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Our File No.: 114125

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK**

Karol Espinal, individually and on behalf of all those
similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

vs.

Firstsource Advantage, LLC,

Defendant.

Docket No:

CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

Karol Espinal, individually and on behalf of all those similarly situated (hereinafter referred to as “*Plaintiff*”), by and through the undersigned counsel, complains, states and alleges against Firstsource Advantage, LLC (hereinafter referred to as “*Defendant*”), as follows:

INTRODUCTION

1. This action seeks to recover for violations of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1692, *et seq.* (“FDCPA”).

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

2. This Court has federal subject matter jurisdiction pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331 and 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(d).

3. Venue is proper under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b) because a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to the claim occurred in this Judicial District.

4. At all relevant times, Defendant conducted business within the State of New York.

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GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK 11530

PARTIES

5. Plaintiff Karol Espinal is an individual who is a citizen of the State of New York residing in Suffolk County, New York.

6. Plaintiff is a “consumer” as defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(3).

7. On information and belief, Defendant Firstsource Advantage, LLC, is a New York Limited Liability Company with a principal place of business in Erie County, New York.

8. Defendant is regularly engaged, for profit, in the collection of debts allegedly owed by consumers.

9. Defendant is a “debt collector” as defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(6).

ALLEGATIONS

10. Defendant alleges Plaintiff owes a debt (“the Debt”).

11. The Debt was primarily for personal, family or household purposes and is therefore a “debt” as defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(5).

12. Sometime after the incurrence of the Debt, Plaintiff fell behind on payments owed.

13. Thereafter, at an exact time known only to Defendant, the Debt was assigned or otherwise transferred to Defendant for collection.

14. In its efforts to collect the debt, Defendant contacted Plaintiff by letter (“the Letter”) dated August 22, 2017. (“**Exhibit 1.**”)

15. The Letter was the initial communication Plaintiff received from Defendant.

16. The Letter is a “communication” as defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(2).

FIRST COUNT

Violation of 15 U.S.C. § 1692g

17. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the foregoing paragraphs as if fully restated herein.

18. 15 U.S.C. § 1692g provides that within five days after the initial communication with a consumer in connection with the collection of any debt, a debt collector shall, unless the information is contained in the initial communication or the consumer has paid the debt, send the consumer a written notice containing certain enumerated information.

19. 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a)(1) requires the written notice provide “the amount of the

debt.”

20. The written notice, to comply with 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a)(1), must convey the amount of the debt clearly from the perspective of the least sophisticated consumer.

21. The written notice, to comply with 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a)(1), must convey the amount of the debt accurately from the perspective of the least sophisticated consumer.

22. The written notice, to comply with 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a)(1), must convey the amount of the debt without ambiguity from the perspective of the least sophisticated consumer.

23. The Letter states, “The Amount Due above reflects the total balance due as of the date of this letter. The itemization reflects the post charge-off activity we received from American Express and as such us subject to timing and system limitations.”

24. The least sophisticated consumer is left to guess what the “timing and system limitations” are.

25. The least sophisticated consumer is left to guess what effect “timing and system limitations” have on the stated amount due.

26. The least sophisticated consumer is left to guess what the current balance is.

27. The least sophisticated consumer could assume that the balance may be different on the date the letter is received versus the date of the letter.

28. The least sophisticated consumer would not know if the balance as of the date of the letter is different at the time the letter is received.

29. The least sophisticated consumer would not know if the balance as of the date of the letter is different at the time payment is to be made.

30. Based upon the foregoing, the least sophisticated consumer would be confused as to how she could satisfy the debt.

31. Based upon the foregoing, the least sophisticated consumer would be uncertain as to how she could satisfy the debt.

32. Defendant failed to clearly state the amount of the debt.

33. Defendant failed to unambiguously state the amount of the debt.

34. Because of this failure, the least sophisticated consumer would likely be confused as to the amount of the debt.

35. Because of this failure, the least sophisticated consumer would likely be uncertain as to the amount of the debt.

36. Defendant violated § 1692g as it failed to clearly, explicitly and unambiguously convey the amount of the debt.

37. 15 U.S.C. § 1692e prohibits a debt collector from using any false, deceptive, or misleading representation or means in connection with the collection of any debt.

38. While § 1692e specifically prohibits certain practices, the list is non-exhaustive, and does not preclude a claim of falsity or deception based on any non-enumerated practice.

39. Collection notices are deceptive if they can be reasonably read to have two or more different meanings, one of which is inaccurate.

40. The question of whether a collection letter is deceptive is determined from the perspective of the “least sophisticated consumer.”

41. § 1692e requires debt collectors, when they notify consumers of their account balance, to disclose whether the balance may increase due to interest and fees.

42. For the above stated reasons, Defendant also violated § 1692e.

CLASS ALLEGATIONS

43. Plaintiff brings this action individually and as a class action on behalf of all persons similarly situated in the State of New York from whom Defendant attempted to collect a consumer debt using a letter including the same “timing and system limitations” language used in the Letter herein, from one year before the date of this Complaint to the present.

44. This action seeks a finding that Defendant’s conduct violates the FDCPA, and asks that the Court award damages as authorized by 15 U.S.C. § 1692k.

45. Defendant regularly engages in debt collection.

46. The Class consists of more than 35 persons from whom Defendant attempted to collect delinquent consumer debts using a letter including the same “timing and system limitations” language used in the Letter herein.

47. Plaintiff’s claims are typical of the claims of the Class. Common questions of law or fact raised by this class action complaint affect all members of the Class and predominate over any individual issues. Common relief is therefore sought on behalf of all members of the Class. This class action is superior to other available methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of this controversy.

48. The prosecution of separate actions by individual members of the Class would

create a risk of inconsistent or varying adjudications with respect to the individual members of the Class, and a risk that any adjudications with respect to individual members of the Class would, as a practical matter, either be dispositive of the interests of other members of the Class not party to the adjudication, or substantially impair or impede their ability to protect their interests. Defendant has acted in a manner applicable to the Class as a whole such that declaratory relief is warranted.

49. Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect and represent the interests of the Class. The management of the class action proposed is not extraordinarily difficult, and the factual and legal issues raised by this class action complaint will not require extended contact with the members of the Class, because Defendant's conduct was perpetrated on all members of the Class and will be established by common proof. Moreover, Plaintiff has retained counsel experienced in actions brought under consumer protection laws.

JURY DEMAND

50. Plaintiff hereby demands a trial of this action by jury.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests judgment as follows:

- a. Certify this action as a class action; and
- b. Appoint Plaintiff as Class Representative of the Class, and Plaintiff's attorneys as Class Counsel; and
- c. Find that Defendant's actions violate the FDCPA; and
- d. Grant damages against Defendant pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k; and
- e. Grant Plaintiff's attorneys' fees pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k; and
- f. Grant Plaintiff's costs; together with
- g. Such other relief that the Court determines is just and proper.

DATED: July 22, 2018

BARSHAY SANDERS, PLLC

By: /s/ Craig B. Sanders

Craig B. Sanders, Esq.

100 Garden City Plaza, Suite 500

Garden City, New York 11530

Tel: (516) 203-7600

Fax: (516) 706-5055

csanders@barshaysanders.com

Attorneys for Plaintiff

Our File No.: 114125

BARSHAY | SANDERS PLLC
100 GARDEN CITY PLAZA, SUITE 500
GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK 11530

Statement Date: 08-22-17
Creditor: AMERICAN EXPRESS
Our Reference #: [REDACTED] 0740
Creditor Account #: XXXXXXXXXXXX1007
Account Balance: \$1,699.85



Firstsource Advantage, LLC
205 Bryant Woods South, Amherst, NY 14228 • 1-877-426-5514

**An opportunity to resolve your debt with American Express
Call 1-877-426-5514**

Dear Karol Espinal:

Your outstanding balance for the American Express account listed above is past due and has been sent to us by American Express for collections efforts. At Firstsource Advantage, LLC, we know you want to put this debt behind you. To do so, please send the total amount due, made payable to American Express, in the enclosed envelope.

In the event you are unable to send the total amount due, American Express has various payment options that may be available to you. Please call us toll-free at 1-877-426-5514 so that we can work with you and discuss options that are best suited for you. If you resolve the balance in full, there may be an opportunity for you to regain card membership with American Express.

We hope that you will address this matter. We are available Mon and Tues 8am-9pm, Wed – Fri 8am-8pm, Sat 8am-12pm Eastern Time.

This is a communication from a debt collector. This is an attempt to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

Unless you notify this office within 30 days after receiving this notice that you dispute the validity of this debt or any portion thereof, this office will assume this debt is valid. If you notify this office in writing within 30 days after receiving this notice that you dispute the validity of this debt or any portion thereof, this office will obtain verification of the debt or obtain a copy of a judgment and mail you a copy of such judgment or verification. If you request this office in writing within 30 days after receiving this notice, this office will provide you with the name and address of the original creditor, if different from the current creditor.

In accordance with NY State regulatory requirements, please be advised of the following:

- Total due as of charge-off: \$1,699.85
- Total interest accrued since charge-off: \$0.00
- Total non-interest charges or fees accrued since charge-off: \$0.00
- Total payments made since charge-off: \$0.00

The Amount Due above reflects the total balance due as of the date of this letter. The itemization reflects the post charge-off activity we received from American Express and as such is subject to timing and system limitations.

Sincerely,

Firstsource Advantage, LLC
A Professional Debt Recovery Agency
New York City Department of Consumer Affairs License #1262554.

Debt collectors, in accordance with the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1692 et seq., are prohibited from engaging in abusive, deceptive, and unfair debt collection efforts, including, but not limited to:

- i) the use or threat of violence; ii) the use of obscene or profane language; and iii) repeated phone calls made with the intent to annoy, abuse, or harass.

If a creditor or debt collector receives a money judgment against you in court, state and federal laws may prevent the following types of income from being taken to pay the debt: 1. Supplemental security income, (SSI); 2. Social security; 3. Public assistance (welfare); 4. Spousal support maintenance (alimony) or child support; 5. Unemployment benefits; 6. Disability benefits; 7. Workers' compensation benefits; 8. Public or private pensions; 9. Veterans' benefits; 10. Federal student loans, federal student grants, and federal work study funds; 11. Ninety percent of your wages or salary earned in the last sixty days.

Send correspondence to: Firstsource Advantage, LLC, 205 Bryant Woods South, Amherst, NY 14228

For account information and payment options, you may access our website at www.fsapay.com

562CZFRST02_N1OASIS_507802126

Please Detach Lower Portion and Return with Your Payment

Do not send correspondence to this address.

CZFRST02
PO Box 1022
Wixom MI 48393-1022
CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

08-22-17

IF PAYING BY CREDIT CARD, FILL OUT BELOW.		
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
CARD NUMBER		EXPIRATION DATE
SIGNATURE		PAYMENT DATE
ACCOUNT #	BALANCE DUE	AMOUNT PAID
[REDACTED] 0740	\$1,699.85	\$

|||
KAROL ESPINAL
7 LOCUST AVE
BABYLON NY 11702-2207

Make Payment To:
FIRSTSOURCE ADVANTAGE, LLC
PO BOX 628
BUFFALO NY 14240-0628



IMPORTANT: To receive proper credit, be sure to enclose this portion with your payment



1 of 1

000510

CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS: KAROL ESPINAL
(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff: SUFFOLK
(c) Attorneys: BARSHAY SANDERS, PLLC
DEFENDANTS: FIRSTSOURCE ADVANTAGE, LLC
County of Residence of First Listed Defendant: ERIE
NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.

II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only)
III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES (Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff and One Box for Defendant)
O 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff
O 2 U.S. Government Defendant
O 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party)
O 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)
Citizen of This State
Citizen of Another State
Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country

IV. NATURE OF SUIT (Place an "X" in One Box Only)
CONTRACT
REAL PROPERTY
TORTS
PERSONAL INJURY
CIVIL RIGHTS
PRISONER PETITIONS
FORFEITURE/PENALTY
LABOR
IMMIGRATION
BANKRUPTCY
SOCIAL SECURITY
FEDERAL TAX SUITS
OTHER STATUTES

V. ORIGIN (Place an "X" in One Box Only)
O 1 Original Proceeding
O 2 Removed from State Court
O 3 Remanded from Appellate Court
O 4 Reinstated or Reopened
O 5 Transferred from Another District (specify)
O 6 Multidistrict Litigation - Transfer
O 8 Multidistrict Litigation - Direct File

VI. CAUSE OF ACTION
Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity): 15 USC §1692
Brief description of cause: 15 USC §1692 Fair Debt Collection Practices Act Violation

VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:
CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER RULE 23, F.R.Cv.P. DEMAND \$
CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint: JURY DEMAND: Yes No

VIII. RELATED CASE(S) IF ANY
(See Instructions)
JUDGE
DOCKET NUMBER

DATE: July 23, 2018
SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD: /s Craig B. Sanders

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
RECEIPT # AMOUNT APPLYING IFP JUDGE MAG. JUDGE

CERTIFICATION OF ARBITRATION ELIGIBILITY

Local Arbitration Rule 83.10 provides that with certain exceptions, actions seeking money damages only in an amount not in excess of \$150,000, exclusive of interest and costs, are eligible for compulsory arbitration. The amount of damages is presumed to be below the threshold amount unless a certification to the contrary is filed.

I, Craig B. Sanders, counsel for Plaintiff, do hereby certify that the above captioned civil action is ineligible for compulsory arbitration for the following reason(s):

- monetary damages sought are in excess of \$150,000, exclusive of interest and costs,
the complaint seeks injunctive relief,
the matter is otherwise ineligible for the following reason

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT - FEDERAL RULES CIVIL PROCEDURE 7.1

Identify any parent corporation and any publicly held corporation that owns 10% or more of its stocks:

RELATED CASE STATEMENT (Section VIII on the Front of this Form)

Please list all cases that are arguably related pursuant to Division of Business Rule 50.3.1 in Section VIII on the front of this form. Rule 50.3.1 (a) provides that "A civil case is "related" to another civil case for purposes of this guideline when, because of the similarity of facts and legal issues or because the cases arise from the same transactions or events, a substantial saving of judicial resources is likely to result from assigning both cases to the same judge and magistrate judge." Rule 50.3.1 (b) provides that " A civil case shall not be deemed "related" to another civil case merely because the civil case: (A) involves identical legal issues, or (B) involves the same parties." Rule 50.3.1 (c) further provides that "Presumptively, and subject to the power of a judge to determine otherwise pursuant to paragraph (d), civil cases shall not be deemed to be "related" unless both cases are still pending before the court."

NY-E DIVISION OF BUSINESS RULE 50.1(d)(2)

- 1. Is the civil action being filed in the Eastern District removed from a New York State Court located in Nassau or Suffolk County: NO
2. If you answered "no" above:
a) Did the events or omissions giving rise to the claim or claims, or a substantial part thereof, occur in Nassau or Suffolk County? YES
b) Did the events or omissions giving rise to the claim or claims, or a substantial part thereof, occur in the Eastern District? YES
c) If this is a Fair Debt Collection Practice Act case, specific the County in which the offending communication was received: SUFFOLK

If your answer to question 2 (b) is "No," does the defendant (or a majority of the defendants, if there is more than one) reside in Nassau or Suffolk County, or, in an interpleader action, does the claimant (or a majority of the claimants, if there is more than one) reside in Nassau or Suffolk County? Yes No

(Note: A corporation shall be considered a resident of the County in which it has the most significant contacts).

BAR ADMISSION

I am currently admitted in the Eastern District of New York and currently a member in good standing of the bar of this court. Yes No

Are you currently the subject of any disciplinary action (s) in this or any other state or federal court? Yes (If yes, please explain) No

I certify the accuracy of all information provided above.

Signature: /s Craig B. Sanders

AO 440 (Rev. 06/12) Summons in a Civil Action

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
for the
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

Karol Espinal, individually and on behalf of all those similarly situated)	
<i>Plaintiff(s)</i>)	
v.)	Civil Action No.
Firstsource Advantage, LLC)	
<i>Defendant(s)</i>)	

SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION

To: *(Defendant's name and address)*
Firstsource Advantage, LLC
C T CORPORATION SYSTEM
111 EIGHTH AVENUE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK, 10011

A lawsuit has been filed against you.

Within 21 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) – or 60 days if you are the United States, or a United States agency, or an officer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) – you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff’s attorney, whose name and address are:

BARSHAY SANDERS PLLC
100 GARDEN CITY PLAZA, SUITE 500
GARDEN CITY, NY 11530

If you fail to respond, judgment by default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court.

CLERK OF COURT

Date: _____

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

ClassAction.org

This complaint is part of ClassAction.org's searchable class action lawsuit database and can be found in this post: [FDCPA Suit Claims NY Consumer Left 'Confused' by Letter from Firstsource Advantage](#)
