

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF
PENNSYLVANIA

Margaret Ann Hayeslip v. Commissioner, Social Security
Administration

Hayeslip · No. 2:24-cv-01717 · Decided April 16, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania reviewed the denial of Margaret Ann Hayeslip’s application for Supplemental Security Income. The court held that the Administrative Law Judge’s evaluation of the medical opinion evidence and residual functional capacity was not supported by substantial evidence. The court remanded the case to the Commissioner for further proceedings and directed the Clerk to close the case.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania
DECIDED	April 16, 2026
DOCKET	2:24-cv-01717
DISPOSITION	remanded
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Judicial review under 42 U.S.C. § 405(g) of the Commissioner's denial of the plaintiff's application for Supplemental Security Income.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviews legal issues plenary and reviews the ALJ's factual findings to determine whether they are supported by substantial evidence. The court may not reweigh the evidence or substitute its own conclusions for those of the factfinder.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unknown
PARTIES	Margaret Ann Hayeslip v. Commissioner, Social Security Administration

TOPICS

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

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the ALJ adequately evaluated the consistency and supportability of the medical opinions of the consultative examiners and treating mental-health provider.
2. Whether substantial evidence supported the ALJ's residual functional capacity determination and resulting step-five finding.

HOLDINGS

1. The ALJ erred in finding that the consultative examiners' narrative mental-status evaluations were inconsistent with their HA-1152 functional assessments; the record showed that the assessments were consistent.
2. The ALJ erred in finding Ms. Means's opinion less persuasive than Ms. Burkholder's opinion because the longitudinal treatment records and explanatory evidence supported Ms. Means's assessment of Hayeslip's limitations.
3. Substantial evidence did not support the ALJ's residual functional capacity determination or the resulting denial of Supplemental Security Income.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“He was certainly free to reach his own conclusions about the medical records, so long as those conclusions were “supportable” and “consistent” with the medical evidence. They were not.” (Opinion at opening)

“For the foregoing reasons, the Court remands to the Commissioner for further proceedings, consistent with this opinion.” (Conclusion)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Hayeslip alleged disability based on ADHD, obsessive-compulsive disorder, anxiety, depression, and a personality disorder, along with fibromyalgia. Her treating and consultative mental-health providers described significant anxiety, OCD symptoms, panic attacks, difficulty leaving home, and marked or extreme limitations in several work-related mental and interpersonal functions. The ALJ found that she retained the residual functional capacity for light work with restrictions, including only occasional interaction with others, and concluded at step five that she could perform jobs such as office clerk, mail clerk, or router. The district court concluded that the ALJ's evaluation of the medical opinions was not supported by substantial evidence.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Hayeslip applied for Supplemental Security Income in May 2021. An ALJ denied the claim, and the Appeals Council denied review. In an earlier federal action, the parties stipulated to remand because the ALJ had not sufficiently assessed the medical evidence; the Appeals Council then remanded for further consideration of the medical opinions and residual functional capacity. After a second hearing, the ALJ again denied benefits in October 2024. Hayeslip sought review of that second denial, and the district court remanded for further proceedings.

DISPOSITION

remanded

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

The case was remanded to the Commissioner for further proceedings consistent with the opinion, including a proper evaluation of the medical opinion evidence and residual functional capacity.

CASES CITED

- 566 F.3d 347, 349 (3d Cir. 2009)
- 247 F.3d 34, 40 (3d Cir. 2001)
- 540 U.S. 20, 24-25 (2003)
- 790 F.2d 26, 28 (3d Cir. 1986)
- 181 F.3d 429, 431 (3d Cir. 1999)
- 55 F.3d 900, 901 (3d Cir. 1995)
- 970 F.2d 1178, 1182 (3d Cir. 1992)
- 332 U.S. 194, 196-97 (1947)
- 115 F.4th 637, 639 (3d Cir. 2024)
- 364 F.3d 501, 505 (3d Cir. 2004)
- 710 F.2d 110, 115 n. 5 (3d Cir. 1983)
- 994 F.2d 1058, 1065 (3d Cir. 1993)
- 290 F. App'x 493, 496 (3d Cir. 2008)