainard v. Secretary of Health and Human Services, 889 F.2d 679, 681 (6th Cir. 1989)
- Heston v. Commissioner of Social Security, 245 F.3d 528, 535 (6th Cir. 2001)
- Buxton v. Halter, 246 F.3d 762, 772-73 (6th Cir. 2001)
- Mullen v. Bowen, 800 F.2d 535, 545 (6th Cir. 1986)
- Her v. Commissioner of Social Security, 203 F.3d 388, 389-90 (6th Cir. 1999)
- Baker v. Heckler, 730 F.2d 1147, 1150 (8th Cir. 1984)
- Bowen v. Commissioner of Social Security, 478 F.3d 742, 746 (6th Cir. 2007)
- Fleischer v. Astrue, 774 F. Supp. 2d 875, 877 (N.D. Ohio 2011)
- Sarchet v. Chater, 78 F.3d 305, 307 (7th Cir. 1996)
- Ryan L.F. v. Commissioner of Social Security, No. 6:18-cv-01958-BR, 2019 WL 6468560, at *4 (D. Or. Dec. 2, 2019)
- Rudd v. Commissioner of Social Security, 531 F. App'x 719, 728 (6th Cir. 2013)
- Shepard v. Commissioner of Social Security, 705 F. App'x 435, 442-43 (6th Cir. 2017)
- Berkshire v. Beauvais, 928 F.3d 520, 530-31 (6th Cir. 2019)