

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
OKLAHOMA

Micheal J. B. v. Frank Bisignano, Commissioner of Social Security

Micheal J. B. · No. 4:24-cv-00496-MTS · Decided March 31, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma reviewed the Commissioner of Social Security’s denial of Micheal J. B.’s application for disability insurance benefits. The court held that the administrative law judge properly evaluated the medical opinion evidence and the claimant’s subjective symptoms, and that the decision was supported by substantial evidence. The court affirmed the Commissioner’s decision on March 31, 2026.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma
DECIDED	March 31, 2026
DOCKET	4:24-cv-00496-MTS
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Plaintiff sought judicial review under 42 U.S.C. § 405(g) of the Commissioner of Social Security's denial of Title II disability insurance benefits.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviewed whether the Commissioner applied the correct legal standards and whether the decision was supported by substantial evidence. Substantial evidence means more than a scintilla but less than a preponderance, and the court may not reweigh the evidence or substitute its judgment for the Commissioner's.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unknown
PARTIES	Micheal J. B. v. Frank Bisignano, Commissioner of Social Security

TOPICS

- judicial review of agency action
- administrative law
- disability definition
- ada / disability

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the ALJ properly evaluated the supportability and consistency of Dr. Leslie Chan's medical opinion under 20 C.F.R. §§ 404.1520c and 416.920c.
2. Whether the ALJ properly evaluated the intensity, persistence, and limiting effects of Plaintiff's subjective symptoms under SSR 16-3p and 20 C.F.R. § 404.1529.

HOLDINGS

1. The ALJ applied the correct legal standards and adequately articulated the supportability and consistency reasons for finding Dr. Chan's opinion unpersuasive.
2. The ALJ properly evaluated Plaintiff's subjective symptoms, and substantial evidence supported the finding that the alleged intensity, persistence, and limiting effects of those symptoms were inconsistent with the record.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“the nature, scope, and findings from the longitudinal treatment records do not support the intensity or persistence of his subjective allegations.” (R. 529)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Plaintiff applied for Title II disability insurance benefits, alleging disability from spinal stenosis, degenerative disc disease, a herniated disc, ankylosing spondylitis, knee and leg pain, and hand symptoms. He had no past relevant work, and the ALJ found severe degenerative disc disease, degenerative joint disease of the knee, and obesity. The ALJ found that Plaintiff retained the residual functional capacity for limited light work and could perform jobs including information clerk, furniture rental clerk, and marker. Plaintiff challenged the ALJ's evaluation of his treating physician's opinion and his subjective symptom statements.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Plaintiff's application for disability insurance benefits was denied initially and on reconsideration. After a hearing, an ALJ denied benefits on August 31, 2022, and the Appeals Council denied review. The district court previously granted an unopposed motion to reverse and remand for further proceedings, after which the Appeals Council remanded the matter and the ALJ again denied benefits on June 25, 2024. The Appeals Council did not assume jurisdiction, making the ALJ's second decision final, and the district court affirmed it.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- Williams v. Bowen, 844 F.2d 748, 750-51 (10th Cir. 1988)

- Noreja v. Social Security Commissioner, 952 F.3d 1172, 1177 (10th Cir. 2020)
- Lax v. Astrue, 489 F.3d 1080, 1084 (10th Cir. 2007)
- Biestek v. Berryhill, 139 S. Ct. 1148, 1154 (2019)
- Consolidated Edison Co. v. NLRB, 305 U.S. 197, 229 (1938)
- Universal Camera Corp. v. NLRB, 340 U.S. 474, 488 (1951)
- Casias v. Secretary of Health & Human Services, 933 F.2d 799, 800-01 (10th Cir. 1991)
- White v. Barnhart, 287 F.3d 903, 908 (10th Cir. 2002)
- Keyes-Zachary v. Astrue, 695 F.3d 1156, 1166-67 (10th Cir. 2012)
- Mays v. Colvin, 739 F.3d 569, 574-76 (10th Cir. 2014)
- Rusty F. v. Kijakazi, No. 21-CV-7-CVE-CDL, 2022 WL 10365886, at *6 (N.D. Okla. Apr. 26, 2022), report and recommendation adopted, 2022 WL 4465178 (N.D. Okla. Sept. 26, 2022)
- Qualls v. Apfel, 206 F.3d 1368, 1372 (10th Cir. 2000)

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