

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

SAMUEL WILLIAMS, pleading on his own behalf and on behalf of all other similarly situated consumers,)))	Case No.:
Plaintiff,))	CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT
VS.)	4 1991
FRONTLINE ASSET STRATEGIES;)	17
VELOCITY INVESTMENTS, LLC.)	
Defendant.)	

Plaintiff, SAMUEL WILLIAMS (hereinafter "Plaintiff"), on behalf of himself and all other similarly situated consumers, by and through undersigned counsel, hereby alleges against FRONTLINE ASSET STRATEGIES (hereinafter "FAS") and VELOCITY INVESTIMENTS, LLC. (hereinafter "Velocity") (collectively referred to as "Defendants"), as follows:

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

1. This is an action for damages arising from Defendant's violations of the Fair Debt Collections Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. §1692 *et seq.* (hereinafter "FDCPA").

JURSIDICTION AND VENUE

This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1331 and 15 U.S.C.
 §1692k (d).

3. Venue is proper in this district under 28 U.S.C §1391(b).

PARTIES

Case 2:17-cv-03119-JD Document 1 Filed 07/13/17 Page 2 of 10

4. Plaintiff is a resident of Downington, Pennsylvania and is a "consumer" as the phrase is defined and applied under 15 U.S.C. §1692(a) of the FDCPA.

5. Defendant FAS is a corporation doing business in the State of Pennsylvania, with its corporate address as 2700 Snelling Ave N., Suite 250, Roseville, MN 55113, and is a "debt collector" as the phrase is defined and applied under 15 U.S.C. §1692(a) of the FDCPA in that they regularly attempt to collect on debts primarily incurred for personal, family or household purposes.

6. Defendant Velocity is a corporation doing business in the State of Pennsylvania, with its corporate address as 1800 State Route 34, Suite 404A, Wall Township, New Jersey 07719, and is a "debt collector" as the phrase is defined and applied under 15 U.S.C. §1692(a) of the FDCPA in that they regularly attempt to collect on debts primarily incurred for personal, family or household purposes.

FACTUAL STATEMENT

 On a date better known by Defendant, Plaintiff incurred credit card debt in the amount of \$1,384.80.

Credit Card debt is considered a "debt" as that term is used and defined under the FDCPA.

9. In attempt to collect said debt, Defendant FAS sent Plaintiff a dunning letter on August 5, 2016 offering three payment plans for settling his debt. Exhibit A. Two of these options included partial payments for six and twelve months respectively.

10. Exhibit A sought to collect a purported credit card debt incurred for personal, family or household purposes and not for business purposes. The underlying debt is beyond the statute of limitations.

11. The dunning letter clearly stated that the law limits how long a consumer be sued. However, it did not indicate or inform Plaintiff that a partial payment on the debt would restart the running of the statute of limitations.

12. Additionally, the dunning letter falsely indicated that because the debt is beyond the statute of limitations, Velocity Investments LLC, the current creditor, will *choose* not to sue Plaintiff for the debt. In fact, Velocity Investments LLC *could not* sue Plaintiff for the debt. Furthering this confusion is the fact that the least sophisticated consumer reads this language and believes that although Velocity Investments LLC has chosen not to sue Plaintiff, FAS may still choose to sue him.

13. Notwithstanding the above, the dunning letter contains the language: "The total amount due may change due to interest being added to your account." Upon information and belief, once the underlying debt is charged off, FAS no longer pursues interest. Accordingly, by threatening that non-payment of the debt may cause the balance to increase, Defendant has made a false threat.

 Accordingly, Defendant's letter is false, deceptive, and misleading in violation of the FDCPA.

15. Defendant FAS sent Exhibit A to Plaintiff to collect on behalf of the current creditor Velocity. FAS and Velocity maintain an agent-principle relationship as is evident from the information provided within the letter. Velocity is a debt collector. Accordingly, Velocity is vicariously liable for FAS's FDCPA violations.

CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS

The Class

16. Plaintiff brings this as a class action pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 23.

17. Plaintiff seeks certification of the following classes, initially defined as follows:

<u>Class</u>: All consumers with a Pennsylvania address that have received collection letters from Defendant concerning debts used primarily for personal, household, or family purposes within one year prior to the filing of this complaint that a) fails to provide a partial payment disclosure, b) fails to disclose that the consumer cannot be sued on the debt, or c) falsely threatens the accrual of interest.

18. Excluded from the Class is Defendant herein, and any person, firm, trust, corporation, or other entity related to or affiliated with the defendant, including, without limitation, persons who are officers, directors, employees, associates or partners of Defendant.

<u>Numerosity</u>

19. Upon information and belief, Defendant has filed numerous letters in an attempt to collect a debt to hundreds of consumers throughout the State of Pennsylvania, each of which violates the FDCPA. The members of the Class, therefore, are believed to be so numerous that joinder of all members is impracticable.

20. The letters sent by Defendant, and received by the Class, are to be evaluated by the objective standard of the hypothetical "least sophisticated consumer."

21. The exact number and identities of the Class members are unknown at this time and can only be ascertained through discovery. Identification of the Class members is a matter capable of ministerial determination from Defendant's records.

Common Questions of Law and Fact

22. There are questions of law and fact common to the class that predominates over any questions affecting only individual Class members. These common questions of law and fact include, without limitation: (i) whether Defendant violated various provisions of the FDCPA; (ii)

whether Plaintiff and the Class have been injured by Defendant's conduct; (iii) whether Plaintiff and the Class have sustained damages and are entitled to restitution as a result of Defendant's wrongdoing and, if so, what is the proper measure and appropriate statutory formula to be applied in determining such damages and restitution; and (iv) whether Plaintiff and the Class are entitled to declaratory and/or injunctive relief.

Typicality

23. The Plaintiff's claims are typical of the claims of the class members. Plaintiff and all members of the Plaintiff's Class defined in this complaint have claims arising out of the Defendant's common uniform course of conduct complained of herein. Plaintiff's claims are typical of the claims of the Class, and Plaintiff has no interests adverse or antagonistic to the interests of other members of the Class.

Protecting the Interests of the Class Members

24. Plaintiff will fairly and adequately represent the Class members' interests, in that the Plaintiff's counsel is experienced and, further, anticipates no impediments in the pursuit and maintenance of the class action as sought herein.

25. Neither the Plaintiff nor his counsel have any interests, which might cause them not to vigorously pursue the instant class action lawsuit.

Proceeding Via Class Action is Superior and Advisable

26. A class action is superior to other methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of the claims herein asserted, this being specifically envisioned by Congress as a principal means of enforcing the FDCPA, as codified by 15 U.S.C.§ 1692(k).

Case 2:17-cv-03119-JD Document 1 Filed 07/13/17 Page 6 of 10

27. The members of the Class are generally unsophisticated individuals, whose rights will not be vindicated in the absence of a class action.

28. Prosecution of separate actions by individual members of the Class would create the risk of inconsistent or varying adjudications resulting in the establishment of inconsistent or varying standards for the parties.

29. Certification of a class under Rule 23(b)(2) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure is also appropriate in that a determination that the said messages violate 15 U.S.C. § 1692e(11) is tantamount to declaratory relief and any monetary relief under the FDCPA would be merely incidental to that determination.

30. 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's Class predominate over any questions affecting an individual member, and a class action is superior to other available methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of the controversy.

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

32. A class action will permit a large number of similarly situated persons to prosecute their common claims in a single forum simultaneously, efficiently, and without the duplication of effort and expense that numerous individual actions would engender. Class treatment also will permit the adjudication of relatively small claims by many Class members who could not otherwise afford to seek legal redress for the wrongs complained of herein.

33. Absent a class action, the Class members will continue to suffer losses borne from Defendant's breaches of Class members' statutorily protected rights as well as monetary damages,

thus allowing and enabling: (a) Defendant's conduct to proceed and; (b) Defendant to further enjoy the benefit of its ill-gotten gains.

34. Defendant has acted, and will act, on grounds generally applicable to the entire Class, thereby making appropriate a final injunctive relief or corresponding declaratory relief with respect to the Class as a whole.

<u>COUNT I</u> <u>VIOLATIONS OF THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT</u> <u>15 U.S.C. §1692 *et seq*</u>

35. Plaintiff repeats the allegations contained in the above paragraphs and incorporates them as if specifically set forth at length herein.

36. Defendant's collection letter fails to properly inform consumers that their debt was past the statute of limitations and taking advantage of a partial payment option would restart the running of the statute. Accordingly, Defendant has violated the following provisions of the FDCPA:

37. Section 1692e provides:

§ 1692e. False or misleading representations

A debt collector may not use any false, deceptive, or misleading representation or means in connection with the collection of any debt. Without limiting the general application of the foregoing, the following conduct is a violation of this section:...

(2) The false representation of-

(A) The character, amount or legal status of any debt

(10) The use of any false representation or deceptive means to collect or attempt to collect any debt or to obtain information concerning a consumer...

38. Defendant's collection letter is confusing and misleading regarding the reasonable interpretation of the balance owed.

39. Section 1692f provides:

§ 1692f. Unfair Practices

A debt collector may not use unfair or unconscionable means to collect or attempt to collect any debt....

<u>COUNT II</u> <u>VICARIOUS LIABILTY OF DEFENDANT VELOCITY</u>

40. Plaintiff repeats the allegations contained in the above paragraphs and incorporates them as if specifically set forth at length herein.

41. Defendant Velocity is a debt collector as the phrase is defined and applied under 15 U.S.C. §1692(a) of the FDCPA in that they regularly attempt to collect on debts primarily incurred for personal, family or household purposes.

42. Under traditional agency principles, vicarious liability does not require specific acts of control, but rather allows for principals to be held liable for the acts of their agents when the agents are acting in the scope of their authority

43. FAS violated the FDCPA while acting as an agent on behalf of Velocity and acting within the scope of its authority.

44. It is a reasonable inference that one debt collector undertaking debt collection activities on behalf of another is acting within the scope of its authority

45. Upon information and belief, Velocity enlisted FAS to engage in unlawful debt collection activities on its behalf in an attempt to shield itself from liability.

46. As such, Velocity is vicariously liable for the acts of its agent FAS in violating the FDCPA.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, Samuel Williams, respectfully requests that this Court do the

following for the benefit of Plaintiff:

- a. Enter an Order declaring Defendant's actions, as described above, in violation of the FDCPA;
- b. Enter an Order for Injunctive Relief preventing Defendant from using said collection letters to collect debts from consumer debtors;
- c. Appoint Plaintiff as the Class Representative, and appoint Plaintiff's Counsel as Lead Counsel for the Class;
- d. Enter a judgment against Defendants for statutory damages, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k;
- e. Award costs and reasonable attorneys' fees, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k; and
- f. Grant such other and further relief as may be just and proper.

JURY TRIAL DEMAND

47. Plaintiff demands a jury trial on all issues so triable.

Dated this 11th of July, 2017.

Respectfully Submitted,

<u>/s/Alexander R. Ferrante, Esq.</u> Alexander R. Ferrante, Esq. Gold & Ferrante, P.C. 261 Old York Road Suite 526 Jenkintown, PA 19046 Tel: (215)- 872-5127 aferrante1@verizon.net



Deer SAMUEL WILLIAMS

Your definiquent account has been harned over to Freudane Asset Sitzangies, LLC for collection. As of the date of this hutter, your owe \$1,384 and Good news, your current conduct has authorized at to provide the following payment options in order to periodice your debt:

 Option 1
 Resolve slas debt. with a constant payment of \$415.44

 Option 2
 Resolve this debt. with six constitutive monthly payments of \$92.32

 Option 3
 Ranove this debt. with receive constitutive monthly payments of \$51.93

We request passment on any option to be in our office by 00/4/4/2016. Contact us at \$77-258-1590 to speak to its account pepresentative: about these options. We have at Providine Amer Strategies are have to annual you in resolving this pursiseding debt and moving Soround-We strive to work with son, not against you.

The law limits how long you can be sued on a debt. Because of the age of your debt, VELOCITY INVESTMENTS, LLC will not sue you for it, and VELOCITY INVESTMENTS. LLC will not report if to any credit reporting agency.

Your rights under federal law to sequest verification of your obligation to your current creditor within 30 days as not affected by the above informed physical options. Calls to or from this company may be mentiosed or receded. The total amount doe may change due to i information being added to your account.

Sintently, Prov. Tratar 877-258-1390 FentieEnte Annet Stantegieu, LLC

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This communication is from a debt collector and vi an intraspt to collect a deta. Any information obtained will be used for this parpone

Flease size the reverse side or sent page for important consumer notices From line Asset Strategies, LLC + 2700 Satelling Ave N + Ste 250 + Rosevelle, MN 53113 Toll Free: 877-258-159h Fax: 6516212579 Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday 7AM-99M CST + Samirting KAM-129M CST

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(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number) Alcran Ler K- Ferrah te Star Gellan heilar L 26012 for K- 22 Star Jes K- Jenn PK 25046					
II. BASIS OF JURÍSD	CTION (Place an "X" in (One Box Only)		RINCIPAL PARTIES	(Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff
1 U.S. Government Plaintiff	U.S. Government	Noi a Party)		FF DEF 1	
2 U.S. Government Defendant	D 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizensh	ip of Parties in Item III)	Citizen of Another State	2 2 Incorporated and F of Business In A	
			Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country	3 D 3 Foreign Nation	□ 6 □ 6
IV. NATURE OF SUIT		nly) DRTS	E TORITHEIR PRINT	Click here for: Nature of BANKRUPTCY	of Suit Code Descriptions.
 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 (Excludes 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 	PERSONAL INJURY 310 Airplane 315 Airplane Product Liability 320 Assault, Libel & Stander 330 Federal Employers' Liability 340 Marine Product Liability 340 Marine Product Liability 350 Motor Vehicle 355 Motor Vehicle 760 Other Personal Injury 360 Other Personal Injury 362 Personal Injury - Medical Malpractice CIYIL/RIGHTS 440 Other Civil Rights 441 Voting 442 Employment 443 Housing/ Accommodations 445 Amer. w/Disabilities - Other Other Civil Sabilities - Other 448 Education	PERSONAL INJURY 365 Personal Injury - Product Liability 367 Health Care/ Pharmaceutical Personal Injury Product Liability 368 Asbestos Personal Injury Product Liability PERSONAL PROPERTY 370 Other Fraud 371 Truth in Lending 380 Other Personal Property Damage 385 Property Damage 385 Property Damage 7roduct Liability PRISONER PETITIONS: Habeas Corpus: 463 Alien Detainee 510 Motions to Vacate Sentence 530 General 530 General 530 Civil Rights 555 Prison Condition 556 Civil Detainee -	 625 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881 690 Other 710 Fair Labor Standards Act 720 Labor/Management Relations 740 Railway Labor Act 751 Family and Medical Leave Act 790 Other Labor Litigation 791 Employee Retirement Income Security Act <u>100 Him MiGRATION</u> 462 Naturalization Application 465 Other Immigration Actions 	 422 Appeal 28 USC 158 423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157 PROPERTY RIGHTS 820 Copyrights 830 Patent 835 Patent - Abbreviated New Drug Application 840 Trademark SOCIAL SECURITY 861 HIA (1395ff) 862 Black Lung (923) 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g)) 864 SSID Title XVI 865 RSI (405(g)) FEDERAL TAX SUITS 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant) 871 IRS—Third Party 26 USC 7609 	 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 tacketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations 480 Consumer Credit 490 Cable/Sat TV 850 Securities/Commodities/ Exchange 890 Other Statutory Actions 891 Agricultural Acts 895 Freedom of Information Act 896 Arbitration 899 Administrative Procedure Act/Review or Appeal of Agency Decision 950 Constitutionality of State Statutes
Confinement V. ORIGIN (Place an "X" in One Box Only) Original Proceeding 2 Removed from State Court 3 Remanded from Appellate Court 4 Reinstated or Reopened 5 Transferred from Another District (specify) 6 Multidistrict Litigation - Transfer VI. CAUSE OF ACTION Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity): 6 VI. CAUSE OF ACTION Frief description pf cake: UNDER RULE 23, F.R.CV.P. 6 CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint: UNDER RULE 23, F.R.CV.P. VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT: CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER RULE 23, F.R.CV.P. DEMAND \$ UNDER RULE 23, F.R.CV.P. CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint: VII. RELATED CASE(S) IF ANY Mathematications): JUDGE DOCKET NUMBER 13 2017 DATE H 13/247 Without the of Attronspector Record H 13/247 Key Mathematication Record H 13/247					
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY APPLYING IFP JUDGE MAG. JUDGE					

Case 2:17-cv-03119-JD Document 1-1 Filed 07/13/17 Page 2 of 3

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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PERIOD NIA - DESIGNATION FORM to be assignment to appropriate calendar.	be used by counsel to indi	cate the category of the case for the purpose of
Address of Plaintiff: Samuel Williams, 1463 W. Stonington Drive, Down	ington, PA 19335	
Address of Defendant: Frontline, 2700 Snelling Ave N., Suite 250, Rosev	ille, MN 55113; Vel	
Place of Accident, Incident or Transaction: Downington, PA 1335	//	Wall Township, New Jersey 07719
(Use Reverse Side For)	Additional Space)	
Does this civil action involve a nongovernmental corporate party with any parent corporation a (Attach two copies of the Disclosure Statement Form in accordance with Fed.R.Civ.P. 7.1(a)		Yes Ver
Does this case involve multidistrict litigation possibilities?		
RELATED CASE, IF ANY: None		
Case Number: Judge	Date Terminated:	
Civil cases are deemed related when yes is answered to any of the following questions:		
1. Is this case related to property included in an earlier numbered suit pending or within one y	ear previously terminated a	
2. Does this case involve the same issue of fact or grow out of the same transaction as a prior	suit pending or within one	Yes No
action in this court?		
3. Does this case involve the validity or infringement of a patent already in suit or any earlier	numbered case pending or	Yes No K within one year previously
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4. Is this case a second or successive habcas corpus, social security appeal, or pro se civil righ	ts case filed by the same in	idividual? Yes No 🔀
CIVIL: (Place V in ONE CATEGORY ONLY)		
 A. Federal Question Cases: 1. Indemnity Contract, Marine Contract, and All Other Contracts 	B. Diversity Juris	contract and Other Contracts
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3. D Jones Act-Personal Injury	2. □ Airplane 3. □ Assault, I	2 1
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6. D Labor-Management Relations		rsonal Injury (Please specify)
7. D Civil Rights	7. Products	
8.		Liability — Asbestos
9. D Securities Act(s) Cases		Diversity Cases
10. A Social Security Review Cases	(Please spe	ccify)
All other Federal Question Cases (Please specify) <u>15 USC section 1692</u>		
ARBITRATION CERT Alexander R. Ferrante (Check Appropriate C. Check Appropriate C.	ategory)	
Pursuant to Local Civil Rule 53.2, Section 3(c)(2), that to the best of my knowledge and		rable in this civil action case exceed the sum of
\$150,000.00 exclusive of interest and costs;		
Relief other than monetary damages is sought		45004
DATE: 7-11-2017		45381
Attorney-at-Law NOTE: A trial de novo will be a trial by jury only if the	re has been compliance wi	Attorney I.D.# th F.R.C.P. 38.
I certify that, to my knowledge, the within case is not related to any case now pending or	within one year previous	ly terminated action in this court
except as noted above.		111 1 3 3049
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CIV. 609 (5/2012)	>	Attomey I.D.#

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

CASE MANAGEMENT TRACK DESIGNATION FORM

CIVIL ACTION

NO.

3119

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SAMUEL WILLIAMS, on behalf of himself and all other similarly situated consumers

FRONTLINE ASSET STRATEGIES and VELOCITY INVESTMENTS. LLC.

In accordance with the Civil Justice Expense and Delay Reduction Plan of this court, counsel for plaintiff shall complete a Case Management Track Designation Form in all civil cases at the time of filing the complaint and serve a copy on all defendants. (See § 1:03 of the plan set forth on the reverse side of this form.) In the event that a defendant does not agree with the plaintiff regarding said designation, that defendant shall, with its first appearance, submit to the clerk of court and serve on the plaintiff and all other parties, a Case Management Track Designation Form specifying the track to which that defendant believes the case should be assigned.

SELECT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CASE MANAGEMENT TRACKS:

- (a) Habeas Corpus Cases brought under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 through § 2255. ()
- (b) Social Security Cases requesting review of a decision of the Secretary of Health and Human Services denying plaintiff Social Security Benefits.
- (c) Arbitration Cases required to be designated for arbitration under Local Civil Rule 53.2. ()
- (d) Asbestos Cases involving claims for personal injury or property damage from exposure to asbestos.
- (e) Special Management Cases that do not fall into tracks (a) through (d) that are commonly referred to as complex and that need special or intense management by the court. (See reverse side of this form for a detailed explanation of special management cases.)
- (f) Standard Management Cases that do not fall into any one of the other tracks.

Telephone	FAX Number	E-Mail Address		
1-215-872-5127	1-215-885-5283	aferrante1@verizon.net		
Date	Attorney-at-law	Attorney for		
July 11, 2017	Alexander R-Ferran te Samuel Williams			

(Civ. 660) 10/02

ClassAction.org

This complaint is part of ClassAction.org's searchable class action lawsuit database and can be found in this post: <u>Frontline Asset Strategies</u>, <u>Velocity Investments Sued for 'False Threat'</u>