### UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT WESTERN DISTRICT OF KENTUCKY LOUISVILLE DIVISION

Kathy Goodman, individually, and on behalf of a class of similarly situated persons,

Cause No. 3:18-cv-62-TBR

Plaintiffs,

**CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT** 

v.

DeKalb County Solutions, Inc. 502 E. Main Street Genoa, Illinois 60135 JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

Defendant.

**SERVE**:

Kentucky Secretary of State 700 Capital Ave., Ste. 152 Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

\*\*\* \*\*\* \*\*\* \*\*\*

The Plaintiff, Kathy Goodman ("*Plaintiff*" or "*Ms. Goodman*"), individually and on behalf of others similarly situated, by counsel, files this Complaint against Defendant, DeKalb County Solutions, Inc., states as follows:

#### INTRODUCTION

1. This is an action for actual and statutory damages brought by Plaintiff against the Defendant for violation of Chapter 41, the Consumer Credit Protection Credit Act, of Title 15 (Commerce and Trade) of the United States Code, specifically, 15 U.S.C. § 1692 et seq., (known as the "Fair Debt Collection Practices Act," hereafter the "FDCPA"), which prohibits debt

collectors from engaging in abusive, deceptive and unfair practices in the collection of consumer debt and in connection therewith.

#### **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

- 2. Plaintiff a resident of Louisville, Jefferson County, Kentucky.
- 3. Plaintiff is a "consumer" as that term is defined in the FDCPA with respect to the matters referred to herein.
- 4. Defendant ("*Defendant*" or "*Dekalb County Solutions, Inc.*") is a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the state of Illinois.
- 5. At all pertinent times herein, in this judicial district, Defendant regularly used the mails to collect consumer debts owed or asserted to be owed or due another, and/or otherwise engaged in a business the primary purpose of which was the collection of consumer debt owed or due or asserted to be owed or due another.
- 6. Defendant is a "*debt collector*" as said term is defined in the FDCPA and with respect to the matters cited herein.
- 7. This Court has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331 and 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(d).
- 8. Venue in this District is proper because the Defendant transacts business in this District, Plaintiff was a resident of this District at all pertinent times herein, and the conduct complained of occurred here.

#### **FACTS**

- 9. On or about June 13, 2017, Defendant sent a letter to Plaintiff via the mails wherein Defendant sought to collect a debt on behalf of GE Money Bank DILLARD's in the amount of \$98.36.
- 10. The Defendant made a false or misleading representation when it attempted to collect a time barred debt and, although included a time barred notice, placed the notice on the back of the letter so that the consumer would be less likely to see said notice.
- 11. In the June 13, 2017 letter, the Defendant made false or misleading representations about the debt when it mailed Plaintiff confusing statements as to the actual amount owed on the debt by seeking unlawful interest charges and by asserting three different balance amounts, including an "original balance" of \$889.35, a "current balance" of \$1,173.98, and a "current due" amount of \$98.36.
- 12. In the June 13, 2017 letter, the Defendant threatened to take action it could not lawfully take or that it did not intend to take and conveyed a false sense of urgency. To wit, in the letter, Defendant stated, "If we do not recieve your first payment by **07/01/2017** we will review your account and proceed with appropriate collection efforts in accordance with state and federal law."
- 13. In the June 13, 2017 letter, the Defendant sought to collect interest that was not authorized by the agreement creating the debt or permitted by law.
- 14. As a result of the Defendant's conduct, as herein alleged, Plaintiff has suffered damages, including confusion, emotional distress, embarrassment, humiliation, anxious, stress,

and pecuniary loss, including expenses and postage, entitling her to pursue a private cause of action against Defendant for actual and statutory damages, plus attorney's fees and costs.

# COUNT I VIOLATIONS OF 15 U.S.C. § 1692F

- 15. In connection with the collection of the subject debt, Defendant used unfair or unconscionable means to collect or attempt to collect the subject debt, by, *inter alia*, seeking to collect time-barred debts that were not authorized by agreement or permitted by law, in violation of 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692f and 1692f(1).
- 16. As a result of the violation, Plaintiff suffered actual damages, including confusion, inconvenience, emotional distress, embarrassment, humiliation, anxious, stress, and pecuniary loss, including expenses and postage.
- 17. With respect to the additional damages that may be awarded pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(2)(A), Defendant's noncompliance with the FDCPA is intentional, frequent, widespread and affects a large number of persons perhaps numbering into the thousands, including but not limited to Plaintiff.
- 18. Defendant's conduct as herein alleged entitles Plaintiff to relief against the Defendant in the form of an award of actual damages, statutory damages, plus attorney's fees and costs.

### COUNT II VIOLATIONS OF 15 U.S.C. § 1692E

19. In connection with the collection of the subject debt, Defendant used false or misleading representations, in violation of 15 U.S.C. §1692e. To wit, in its June 13, 2017 letter, Defendant misrepresented the amount of and legal status of the debt and its entitlement to

collect the time-barred debt, failed to adequately disclose that the debt was time-barred, sought to collect unlawful interest charges, and conveyed a false sense of urgency.

- 20. As a result of the violation, Plaintiff suffered actual damages, including confusion, inconvenience, emotional distress, embarrassment, humiliation, anxious, stress, and pecuniary loss, including expenses and postage.
- 21. With respect to the additional damages that may be awarded pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(2)(A), Defendant's noncompliance with the FDCPA is intentional, frequent, widespread and affects a large number of persons perhaps numbering into the thousands, including but not limited to Plaintiff.
- 22. Defendant's conduct as herein alleged entitles Plaintiff to relief against the Defendant in the form of an award of actual damages, statutory damages, plus attorney's fees and costs.

#### **CLASS ALLEGATIONS**

- 23. Plaintiff files this action as a class action on behalf of herself and all individuals who received a letter in the mails from Defendant seeking to collect a debt on behalf of GE Money Bank Dillards during the period commencing one-year before the filing of this action to the filing of this action which included the following disclosure on the reverse side of the letter: "The law in your state limits how long we can seek judicial remedies on this a debt."
- 24. This action has been brought and may properly be maintained as a class action pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23 on behalf of Plaintiff and all others similarly situated with the Class defined as follows: All individuals who received letters from Defendant sent on or after June 13, 2017 seeking payment of past-due debt, time-barred debt.

- 25. Members of the Class are so numerous that their individual joinder is impracticable. The precise number of Class members is unknown to Plaintiff, but upon information and belief, the number of individuals within the Class may exceed 200. The true number of Class members is likely to be known to Defendant.
- 26. There is a well-defined community of interest among members of the Class. The claims of the representative Plaintiff are typical of the claims of the Class in that the representative Plaintiff and all Class members received from Defendant dunning letters that failed to comply with the requirements of the FDCPA. The factual basis of Defendant's conduct is common to all Class members and resulted in injury to all Class members.
- 27. The questions of law and fact in this case are common to Plaintiff and Class members and include the following:
- a. Did the Defendant make misleading statements in its letters to the Plaintiff and the Class Members?
- b. Did the Defendant seek to collect amounts not authorized by agreement or permitted by law in its letters to Plaintiff and the Class Members?
  - c. Did the Defendant fail to comply with the requirements of the FDCPA?
- 28. Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the Class. Plaintiff has retained counsel with experience in FDCPA claims and complex litigation. Plaintiff and her counsel are committed to vigorously prosecuting this action on behalf of the Class they represent and have the financial resources to do so. Neither Plaintiff nor counsel has any interest adverse to those of the Class.

29. Plaintiff and members of the Class have suffered and will continue to suffer harm and damage as a result of Defendant's conduct. A class action is superior to other available methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of the controversy. Absent a class action, the vast majority of the Class members would likely find the cost of litigating their claims prohibitive and would have no effective remedy at law. Class treatment of common questions of law and fact is superior to multiple individual actions or piecemeal litigation in that class treatment will conserve the resources of the courts and litigants and promote consistency and efficiency of adjudication.

#### PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, Kathy Goodman and the putative Class, by counsel, request this Court to:

- a. Certify the Plaintiff's Class, appoint Plaintiff as Class Representative, and appoint undersigned counsel as counsel of record as Class counsel;
- b. Enter judgment against DeKalb County Solutions, Inc. to compensate Plaintiff and the Class Members for their actual damages sustained as set forth in above Counts.
- c. Enter judgment against DeKalb County Solutions, Inc. under the above Counts for statutory damages for the Plaintiff and for each member of the Class.
- d. Enter judgment against DeKalb County Solutions, Inc. for punitive damages on the above Counts wherein an award of such damages is proper and appropriate.
  - e. Conduct a trial by jury on all issues so triable.
- f. Enter an order temporarily and permanently enjoining DeKalb County Solutions, Inc. from future similar violations of the FDCPA.

- g. Enter an order awarding attorneys' fees and costs herein incurred against DeKalb County Solutions, Inc.
  - h. Grant any and all other relief to which the Court deems appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,

TAYLOR COUCH PLLC

/s/ Nina B. Couch

Zachary L. Taylor
Nina B. Couch
2815 Taylorsville Road, Suite 101
Louisville, Kentucky 40205
(502) 625-5000
ztaylor@taylorcouchlaw.com
ncouch@taylorcouchlaw.com

## 

JS 44 (Rev. 06/17)

## **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 decket sheet.

purpose of initiating the civil d	ocket sheet. (SEE INSTRUC	TIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF TH	HIS FORM.)			
(a) PLAINTIFFS Kathy Goodman, individu situated persons,	ually, and on behalf of	a class of similarly	DEFENDANTS DeKalb County So	DEFENDANTS DeKalb County Solutions, Inc.		
<b>(b)</b> County of Residence (E	of First Listed Plaintiff <u>J</u> XCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CA	efferson County, KY	NOTE: IN LAND CO	County of Residence of First Listed Defendant Dekalb County, IL  (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)  NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.		
(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Taylor Couch, PLLC, 28 Louisville, KY 40205, 50	15 Taylorsville Road, S	<sub>r)</sub> Suite 101	Attorneys (If Known)			
II. BASIS OF JURISD	ICTION (Place an "X" in O	ne Box Only)		RINCIPAL PARTIES	(Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintif	
☐ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff	★ 3 Federal Question  (U.S. Government Not a Party)			TF DEF  1 Incorporated or P of Business In		
☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant	☐ 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)		Citizen of Another State	2		
			Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country	3	□ 6 □ 6	
IV. NATURE OF SUIT			EQUEETTIDE/DENATTV		of Suit Code Descriptions.	
CONTRACT  ☐ 110 Insurance ☐ 120 Marine ☐ 130 Miller Act ☐ 140 Negotiable Instrument ☐ 150 Recovery of Overpayment	PERSONAL INJURY    310 Airplane   315 Airplane Product   Liability   320 Assault, Libel &   Slander   330 Federal Employers'   Liability   340 Marine   345 Marine Product   Liability   350 Motor Vehicle   355 Motor Vehicle   355 Motor Vehicle   1360 Other Personal   Injury   362 Personal Injury -   Medical Malpractice   CIVIL RIGHTS   440 Other Civil Rights   441 Voting   442 Employment   443 Housing/   Accommodations   445 Amer. w/Disabilities -   Employment   446 Amer. w/Disabilities -   Other   448 Education	PERSONAL INJURY  365 Personal Injury - Product Liability  367 Health Care/ Pharmaceutical Personal Injury Product Liability  368 Asbestos Personal Injury Product Liability  PERSONAL PROPERTY  370 Other Fraud  371 Truth in Lending  380 Other Personal Property Damage Product Liability  PRISONER PETITIONS  Habeas Corpus:  463 Alien Detainee  510 Motions to Vacate Sentence  530 General  535 Death Penalty Other:  540 Mandamus & Other  550 Civil Rights  555 Prison Condition  560 Civil Detainee - Conditions of Confinement	FORFEITURE/PENALTY  □ 625 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881 □ 690 Other   LABOR □ 710 Fair Labor Standards Act □ 720 Labor/Management Relations □ 740 Railway Labor Act □ 751 Family and Medical Leave Act □ 790 Other Labor Litigation □ 791 Employee Retirement Income Security Act  IMMIGRATION □ 462 Naturalization Application □ 465 Other Immigration Actions	BANKRUPTCY  □ 422 Appeal 28 USC 158 □ 423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157  PROPERTY RIGHTS □ 820 Copyrights □ 830 Patent □ 835 Patent - Abbreviated New Drug Application □ 840 Trademark  SOCIAL SECURITY □ 861 HIA (1395ff) □ 862 Black Lung (923) □ 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g)) □ 864 SSID Title XVI □ 865 RSI (405(g))  FEDERAL TAX SUITS □ 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant) □ 871 IRS—Third Party 26 USC 7609	OTHER STATUTES  □ 375 False Claims Act □ 376 Qui Tam (31 USC □ 3729(a)) □ 400 State Reapportionment □ 410 Antitrust □ 430 Banks and Banking □ 450 Commerce □ 460 Deportation □ 470 Racketeer Influenced and □ Corrupt Organizations □ 480 Consumer Credit □ 490 Cable/Sat TV □ 850 Securities/Commodities/ □ Exchange □ 890 Other Statutory Actions □ 891 Agricultural Acts □ 893 Environmental Matters □ 895 Freedom of Information □ Act □ 896 Arbitration □ 899 Administrative Procedure □ Act/Review or Appeal of □ Agency Decision □ 950 Constitutionality of State Statutes	
	emoved from 3 ate Court  Cite the U.S. Civil Sta	Appellate Court stute under which you are fi				
Federal Fair Debt Collection Practices  VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT: COMPLAI			Act DEMAND \$			
VIII. RELATED CASI		JUDGE		DOCKET NUMBER		
DATE 01/30/2018 FOR OFFICE USE ONLY		signature of attor /s/ Nina B. Couch	NEY OF RECORD  ncouch@taylorcouch	law.com		
	MOUNT	APPLYING IFP	JUDGE	MAG. JUI	DGE	

#### INSTRUCTIONS FOR ATTORNEYS COMPLETING CIVIL COVER SHEET FORM JS 44

Authority For Civil Cover Sheet

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replaces nor supplements the filings and service of pleading 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. Consequently, a civil cover sheet is submitted to the Clerk of Court for each civil complaint filed. The attorney filing a case should complete the form as follows:

- **I.(a) Plaintiffs-Defendants.** Enter names (last, first, middle initial) of plaintiff and defendant. If the plaintiff or defendant is a government agency, use only the full name or standard abbreviations. If the plaintiff or defendant is an official within a government agency, identify first the agency and then the official, giving both name and title.
- (b) County of Residence. For each civil case filed, except U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county where the first listed plaintiff resides at the time of filing. In U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county in which the first listed defendant resides at the time of filing. (NOTE: In land condemnation cases, the county of residence of the "defendant" is the location of the tract of land involved.)
- (c) Attorneys. Enter the firm name, address, telephone number, and attorney of record. If there are several attorneys, list them on an attachment, noting in this section "(see attachment)".
- II. Jurisdiction. The basis of jurisdiction is set forth under Rule 8(a), F.R.Cv.P., which requires that jurisdictions be shown in pleadings. Place an "X" in one of the boxes. If there is more than one basis of jurisdiction, precedence is given in the order shown below.
  - United States plaintiff. (1) Jurisdiction based on 28 U.S.C. 1345 and 1348. Suits by agencies and officers of the United States are included here. United States defendant. (2) When the plaintiff is suing the United States, its officers or agencies, place an "X" in this box.
  - Federal question. (3) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1331, where jurisdiction arises under the Constitution of the United States, an amendment to the Constitution, an act of Congress or a treaty of the United States. In cases where the U.S. is a party, the U.S. plaintiff or defendant code takes precedence, and box 1 or 2 should be marked.
  - Diversity of citizenship. (4) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1332, where parties are citizens of different states. When Box 4 is checked, the citizenship of the different parties must be checked. (See Section III below; **NOTE: federal question actions take precedence over diversity cases.**)
- III. Residence (citizenship) of Principal Parties. This section of the JS 44 is to be completed if diversity of citizenship was indicated above. Mark this section for each principal party.
- IV. Nature of Suit. Place an "X" in the appropriate box. If there are multiple nature of suit codes associated with the case, pick the nature of suit code that is most applicable. Click here for: Nature of Suit Code Descriptions.
- V. Origin. Place an "X" in one of the seven boxes.
  - Original Proceedings. (1) Cases which originate in the United States district courts.
  - Removed from State Court. (2) Proceedings initiated in state courts may be removed to the district courts under Title 28 U.S.C., Section 1441. When the petition for removal is granted, check this box.
  - Remanded from Appellate Court. (3) Check this box for cases remanded to the district court for further action. Use the date of remand as the filing date
  - Reinstated or Reopened. (4) Check this box for cases reinstated or reopened in the district court. Use the reopening date as the filing date. Transferred from Another District. (5) For cases transferred under Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1404(a). Do not use this for within district transfers or multidistrict litigation transfers.
  - Multidistrict Litigation Transfer. (6) Check this box when a multidistrict case is transferred into the district under authority of Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1407
  - Multidistrict Litigation Direct File. (8) Check this box when a multidistrict case is filed in the same district as the Master MDL docket.

    PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE IS NOT AN ORIGIN CODE 7. Origin Code 7 was used for historical records and is no longer relevant due to changes in statue.
- VI. Cause of Action. Report the civil statute directly related to the cause of action and give a brief description of the cause. Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity. Example: U.S. Civil Statute: 47 USC 553 Brief Description: Unauthorized reception of cable service
- VII. Requested in Complaint. Class Action. Place an "X" in this box if you are filing a class action under Rule 23, F.R.Cv.P.

  Demand. In this space enter the actual dollar amount being demanded or indicate other demand, such as a preliminary injunction.

  Jury Demand. Check the appropriate box to indicate whether or not a jury is being demanded.
- VIII. Related Cases. This section of the JS 44 is used to reference related pending cases, if any. If there are related pending cases, insert the docket numbers and the corresponding judge names for such cases.

**Date and Attorney Signature.** Date and sign the civil cover sheet.

# UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Kathy Goodman, individually, and on behlf of a class of similarly situated persons	) ) )				
Dluintiff(a)	)				
Plaintiff(s)	Civil Action No.				
v. DeKalb County Solutions, Inc.	) CIVII ACTION NO.				
Dertail County Columnia, Inc.	) ) )				
Defendant(s)	)				
SUMMONS IN	N A CIVIL ACTION				
To: (Defendant's name and address)  DeKalb County Solutions, Inc. 502 E. Main Street Genoa, Illinois 60135  c/o Kentucky Secretary of State 700 Capital Ave., Ste. 152					
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601					
A lawsuit has been filed against you.					
are the United States or a United States agency, or an office P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an and the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or moti	you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you cer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. aswer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of ion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney,				
2815 Taylorsville Road, St	Taylor Couch, PLLC Nina Couch and Zachary Taylor 2815 Taylorsville Road, Suite 101 Louisville, Kentucky 40205				
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:					
Date:	Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk				

AO 440 (Rev. 06/12) Summons in a Civil Action (Page 2)

Civil Action No.

#### PROOF OF SERVICE

(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 4 (l))

	This summons for (nan	ne of individual and title, if any	y)						
was re	ceived by me on (date)								
	☐ I personally served	the summons on the indi-	vidual at (place)						
			on (date)	; or					
	☐ I left the summons at the individual's residence or usual place of abode with (name)								
	, a person of suitable age and discretion who resides there,								
	on (date), and mailed a copy to the individual's last known address; or								
	☐ I served the summo	ons on (name of individual)		, who is					
	designated by law to accept service of process on behalf of (name of organization)								
			on (date)	; or					
	☐ I returned the sumn	☐ I returned the summons unexecuted because							
	☐ Other ( <i>specify</i> ):								
	N. C. d.	6 . 1 .10							
	My fees are \$	for travel and \$	for services, for a total of \$	0.00					
	I declare under penalty	y of perjury that this infor	rmation is true.						
	,	, <u>F</u> J,							
Date:									
Dave.			Server's signature						
			Printed name and title						
			Server's address						

Additional information regarding attempted service, etc:

# **ClassAction.org**

This complaint is part of ClassAction.org's searchable class action lawsuit database and can be found in this post: <u>Class Action Claims DeKalb County Solutions Tried to Collect on Time-Barred Debt</u>