



IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

RICHARD POPPER, an individual for himself and for a class of similarly situated individuals,

NO.

17

627

Plaintiff,

PLAINTIFF DEMANDS A TRIAL BY JURY

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v.

CONVERGENT OUTSOURCING, INC., a

Washington Corporation,

Defendant.

COMPLAINT - CLASS ACTION

Plaintiff, RICHARD POPPER (hereinafter referred to as "PLAINTIFF"), on behalf of himself and all those similarly situated, by and through undersigned counsel, alleges upon knowledge as to himself and his own acts, and upon information and belief as to all other matters, and brings this complaint against Defendant, CONVERGENT OUTSOURCING, INC. (hereinafter referred to as "DEFENDANT") and in support thereof alleges the following:

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

1. PLAINTIFF brings this action for actual and statutory damages arising from DEFENDANT's violations of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act (hereinafter referred to as the "FDCPA"), 15 U.S.C. § 1692, et seq. DEFENDANT intentionally and systematically sends initial collection letters to consumers that do not contain disclosures required by the FDCPA. DEFENDANT further collects nonexistent debt.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

2. The Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(d).

3. Venue is proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(2) because a substantial part of the events giving rise to the claim occurred in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

PARTIES

- 4. PLAINTIFF is a natural person residing in Norristown, Pennsylvania.
- 5. PLAINTIFF is a "consumer" as defined in the FDCPA at 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(3).
- 6. PLAINTIFF allegedly owes a (past due) consumer "debt" as defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(5).
- 7. DEFENDANT is incorporated in Washington, the principal purpose of whose business is the collection of debts, with a principal place of business at 800 SW 39th St., Renton, WA, 98057.
- 8. PLAINTIFF is informed and believes, and thereon alleges, that DEFENDANT regularly collects or attempts to collect consumer debts owed or due or asserted to be owed or due another and that DEFENDANT is a "debt collector" as defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(6).

STATEMENT OF FACTS

- 9. PLAINTIFF repeats, re-alleges, and incorporates by reference, paragraphs 1 through 8 inclusive, above.
- 10. In late 2016, PLAINTIFF contracted with T- Mobile to receive cellular phone service for his family.
- 11. Under the terms of the contract, PLAINTIFF had the right to cancel within three days to receive a full refund after returning the T-Mobile phones.
- 12. PLAINTIFF returned the phones and cancelled his service within the three-day timeframe.
 - 13. T- Mobile mistakenly attempted to collect on the account multiple times.

- 14. However, when PLAINTIFF informed T-Mobile's representative via telephone call that he cancelled in the appropriate timeframe, T-Mobile affirmed that PLAINTIFF did not actually owe any money.
- 15. T-Mobile further confirmed this fact via e-mail, a true and correct copy of which is attached as **Exhibit 1**.
- 16. On or about January 31, 2017, DEFENDANT sent a form collection letter to PLAINTIFF in an attempt to collect a consumer debt, a true and correct copy of which is attached hereto as **Exhibit 2**.
 - 17. The letter states that PLAINTIFF owes \$2,591.86. *Id.*
- 18. The letter does not contain a disclosure informing PLAINTIFF of his right to dispute and request verification of the debt within 30 days after receipt of the letter.
- 19. On or about February 10, 2017, PLAINTIFF called DEFENDANT to inquire as to the current balance of his account and the date on which DEFENDANT mailed its initial letter.
- 20. On this phone call, DEFENDANT stated that it mailed PLAINTIFF its initial collection letter on January 31, 2017, and that PLAINTIFF's current balance was \$419.52.
- 21. Thereafter, PLAINTIFF did not receive a letter from DEFENDANT informing him of his right to dispute and request verification of the debt.

CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS

- 22. PLAINTIFF repeats, re-alleges, and incorporates by reference, paragraphs 1 through 21 inclusive, above.
- 23. PLAINTIFF brings this claim individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated for the purpose of asserting the claim alleged in this Complaint on a common basis. PLAINTIFF's proposed class is defined under Federal Rules of Civil Procedure ("Fed. R. Civ. P.") 23(b)(3), and PLAINTIFF proposes to act as representative of the following class:

- a. A class consisting of consumers who:
 - i. Reside in Pennsylvania, and;
 - ii. Within one year prior to the filing of this action;
 - iii. Received a collection letter from DEFENDANT;
 - iv. Which was the initial collection letter from DEFENDANT;
 - v. Which did not include a disclosure regarding the consumer's right to dispute and request verification of the debt;
 - vi. Where the consumer did not receive a written disclosure regarding his or her right to dispute and request verification of the debt within five days after such initial letter was sent.
- 24. PLAINTIFF does not know the exact size or identities of the class, as DEFENDANT maintains exclusive control of such information. Because the letter is a form letter, PLAINTIFF believes that the class includes between 10,000 and 20,000 individuals whose identities can be readily determined from DEFENDANT's business records. Therefore, the proposed class is so numerous that joinder of all members is impracticable.
- 25. All class members have been affected by the same conduct. The common questions of law and fact predominate over any questions affecting only individual members of the class. These questions include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Whether DEFENDANT's actions violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a) by sending an initial letter which did not contain the appropriate disclosures and not sending a written notice of such disclosures within five days thereafter;
 - b. The identities of individuals who received a substantially similar initial collection letter from DEFENDANT which violated the above subsection; and
 - c. The total number of collection letters that DEFENDANT mailed to consumers

which violated the above subsection.

- 26. PLAINTIFF's claims are typical of the claims of the class and do not conflict with the interests of any other class members. PLAINTIFF and the members of the class were uniformly subjected to the same conduct.
- 27. Upon information and belief, DEFENDANT has a practice and policy of intentionally neglecting to mail initial collection letters which contain the disclosure informing the consumer of his or her right to dispute and request verification of the debt.
- 28. PLAINTIFF will fairly and adequately represent the class members' interests and has retained counsel who are qualified to pursue this litigation.
 - 29. PLAINTIFF is committed to vigorously pursuing his claims.
- 30. A class action is superior for the fair and efficient adjudication of the class members' claims as Congress specifically envisioned class actions as a principal means of enforcing the FDCPA. See 15 U.S.C. § 1692k. The members of the class are generally unsophisticated consumers, whose rights will not be vindicated in the absence of a class action. Prosecution of separate actions by individual members of the class would also create the risk of inconsistent or varying adjudications resulting in the establishment of inconsistent or varying standards and would not be in the best interest of judicial economy.
- 31. A class action regarding the issues in this case does not create any problems of manageability.
- 32. If facts are discovered to be appropriate, PLAINTIFF will seek to certify the class under Rule 23(b)(3) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

FIRST CLAIM FOR RELIEF

VIOLATIONS OF THE FDPCA 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a) BROUGHT BY PLAINTIFF INDIVIDUALLY AND ON BEHALF OF THE CLASS

- 33. PLAINTIFF repeats, re-alleges, and incorporates by reference, paragraphs 1 through 32 inclusive, above.
- 34. Within five days after its initial communication with a consumer, a debt collector must send a written notice to the consumer containing:
 - (1) the amount of the debt;
 - (2) the name of the creditor to whom the debt is owed;
 - (3) a statement that unless the consumer, within thirty days after receipt of the notice, disputes the validity of the debt, or any portion thereof, the debt will be assumed to be valid by the debt collector;
 - (4) a statement that if the consumer notifies the debt collector in writing within the thirty-day period that the debt, or any portion thereof, is disputed, the debt collector will obtain verification of the debt or a copy of a judgment against the consumer and a copy of such verification or judgment will be mailed to the consumer by the debt collector; and
 - (5) a statement that, upon the consumer's written request within the thirty-day period, the debt collector will provide the consumer with the name and address of the original creditor, if different from the current creditor.

15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a).

- 35. On or about January 31, 2017, DEFENDANT sent a form collection letter to PLAINTIFF in an attempt to collect a consumer debt. Ex. 2.
- 36. The letter does not contain a disclosure informing PLAINTIFF of his right to dispute and request verification of the debt within 30 days after receipt of the letter.

- 37. On or about February 10, 2017, PLAINTIFF called DEFENDANT to inquire as to the current balance of his account and the date on which DEFENDANT mailed its initial letter.
- 38. On this phone call, DEFENDANT stated that it mailed PLAINTIFF its initial collection letter on January 31, 2017.
- 39. Thereafter, PLAINTIFF did not receive a letter from DEFENDANT informing him of his right to dispute and request verification of the debt.
- 40. By not including this disclosure on its first letter, or thereafter providing PLAINTIFF with that written disclosure, DEFENDANT violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a).
- 41. As a result of the FDCPA violations by DEFENDANT, PLAINTIFF is entitled to an award of statutory damages.
- 42. PLAINTIFF was deprived of his legally protected interest to receive this disclosure in a timely manner, and therefore has suffered a concrete injury sufficient to confer standing upon him for the purposes of Article III.
- 43. It has been necessary for PLAINTIFF to obtain the services of an attorney to pursue this claim, on behalf of himself and those similarly situated, and is entitled to recover reasonable attorneys' fees therefor.

SECOND CLAIM FOR RELIEF

VIOLATIONS OF THE FDPCA 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692e(5); e(10) f(1) BROUGHT BY PLAINTIFF INDIVIDUALLY

- 44. PLAINTIFF repeats, re-alleges, and incorporates by reference, paragraphs 1 through 43 inclusive, above.
- 45. A debt collector is prohibited from threatening "to take any action that cannot legally be taken." 15 U.S.C. § 1692e(5).
 - 46. A debt collector is also prohibited from using "any false representation or

deceptive means" to attempt to collect a debt. 15 U.S.C. § 1692e(10).

- 47. A debt collector is further prohibited from collecting any amount "unless such amount is "expressly authorized by the agreement creating the debt or permitted by law." 15 U.S.C. § 1692f(1).
- 48. In late 2016, PLAINTIFF contracted with T- Mobile to receive cellular phone service for his family.
- 49. Under the terms of the contract, PLAINTIFF had the right to cancel within three days to receive a full refund after returning the T-Mobile phones.
- 50. PLAINTIFF returned the phones and cancelled his service within the three-day timeframe.
 - 51. T- Mobile mistakenly attempted to collect on the account multiple times.
- 52. However, when PLAINTIFF informed T-Mobile's representative via telephone call that he cancelled in the appropriate timeframe, T-Mobile affirmed that PLAINTIFF did not actually owe any money.
 - 53. T-Mobile further confirmed this fact via e-mail. Ex. 1.
- 54. On or about January 31, 2017, DEFENDANT sent a form collection letter to PLAINTIFF in an attempt to collect a consumer debt. Ex. 2.
 - 55. The letter states that PLAINTIFF owes \$2,591.86. *Id.*
 - 56. However, PLAINTIFF does not owe this debt.
- 57. By stating that the debt was duly owed and in the amount of \$2,591.86, DEFENDANT used a false representation in the attempt to collect a debt and therefore violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692e(10).
- 58. By attempting to collect a debt to which it was not legally entitled, DEFENDANT threatened to take an action which it could not take, and therefore violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692e(5).

- 59. By attempting to collect a debt which was not "expressly authorized by the agreement creating the debt or permitted by law," DEFENDANT violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692f(1).
- 60. PLAINTIFF was deprived of his legally protected interest to receive communications from debt collectors that do not contain material misrepresentations, and therefore has suffered a concrete injury sufficient to confer standing upon him for the purposes of Article III.
- 61. As a result of the FDCPA violations by DEFENDANT, PLAINTIFF is entitled to an award of statutory damages.
- 62. It has been necessary for PLAINTIFF to obtain the services of an attorney to pursue this claim, and is entitled to recover reasonable attorneys' fees therefor.

THIRD CLAIM FOR RELIEF

VIOLATIONS OF THE FDCPA 15 U.S.C. § 1692e(2)(A) BROUGHT BY PLAINTIFF INDIVIDUALLY

- 63. PLAINTIFF repeats, re-alleges, and incorporates by reference, paragraphs 1 through 62 inclusive, above.
- 64. A debt collector may not falsely represent the amount or legal status of any debt.

 15 U.S.C. § 1692e(2)(A).
- 65. In late 2016, PLAINTIFF contracted with T- Mobile to receive cellular phone service for his family.
- 66. Under the terms of the contract, PLAINTIFF had the right to cancel within three days to receive a full refund after returning the T-Mobile phones.
- 67. PLAINTIFF returned the phones and cancelled his service within the three-day timeframe.
 - 68. T- Mobile attempted to collect on the account multiple times.

- 69. However, when PLAINTIFF informed T-Mobile's representative via telephone call that he cancelled in the appropriate timeframe, T-Mobile affirmed that PLAINTIFF did not actually owe any money.
 - 70. T-Mobile further confirmed this fact via e-mail. Ex. 1.
 - 71. As such, PLAINTIFF does not owe this debt.
- 72. On or about February 10, 2017, PLAINTIFF called DEFENDANT to inquire as to the current balance of his account.
- 73. On this phone call, DEFENDANT stated that PLAINTIFF's current balance was \$419.52.
- 74. By stating that the debt was duly owed and in the amount of \$419.52, DEFENDANT misrepresented the amount and the legal status of the debt, in violation of 15 U.S.C. § 1692e(2)(A).
- 75. PLAINTIFF was deprived of his legally protected interest to receive communications from debt collectors that do not contain material misrepresentations, and therefore has suffered a concrete injury sufficient to confer standing upon him for the purposes of Article III.
- 76. As a result of the FDCPA violations by DEFENDANT, PLAINTIFF is entitled to an award of statutory damages.
- 77. It has been necessary for PLAINTIFF to obtain the services of an attorney to pursue this claim, and is entitled to recover reasonable attorneys' fees therefor.

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

78. Please take notice that PLAINTIFF demands trial by jury in this action.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, PLAINTIFF respectfully prays that this Court grant the following relief in PLAINTIFF's favor, and on behalf of the class, and that judgment be entered against DEFENDANT for the following:

- (1) For actual damages incurred by PLAINTIFF pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(1);
- (2) For statutory damages awarded to PLAINTIFF, not to exceed \$1000, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(2)(A);
- (3) For statutory damages awarded to the Class Members, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(2)(B), of the amount not to exceed the lesser of \$500,000 or 1 per centum (1%) of the net worth of the DEFENDANT;
- (4) For disgorgement of all of DEFENDANT's revenues obtained through use of the letter at issue;
- (5) For reasonable attorneys' fees for all services performed by counsel in connection with the prosecution of these claims;
- (6) For reimbursement for all costs and expenses incurred in connection with the prosecution of these claims; and
- (7) For any and all other relief this Court may deem appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,

LaROSA LAW FIRM

Date: 4/6/17

MICHAEL LAROSA, ESQUIRE

959 West Chester Pike Havertown, PA 19083

Tel: 610-924-0999 Fax: 610-924-0473 ml@larosalawfirm.com Attorney for Plaintiff

EXHIBIT 1



Exhibit 1

Alexander Douglas <alex@gp-nola.com>

Fwd: T-Mobile Handset Research Notification 6102030880

5 messages

Rich Popper <rich.popper@gmail.com>

Fri, Feb 10, 2017 at 1:28 PM

To: alex@gp-nola.com

Here's the email that they received the phones back

Forwarded message -

From: "ARSystem Notify" < DoNotReply@t-mobile.com>

Date: Jan 26, 2017 1:56 AM

Subject: T-Mobile Handset Research Notification 6102030880

To: <rich.popper@gmail.com>

Cc:

T-Mobile Handset Order Research Request Handset Order Reference: 06891958

Thank you for taking the time to contact T-Mobile. Our warehouse has received the equipment. We have requested a refund for the payment made at the time of purchase. We have ended the EIP on the account. The EIP charges associated to this order will automatically credit by the end of your next bill cycle.

Following IMEI: 358565071866933, 359755072762756, 359755072705680, 358511078495417

Thank You,

Handset Order Research Department T-Mobile USA, Inc.

Alexander Douglas <alex@gp-nola.com>

Fri, Feb 10, 2017 at 4:44 PM

To: Rich Popper <rich.popper@gmail.com>

Thanks. Do you know what EIP stands for?

Sent from my iPhone

[Quoted text hidden]

Rich Popper <rich.popper@gmail.com>

To: Alexander Douglas <alex@gp-nola.com>

Fri, Feb 10, 2017 at 4:46 PM

No clue

[Quoted text hidden]

Rich Popper <rich.popper@gmail.com>

To: Alex Douglas <alex@gp-nola.com>

Wed, Feb 15, 2017 at 9:26 AM

Hey alex,

Just checking in, do we need anything, or is there anything i can do to help?

[Quoted text hidden]

Alexander Douglas <alex@gp-nola.com>

To: Rich Popper < rich.popper@gmail.com>

Hello Rich,

Wed, Feb 15, 2017 at 10:04 AM

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3/14/2017

gp-nola.com Mail - Fwd: T-Mobile Handset Research Notification 6102030880

Nope. I've emailed the demand letter to Convergent directly. I'll let you know when I hear from them.

Regards, Alex

[Quoted text hidden]

Alexander J. Douglas, Esq. | Attorney | Gesund & Pailet, LLC

2510 Chili Ave., Rochester, NY 14624 Direct: (585) 703-9783 | alex@gp-nola.com Licensed in: New York and Louisiana

Confidentiality: This e-mail is confidential and intended only for the recipient(s) named. Unless you are a named recipient, your reading, distributing, forwarding, or copying this communication is prohibited and may violate the legal rights of others. If you received this communication in error, please call me, return the e-mail to me, and delete it from your system.

EXHIBIT 2

PO Box 1022 Water Mi 48393-1022 CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED ATERSO01

Convergent Outsourcing, frict 600 SW 39th St./PO Bax 9004 Renton, WA SSIGST Mon-FritAM-SPM & Set SAM-LIPM PT

Date: 01/31/2017
Creditor: T-Mobile, USA
Client Account #: 060-850-2174 Convergent Account #: 323

)16

Amount Owed: \$2,591.86 Total Balance: \$2,591.86 Amount Owed:

Nomistown FA 18401-5643

Your Response is Requested

This notice is being sent to you by a collection agency. The records of T-Mobile, USA show that your balance of \$2,591,86 is due in full.

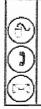
If you have any questions about this account please contact our office toll free at 800-850-3174.

Sincerely,

Convergent Outsourcing, Inc.

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

NOTICE: PLEASE SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR IMPORTANT CONSUMER INFORMATION.



3 CONVENIENT WAYS TO PAY:

Pay Online: Email our office or pay your bill online with your credit/debit card or checking account at www.payconvergent.com. Your temporary identification number is: 2.40424016.501.

Pay by Phone: Please call Convergent Outsourcing, Inc. at 800-850-3174. We offer check by phone, Western Union, and credit/debit card.

Pay by Mail: Send Payments to Convergent Outsourcing, Inc., PO Box 9004, Renton WA 98057-9004.

PLEASE DETACH T	HE BOTTOM POSTION W APPEARS CORRECT:	THE YOUR PAYMENT, BEFO	RE MAILING. PLEASE EYSURE RETURN ADDR OF THE REPLY ENVELOPE ##	ESS paradores Haba il rescones
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Total Balance: \$2,5	91.66			
Amount Enclosed: US				
New Address Address City Caytine Phone: ()	ST Zip		Convergent Outsourcing, Ins PO Box 9004 Renton WA 98057-9004	1415 14
Figure Phone: () _				
if we are calling you in error, plour website at www.cenvergen		u visit		

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(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Amichael LaRosa, EsqL 959 West Chester Pike - 610-924-0999				Attorneys (If Known)					
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FOR OFFICE/USE ONLY									

AMOUNT

APPLYING IFP

JUDGE

MAG. JUDGE

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

1627

	UNITED STATES DI	STRICT COURT	17	1627
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF assignment to appropriate calendar,	PENNSYLVANIA — DESIGNATION FORM	to be used by counsel to indicat	e the category of the	case for the purpose of
Address of Plaintiff: Norristown,	Pennsylvania			
Address of Defendant: 800 SW 39	th St., Renton, WA, 98057			
Place of Accident, Incident or Transaction	Norristown, Pennsylvania (Use Reverse Side F.	or Additional Space)		
Does this civil action involve a nongover	amental corporate party with any parent corporation	on and any publicly held corporat	ion owning 10% or m	re of its stock?
(Attach two copies of the Disclosure Sta	tement Form in accordance with Fed.R.Civ.P. 7.	l (a))	Yes No 🗷	-
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Civil cases are deemed related when yes is	answered to any of the following questions:			
Is this case related to property included	in an earlier numbered suit pending or within on	e year previously terminated actic	on in this court?	
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2. □ FELA		2. D Airplane Per	sonal Injury	
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5150,090.00 exclusive of interest and costs Relief other than monetary damages				
DATE: 4/10/17		The state of the s	50011	
NOT	Attorney-at-Law E: A trial de novo will be a trial by jury only if t	here has been compliance with F.	Attorney I.D.# R.C.P. 38.	
certify that, to my knowledge, the with	n case is not related to any case now pending (or within one year previously te	rminated action in th	is court
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CIV. 609 (5/2012)	security-at-Law		Attorney I.D.#	10 2017



IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

CASE MANAGEMENT TRACK DESIGNATION FORM

Telephone	FAX Number	E-Mail Address			
610-924-0999	610-924-0473	ml@larosalawfirm.com			
Date / /	Attorney-at-law	Attorney for			
4/10/17	Michael LaRosa	Plaintiff			
(f) Standard Manageme	ent – Cases that do not fall	into any one of the other tracks.	()		
commonly referred	to as complex and that need rse side of this form for a contract of the contra	nto tracks (a) through (d) that are d special or intense management by detailed explanation of special	(x)		
(d) Asbestos – Cases in exposure to asbestos		l injury or property damage from	()		
(c) Arbitration – Cases	required to be designated f	for arbitration under Local Civil Rule 53.2.	. ()		
(b) Social Security – Ca and Human Services	ises requesting review of a s denying plaintiff Social S	decision of the Secretary of Health ecurity Benefits.	()		
(a) Habeas Corpus – Cases brought under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 through § 2255.					
SELECT ONE OF TH	E FOLLOWING CASE N	MANAGEMENT TRACKS:			
plaintiff shall complete filing the complaint and side of this form.) In designation, that defend the plaintiff and all other	a Case Management Track serve a copy on all defenda the event that a defendant lant shall, with its first appo	Delay Reduction Plan of this court, court Designation Form in all civil cases at the ents. (See § 1:03 of the plan set forth on the does not agree with the plaintiff regarding earance, submit to the clerk of court and seems that Track Designation Form specifying the assigned.	time of reverse ng said erve on		
Convergent Outsour	cing, Inc.	NO.			
Richard Popper, an i himself and those sir v	•	CIVIL ACTION 17 1	627		

(Civ. 660) 10/02

CIVIL ACTION

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: Convergent Outsourcing Sent Non-Compliant Collection Notices</u>