

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
WISCONSIN

**Brittany L. Archibald v. Frank Bisignano, Commissioner of the
Social Security Administration**

Case No. 25-C-1170 · No. Case No. 25-C-1170; 2:25-cv-01170 · Decided May 5, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin reviews Brittany L. Archibald’s challenge to the denial of Social Security disability benefits. The court concludes that the ALJ reasonably evaluated the medical opinions, subjective symptom evidence, and residual functional capacity, and affirms the agency’s decision.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Lynn Adelman
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin
DECIDED	May 5, 2026
DOCKET	Case No. 25-C-1170; 2:25-cv-01170
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Action for judicial review of the Commissioner of Social Security's denial of disability benefits under 42 U.S.C. § 405(g).
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviews whether the ALJ applied the correct legal standards, whether the decision is supported by substantial evidence, and whether the ALJ built an accurate and logical bridge from the evidence to the conclusions. The court may not reweigh evidence, resolve credibility questions, or substitute its judgment for the ALJ's. Review of the ALJ's evaluation of subjective symptoms is limited to whether the decision was patently wrong.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished
PARTIES	Brittany L. Archibald v. Frank Bisignano, Commissioner of the Social Security Administration

TOPICS

judicial review of agency action

agency adjudication

administrative law

PRACTICE AREAS

Social Security disability

administrative law

judicial review of agency action

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the ALJ properly evaluated and discounted portions of the treating physician's medical opinions under 20 C.F.R. § 404.1520c.
2. Whether the ALJ improperly formulated the residual functional capacity without adopting a medical opinion in full or obtaining additional medical-expert review.
3. Whether the ALJ properly evaluated Archibald's subjective symptom statements under 20 C.F.R. § 404.1529 and SSR 16-3p.
4. Whether the ALJ's decision was supported by substantial evidence and an adequate logical bridge.

HOLDINGS

1. The ALJ properly evaluated Dr. Siddiqui's opinions by addressing their supportability and consistency and reasonably found the opinions less persuasive in substantial part because they relied heavily on subjective complaints, were not supported by examination findings, and were inconsistent with other record evidence.
2. The ALJ was not required to adopt a physician's RFC opinion in full or choose between competing medical opinions; the ALJ could formulate an RFC from the entire record, including objective evidence, medical opinions, and the claimant's statements.
3. The ALJ properly evaluated Archibald's subjective symptom statements under the required two-step process and reasonably found that the alleged intensity, persistence, and limiting effects were not entirely consistent with the record.
4. The ALJ's unfavorable disability determination was supported by substantial evidence and adequately explained, so the court affirmed the decision.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"It means—and means only—such relevant evidence as a reasonable mind might accept as adequate to support a conclusion." (13)

"The determination or decision must contain specific reasons for the weight given to the individual's symptoms, be consistent with and supported by the evidence, and be clearly articulated so the individual and any subsequent reviewer can assess how the adjudicator evaluated the individual's symptoms." (24)

"The ALJ must "consider all limitations supported by [the] record evidence" and "tie the record evidence to the limitations included in the RFC finding," but he need not match RFC conclusions item-by-item with medical opinions." (22)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Archibald alleged disability based principally on postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome, Chiari malformation, tethered cord, and cervical and lumbar degenerative disc disease. She reported dizziness, fainting-type symptoms, fatigue, pain, urinary frequency, balance problems, and limitations in lifting, standing, walking, and concentrating. Her treating physician, Dr. Ali Siddiqui, opined in October 2024 that she had substantially greater limitations, including the need to lie down on short notice and occasional use of a walker. The ALJ found that the medical evidence, treatment history, normal or non-analgesic gait findings, symptom improvement with treatment, and daily activities supported a sedentary residual functional capacity rather than disabling limitations.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Archibald applied for Social Security disability benefits in June 2022. The agency denied the application initially and on reconsideration. After a November 5, 2024 hearing, the ALJ issued an unfavorable decision on November 25, 2024. The Appeals Council denied review on June 5, 2025, making the ALJ's decision the final agency decision. The district court affirmed the ALJ's decision and dismissed the action.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- Poole v. Kijakazi, 28 F.4th 792, 794 (7th Cir. 2022)
- Jeske v. Saul, 955 F.3d 583, 587 (7th Cir. 2020)
- Biestek v. Berryhill, 587 U.S. 97, 103 (2019)
- L.D.R. v. Berryhill, 920 F.3d 1146, 1152 (7th Cir. 2019)
- Warnell v. O'Malley, 97 F.4th 1050, 1053-54 (7th Cir. 2024)
- Bakke v. Kijakazi, 62 F.4th 1061, 1068 (7th Cir. 2023)
- Prill v. Kijakazi, 23 F.4th 738, 750-51 (7th Cir. 2022)
- Karr v. Saul, 989 F.3d 508, 511 (7th Cir. 2021)
- Stobbe v. Kijakazi, No. 20-C-777, 2021 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 148493, at *70 (E.D. Wis. Aug. 9, 2021)
- Schmidt v. Barnhart, 395 F.3d 737, 746 (7th Cir. 2005)
- Skinner v. Astrue, 478 F.3d 836, 845 (7th Cir. 2007)
- Rabdeau v. Bisignano, 155 F.4th 908, 912 (7th Cir. 2025)
- Sarchet v. Chater, 78 F.3d 305, 307 (7th Cir. 1996)
- Cole v. Colvin, 831 F.3d 411, 412 (7th Cir. 2016)
- Curvin v. Colvin, 778 F.3d 645, 650 (7th Cir. 2015)
- Delong v. Saul, 844 F. App'x 894, 900 (7th Cir. 2021)
- Gedatus v. Saul, 994 F.3d 893, 900 (7th Cir. 2021)
- Bates v. Colvin, 736 F.3d 1093, 1100 (7th Cir. 2013)
- Cain v. Bisignano, 148 F.4th 490, 497 (7th Cir. 2025)

- *Moreno v. Berryhill*, No. 17-1954, 2018 U.S. App. LEXIS 29791 (7th Cir. Oct. 25, 2018)
- *Thorps v. Astrue*, 873 F. Supp. 2d 995, 1006 (N.D. Ill. 2012)
- *Seamon v. Astrue*, 364 F. App'x 243, 247 (7th Cir. 2010)
- *Deborah M. v. Saul*, 994 F.3d 785, 788 (7th Cir. 2021)
- *Thomas v. Colvin*, 745 F.3d 802, 808 (7th Cir. 2014)
- *Diaz v. Chater*, 55 F.3d 300, 306 n.2 (7th Cir. 1995)
- *Pufahl v. Bisignano*, 142 F.4th 446, 458 (7th Cir. 2025)
- *Durham v. Kijakazi*, 53 F.4th 1089, 1095 (7th Cir. 2022)
- *Vang v. Saul*, 805 F. App'x 398, 401-02 (7th Cir. 2020)
- *Alvarado v. Colvin*, 836 F.3d 744, 750 (7th Cir. 2016)
- *Moore v. Colvin*, 743 F.3d 1118, 1127 (7th Cir. 2014)
- *Summers v. Berryhill*, 864 F.3d 523, 527 (7th Cir. 2017)
- *Hess v. O'Malley*, 92 F.4th 671, 679 (7th Cir. 2024)
- *Kinnari v. Saul*, No. 19 C 760, 2020 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 65005, at *7 (N.D. Ill. Apr. 14, 2020)