# IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT MIDDLE DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE NASHVILLE DIVISION

JENNIFER WEBB, On Behalf of Herself	)
and All Others Similarly Situated,	)
Plaintiff,	) ) CLASS AND COLLECTIVE ) ACTION
V.	) CASE NO
<b>APEX SYSTEMS, LLC and DELL</b>	) CASE NO
MARKETING CORP.,	) JUDGE
Defendants.	) JURY TRIAL DEMANDED
CLASS AND COLLECT	) VE ACTION COMPLAINT

# **INTRODUCTION**

1. Plaintiff Jennifer Webb ("Plaintiff") brings this lawsuit on behalf of herself and all similarly situated individuals as a collective action under 29 U.S.C. § 216(b) of the Fair Labor Standards Act ("FLSA") against Defendants Apex Systems, LLC ("Apex") and Dell Marketing Corporation ("Dell"). Plaintiff worked for Defendants at a call center operated by Dell at or near 1 Dell Parkway in Nashville, Tennessee.<sup>1</sup> Plaintiff seeks to recover unpaid wages owed to her and to all other similarly situated employees who have worked for Defendants at this Dell Call Center at any time within the three years before the filing of this lawsuit.

2. Plaintiff also asserts claims for unjust enrichment and breach of contract under Tennessee law against Defendants pursuant to Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Plaintiff asserts these claims for unpaid wages on behalf of herself and all members of the Rule 23 Class defined below.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This call center is referred to herein as the "Dell Call Center."

3. Plaintiff alleges that Defendants fail to pay call center workers at the Dell Call Center for all time worked by means of a facility-wide policy and practice. Specifically, Defendants have a common policy of only paying their call center workers in Nashville for work activities performed while they are logged into a phone dialing software platform referred to as the BT Phone Dialer. Defendants require their call center workers in Nashville to perform various preparatory work activities before their paid shifts begin, including, without limitation, activities related to the operation of their computers (*e.g.*, turning on or "waking up" their computers, logging into their computers, and logging into approximately a dozen programs needed to field calls). Through this uniform policy or practice, Defendants deliberately fail to pay their employees at the Dell Call Center for all time worked, including overtime, in willful violation of the FLSA and Tennessee state law.

4. On behalf of themselves and those she seeks to represent, Plaintiff seeks relief for, *inter alia*, unpaid wages, unpaid overtime wages, liquidated damages, prejudgment interest, costs, attorney's fees, and declaratory relief.

#### JURISDICTION AND VENUE

5. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over Plaintiff's FLSA claims under 28 U.S.C. § 1331 and 29 U.S.C. §§ 201, *et seq*.

6. This Court also has supplemental jurisdiction over Plaintiff's Tennessee state law claims under 28 U.S.C. § 1367 because these state law claims are so related to the FLSA claims that they form part of the same case or controversy.

7. Venue for this action properly lies in the Middle District of Tennessee, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391, because Defendants conduct business in this judicial district and because a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to the claims occurred in this judicial district.

#### **PARTIES**

8. Plaintiff Jennifer Webb resides in Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee. Plaintiff Webb worked for Defendants as a helpdesk support representative at the Dell Call Center from about October 2017 until about May 2018.<sup>2</sup>

9. Defendant Apex Systems, LLC is a Virginia Corporation doing business in the state of Tennessee, with its principal office in Calabasas, California.

10. Defendant Dell Marketing Corporation is a Delaware Corporation doing business in the state of Tennessee, with its principal office in Round Rock, Texas.

11. At all relevant times, Defendants have been regularly engaged in interstate commerce.

12. At all relevant times, Defendants have been enterprises within the meaning of § 3(r) and § 3(s)(1) of the FLSA, 29 U.S.C. §§ 203(r) & (s).

13. At all relevant times, Defendants have been employers within the meaning of the FLSA, 29 U.S.C. §§ 203, 206-07.

#### **FACTS**

14. Defendant Dell operates a call center in Nashville that provides helpdesk services to businesses who use Dell computers. If employees of these businesses experience technical problems with their computers, including with the software on their computers, their employees can call a helpdesk number to receive assistance. The Dell Call Center handles some of these helpdesk calls.

 $<sup>^2</sup>$  For a portion of this time, Plaintiff worked remotely from home as an accommodation for a medical issue.

15. In or around October 2017, Plaintiff Webb was hired by Defendant Apex, which is a staffing agency, to work at the Dell Call Center.

16. Plaintiff worked at the Dell Call Center from October 2017 to May 2018. For a portion of this time, Plaintiff worked remotely from home as an accommodation for a medical issue.

17. Although Plaintiff was hired and paid by Defendant Apex, Plaintiff's day-to-day work activities for this period of time were entirely controlled and directed by employees of Defendant Dell.

18. In fact, although some helpdesk representatives were hired and paid directly by Dell, and some helpdesk representatives were hired and paid directly by Apex, and some helpdesk representatives were hired and paid by other staffing agencies, employees of Dell controlled and directed all of the work activities of all of the helpdesk representatives working at the Dell Call Center.

19. Plaintiff and the similarly situated helpdesk representatives she seeks to represent are collectively referred to herein as the "Dell Call Center Workers."

20. The Dell Call Center Workers spend the majority of their work time on the phone.

21. Defendants classify the Dell Call Center Workers as "non-exempt" under the FLSA and pay them on an hourly basis.

22. Defendants instruct, require, and/or permit the Dell Call Center Workers to perform work "off the clock" without compensation.

23. Defendants' timekeeping system does not capture all the time the Dell Call Center Workers spend working each day. Defendants expect and require the Dell Call Center Workers to spend as much of their paid time as possible handling calls. 24. However, Defendants require the Dell Call Center Workers to perform off-theclock work activities without pay prior to the beginning of their scheduled shifts.

25. Defendants require the Dell Call Center Workers to be ready to handle calls at their scheduled start time. To be ready to do so by their scheduled start time, the Dell Call Center Workers arrive at their workstations before their scheduled start time to perform integral and indispensable preparatory tasks, including, without limitation: (a) turning on and / or booting up their computers; (b) starting up various programs, applications, and systems; (c) logging onto various programs, applications, and systems; (d) reading emails, updates, and/or training material; and (e) completing other essential tasks.

26. Finally, at their scheduled start times, the Dell Call Center Workers log into a phone dialing software platform referred to as the BT Phone Dialer. Promptly thereafter, the Dell Call Center Workers begin to receive calls, which requires the use of certain programs and systems on their computers. If the Dell Call Center Workers were to log into the BT Phone Dialer before booting up their computers, starting up various programs and applications, logging into various systems, and completing other essential tasks, then they would be unprepared and unable to receive calls or fulfill customer requests, which would subject them to discipline.

27. Defendants do not pay the Dell Call Center Workers for these integral and indispensable pre-shift tasks, which are necessary for the performance of their principal activity of handling calls on behalf of Defendants' clients. As a result, the Dell Call Center Workers spend several minutes each shift performing these tasks without pay.

28. As a result of Defendants' failure to pay the Dell Call Center Workers for these integral and indispensable pre-shift tasks, Defendants have failed to compensate Plaintiff and those similarly situated for all time worked, including hours worked over forty (40) in a week.

29. Defendants' failure to pay all wages, including overtime wages, due to the Dell Call

Center Workers is ongoing and willful.

#### **COLLECTIVE ACTION ALLEGATIONS**

30. Plaintiff asserts her FLSA claims pursuant to 29 U.S.C. § 216(b) as a collective

action on behalf of the following putative plaintiffs:

All current and former hourly-paid, FLSA non-exempt call center workers at Defendant Dell Marketing Corporation's call center located at 1 Dell Parkway in Nashville, Tennessee who at any time from June 24, 2015 through the present have worked in positions in which employees handle telephone calls on behalf of Dell clients (for example, Honeywell), including without limitation current and former employees who provide or provided customer service and/or technical support.

(the "Collective Class").

31. Plaintiff seeks to pursue her claims on behalf of all individuals who opt into this action pursuant to 29 U.S.C. § 216(b).

32. Plaintiff and the Collective Class are "similarly situated" as that term is defined in 29 U.S.C. § 216(b) because, *inter alia*, Defendants employed a uniform timekeeping system in the Nashville facility that resulted in a failure to pay the Collective Class for all hours worked, as mandated by the FLSA and Tennessee law.

33. All, or virtually all, of the legal and factual issues that will arise in litigating the collective claims are common to Plaintiff and the Collective Class. These issues include (1) whether and to what extent Defendants did not pay for all hours worked, (2) whether and to what extent these unpaid hours include hours worked over 40 in a week, and (3) whether and to what extent such overtime hours were compensated at one and one-half times the regular rate of pay.

# <u>CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS UNDER FEDERAL RULE</u> <u>OF CIVIL PROCEDURE 23</u>

34. Plaintiff brings this action on her own behalf and, pursuant to Rule 23 of the Federal

Rules of Civil Procedure, on behalf of the following class of individuals:

All current and former hourly-paid, FLSA non-exempt call center workers at Defendant Dell Marketing Corporation's call center located at 1 Dell Parkway in Nashville, Tennessee who at any time from July 24, 2012 through the present have worked in positions in which employees handle telephone calls on behalf of Dell clients (for example, Honeywell), including without limitation current and former employees who provide or provided customer service and/or technical support.

(the "Rule 23 Class").

35. Plaintiff is a members of the Rule 23 Class she seeks to represent.

36. The Rule 23 Class is sufficiently numerous that joinder of all members is impractical, satisfying Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23(a)(1). There are hundreds of class members during the class period.

37. All members of the Rule 23 Class share the same pivotal questions of law and fact, thereby satisfying Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23(a)(2). Namely, all members of the Rule 23 Class share the questions of (1) whether and to what extent Defendants did not pay for all hours worked, (2) whether and to what extent these unpaid hours include hours worked over forty (40) in a week, (3) whether and to what extent such overtime hours were compensated at one and one-half times the regular rate of pay, (4) whether Defendants' actions constituted unjust enrichment, and (5) whether Defendants' actions constituted a breach of contract.

38. Plaintiff's claims are typical of the claims of the Rule 23 Class, thus satisfying Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23(a)(3). Defendants' failure to pay for all time worked was not the result of any Plaintiff-specific circumstances. Rather, it arose from Defendants' common

payroll policies and practices, which Defendants applied to Call Center Workers at its Nashville call center.

39. Plaintiff will fairly and adequately represent and protect the interests of the Rule 23 Class. Further, Plaintiff has retained competent counsel experienced in representing classes of employees against their employers related to their employers' failure to pay them properly under the law, thus satisfying Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23(a)(4).

40. By consistently failing to pay their call center workers for all hours worked, Defendants have acted on grounds that apply generally to all members of the Rule 23 Class, such that final injunctive relief and corresponding declaratory relief is appropriate respecting the class as a whole. Accordingly, Plaintiff is entitled to pursue her Tennessee state law claims as a class action, pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23(b)(2).

41. By consistently failing to pay its call center workers for all hours worked, Defendants have created a scenario where questions of law and fact common to Rule 23 Class members predominate over any questions affecting only individual members. Thus, a class action is superior to other available methods for fair and efficient adjudication of this matter. Accordingly, Plaintiff is entitled to pursue her Tennessee state law claims as a class action, pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23(b)(3).

# (Violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act)

42. All previous paragraphs are incorporated as though fully set forth herein.

43. Plaintiff brings this claim on behalf of herself and all those similarly situated pursuant to Section 16(b) of the FLSA, 29 U.S.C. § 216(b).

44. At all times material to the allegations herein, Plaintiff was an employee entitled to the rights, protections, and benefits provided under the FLSA, 29 U.S.C. §§ 201, *et seq*.

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45. Defendants are employers covered by the FLSA.

46. Plaintiff and all similarly-situated employees are or were victims of a common, facility-wide compensation policy that fails to record and compensate all time worked by call center employees, including time worked pre-shift.

47. The FLSA entitles employees to compensation for every hour worked in a workweek. See 29 U.S.C. § 206(b).

48. Some of the uncompensated time at issue is time worked in excess of forty (40) hours per week.

49. The FLSA requires that covered employees receive overtime compensation "not less than one and one-half times" their regular rate of pay for hours worked over forty (40) in a week. 29 U.S.C. § 207.

50. Defendants have violated the FLSA by failing to compensate Plaintiff and the Collective Class on a daily basis for all time worked, including overtime.

51. In violation of the FLSA, Defendants acted willfully and with reckless disregard of clearly applicable FLSA provisions.

## **<u>COUNT II</u>** (Tennessee Breach of Contract)

52. All previous paragraphs are incorporated as though fully set forth herein.

53. Plaintiff brings this claim on behalf of all members of the Rule 23 Class.

54. Plaintiff and the Rule 23 Class members entered into employment agreements with Defendants whereby they agreed to perform work for Defendants in exchange for being compensated for all time worked.

55. The agreements were made between parties capable of contracting and contained mutual obligations and valid consideration.

56. Plaintiff and the Rule 23 Class members have performed all conditions precedent, if any, required of them under the agreement.

57. Defendants failed and refused to perform their obligations in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agreement by failing to pay Plaintiff and the Rule 23 Class members for all time worked on behalf of Defendants.

# <u>COUNT III</u> (Tennessee Unjust Enrichment)

58. All previous paragraphs are incorporated as though fully set forth herein.

59. Plaintiff brings this claim on behalf of all members of the Rule Class in the alternative to Count II.

60. Under Tennessee law, Defendants are obligated to pay Plaintiff and the Rule 23 Class members for all time worked.

61. Because of the wrongful activities described above, including the failure to pay wages due and owing, Defendants have received the benefit of Plaintiff and the Rule 23 Class members' unpaid labor and have therefore received money belonging to the Plaintiff and the Rule 23 Class.

62. Defendants were clearly aware of and appreciated the benefit that Plaintiff and the Rule 23 Class members conferred on it.

63. Defendants have been unjustly enriched as a result of accepting the work of Plaintiff and the Rule 23 Class without proper compensation for all time worked. It would be unjust to allow Defendants to enjoy the fruits of such employees' labor without proper compensation.

### PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays for the following relief on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated:

A. An order permitting this litigation to proceed as a collective action pursuant to 29 U.S.C. § 216(b) and as a class action pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23 on behalf of the Rule 23 Class;

B. Prompt notice of this litigation, pursuant to 29 U.S.C. § 216(b) to all potential members of the Collective Class, and pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23 to all members of the Rule 23 Class;

C. A declaration that Defendants have violated the FLSA and the common law of Tennessee;

D. A declaration that Defendants' violations of the FLSA;

E. A judgment against Defendants and in favor of Plaintiff and those she seeks to represent, for compensation for all unpaid and underpaid wages that Defendants have failed and refused to pay in violation of the FLSA and Tennessee law;

G. Prejudgment interest to the fullest extent permitted under the law;

H. Liquidated damages to the fullest extent permitted under the FLSA;

I. Litigation costs, expenses, and Plaintiff's attorneys' fees to the fullest extent permitted under the law; and,

J. Such other and further relief as this Court deems just and proper in equity and under the law.

#### JURY DEMAND

Plaintiff demands a jury trial as to all claims so triable.

Dated: July 24, 2018

Respectfully submitted,

<u>/s/ David W. Garrison</u> DAVID W. GARRISON (No. 24968) SCOTT P. TIFT (No. 27592) JOSHUA A. FRANK (No. 33294) BARRETT JOHNSTON MARTIN & GARRISON, LLC Bank of America Plaza 414 Union Street, Suite 900 Nashville, TN 37219 Telephone: (615) 244-2202 Facsimile: (615) 252-3798 dgarrison@barrettjohnston.com stift@barrettjohnston.com jfrank@barrettjohnston.com

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Attorneys for Plaintiffs

\* Pro Hac Vice Motion Anticipated

# **CIVIL COVER SHEET**

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

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS JENNIFER WEBB, On B Situated,	ehalf of Herself and A	ll Others Similarly	DEFENDANTS APEX SYSTEMS,	LLC and DELL MARKE	TING CORP.,
(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff <u>Davidson County, TN</u> (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)		NOTE: IN LAND CO	County of Residence of First Listed Defendant (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY) NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.		
(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, 7 Barrett Johnston Martin & 414 Union St., Suite 900 (615)-244-2202	& Garrison, LLC	r)	Attorneys (If Known)		
II. BASIS OF JURISDI	CTION (Place an "X" in O	One Box Only)	II. CITIZENSHIP OF P	RINCIPAL PARTIES	(Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff
1 U.S. Government Plaintiff	3 Federal Question (U.S. Government)	Not a Party)		<b>IF DEF</b> 1 □ 1 Incorporated <i>or</i> Pr of Business In 1	
2 U.S. Government Defendant	☐ 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizensh)	ip of Parties in Item III)		2 2 Incorporated and I of Business In A	Another State
			Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country	3 🗖 3 Foreign Nation	
IV. NATURE OF SUIT					
CONTRACT      110 Insurance      120 Marine      130 Miller Act      140 Negotable Instrument      150 Recovery of Overpayment     & Enforcement of Judgment      151 Medicare Act      152 Recovery of Defaulted     Student Loans     (Excludes Veterans)      153 Recovery of Overpayment     of Veteran's Benefits      160 Stockholders' Suits      190 Other Contract      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	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 700 Other Personal Injury 360 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	<b>PERSONAL INJURY</b> 365 Personal Injury - Product Liability         367 Health Care/ Pharmaceutical Personal Injury Product Liability         368 Asbestos Personal Injury Product Liability         368 Asbestos Personal         1njury Product         2370 Other Fraud         371 Truth in Lending         380 Other Personal         Property Damage         985 Property Damage         Product Liability <b>PRISONER PETITIONS Habeas Corpus:</b> 463 Alien Detainee         530 General         535 Death Penalty         Other:         540 Mandamus & Other         555 Prison Condition         560 Civil Rights         555 Prison Condition	Act 720 Labor/Management Relations 740 Railway Labor Act 751 Family and Medical Leave Act 790 Other Labor Litigation	BANKRUPTCY  BANKRUPTCY  A 22 Appeal 28 USC 158  A 23 Withdrawal 28 USC 157  PROPERTY RIGHTS  B 20 Copyrights B 30 Patent B 40 Trademark  SOCIAL SECURITY B 861 HIA (1395ff) B 862 Black Lung (923) B 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g)) B 864 SSID Title XVI B 865 RSI (405(g))  FEDERAL TAX SUITS B 70 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant) B 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         60 Consumer Credit         490 Cable/Sat TV         850 Securities/Commodities/Exchange         890 Other Statutory Actions         891 Agricultural Acts         895 Freedom of Information Act         896 Arbitration         950 Constitutionality of State Statutes
	moved from $\Box$ 3 te Court	Appellate Court	(specify)	er District Litigation ) Transfer	
VI. CAUSE OF ACTIO	Brief description of ca	ause:	filing (Do not cite jurisdictional stat essee Common Law Claim tandards Act and Tenness		
VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:	UNDER RULE 2	IS A <b>CLASS ACTION</b> 3, F.R.Cv.P.	DEMAND \$	CHECK YES only JURY DEMAND:	if demanded in complaint: ★ Yes □ No
VIII. RELATED CASI IF ANY	E(S) (See instructions):	JUDGE		DOCKET NUMBER	
DATE 07/24/2018 FOR OFFICE USE ONLY		SIGNATURE OF ATTO /s/ David W. Gar			
	adita-cv-00686	Documenta-1	Filed 07/24/18 GEP	age 1 of 1 PagelD	D#E 13

# **ClassAction.org**

This complaint is part of ClassAction.org's searchable class action lawsuit database and can be found in this post: Former Call Center Employee Sues Apex Systems, Dell Marketing Corp. Over Allegedly Unpaid 'Off-the-Clock' Work