

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Billie Jo Whitfield,)	C/A No.: 1:16-3428-SVH
)	
Plaintiff,)	
)	
vs.)	
)	ORDER
Commissioner of Social Security)	
Administration,)	
)	
Defendant.)	
)	

This matter is before the court on Plaintiff's motion for attorney's fees. [ECF No. 18]. The parties consented to the undersigned's disposition of this case. [ECF No. 8], and on November 9, 2016, the matter was referred to the undersigned by order of the Honorable Richard M. Gergel [ECF No. 9]. On May 10, 2017, the court reversed the Commissioner's decision that had denied Plaintiff's claims for Disability Insurance Benefits and Supplemental Security Income. [ECF No. 16]. Plaintiff then filed and documented a request totaling \$3,438.52 for fees, costs, and expenses pursuant to the Equal Access to Justice Act, 28 U.S.C. § 2412 ("the EAJA"). [ECF No. 18]. The Commissioner filed a response in support of Plaintiff's motion. [ECF No. 19]. Accordingly, the court grants Plaintiff's motion and directs the Commissioner to pay Plaintiff the stipulated sum of \$3,438.52. Such payment shall constitute a complete release from and bar to any and all further claims that Plaintiff may have under the EAJA to fees, costs, and expenses incurred in connection with disputing the Commissioner's decision. This award is without prejudice to the rights of Plaintiff's counsel to seek

attorney fees under section 206(b) of the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. § 406(b), subject to the offset provisions of the EAJA.

Under *Astrue v. Ratliff*, 130 S.Ct. 2521, 2528–29 (2010), EAJA fees awarded by this court belong to Plaintiff and are subject to offset under the Treasury Offset Program (31 U.S.C. § 3716(c)(3)(B) (2006)). Therefore, the court orders the EAJA fees to be made payable to Plaintiff and mailed to the business address of Plaintiff's counsel.¹

IT IS SO ORDERED.



July 17, 2017
Columbia, South Carolina

Shiva V. Hodges
United States Magistrate Judge

¹ Plaintiff's counsel may disburse these funds to satisfy valid liens or in accordance with a lawful assignment.