BARSHAY SANDERS, PLLC

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Attorneys for Plaintiff
Our File No.: 115311

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

Ericka Johnson, individually and on behalf of all those similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

VS.

Persolve Legal Group, LLP,

Defendant.

Docket No:

CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

Ericka Johnson, 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 Persolve Legal Group, LLP (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.

PARTIES

- 5. Plaintiff Ericka Johnson is an individual who is a citizen of the State of New York residing in Nassau County, New York.
 - 6. Plaintiff is a "consumer" as defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(3).
- 7. On information and belief, Defendant Persolve Legal Group, LLP, is a California Limited Liability Partnership with a principal place of business in Los angeles County, California.
- 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 March 6, 2018. ("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).
 - 17. Plaintiff's debt was accruing interest.
- 18. 23 N.Y.C.R.R. § 1.2(b) requires debt collectors to provide an itemized account of the debt, including: (i) the total amount of the debt due as of charge-off; (ii) the total amount of interest accrued since charge-off; (iii) the total amount of non-interest charges or fees accrued since charge-off; and (iv) the total amount of payments made on the debt since the charge-off.
 - 19. The Letter fails to provide the required 23 N.Y.C.R.R. § 1.2(b) disclosures.
- 20. 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.

- 21. 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a)(1) requires the written notice provide "the amount of the debt."
- 22. 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.
- 23. 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.
- 24. 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.
- 25. The written notice, to comply with 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a)(1), must state whether interest, late fees and/or other fees are accruing.
- 26. The written notice, to comply with 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a)(1), must allow the least sophisticated consumer to determine the minimum amount he or she owes at the time of the notice.
- 27. The written notice, to comply with 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a)(1), must allow the least sophisticated consumer to determine what he or she will need to pay to resolve the debt at any given moment in the future.
- 28. The written notice, to comply with 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a)(1), must contain an explanation, understandable by the least sophisticated consumer, of any fees or interest that may cause the balance to increase at any time in the future.
- 29. The failure to include the foregoing information renders an otherwise accurate statement of the "amount of the debt" violative of 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a)(1).
- 30. 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.
- 31. Section 1692e requires debt collectors, when they notify consumers of their account balance, to disclose whether the balance may increase due to interest and fees.
- 32. The Letter fails to include any "safe harbor" language concerning the accrual of interest and/or fees. *Carlin v. Davidson Fink*, 852 F.3d 207, 216 (2d Cir. 2017); *Avila v. Riexinger & Associates, LLC*, 817 F.3d 72, 76 (2d Cir. 2016).
 - 33. The Letter fails to indicate the minimum amount Plaintiff owed at the time of

receipt of the Letter.

- 34. The Letter fails to provide information that would allow the least sophisticated consumer to determine the minimum amount he or she owes at the time of receipt of the Letter.
- 35. The Letter fails to provide information that would allow Plaintiff to determine what Plaintiff will need to pay to resolve the debt at any given moment in the future.
- 36. The Letter fails to provide information that would allow the least sophisticated consumer to determine what he or she will need to pay to resolve the debt at any given moment in the future.
- 37. The Letter fails to provide information that would allow the least sophisticated consumer to determine the amount of interest owed.
 - 38. For instance, the Letter fails to indicate whether additional interest will be added.
 - 39. For instance, the Letter fails to indicate the applicable interest rate.
 - 40. For instance, the Letter fails to indicate the date of accrual of interest.
- 41. For instance, the Letter fails to indicate the amount of interest during any measurable period.
- 42. The Letter fails to provide information that would allow the least sophisticated consumer to determine the amount of late fees owed.
 - 43. For instance, the Letter fails to indicate the amount of late fees.
 - 44. For instance, the Letter fails to indicate the date such fees will be added.
- 45. For instance, the Letter fails to indicate the amount of late fees during any measurable period.
- 46. The Letter fails to contain an explanation, understandable by the least sophisticated consumer, of any fees and interest that may cause the amount stated to increase.
 - 47. The Letter fails to state whether interest, late fees and/or other fees are accruing.
 - 48. The Letter fails to state what part of the amount stated is attributable to principal.
 - 49. The Letter fails to state what part of the amount stated is attributable to interest.
 - 50. The Letter fails to state what part of the amount stated is attributable to late fees.
 - 51. The Letter fails to state what part of the amount stated is attributable to other fees.
- 52. The Letter, because of the aforementioned failures, would render the least sophisticated consumer unable to determine the minimum amount owed at the time of the Letter.
 - 53. The Letter fails to contain an explanation, understandable by the least

sophisticated consumer, of any interest that may cause the amount stated to increase.

- 54. The Letter, because of the aforementioned failures, would render the least sophisticated consumer unable to determine the minimum amount owed at the time of the Letter.
- 55. The Letter, because of the aforementioned failures, would render the least sophisticated consumer unable to determine what she will need to pay to resolve the debt at any given moment in the future.
- 56. The Letter, because of the aforementioned failures, would render the least sophisticated consumer unable to determine the amount of his or her debt.
- 57. The Letter, because of the aforementioned failures, would render the least sophisticated consumer unable to determine the amount of her debt because the consumer would not know whether interest and fees would continue to accrue, or whether the amount of the debt was static.
- 58. The Letter, because of the aforementioned failures, did not convey "the amount of the debt" clearly from the perspective of the least sophisticated consumer.
- 59. The Letter, because of the aforementioned failures, did not convey "the amount of the debt" accurately from the perspective of the least sophisticated consumer.
- 60. The Letter, because of the aforementioned failures, did not convey "the amount of the debt" without ambiguity from the perspective of the least sophisticated consumer.
- 61. Because of the aforementioned failures, the least sophisticated consumer would likely be confused as to the amount of the debt.
- 62. Because of the aforementioned failures, the least sophisticated consumer would likely be uncertain as to the amount of the debt.
- 63. The Letter, because of the aforementioned failures, violates 15 U.S.C. § 1692e and 15 U.S.C. § 1692g.

CLASS ALLEGATIONS

- 64. 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 collection letter that fails to provide a "safe harbor" concerning the accrual of interest and/or late fees, from one year before the date of this Complaint to the present.
 - 65. 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.

- 66. Defendant regularly engages in debt collection.
- 67. The Class consists of more than 35 persons from whom Defendant attempted to collect delinquent consumer debts using a collection letter that fails to provide a "safe harbor" concerning the accrual of interest and/or late fees.
- 68. 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.
- 69. 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.
- 70. 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

71. 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: May 1, 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.: 115311

THEOLY I LEGAL GROUP, LLP

301 Corbin Ave, Suite 1600, Northridge, CA 91324-2508 Tel; 366-438-1259

March 6, 2018

Balance to date:

\$13.015.17

Original Creditor:

Santander-Chrysler CO-821

Account Number:

***4623

Current Debt Owner: DeVille Asset Management, Ltd.

Purchase Date by Current Debt Owner:

Our File No.: Respond to:

(866) 438-1259 Dear Mr./Ms. ERICKA JOHNSON:

The above referenced debt has been listed with this office for the purposes of collection. However, it is our goal to resolve your account prior to any type of further collection activity. We look forward to working with you in resolving your claim.

If you have filed bankruptcy, please forward proof to our office.

We have provided three convenient ways for you to pay:

1. Pay the total above by Credit Card, use the form at the bottom of this letter

Send check or money order for the total above in the enclosed envelope.
 Call our office at (866) 438-1259 if you need additional time.

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 from 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 of 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.

California Civil Code Section 1785 (c)(2). "As required by law, you are hereby notified that a negative credit report reflecting on your credit record may be submitted to a credit reporting agency if you fail to fulfill the terms of your credit obligations." The Rosenthal Act, California Civil Code Section 1788.21, also requires that you notify your creditor of your change of name, address, or employment for any existing consumer credit.

Please be advised that in the event that you reside in the State of California and legal action is taken against you, this is your formal written notice under California Code of Civil Procedure § 1033 that you may be responsible to pay the "actual cost of the filing fee. the actual cost of service of process and, when otherwise specifically allowed by law, reasonable attorneys fees."

SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING YOUR ACCOUNT

THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT BY A DEBT COLLECTOR. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

Detach Lower Portion and Return with Payment

ICSPERSOIPLTR

CSPERSO1 PO Box 1280 Oaks PA 19456-1280

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

March 6, 2018

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Current Balance: \$13,015.17 Our File No .: Amount Paid: \$

Mail All Correspondence To:

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CARDHOLDER NAME		S S

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ERICKA JOHNSON				PERSOLVE LEGAL GROUP, LLP						
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(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, A BARSHAY SAND 100 Garden City Pl	, ,	,		Attorneys (If Kno	own)					
(516) 203-7600										
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VI. CAUSE OF ACTIO		use: 15 USC \$1692		Oo not cite jurisdiction Collection Practice			wersuy): 15 USC	. 81092		
VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:	• CHECK IF THIS I UNDER RULE 2	S A CLASS ACTION		EMAND \$			CHECK YES on RY DEMAND	-	_	int:
VIII. RELATED CASE IF ANY	C(S)	(See Instructions) JUDGE				DOCI	KET NUMBER_			
DATE May 1, 2018		SIGNATURE OF ATT		of record Sanders						
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY RECEIPT #AM	IOUNT	APPLYING IFP		JUDO	GE		MAG. JU	JDGE		

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.

	igible for compulsory arbitration for the following reason	
	monetary damages sought are in excess of \$150,000, exthe complaint seeks injunctive relief,	sclusive of interest and costs,
	•	on
	DISCLOSURE STATEMENT - FEDE	RAL RULES CIVIL PROCEDURE 7.1
	Identify any parent corporation and any publicly he	ld corporation that owns 10% or more or its stocks:
	RELATED CASE STATEMENT (Se	ction VIII on the Front of this Form)
provides because the same the civil to the po	ss that "A civil case is "related" to another civil case for purposes of the cases arise from the same transactions or events, a substantial sate judge and magistrate judge." Rule 50.3.1 (b) provides that "A civil case: (A) involves identical legal issues, or (B) involves the same provides that "A civil case the provides that the provides the provides that the provides the pr	ss Rule 50.3.1 in Section VIII on the front of this form. Rule 50.3.1 (a) this guideline when, because of the similarity of facts and legal issues or aving of judicial resources is likely to result from assigning both cases to il case shall not be deemed "related" to another civil case merely because parties." Rule 50.3.1 (c) further provides that "Presumptively, and subject vil cases shall not be deemed to be "related" unless both cases are still
	NY-E DIVISION OF BU	SINESS RULE 50.1(d)(2)
1.	Is the civil action being filed in the Eastern District removed County: NO	from a New York State Court located in Nassau or Suffolk
2.	If you answered "no" above: a) Did the events or omissions giving rise to the claim or claim County? YES	ms, or a substantial part thereof, occur in Nassau or Suffolk
	b) Did the events or omissions giving rise to the claim or claim Eastern District? YES	ms, or a substantial part thereof, occur in the
	c) If this is a Fair Debt Collection Practice Act case, specific was received: NASSAU	the County in which the offending communication
Suffolk		rity of the defendants, if there is more than one) reside in Nassau or ajority of the claimants, if there is more than one) reside in Nassau
	(Note: A corporation shall be considered a resident of the	ne County in which it has the most significant contacts).
	BAR ADI	MISSION
I am cur	arrently admitted in the Eastern District of New York and curre Yes	ntly a member in good standing of the bar of this court. ☐ No
Are you	u currently the subject of any disciplinary action (s) in this or a Yes (If yes, please explain)	ny other state or federal court? ■ No
I certify	y the accuracy of all information provided above.	

Signature: /s Craig B. Sanders

Date: _____

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for t	he
EASTERN DISTRIC	CT OF NEW YORK
Ericka Johnson, individually and on behalf of all those similarly situated Plaintiff(s) V.)) (
Persolve Legal Group, LLP Defendant(s)) -)
SUMMONS IN A	CIVIL ACTION
To: (Defendant's name and address) Persolve Legal Group, LLP 9301 Corbin Avenue, Suite 1600 Northridge, California 91324 A lawsuit has been filed against you. Within 21 days after service of this summons 60 days if you are the United States, or a United State States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) – y attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's at BARSHAY SA. 100 GARDEN CITY	Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or ttorney, whose name and address are: NDERS PLLC
GARDEN CIT If you fail to respond, judgment by default wi the complaint. You also must file your answer or more	ll be entered against you for the relief demanded in
and the four money and the four mist of or money	CLERK OF COURT

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: Persolve Legal Group Named in NY Woman's Debt Collection Lawsuit