UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN MILWAUKEE DIVISION

KELLEY RIVERA, Individually and on Behalf of	Case No.: 17-cv-993
All Others Similarly Situated,	CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT
Plaintiff,	
v.	T . T . 1 D
COLLECTO, INC. d/b/a EOS CCA,	Jury Trial Demanded
Defendant.	

INTRODUCTION

1. This class action seeks redress for collection practices that violate the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1692 *et seq.* (the "FDCPA").

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

2. The court has jurisdiction to grant the relief sought by the Plaintiff pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k and 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1337. Venue in this District is proper in that Defendant directed its collection efforts into the District.

PARTIES

- 3. Plaintiff Kelley Rivera is an individual who resides in the Eastern District of Wisconsin (Milwaukee County).
- 4. Plaintiff is a "consumer" as defined in the FDCPA, 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(3), in that Defendant sought to collect from her a debt allegedly incurred for personal, family or household purposes.
- 5. Defendant Collecto, Inc. ("EOS") is a foreign corporation with its principal place of business located at 700 Longwater Dr. Norwell, MA 02061. It does business under the fictitious or trade name "EOS CCA."

6. EOS is engaged in the business of a collection agency, using the mails and telephone to collect consumer debts originally owed to others.

FACTS

- 7. On or about August 24, 2016, EOS mailed a debt collection letter to Plaintiff regarding an alleged debt, allegedly owed to EOS and originally owed to "T-MOBILE USA" ("T-Mobile"). A copy of this letter is attached to this complaint as <u>Exhibit A</u>.
- 8. The alleged debt identified in <u>Exhibit A</u> is an alleged cell phone services account, owed to T-Mobile, and used only for personal, family or household purposes.
- 9. Upon information and belief, <u>Exhibit A</u> is a form letter, generated by computer, and with the information specific to Plaintiff inserted by computer.
- 10. Upon information and belief, <u>Exhibit A</u> is a form debt collection letter used by EOS to attempt to collect alleged debts.
 - 11. <u>Exhibit A</u> states the following:

The state of the s		FEES	
PRINCIPAL	INTEREST	COLL. COSTS	BALANCE
\$1,331.21	\$0.00	\$0,00	\$1,331.21
		TOTAL DUE:	\$1,331.21

12. Although the amounts of "Fees" and "Coll. Costs" in Exhibit A are \$0.00, the unsophisticated consumer interprets such references in collection letters letter as implying that there could be some unknown charges, including collection costs or fees, added to the debt in future letters. *See, eg. Tylke v. Diversified Adjustment Serv.*, No. 14-cv-748; 2014 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 153281, *7 (E.D. Wis. Oct. 28, 2014) ("the inclusion of a collection fee, even one showing a balance of zero, could imply the future possibility of one.").

- 13. EOS's tactic of threatening to add unawarded fees or costs to the alleged debt is a material violation of the FDCPA. *See Hahn v. Triumph P'ships LLC*, 557 F.3d 755, 757-58 (7th Cir. 2009).
 - 14. There is no explanation in the letter as to what the "Fees" or "Coll. Costs" are.
- 15. The unsophisticated consumer would be confused by the nebulous references in EOS's letter to "Fees" and "Coll. Costs" and would have no idea what those charges potentially could be, or whether they would be legitimate.
- 16. The only purpose of the "Fees" or "Coll. Costs" lines in Exhibit A is to threaten the consumer that additional fees may be added to the debt if the consumer does not pay right away. It is about harassment. It is an attempt to receive payment from a debtor, perhaps at the expense of payment to another debt collector that is not using such false and deceptive tactics. Such conduct is an unfair and/or unconscionable method of collecting an alleged debt. *See Seeger v. AFNI, Inc.*, 548 F.3d 1107, 1112 (7th Cir. 2008) (collection fee on cellular telephone accounts was neither authorized by agreement of the parties nor permitted by law).
- 17. Prevention of unscrupulous debt collection practices such as this one is part of the very purpose of the FDCPA. 15 U.S.C. § 1692(e) (it is part of the purpose of the FDCPA "to insure that those debt collectors who refrain from using abusive debt collection practices are not competitively disadvantaged").
 - 18. Plaintiff was confused by Exhibit A.
- 19. Plaintiff had to spend time and money investigating <u>Exhibit A</u>, and the consequences of any potential responses to <u>Exhibit A</u>.

- 20. Plaintiff had to take time to obtain and meet with counsel, including traveling to counsel's office by car and its related expenses, including but not limited to the cost of gasoline and mileage, to advise Plaintiff on the consequences of Exhibit A and B.
- 21. The FDCPA creates substantive rights for consumers; violations cause injury to consumers, and such injuries are concrete and particularized. Bock v. Pressler & Pressler, LLP, No. 11-7593, 2017 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 81058 *21 (D.N.J. May 25, 2017) ("through [s]ection 1692e of the FDCPA, Congress established 'an enforceable right to truthful information concerning' debt collection practices, a decision that 'was undoubtedly influenced by congressional awareness that the intentional provision of misinformation' related to such practices, 'contribute[s] to the number of personal bankruptcies, to marital instability, to the loss of jobs, and to invasions of individual privacy,"); Quinn v. Specialized Loan Servicing, LLC, No. 16 C 2021, 2016 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 107299 *8-13 (N.D. Ill. Aug. 11, 2016) (rejecting challenge to Plaintiff's standing based upon alleged FDCPA statutory violation); Lane v. Bayview Loan Servicing, LLC, No. 15 C 10446, 2016 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 89258 *9-10 (N.D. Ill. July 11, 2016) ("When a federal statute is violated, and especially when Congress has created a cause of action for its violation, by definition Congress has created a legally protected interest that it deems important enough for a lawsuit."); Church v. Accretive Health, Inc., No. 15-15708, 2016 U.S. App. LEXIS 12414 *7-11 (11th Cir. July 6, 2016) (same); see also Mogg v. Jacobs, No. 15-CV-1142-JPG-DGW, 2016 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 33229, 2016 WL 1029396, at *5 (S.D. III. Mar. 15, 2016) ("Congress does have the power to enact statutes creating legal rights, the invasion of which creates standing, even though no injury would exist without the statute," (quoting Sterk v. Redbox Automated Retail, LLC, 770 F.3d 618, 623 (7th Cir. 2014)). For this reason, and to

encourage consumers to bring FDCPA actions, Congress authorized an award of statutory damages for violations. 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a).

- 22. Moreover, Congress has explicitly described the FDCPA as regulating "abusive practices" in debt collection. 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692(a) 1692(e). Any person who receives a debt collection letter containing a violation of the FDCPA is a victim of abusive practices. *See* 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692(e) ("It is the purpose of this subchapter to eliminate abusive debt collection practices by debt collectors, to insure that those debt collectors who refrain from using abusive debt collection practices are not competitively disadvantaged, and to promote consistent State action to protect consumers against debt collection abuses").
- 23. 15 U.S.C. § 1692e generally prohibits "any false, deceptive, or misleading representation or means in connection with the collection of any debt."
- 24. 15 U.S.C. § 1692e(10) specifically prohibits the "use of any false representation or deceptive means to collect or attempt to collect any debt.
- 25. Wis. Stat. § 427.104(1)(j) states that a debt collector may not: "Claim, or attempt or threaten to enforce a right with knowledge or reason to know that the right does not exist."

COUNT I - FDCPA

- 26. Plaintiff incorporates by reference as if fully set forth herein the allegations contained in the preceding paragraphs of this Complaint.
- 27. The references in EOS's letter to "Fees" and "Coll. Costs" are false, misleading and confusing.
- 28. The unsophisticated consumer would be confused by the nebulous references in EOS's letter to "Fees" and "Coll. Costs" and would have no idea what those charges are, potentially could be, or whether they would be legitimate.

29. EOS violated 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692e, 1692e(10), 1692f and 1692f(1).

CLASS ALLEGATIONS

- 30. Plaintiff brings this action on behalf of a Class, consisting of (a) all natural persons in the State of Wisconsin (b) who were sent a collection letter in the form represented by Exhibit A to the complaint in this action, (c) seeking to collect a debt for personal, family or household purposes, (d) between July 18, 2016 and July 18, 2017, inclusive, (e) that was not returned by the postal service.
- 31. The Class is so numerous that joinder is impracticable. On information and belief, there are more than 50 members of the Class.
- 32. There are questions of law and fact common to the members of the class, which common questions predominate over any questions that affect only individual class members. The predominant common question is whether the Defendant complied with 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692e and 1692f.
- 33. Plaintiff's claims are typical of the claims of the Class members. All are based on the same factual and legal theories.
- 34. Plaintiff will fairly and adequately represent the interests of the Class members. Plaintiff has retained counsel experienced in consumer credit and debt collection abuse cases.
- 35. A class action is superior to other alternative methods of adjudicating this dispute. Individual cases are not economically feasible.

JURY DEMAND

36. Plaintiff hereby demands a trial by jury.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff requests that the Court enter judgment in favor of Plaintiff and the Class and against Defendant for:

- (a) actual damages;
- (b) statutory damages;
- (c) attorneys' fees, litigation expenses and costs of suit; and
- (d) such other or further relief as the Court deems proper.

Dated: July 18, 2017

ADEMI & O'REILLY, LLP

By: /S/ John D. Blythin
Shpetim Ademi (SBN 1026973)
John D. Blythin (SBN 1046105)
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EXHIBIT A



EOS CCA PO BOX 981002 BOSTON, MA 02298-1002

STATEMENT DATE	<u>08/2</u> 4/1
ACCOUNT#	340
CLIENT NAME	T-MOBILE US

NOTICE OF COLLECTION PLACEMENT

T-MOBILE USA has placed your account with us for collection for total amount shown above. We urge you to remit payment to our office, unless you dispute this debt.

Paying your total amount due can prevent further collection activity and possible credit reporting from occurring on this account subject to your validation rights set forth on the reverse side of this letter.

T-MOBILE USA values you as a subscriber and hopes to get you back to enjoying the many exclusive benefits of their service. If you wish to restore your service, any applicable termination fees on your account will be removed.

If mailing your payment, please detach the coupon below and mail it with your payment to the address on the coupon. Please send all other correspondence to EOS CCA, PO Box 556, Norwell, MA 02061-0556.

Please Call EOS CCA 1-855-666-9201

Please see reverse for important notices and account details.

Office Hours: Mon-Thur 8:00 AM - 9:00 PM EST, Fri 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM EST, Sat 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM EST

Detach remittance slip and enclose with payment

128018-70-138

PO BOX 981002 BOSTON, MA 02298-1002



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FEDERAL LAW

Unless you dispute the validity of this debt, or any portion thereof, within thirty days after receipt of this notice, we shall assume the debt to be valid. If you notify us in writing of your dispute within this thirty-day period, we will obtain verification of the debt, or a copy of a judgment against you, and a copy of such verification or judgment will be mailed to you. Upon your written request within the thirty-day period, we will provide you with the name and address of the original creditor, if different from the current creditor.

ļ					FEES		
	EOS CCA ACCOUNT#	CLIENT ACCOUNT#	PRINCIPAL	INTEREST	COLL. COSTS	BALANCE	
	3406	9874	\$1,331.21	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,331.21	
					TOTAL DUE:	\$1,331.21	

For payments and general account inquiries, call 1-855-666-9201 or 1-720-381-3735. For customer service issues, call our Consumer Relations Department at 1-877-395-5997.

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 THE REVERSE OF THE FORM.)

Place an X in the appropriate	Box: ☐ Green Bay Division	☑ Milwaukee Division
I. (a) PLAINTIFFS		DEFENDANTS
KELLEY RI	VERA	COLLECTO, INC. d/b/a EOS CCA
•	e of First Listed Plaintiff Milwaukee EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)	County of Residence of First Listed Defendant (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY) NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE LAND INVOLVED.
(2) 444 2 7 7		
	e, Address, and Telephone Number) 3620 E. Layton Ave., Cudahy, WI 53110	Attomeys (If Known)
(414) 482-8000-Telephor	ne (414) 482-8001-Facsimile	
II. BASIS OF JURISI	OICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only)	III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES (Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff (For Diversity Cases Only) and One Box for Defendant)
U.S. Government Plaintiff	3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party)	PTF DEF Citizen of This State
U.S. Government Defendant	4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)	Citizen of Another State 2 2 Incorporated and Principal Place 5 5 5 of Business In Another State
		Citizen or Subject of a 3 5 Foreign Nation 6 6
	T (Place an "X" in One Box Only)	
110 Insurance 120 Marine 130 Miller Act 140 Negotiable Instrument 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment 151 Medicare Act 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans (Excl. Veterans) 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits 160 Stockholders' Suits 190 Other Contract 195 Contract Product Liability 196 Franchise REAL PROPERTY 210 Land Condemnation 220 Foreclosure 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment 240 Torts to Land 245 Tort Product Liability 290 All Other Real Property	i=	ry -
☑ 1 Original ☐ 2 R	an "X" in One Box Only) emoved from	☐ 4 Reinstated or Reopened ☐ 5 Transferred from another district (specify) ☐ 6 Multidistrict Litigation ☐ 7 Appeal to District Judge from Magistrate Judgment
VI. CAUSE OF ACTI	15 U.S.C. 1692 et seq	u are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity):
VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:		
VIII. RELATED CAS IF ANY	(See instructions): JUDGE	DOCKET NUMBER
DATE	SIGNATURE OF	ATTORNEY OF RECORD
July 18, 2017	s/ John D	. Blythin
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY		

- MAG JUDGE - Case 2:17-cy-00993 Filed 07/18/17 Page 1 of 2 Pocument 1-2

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.C.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; 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 the nature of suit cannot be determined, be sure the cause of action, in Section VI below, is sufficient to enable the deputy clerk or the statistical clerks in the Administrative Office to determine the nature of suit. If the cause fits more than one nature of suit, select the most definitive.
- 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. (6) Check this box when a multidistrict case is transferred into the district under authority of Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1407. When this box is checked, do not check (5) above.

Appeal to District Judge from Magistrate Judgment. (7) Check this box for an appeal from a magistrate judge's decision.

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 dollar amount (in thousands of dollars) 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 Eastern District of Wisconsin

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KELLEY R	IVERA))
	<i>(s)</i>	_ /
v.	, ,) Civil Action No. 17-cv-993
))
COLLECTO, INC.	d/b/a EOS CCA)
	at(s)	- <i>'</i>)
		,
	SUMMONS	S IN A CIVIL ACTION
To: (Defendant's name and address)	COLLECTO, INC. c/o CORPORATION SEI 8040 EXCELSIOR DRIV MADISON, WI 53717	
A lawsuit has been file	ed against you.	
the United States or a United 12(a)(2) or (3) – you must se	States agency, or an office on the plaintiff an ar	on you (not counting the day you receive it) – or 60 days if you are deer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. aswer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the on must be served on the plaintiff or the plaintiff's attorney, whose
If you fail to respond. You also must file your answe		ll be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. t.
		STEPHEN C. DRIES, CLERK OF COURT
Date:		Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk
		Signature of Clerk of Deputy Clerk

Civil Action No. 17-cv-993

PROOF OF SERVICE

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

were r	eceived by me on (date)	·			
	☐ I personally served	the summons and the attached complain	nt on the individual at (place):		
			On (date)	; or	
	☐ I left the summons	and the attached complaint at the indiv	idual's residence or usual place of a	abode with (name)	
		, a perso	on of suitable age and discretion wh	o resides there,	
	on (date), and mailed a copy to the individual's last known address; or				
	☐ I served the summo	ons and the attached complaint on (name	of individual)		
	who is designated by la	w to accept service of process on beha	If of (name of organization)		
		on	(date)	; or	
	☐ I returned the summ	nons unexecuted because		; or	
	Other (specify):				
	My food one \$	for travel and \$	for services, for a total of \$	0.00	
				0.00	
	I declare under penalty	of perjury that this information is true.			
Date:					
2			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>Lawsuit: EOS CCA Threatens Consumers with Undisclosed Fees</u>