

BARSHAY SANDERS, PLLC
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Attorneys for Plaintiff
Our File No.: 112859

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK**

Jason T. Braunskill, individually and on behalf of all
others similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

vs.

Northstar Location Services, LLC,

Defendant.

Docket No:

CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

BARSHAY | SANDERS PLLC
100 GARDEN CITY PLAZA, SUITE 500
GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK 11530

Jason T. Braunskill, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated (hereinafter referred to as “*Plaintiff*”), by and through the undersigned counsel, complains, states and alleges against Northstar Location Services, LLC (hereinafter referred to as “*Defendant*”), as follows:

INTRODUCTION

1. This action seeks to recover for violations of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1692, *et seq.*, (“FDCPA”).

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

2. This Court has federal subject matter jurisdiction pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331 and 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(d).

3. Venue is proper under 28 U.S.C. §1391(b) because a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to the claim occurred in this Judicial District.

4. At all relevant times, Defendant conducted business within the State of New York.

PARTIES

5. Plaintiff Jason T. Braunskill is an individual who is a citizen of the State of New York residing in Suffolk County, New York.

6. Plaintiff is a “consumer” as defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(3).

7. On information and belief, Defendant Northstar Location Services, LLC, is a New York Limited Liability Company with a principal place of business in Erie County, New York.

8. Defendant is regularly engaged, for profit, in the collection of debts allegedly owed by consumers.

9. Defendant is a “debt collector” as defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(6).

ALLEGATIONS

10. Defendant alleges Plaintiff owes a debt (“the debt”).

11. The debt was primarily for personal, family or household purposes and is therefore a “debt” as defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(5).

12. Sometime after the incurrence of the debt Plaintiff fell behind on payments owed.

13. At all relevant times herein, Plaintiff’s debt accrued, and was subject to, interest.

14. At all relevant times herein, Plaintiff’s debt accrued, and was subject to, late fees.

15. Thereafter, at an exact time known only to Defendant, the debt was assigned or otherwise transferred to Defendant for collection.

16. In its efforts to collect the debt, Defendant contacted Plaintiff by letter (“the letter”) dated April 5, 2016. (“Exhibit 1.”)

17. The letter was the initial communication Plaintiff received from Defendant.

18. The letter is a “communication” as defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(2).

19. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the foregoing paragraphs as if fully restated herein.

20. 15 U.S.C. § 1692g provides that within five days after the initial communication with a consumer in connection with the collection of any debt, a debt collector shall, unless the information is contained in the initial communication or the consumer has paid the debt, send the consumer a written notice containing certain enumerated information.

21. One such requirement is that the debt collector provide “the amount of the debt.” 15 U.S.C. § 1692g(a)(1).

22. A debt collector has the obligation not just to convey the amount of the debt, but

to convey such clearly.

23. The letter sets forth a “Balance.”

24. The letter also offers a settlement.

25. The letter fails to disclose whether the “Balance” may increase due to additional interest.

26. The letter fails to disclose whether the “Balance” may increase due to additional late fees.

27. The letter fails to indicate whether payment of the amount stated would satisfy the debt.

28. The letter fails to indicate whether payment of the amount stated by any date certain would satisfy the debt.

29. The letter fails to disclose whether the “Balance” may increase due to additional interest if the settlement is not accepted.

30. The letter fails to disclose whether the “Balance” may increase due to additional late fees if the settlement is not accepted.

31. The letter fails to include any “safe harbor” language concerning the accrual of interest and/or fees. *Avila v. Riexinger & Associates, LLC*, 817 F.3d 72, 76 (2d Cir. 2016).

32. The letter, because of the aforementioned failures, would render the least sophisticated consumer unable to determine the amount of his or her debt.

33. The letter, because of the aforementioned failures, would render the least sophisticated consumer unable to determine the amount of his or her debt because the consumer would not know whether interest and fees would continue to accrue, or whether the amount of the debt was static.

34. The letter, because of the aforementioned failures, would render the least sophisticated consumer unable to determine the value of Defendant’s settlement offer because the consumer would not know whether interest and fees would continue to accrue, or whether the amount of the debt was static, if the settlement was not accepted.

35. The least sophisticated consumer could reasonably believe that the debt could be satisfied by remitting the “Balance” at any time after receipt of the letter.

36. The least sophisticated consumer could also reasonably believe that the “Balance” was accurate only on the date of the letter because of the continued accumulation of interest

and/or late fees.

37. If interest is continuing to accrue, the least sophisticated consumer would not know how to satisfy the debt because the letter fails to indicate the applicable interest rate, or date of accrual.

38. If late fees are continuing to accrue, the least sophisticated consumer would not know how to satisfy the debt because the letter fails to indicate the amount of applicable and/or possible late fees.

39. For these reasons, Defendant failed to clearly state the amount of the debt.

40. For these reasons, Defendant failed to unambiguously state the amount of the debt.

41. For these reasons, the letter would likely make the least sophisticated consumer uncertain as to the amount of the debt.

42. For these reasons, the letter would likely make the least sophisticated consumer confused as to the amount of the debt.

43. Defendant violated § 1692g as it failed to clearly, explicitly and unambiguously convey the amount of the debt.

44. 15 U.S.C. § 1692e prohibits a debt collector from using any false, deceptive, or misleading representation or means in connection with the collection of any debt.

45. The question of whether a collection letter is deceptive is determined from the perspective of the “least sophisticated consumer.”

46. While § 1692e specifically prohibits certain practices, the list is non-exhaustive, and does not preclude a claim of falsity or deception based on any non-enumerated practice.

47. A collection letter is deceptive under 15 U.S.C. § 1692e if it can reasonably be read by the least sophisticated consumer to have two or more meanings, one of which is inaccurate.

48. A collection letter is also deceptive under 15 U.S.C. § 1692e if it is reasonably susceptible to an inaccurate reading by the least sophisticated consumer.

49. 15 U.S.C. § 1692e requires debt collectors, when they notify consumers of their account balance, to disclose whether the balance may increase due to interest and fees. *Avila v. Riexinger & Associates, LLC*, 817 F.3d 72, 76 (2d Cir. 2016).

50. As previously alleged, the least sophisticated consumer could reasonably read the

letter to mean that the “Balance” was static.

51. As previously alleged, the least sophisticated consumer could also reasonably read the letter to mean that the “Balance” was dynamic due to the continued accumulation of interest and/or late fees.

52. Because the letter is susceptible to an inaccurate reading by the least sophisticated consumer, it is deceptive under 15 U.S.C. § 1692e.

53. Because the letter can reasonably be read by the least sophisticated consumer to have two or more meanings, one of which is inaccurate, as described, it is deceptive under 15 U.S.C. § 1692e.

54. Defendant violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692e by using a false, deceptive and misleading representation in its attempt to collect a debt.

CLASS ALLEGATIONS

55. Plaintiff brings this action individually and as a class action on behalf of all persons similarly situated in the State of New York from whom Defendant attempted to collect a consumer debt using the same unlawful form letter herein, from one year before the date of this Complaint to the present.

56. This action seeks a finding that Defendant’s conduct violates the FDCPA, and asks that the Court award damages as authorized by § 1692k(a)(2) of the FDCPA.

57. Defendant regularly engages in debt collection, using the same unlawful letter described herein, in its attempts to collect delinquent consumer debts from other persons.

58. The Class consists of more than 35 persons from whom Defendant attempted to collect delinquent consumer debts using the same unlawful letter described herein.

59. Plaintiff’s claims are typical of the claims of the Class. Common questions of law or fact raised by this class action complaint affect all members of the Class and predominate over any individual issues. Common relief is therefore sought on behalf of all members of the Class. This class action is superior to other available methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of this controversy.

60. The prosecution of separate actions by individual members of the Class would create a risk of inconsistent or varying adjudications with respect to the individual members of the Class, and a risk that any adjudications with respect to individual members of the Class would, as a practical matter, either be dispositive of the interests of other members of the Class

not party to the adjudication, or substantially impair or impede their ability to protect their interests. Defendant has acted in a manner applicable to the Class as a whole such that declaratory relief is warranted.

61. Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect and represent the interests of the Class. The management of the class action proposed is not extraordinarily difficult, and the factual and legal issues raised by this class action complaint will not require extended contact with the members of the Class, because Defendant's conduct was perpetrated on all members of the Class and will be established by common proof. Moreover, Plaintiff has retained counsel experienced in actions brought under the FDCPA.

JURY DEMAND

62. Plaintiff hereby demands a trial of this action by jury.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests judgment as follows:

- a. Certify this action as a class action; and
- b. Appoint Plaintiff as Class Representatives of the Class, and his attorneys as Class Counsel; and
- c. Find that Defendant's actions violate the FDCPA; and
- d. Grant damages against Defendant pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k; and
- e. Grant Plaintiff's attorneys' fees pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k; and
- f. Grant Plaintiff's costs; together with
- g. Such other relief that the Court determines is just and proper.

DATED: April 3, 2017

BARSHAY SANDERS, PLLC

By: /s/ Craig B. Sanders

Craig B. Sanders, Esq.

100 Garden City Plaza, Suite 500

Garden City, New York 11530

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csanders@barshaysanders.com

Attorneys for Plaintiff

Our File No.: 112859

BARSHAY | SANDERS PLLC
100 GARDEN CITY PLAZA, SUITE 500
GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK 11530

Hours Mon-Thurs 8AM-10PM ET,
 Fri 8AM-8PM ET, Sat 8AM-12PM ET

April 5, 2016

Creditor: GMAC
Account #: [REDACTED] 0070
Balance: \$11,145.58
Amount Remitted: \$ _____

201600000303825-AT1

1 FP *B-01-4QE-AM-19918-73



*****MIXED AADC 140
 JASON T BRAUNSKILL
 641 DOCTORS PA # 36
 RIVERHEAD NY 11901



NORTHSTAR LOCATION SERVICES, LLC
 ATTN: FINANCIAL SERVICES DEPT.
 4285 GENESEE ST
 CHEEKTOWAGA NY 14225-1943

To ensure proper credit, return this portion with your payment.

Creditor	Account #	Balance	Amount Remitted
GMAC	[REDACTED] 0070	\$11,145.58	

The above account has been referred to our office by GMAC. Your account is listed as delinquent with a total amount due of \$11,145.58.

Northstar Location Services, LLC has been authorized by our client, GMAC, to settle your account for \$3,900.95. To discuss this settlement offer or the additional repayments that are available to you, please contact our office toll free at 1-888-820-0968.

This does not alter or amend your validation rights as described below.

Whenever \$600 or more is forgiven as a result of settling a debt for less than the balance owed, the creditor may be required to report the amount forgiven to the Internal Revenue Service on a 1099C form, a copy of which would be mailed to you by the creditor. If you are uncertain of the legal or tax consequences, we encourage you to consult your legal or tax advisor.

Due to the age of your account the above creditor is not able to file suit against you but if you take specific action such as making a payment or making a written promise to pay, the time for filing a suit will be reset.

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

Unless you notify this office 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 this office in writing 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. If you request in writing within 30 days after receiving this notice, this office will provide you with the name and address of the original creditor, if different from the current creditor.

To make paying your account more convenient we offer the following payment options:

- Check-by-phone at 1-888-820-0968
- MoneyGram ExpressPayment
- Credit or Debit Card
- Web Pay at www.gotonls.com
- Pay in person at our office
- Enclose your payment in the envelope

You may contact a Northstar Account Representative toll free at 1-888-820-0968 to make your payment.

NOTICE: SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION



Payment website: <https://www.gotonls.com>

Debt collectors, in accordance with the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1692 et seq., are prohibited from engaging in abusive, deceptive, and unfair debt collection efforts, including but not limited to: (i) the use or threat of violence; (ii) the use of obscene or profane language; and (iii) repeated phone calls made with the intent to annoy, abuse, or harass.

If a creditor or debt collector receives a money judgment against you in court, state and federal laws may prevent the following types of income from being taken to pay the debt:

1. Supplemental security income, (SSI);
2. Social security;
3. Public assistance (welfare);
4. Spousal support, maintenance (alimony) or child support;
5. Unemployment benefits;
6. Disability benefits;
7. Workers' compensation benefits;
8. Public or private pensions;
9. Veterans' benefits;
10. Federal student loans, federal student grants, and federal work study funds; and
11. Ninety percent of your wages or salary earned in the last sixty days.

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: JASON T. BRAUNSKILL
DEFENDANTS: NORTHSTAR LOCATION SERVICES, LLC
(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff: SUFFOLK
(c) Attorneys: BARSHAY SANDERS, PLLC

II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION
III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES
O 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff
O 2 U.S. Government Defendant
O 3 Federal Question
O 4 Diversity
Citizen of This State
Citizen of Another State
Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country

IV. NATURE OF SUIT
CONTRACT
REAL PROPERTY
TORTS
PERSONAL INJURY
CIVIL RIGHTS
PRISONER PETITIONS
FORFEITURE/PENALTY
LABOR
IMMIGRATION
BANKRUPTCY
SOCIAL SECURITY
FEDERAL TAX SUITS
OTHER STATUTES

V. ORIGIN
O 1 Original Proceeding
O 2 Removed from State Court
O 3 Remanded from Appellate Court
O 4 Reinstated or Reopened
O 5 Transferred from Another District
O 6 Multidistrict Litigation - Transfer
O 8 Multidistrict Litigation - Direct File

VI. CAUSE OF ACTION
Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing: 15 USC §1692
Brief description of cause: 15 USC §1692 Fair Debt Collection Practices Act Violation

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: April 5, 2017
SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD: /s Craig B. Sanders

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
RECEIPT #
AMOUNT
APPLYING IFF
JUDGE
MAG. JUDGE

CERTIFICATION OF ARBITRATION ELIGIBILITY

Local Arbitration Rule 83.10 provides that with certain exceptions, actions seeking money damages only in an amount not in excess of \$150,000, exclusive of interest and costs, are eligible for compulsory arbitration. The amount of damages is presumed to be below the threshold amount unless a certification to the contrary is filed.

I, Craig B. Sanders, counsel for Plaintiff, do hereby certify that the above captioned civil action is ineligible for compulsory arbitration for the following reason(s):

- monetary damages sought are in excess of \$150,000, exclusive of interest and costs,
- the complaint seeks injunctive relief,
- the matter is otherwise ineligible for the following reason

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT - FEDERAL RULES CIVIL PROCEDURE 7.1

Identify any parent corporation and any publicly held corporation that owns 10% or more of its stocks:

RELATED CASE STATEMENT (Section VIII on the Front of this Form)

Please list all cases that are arguably related pursuant to Division of Business Rule 50.3.1 in Section VIII on the front of this form. Rule 50.3.1 (a) provides that "A civil case is "related" to another civil case for purposes of this guideline when, because of the similarity of facts and legal issues or because the cases arise from the same transactions or events, a substantial saving of judicial resources is likely to result from assigning both cases to the same judge and magistrate judge." Rule 50.3.1 (b) provides that " A civil case shall not be deemed "related" to another civil case merely because the civil case: (A) involves identical legal issues, or (B) involves the same parties." Rule 50.3.1 (c) further provides that "Presumptively, and subject to the power of a judge to determine otherwise pursuant to paragraph (d), civil cases shall not be deemed to be "related" unless both cases are still pending before the court."

NY-E DIVISION OF BUSINESS RULE 50.1(d)(2)

1. Is the civil action being filed in the Eastern District removed from a New York State Court located in Nassau or Suffolk County? NO
2. If you answered "no" above:
 - a) Did the events or omissions giving rise to the claim or claims, or a substantial part thereof, occur in Nassau or Suffolk County? YES
 - b) Did the events or omissions giving rise to the claim or claims, or a substantial part thereof, occur in the Eastern District? YES

If your answer to question 2 (b) is "No," does the defendant (or a majority of the defendants, if there is more than one) reside in Nassau or Suffolk County, or, in an interpleader action, does the claimant (or a majority of the claimants, if there is more than one) reside in Nassau or Suffolk County? _____

(Note: A corporation shall be considered a resident of the County in which it has the most significant contacts).

BAR ADMISSION

I am currently admitted in the Eastern District of New York and currently a member in good standing of the bar of this court.
 Yes No

Are you currently the subject of any disciplinary action (s) in this or any other state or federal court?
 Yes (If yes, please explain) No

I certify the accuracy of all information provided above.

Signature: /s Craig B. Sanders

AO 440 (Rev. 06/12) Summons in a Civil Action

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Eastern District of New York

Jason T. Braunskill, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated

Plaintiff(s)

v.

Northstar Location Services, LLC

Defendant(s)

Civil Action No.

SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION

To: (Defendant's name and address) Northstar Location Services, LLC
4285 Genesee Street
CHEEKTOWAGA, New York 14225

A lawsuit has been filed against you.

Within 21 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you are the United States or a United States agency, or an officer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: Craig B. Sanders, Esq. 100 Garden City Suite 500 Garden Clty, New York 11530

If you fail to respond, judgment by default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court.

CLERK OF COURT

Date:

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

Civil Action No. _____

PROOF OF SERVICE

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

This summons for *(name of individual and title, if any)* _____
was received by me on *(date)* _____ .

I personally served the summons on the individual at *(place)* _____
_____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

I left the summons at the individual's residence or usual place of abode with *(name)* _____
_____, a person of suitable age and discretion who resides there,
on *(date)* _____ , and mailed a copy to the individual's last known address; or

I served the summons on *(name of individual)* _____ , who is
designated by law to accept service of process on behalf of *(name of organization)* _____
_____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

I returned the summons unexecuted because _____ ; or

Other *(specify)*:

My fees are \$ _____ for travel and \$ _____ for services, for a total of \$ _____ 0.00 .

I declare under penalty of perjury that this information is true.

Date: _____

Server's signature

Printed name and title

Server's address

Additional information regarding attempted service, etc:

Print

Save As...

Reset

ClassAction.org

This complaint is part of ClassAction.org's searchable class action lawsuit database and can be found in this post: [Northstar Location Services Hit with Unfair Debt Collection Lawsuit](#)
