

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
AUSTIN DIVISION

LaTasha Williams, individually and on behalf of all others
similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

-v.-

Plaza Services, LLC and John Does 1-25,

Defendants.

Civil Action No: 1:18-cv-588

**CLASS ACTION
COMPLAINT**

**DEMAND FOR
JURY TRIAL**

Plaintiff LaTasha Williams (hereinafter, "Plaintiff" or "Williams"), a Texas resident, brings this Class Action Complaint by and through her attorneys, Stein Saks, PLLC against Defendant Plaza Services, LLC (hereinafter "Defendant Plaza"), individually and on behalf of a class of all others similarly situated, pursuant to Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, based upon information and belief of Plaintiff's counsel, except for allegations specifically pertaining to Plaintiff, which are based upon Plaintiff's personal knowledge.

INTRODUCTION

1. Congress enacted the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act (the "FDCPA" or the "Act") in 1977 in response to the "abundant evidence of the use of abusive, deceptive, and unfair debt collection practices by many debt collectors." 15 U.S.C. §1692(a). At that time, Congress was concerned that "abusive debt collection practices contribute to the number of personal bankruptcies, to material instability, to the loss of jobs, and to invasions of individual privacy." *Id.* Congress concluded that "existing laws...[we]re inadequate to protect consumers," and that

"the effective collection of debts" does not require "misrepresentation or other abusive debt collection practices." 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692(b) & (c).

2. Congress explained that the purpose of the Act was not only to eliminate abusive debt collection practices, but also to "insure that those debt collectors who refrain from using abusive debt collection practices are not competitively disadvantaged." *Id.* § 1692(e). After determining that the existing consumer protection laws were inadequate. *Id.* § 1692(b), Congress gave consumers a private cause of action against debt collectors who fail to comply with the Act. *Id.* § 1692k.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

3. The Court has jurisdiction over this class action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331 and 15 U.S.C. § 1692 et. seq. The Court has pendent jurisdiction over any state law claims in this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1367(a).

4. Venue is proper in this judicial district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(2) as this is where a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to the claim occurred.

NATURE OF THE ACTION

5. Plaintiff brings this class action on behalf of a class of Texas consumers under § 1692 et seq. of Title 15 of the United States Code, commonly referred to as the Fair Debt Collections Practices Act ("FDCPA"), and

6. Plaintiff is seeking damages and declaratory relief.

PARTIES

7. Plaintiff is a resident of the State of Texas, County of Travis, residing at 1501 Heatherwilde Blvd, #534, Pflugerville, TX 78660.

8. Defendant Plaza is a "debt collector" as the phrase is defined in 15 U.S.C. § 1692(a)(6) and used in the FDCPA with an address at 110 Hammond Drive, Suite 110, Atlanta, GA 30328.

9. Upon information and belief, Defendant Plaza is a company that uses the mail, telephone, and facsimile and regularly engages in business the principal purpose of which is to attempt to collect debts alleged to be due another.

10. John Does 1-25, are fictitious names of individuals and businesses alleged for the purpose of substituting names of Defendants whose identities will be disclosed in discovery and should be made parties to this action.

CLASS ALLEGATIONS

11. Plaintiff brings this claim on behalf of the following class, pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(a) and 23(b)(3).

12. The Class consists of:

- a. all individuals with addresses in the State of Texas;
- b. to whom Defendant Plaza sent an initial collection letter attempting to collect a consumer debt;
- c. on behalf of the creditor Money Key;
- d. that falsely and misleadingly omits that the consumer must verify or request information regarding the alleged debt in writing to be effective;
- e. which letter was sent on or after a date one (1) year prior to the filing of this action and on or before a date twenty-one (21) days after the filing of this action.

13. The identities of all class members are readily ascertainable from the records of Defendants and those companies and entities on whose behalf they attempt to collect and/or have purchased debts.

14. Excluded from the Plaintiff Class are the Defendants and all officer, members, partners, managers, directors and employees of the Defendants and their respective immediate families, and legal counsel for all parties to this action, and all members of their immediate families.

15. There are questions of law and fact common to the Plaintiff Class, which are common issues that predominate over any issues involving only individual class members. The principal issue is whether the Defendants' written communications to consumers, in the forms attached as Exhibits A, violate 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692e and 1692g.

16. The Plaintiff's claims are typical of the class members, as all are based upon the same facts and legal theories. The Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the Plaintiff Class defined in this Complaint. The Plaintiff has retained counsel with experience in handling consumer lawsuits, complex legal issues, and class actions, and neither the Plaintiff nor his attorneys have any interests, which might cause them to not vigorously pursue this action.

17. This action has been brought, and may properly be maintained, as a class action pursuant to the provisions of Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure because there is a well-defined community interest in the litigation:

- a. **Numerosity:** The Plaintiff is informed and believes, and on that basis alleges, that the Plaintiff Class defined above is so numerous that joinder of all members would be impractical.
- b. **Common Questions Predominate:** Common questions of law and fact exist as to all members of the Plaintiff Class and those questions predominate over any questions or issues involving only individual class members. The principal issue

is whether the Defendants' written communications to consumers, in the forms attached as Exhibit A violate 15 § 1692e and §1692g.

- c. **Typicality:** The Plaintiff's claims are typical of the claims of the class members. The Plaintiff and all members of the Plaintiff Class have claims arising out of the Defendants' common uniform course of conduct complained of herein.
- d. **Adequacy:** The Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the class members insofar as Plaintiff has no interests that are adverse to the absent class members. The Plaintiff is committed to vigorously litigating this matter. Plaintiff has also retained counsel experienced in handling consumer lawsuits, complex legal issues, and class actions. Neither the Plaintiff nor his counsel have any interests which might cause them not to vigorously pursue the instant class action lawsuit.
- e. **Superiority:** A class action is superior to the other available means for the fair and efficient adjudication of this controversy because the individual joinder of all members would be impracticable. Class action treatment will permit a large number of similarly situated persons to prosecute their common claims in a single forum efficiently and without unnecessary duplication of effort and expense that individual actions would engender.

18. Certification of a class under Rule 23(b)(3) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure is also appropriate in that the questions of law and fact common to members of the Plaintiff Class predominate over any questions affecting an individual member. A class action is superior to other available methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of the controversy.

19. Depending on the outcome of further investigation and discovery, Plaintiff may, at the time of class certification motion, seek to certify a class(es) only as to particular issues pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(c)(4).

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

20. Plaintiff repeats, reiterates and incorporates the allegations contained in the foregoing paragraphs with the same force and effect as if the same were set forth at length herein.

21. Some time prior to September 1, 2017, an obligation was allegedly incurred to Money Key.

22. The obligation arose out of a transaction involving an alleged debt incurred by Plaintiff with Money Key for funds which Plaintiff used primarily for personal, family or household purposes.

23. The alleged Money Key obligation is a "debt" as defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(5).

24. Money Key is a "creditor" as defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(4).

25. Money Key contracted with the Defendant Plaza to collect the alleged debt.

26. Defendant collects and attempts to collect debts incurred or alleged to have been incurred for personal, family or household purposes on behalf of creditors using the United States Postal Services, telephone and internet.

Violation – September 1, 2017 Collection Letter

27. On or about September 1, 2017, Defendant Plaza sent Plaintiff an initial collection letter (the "Letter") regarding the alleged debt owed to Money Key. The Letter is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

28. When a debt collector solicits payment from a consumer, it must, within five days of an initial communication, provide the consumer with a written validation notice, known as a “G notice,” which must include the following information:

(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 the 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).

(emphasis added)

29. The disclosures required under §1692g(a) are more commonly known as the “G Notice.”

30. The Letter, which in this case was a “G Notice,” does not meet the required guidelines of the FDCPA because it falsely omits the requirement of the “G Notice” that the consumer must (1) dispute the debt in writing to receive verification of the debt and (2) must submit a written request to receive the identity of the original creditor. §§1692g(a)(4) and 1692g(a)(5).

31. In omitting the writing requirement Defendant falsely communicates the consumer's requirements under the FDCPA.

32. This false and inaccurate portion of the Letter is deceptive and misleading because it fails to advise Plaintiff of the proper method for exercising her validation rights under the FDCPA.

33. Plaintiff sustained an informational injury as she was not fully apprised of her rights and responsibilities necessary to properly exercise her options under §1692g.

34. Plaintiff effectively waived her rights to this statutorily available information because she was not properly informed of the "G-Notice" requirements set forth in the FDCPA.

35. As a result of Defendant's deceptive misleading and false debt collection practices, Plaintiff has been damaged.

COUNT I
VIOLATIONS OF THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT 15 U.S.C. §1692e
et seq.

36. Plaintiff repeats, reiterates and incorporates the allegations contained in the foregoing paragraphs with the same force and effect as if the same were set forth at length herein.

37. Defendant's debt collection efforts attempted and/or directed towards the Plaintiff violated various provisions of the FDCPA, including but not limited to 15 U.S.C. § 1692e.

38. Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. §1692e, a debt collector may not use any false, deceptive, or misleading representation or means in connection with the collection of any debt.

39. Defendant violated said section by:

- a. Making a false and misleading representation in violation of §1692e(10).

40. Due to the fact that Defendant's conduct violated Section 1692e et seq. of the FDCPA, Defendant is liable to Plaintiff for actual damages, statutory damages, costs and attorneys' fees.

COUNT II
VIOLATIONS OF THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT 15 U.S.C.
§1692g et seq.

41. Plaintiff repeats, reiterates and incorporates the allegations contained in in the foregoing paragraphs with the same force and effect as if the same were set forth at length herein.

42. Defendant's debt collection efforts attempted and/or directed towards the Plaintiff violated various provisions of the FDCPA, including but not limited to 15 U.S.C. § 1692g.

43. Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. §1692g, when a debt collector solicits payment from a consumer, it must, within five days of an initial communication, provide the consumer with a written validation notice, known as the "G Notice," which must include the following information:

(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 the 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).

44. Defendant violated this section by deceptively misrepresenting the requirements of §§1692g(a)(4) and (5) in omitting the requirement that the consumer must request debt validation and creditor information in writing as required under the FDCPA.

45. Plaintiff sustained an informational injury as she was wrongfully misinformed that she need not request the debt information in writing.

46. Plaintiff was harmed due to the fact that she was misled into believing that she was not required to dispute her debt in writing to obtain validation of the debt.

47. Due to the fact that Defendant's conduct violated Section 1692g et seq. of the FDCPA, Defendant is liable to Plaintiff for actual damages, statutory damages, costs and attorneys' fees.

DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY

48. Pursuant to Rule 38 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, Plaintiff hereby requests a trial by jury on all issues so triable.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff LaTasha Williams, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated, demands judgment from Defendant Plaza Services, LLC as follows:

1. Declaring that this action is properly maintainable as a Class Action and certifying Plaintiff as Class representative, and Yaakov Saks, Esq. as Class Counsel;
2. Awarding Plaintiff and the Class statutory damages;
3. Awarding Plaintiff and the Class actual damages;

4. Awarding Plaintiff costs of this Action, including reasonable attorneys' fees and expenses;
5. Awarding pre-judgment interest and post-judgment interest; and
6. Awarding Plaintiff and the Class such other and further relief as this Court may deem just and proper.

Respectfully Submitted,

STEIN SAKS, PLLC

/s/ Yaakov Saks _____

Yaakov Saks, Esq.

285 Passaic Street

Hackensack, NJ 07601

Telephone: 201-282-6500

Fax: 201-282-6501

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Attorneys for Plaintiff LaTasha Williams

EXHIBIT A



110 Hammond Drive
Suite 110
Atlanta, GA 30328

September 01, 2017

LaTasha williams
[REDACTED]

ACCOUNT SUMMARY	
Original Creditor:	Money Key
Original Account Number:	[REDACTED] 2309
Open Date:	08/27/15
Plaza Reference #:	[REDACTED] 8819
Last 4 SSN#:	3337
Current Balance:	\$131.88

DEBT VALIDATION NOTICE

LaTasha williams,

Plaza Services has purchased your account from the original creditor named above. In response to your dispute of items on your credit report, we wish to confirm that our information is correct.

If the above information is correct but you are not able to repay this debt, we want to help you. We work with our consumers to find affordable repayment arrangements.

Unless you notify Plaza Services 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 us 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 information, including the name and address of the original creditor.

Sincerely,

Plaza Compliance Department

This communication from a debt collector is an attempt to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

We Have Many Options

Online	Phone	Mail	E-Mail
www.pay-plaza.com	877-475-1103	Plaza Services 110 Hammond Drive, Suite 110 Atlanta, GA 30328	mbrown@plazaservicesllc.com

110 Hammond Drive
Suite 110
Atlanta, GA 30328

LaTasha williams
[REDACTED]

IMPORTANT: TO RECEIVE PROPER CREDIT BE SURE TO ENCLOSE THIS PORTION WITH YOUR PAYMENT IN FULL

Creditor: Money Key
Acct #: 281712309 Balance: \$131.88

PAY BY PHONE TOLL-FREE: VISA M/C DISC VOR

OR PAY BY CREDIT CARD:

Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____ Payment Amt: \$ _____ 3 Digit CCV: _____

Print Name: _____ Signature: _____

RETURN IN PROVIDED ENVELOPE TO:
110 Hammond Drive
Suite 110
Atlanta, GA 30328

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

LaTasha Williams, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated

(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff Travis (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)

(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number) Yaakov Saks, Esq., Stein Saks, PLLC 285 Passaic St., Hackensack, NJ 07601 201-282-6500 x 101, ysaks@steinsakslegal.com

DEFENDANTS

Plaza Services, LLC and John Does 1-25

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.

Attorneys (If Known)

II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff, 2 U.S. Government Defendant, 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party), 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)

III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES (Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff and One Box for Defendant)

Table with columns for Plaintiff (PTF) and Defendant (DEF) citizenship: Citizen of This State, Citizen of Another State, Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country, Incorporated or Principal Place of Business In This State, Incorporated and Principal Place of Business In Another State, Foreign Nation.

IV. NATURE OF SUIT (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

Large table with categories: CONTRACT, REAL PROPERTY, TORTS, CIVIL RIGHTS, PRISONER PETITIONS, FORFEITURE/PENALTY, LABOR, IMMIGRATION, BANKRUPTCY, SOCIAL SECURITY, FEDERAL TAX SUITS, OTHER STATUTES.

V. ORIGIN (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- 1 Original Proceeding, 2 Removed from State Court, 3 Remanded from Appellate Court, 4 Reinstated or Reopened, 5 Transferred from Another District, 6 Multidistrict Litigation

VI. CAUSE OF ACTION

Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity): Fair Debt Collection Practices Act - 15 USC Sect. 1692 et seq. Brief description of cause: Improper collection efforts involving false and misleading collection letter

VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:

CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER RULE 23, F.R.Cv.P. DEMAND \$ CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint: JURY DEMAND: Yes No

VIII. RELATED CASE(S) IF ANY

(See instructions): JUDGE DOCKET NUMBER

DATE 07/13/2018 SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD /s/Yaakov Saks

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

RECEIPT # AMOUNT APPLYING IFP JUDGE MAG. JUDGE Print Save As... Reset

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ATTORNEYS COMPLETING CIVIL COVER SHEET FORM JS 44

Authority For Civil Cover Sheet

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replaces nor supplements the filings and service of pleading or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. Consequently, a civil cover sheet is submitted to the Clerk of Court for each civil complaint filed. The attorney filing a case should complete the form as follows:

- I.(a) Plaintiffs-Defendants.** Enter names (last, first, middle initial) of plaintiff and defendant. If the plaintiff or defendant is a government agency, use only the full name or standard abbreviations. If the plaintiff or defendant is an official within a government agency, identify first the agency and then the official, giving both name and title.
- (b) County of Residence.** For each civil case filed, except U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county where the first listed plaintiff resides at the time of filing. In U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county in which the first listed defendant resides at the time of filing. (NOTE: In land condemnation cases, the county of residence of the "defendant" is the location of the tract of land involved.)
- (c) Attorneys.** Enter the firm name, address, telephone number, and attorney of record. If there are several attorneys, list them on an attachment, noting in this section "(see attachment)".
- II. Jurisdiction.** The basis of jurisdiction is set forth under Rule 8(a), F.R.Cv.P., which requires that jurisdictions be shown in pleadings. Place an "X" in one of the boxes. If there is more than one basis of jurisdiction, precedence is given in the order shown below.
 United States plaintiff. (1) Jurisdiction based on 28 U.S.C. 1345 and 1348. Suits by agencies and officers of the United States are included here.
 United States defendant. (2) When the plaintiff is suing the United States, its officers or agencies, place an "X" in this box.
 Federal question. (3) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1331, where jurisdiction arises under the Constitution of the United States, an amendment to the Constitution, an act of Congress or a treaty of the United States. In cases where the U.S. is a party, the U.S. plaintiff or defendant code takes precedence, and box 1 or 2 should be marked.
 Diversity of citizenship. (4) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1332, where parties are citizens of different states. When Box 4 is checked, the citizenship of the different parties must be checked. (See Section III below; **NOTE: federal question actions take precedence over diversity cases.**)
- III. Residence (citizenship) of Principal Parties.** This section of the JS 44 is to be completed if diversity of citizenship was indicated above. Mark this section for each principal party.
- IV. Nature of Suit.** Place an "X" in the appropriate box. If 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 clerk(s) 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 six 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.
- VI. Cause of Action.** Report the civil statute directly related to the cause of action and give a brief description of the cause. **Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity.** Example: U.S. Civil Statute: 47 USC 553 Brief Description: Unauthorized reception of cable service
- VII. Requested in Complaint.** Class Action. Place an "X" in this box if you are filing a class action under Rule 23, F.R.Cv.P.
 Demand. In this space enter the actual dollar amount being demanded or indicate other demand, such as a preliminary injunction.
 Jury Demand. Check the appropriate box to indicate whether or not a jury is being demanded.
- VIII. Related Cases.** This section of the JS 44 is used to reference related pending cases, if any. If there are related pending cases, insert the docket numbers and the corresponding judge names for such cases.

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

ClassAction.org

This complaint is part of ClassAction.org's searchable class action lawsuit database and can be found in this post: [Plaza Services Misled Consumer Regarding Dispute Rights, Class Action Claims](#)
