

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON

Alexander P. v. Commissioner, Social Security Administration

Alexander P. · No. 1:24-cv-01734-AP · Decided January 23, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the District of Oregon reviewed the Commissioner of Social Security’s denial of Alexander P.’s application for disability insurance benefits. The court rejected challenges concerning Listing 12.05B, subjective symptom testimony, and the evaluation of medical opinions, holding that the administrative law judge’s findings were supported by substantial evidence. The Commissioner’s decision was affirmed.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of Oregon
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Amy E. Potter
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of Oregon
DECIDED	January 23, 2026
DOCKET	1:24-cv-01734-AP
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Action for judicial review under 42 U.S.C. § 405(g) of the Commissioner's final decision denying Plaintiff's application for disability insurance benefits.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviews questions of law de novo and reviews the ALJ's factual determinations for substantial evidence. The court may not substitute its judgment for the ALJ's when the evidence could support either affirming or reversing the decision.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown
PARTIES	Alexander P. v. Commissioner, Social Security Administration

TOPICS

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

PRACTICE AREAS

- Social Security disability benefits
- administrative law
- judicial review of agency action

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the ALJ erred by finding that Plaintiff's impairments did not meet or equal Listing 12.05B.
2. Whether the ALJ provided specific, clear, and convincing reasons supported by substantial evidence for discounting Plaintiff's subjective symptom testimony.
3. Whether the ALJ properly evaluated the persuasiveness of the medical opinions of David Hickman, Ph.D., and Karina Castillo, LCSW, in assessing Plaintiff's residual functional capacity.

HOLDINGS

1. The ALJ did not err in finding that Plaintiff failed to satisfy Listing 12.05B because the record supported only moderate limitations, rather than one extreme limitation or two marked limitations, in the relevant areas of adaptive functioning.
2. The ALJ gave specific, clear, and convincing reasons supported by substantial evidence for finding that Plaintiff's statements concerning the intensity, persistence, and limiting effects of his symptoms were not entirely consistent with the record.
3. The ALJ did not err in finding Dr. Hickman's opinion partially persuasive and Ms. Castillo's opinion unpersuasive because the ALJ adequately considered supportability and consistency and explained the findings with substantial evidence.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Under the substantial-evidence standard, a court looks to an existing administrative record and asks whether it contains ‘sufficien[t] evidence’ to support the agency's factual determinations.” (2)

“[T]he ALJ can reject the claimant’s testimony about the severity of [their] symptoms only by offering specific, clear and convincing reasons for doing so.” (7)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff alleged disability beginning December 31, 2019, based on problems retaining information, post-traumatic stress disorder, attention deficit disorder, and social anxiety. He had completed high school and previously worked as a janitor, stocker, dishwasher, and merchandiser representative. The ALJ found that Plaintiff had severe impairments but that they did not meet or equal a listed impairment, and assessed a residual functional capacity for a full range of work with limitations to simple, routine tasks and time to refocus. The ALJ concluded that Plaintiff could perform his past work as a janitor and dishwasher.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff applied for disability insurance benefits, and the claim was denied initially and on reconsideration. After a hearing, the ALJ determined that Plaintiff was not disabled. The Appeals Council denied review, after which Plaintiff filed this action. The district court affirmed the Commissioner's decision.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- O'Brien v. Bisignano, 142 F.4th 687, 693 (9th Cir. 2025)
- Biestek v. Berryhill, 587 U.S. 97, 102 (2019)
- Parra v. Astrue, 481 F.3d 742, 746 (9th Cir. 2007)
- Woods v. Kijakazi, 32 F.4th 785, 787 n.1 (9th Cir. 2022)
- Garrison v. Colvin, 759 F.3d 995, 1014-15 (9th Cir. 2014)
- Reddick v. Chater, 157 F.3d 715, 722 (9th Cir. 1998)
- Lester v. Chater, 81 F.3d 821, 834 (9th Cir. 1995)
- Orn v. Astrue, 495 F.3d 625, 639 (9th Cir. 2007)
- Trevizo v. Berryhill, 871 F.3d 664, 679 (9th Cir. 2017)
- Woods v. Kijakazi, 32 F.4th 785, 791-92 (9th Cir. 2022)

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