

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF
OHIO, WESTERN DIVISION

Jordan G. v. Commissioner of Social Security

Jordan G. · No. 2:24-cv-04146 · Decided February 13, 2026

SUMMARY

Report and Recommendation in a Social Security disability appeal concerning whether the Administrative Law Judge properly evaluated evidence underlying a Veterans Affairs disability determination and whether the administrative record required further development. The court recommends affirming the Commissioner’s decision, finding that the ALJ’s residual functional capacity assessment and non-disability determination were supported by substantial evidence. The recommendation was issued subject to objections under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 72(b).

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio, Western Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Stephanie K. Bowman; James L. Graham
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio, Western Division
DECIDED	February 13, 2026
DOCKET	2:24-cv-04146
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Social Security claimant sought judicial review under 42 U.S.C. § 405(g) of the Commissioner's denial of disability insurance benefits. The magistrate judge issued a Report and Recommendation recommending affirmance of the Commissioner's decision.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviews whether the Commissioner's decision is supported by substantial evidence and whether the applicable legal standards were followed. Substantial evidence is such relevant evidence as a reasonable mind might accept as adequate to support a conclusion; if substantial evidence supports the denial, the court must affirm even if substantial evidence could support a contrary result.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential

TOPICS

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PRACTICE AREAS

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QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the ALJ properly considered the medical evidence underlying the VA's prior disability determination, including a medical evaluation stating that Plaintiff's headaches caused significant disability.
2. Whether the ALJ erred by failing to fully and fairly develop the administrative record or by formulating the residual functional capacity without a medical opinion corresponding precisely to that RFC.
3. Whether the Commissioner's denial of benefits was supported by substantial evidence and consistent with applicable law.

HOLDINGS

1. The ALJ did not err in considering the medical evidence underlying the VA's disability determination. Although the VA disability rating itself was not binding or persuasive under the Social Security framework, the ALJ considered the underlying medical evidence, including the evaluation by Dr. Rivero.
2. The ALJ did not err by failing to further develop the record, and an RFC need not correspond precisely to a physician's medical opinion when it is supported by a combination of objective medical and nonmedical evidence.
3. The Commissioner's denial of benefits was supported by substantial evidence and contained no reversible error; affirmance was therefore recommended.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Substantial evidence is “such relevant evidence as a reasonable mind might accept as adequate to support a conclusion.”” (at 3)

“The foundation of the ALJ's RFC does not have to be a physician's medical opinion, so long as the ALJ sufficiently “make[s] a connection between the evidence relied on and the conclusion reached.”” (at 8)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Jordan G. alleged disability based on physical and mental impairments, including lumbar-spine fracture residuals, scoliosis and spinal degeneration, adjustment disorder, PTSD, depression, ADHD, migraines, and substance-use disorder. He alleged disability beginning June 30, 2020, but his insured status ended September 30, 2021. The ALJ found that he could perform a restricted range of light work and, based on vocational-expert

testimony, could perform jobs such as merchandise marker, collator operator, and housekeeping cleaner. Plaintiff challenged the ALJ's treatment of evidence underlying a VA disability determination and argued that the ALJ failed to fully develop the record.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff filed a Title II application for disability insurance benefits alleging disability beginning June 30, 2020. The application was denied initially and on reconsideration; after an August 23, 2023 hearing, the ALJ issued an adverse decision on October 3, 2023. The Appeals Council denied review, and Plaintiff filed this action. The Report and Recommendation recommends affirming the Commissioner's decision and closing the case, subject to objections under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 72(b).

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Bowen v. City of New York, 476 U.S. 467, 469-70 (1986)
- Richardson v. Perales, 402 U.S. 389, 401 (1971)
- Hephner v. Mathews, 574 F.2d 359, 362 (6th Cir. 1978)
- Felisky v. Bowen, 35 F.3d 1027, 1035 (6th Cir. 1994)
- Biestek v. Berryhill, 139 S. Ct. 1148, 1154 (2019)
- Combs v. Commissioner of Social Security, 459 F.3d 640, 643 (6th Cir. 2006)
- Boggs v. Commissioner of Social Security, No. 2:20-cv-6135, 2021 WL 4771267, at *6 (S.D. Ohio Oct. 13, 2021)
- Christopher L. v. Commissioner of Social Security, No. 3:24-cv-310, 2025 WL 2119471, at *3 (S.D. Ohio July 29, 2025)
- Naddra v. Commissioner of Social Security, No. 1:16-CV-340, 2016 WL 11268204, at *8 (S.D. Ohio Dec. 22, 2016), report and recommendation adopted, 2017 WL 1194708 (S.D. Ohio Mar. 31, 2017)
- Tucker v. Commissioner of Social Security, 775 F. App'x 220, 226 (6th Cir. 2019)
- Rudd v. Commissioner of Social Security, 531 F. App'x 719, 728 (6th Cir. 2013)
- Boyes v. Secretary of Health & Human Services, 46 F.3d 510, 512 (6th Cir. 1995)
- Halsey v. Richardson, 441 F.2d 1230 (6th Cir. 1971)
- Landsaw v. Secretary of Health & Human Services, 803 F.2d 211, 214 (6th Cir. 1986)
- Moats v. Commissioner of Social Security, 42 F.4th 558, 563 (6th Cir. 2022)
- Allison v. Apfel, 229 F.3d 1150 (6th Cir. 2000)
- Hizer v. Commissioner of Social Security, 852 F. App'x 999, 1003 (6th Cir. 2021)
- Poe v. Commissioner of Social Security, 342 F. App'x 149, 157 (6th Cir. 2009)
- Thomas v. Arn, 474 U.S. 140 (1986)
- United States v. Walters, 638 F.2d 947 (6th Cir. 1981)

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