

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY

Laura Yancy, *individually and on behalf of all others
similarly situated*;

Plaintiff,

-v.-

Client Services, Inc.,
John Does 1-25

Defendant.

Civil Action No: 2:18-CV-16163

CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Plaintiff Laura Yancy (hereinafter, “Plaintiff”), a New Jersey resident, brings this Class Action Complaint by and through her attorneys, Stein Saks, PLLC, against Defendant Client Services, Inc. (hereinafter “Defendant” or “CSI”), 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/PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

1. Congress enacted the FDCPA 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, 15 U.S.C. § 1692 et. seq. and 28 U.S.C. § 2201. If applicable, the Court also has pendent jurisdiction over the 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).

NATURE OF THE ACTION

5. Plaintiff brings this class action on behalf of a class of New Jersey 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 and injunctive relief.

PARTIES

7. Plaintiff is a resident of the State of New Jersey, County of Essex, residing at 1415 Clinton Ave, Irvington, NJ, 07111.

8. Credit Services, Inc. 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 3451 Harry S Truman Blvd, St. Charles, Missouri, 63301.

9. Upon information and belief, Defendant 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. Defendant is a “debt collector”, as defined under the FDCPA under 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(6).

11. 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

12. Plaintiffs bring this claim on behalf of the following case, pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(a) and 23(b)(3).

13. The Class consists of:

- a. all individuals with addresses in the State of Jersey;
- b. to whom Client Services, Inc. sent a collection letter attempting to collect a consumer debt;
- c. regarding collection of a Chase Bank U.S.A., N.A. Debt;
- d. that it implies that a consumer may enhance its likelihood of approval for future credit products by paying the claimed debt in full, rather than the reduced settlement amount;
- 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.

14. 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.

15. Excluded from the Plaintiff Classes 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.

16. There are questions of law and fact common to the Plaintiff Classes, which common issues 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 Exhibit A**, violates 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692e.

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

18. 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 Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and on that basis allege, that the Plaintiff Classes defined above are 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 Classes 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**, violates 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692e.
- c. **Typicality:** The Plaintiff's claims are typical of the claims of the class members. The Plaintiffs and all members of the Plaintiff Classes have claims arising out of the Defendants' common uniform course of conduct complained of herein.
- d. **Adequacy:** The Plaintiffs will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the class members insofar as Plaintiffs have no interests that are adverse to the absent class members. The Plaintiffs are committed to vigorously litigating this matter. Plaintiffs have also retained counsel experienced in handling consumer lawsuits, complex legal issues, and class actions. Neither the Plaintiffs nor their 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 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.

19. 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

Classes 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.

20. Depending on the outcome of further investigation and discovery, Plaintiffs 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

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

22. Some time prior to November 17, 2017, an obligation was allegedly incurred to Chase Bank U.S.A., N.A. (“Chase”).

23. The Chase obligation arose out of a transaction in which money, property, insurance or services, which are the subject of the transaction, are primarily for personal, family or household purposes.

24. The alleged Chase Bank U.S.A., N.A. obligation is a “debt” as defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(5).

25. Chase is a “creditor” as defined by 15 U.S.C. §1692a(4).

26. Chase or a subsequent owner of the Chase debt contracted the Defendant to collect the alleged debt.

27. 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 Service, telephone and internet.

Violation I – November 17, 2017 Collection Letter

28. On or about November 17, 2017, Defendant sent the Plaintiff a collection letter (the “Letter”) regarding the alleged debt owed to Chase Bank U.S.A., N.A., with an outstanding balance due in the amount of \$2049.29. **See Exhibit A.**

29. Defendant’s November 17, 2017 Collection Letter contained language that implies that the consumer may enhance its likelihood of future approval for credit products by paying the alleged debt in full, rather than accept a reduced settlement amount.

30. Specifically, the second paragraph of Defendant’s letter contained an offer to settle the \$2049.29 balance for a reduced amount of \$410.00.

31. However, the fourth paragraph continues: “If we settle this debt with you for less than the full outstanding balance, Chase may offer you less favorable terms in the future for some Chase products or services or may deny your application.”

32. This language implies that if the Plaintiff settles the stated balance for a reduced amount, as opposed to paying the stated balance in full, Plaintiff may reduce her likelihood of receiving future credit products from Chase Bank or reduce her overall creditworthiness.

33. This language is false and deceptive, since approval in the future has to do with a person’s credit, and by implying that paying in full will help your chance of being approved is a false statement.

34. Further this language is deceptive and overshadowing as it does not truly afford the consumer of its proper rights and ability to dispute the debt, as it encourages only payment in full of the stated amount of the debt rather than disputing and only paying part of it.

35. As a result of Defendant’s deceptive, misleading and unfair 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 paragraphs above herein 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).
- b. Specifically, by falsely implying that payment in-full (rather than settlement) of the claimed debt would have enhanced her likelihood of receiving future credit products or enhanced her overall creditworthiness.

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

DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY

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

EXHIBIT A



3451 Harry S Truman Blvd.
Saint Charles, MO 63301-4047

RE: CHASE BANK USA, N.A.

ACCOUNT NUMBER: [REDACTED]

BALANCE DUE: \$2,049.29

REFERENCE NUMBER: [REDACTED]

Office Hours (Central Time)
Monday-Thursday: 8am-8pm
Friday: 8am-5pm
Saturday: 7am-11am
Sunday: Closed

PHONE: 877-288-9903

DATE: 11/17/2017

SETTLEMENT OFFER

We are offering you a settlement amount of \$410.00, to settle this CHASE BANK USA, N.A. account for less than the balance due.* This offer is valid until 12/7/2017. If payment in full of the settlement amount is not received in our office by this date, this offer will be withdrawn and will be deemed null and void. We are not obligated to renew this offer. If you are unable to pay the settlement amount in full by this due date, please contact our office for alternative payment options which may be available to you.

We look forward to working with you in resolving this matter.

Mike Crafts

*If we settle this debt with you for less than the full outstanding balance, Chase may offer you less favorable terms in the future for some Chase products or services, or may deny your application.

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

FOR IMPORTANT RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES WHICH MIGHT APPLY TO YOUR STATE OF RESIDENCE,
PLEASE SEE BELOW OR REVERSE SIDE (IF FAXED THEN FOLLOWING PAGE).

	Send your payment in the enclosed envelope using the remittance coupon below.		Online: www.csiconsumercenter.com
	Pay-by-Phone: 1-877-552-5905		If you are unable to pay the above settlement offer in full, contact our office at 877-288-9903 for payment options, which may be available to you.

Do not send correspondence to this address.

PO Box 1586
Saint Peters, MO 63376

REFERENCE NUMBER	[REDACTED]
AMOUNT ENCLOSED	



Checks Payable To: Client Services, Inc.

REMIT TO:

CLIENT SERVICES, INC.
3451 HARRY S. TRUMAN BLVD
ST. CHARLES MO 63301-4047



LAURA K YANCY
70 CRAWFORD ST APT 3
NEWARK NJ 07102-1145



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

Laura Yancy, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated;

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

(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number) Yaakov Saks- Stein Saks, PLLC 285 Passaic Street, Hackensack, NJ 07601 (201) 282-6500 ext 101

DEFENDANTS

Client Services, Inc., 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 and business location (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)

Click here for: Nature of Suit Code Descriptions.

Large table with categories: CONTRACT, REAL PROPERTY, CIVIL RIGHTS, PRISONER PETITIONS, TORTS, 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 (specify), 6 Multidistrict Litigation - Transfer, 8 Multidistrict Litigation - Direct File

VI. CAUSE OF ACTION

Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity): 15 U.S.C. § 1692 - FDCPA- Fair Debt Collection Practices Act. Brief description of cause: Improper language in a 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 11/15/2018 SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD /s/Yaakov Saks

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

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