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and the Putative Class*

8 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
9 **SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

<p>11 DEREK BRUNS, DAVID 12 KAUFFMAN and CHRISTOPHER 13 JORGENS, individually and on 14 behalf of others similarly situated,  15 Plaintiffs,  16 vs.  17 TD AMERITRADE, INC.,  18 Defendant.</p>	<p>CASE NO. <u>'22CV1369 L JLB</u></p> <p><u>CLASS ACTION</u></p> <p>COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES FOR VIOLATIONS OF:</p> <p>THE CALIFORNIA INVASION OF PRIVACY ACT, CAL. PEN. CODE 637.3 ET SEQ.</p> <p>JURY TRIAL DEMANDED</p>
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**INTRODUCTION**

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2 1. Plaintiffs Derek Bruns, David Kauffman and Christopher Jorgens (“Plaintiffs”),  
3 on behalf of Plaintiffs and a Class of similarly situated individuals defined below,  
4 bring this Class Action Complaint and Demand for Jury Trial against Defendant  
5 TD Ameritrade, Inc. (“Defendant”) to put an end to its unlawful use,  
6 examination, and recording of Plaintiffs’ and putative Class members’ biometric  
7 voice prints. Plaintiffs, for this Class Action Complaint, allege as follows upon  
8 personal knowledge as to Plaintiffs’ own acts and experiences and, as to all other  
9 matters, upon information and belief.

10 **NATURE OF THE ACTION**

- 11 2. Defendant utilizes a system that enables it to examine the voice of anyone that calls  
12 it to determine the truth or falsity of the callers’ statements. The software combines  
13 audio, voice, and artificial intelligence technologies to compare the callers’ voices  
14 to a comprehensive database of recordings and metrics.
- 15 3. The system Defendant uses allows it to authenticate or refute the true identity of  
16 callers, among other things. The system contains voice recognition software that  
17 creates a biometric voice print of each caller. The system then allows Defendant  
18 to analyze the callers’ voice prints to determine the truth or falsity of their  
19 statements.
- 20 4. Defendant does this for anyone that calls it, including Plaintiffs and Class  
21 members.
- 22 5. In addition to the behind-the-scenes voice examinations that Defendant performed  
23 on Plaintiffs and class members, Defendant published that it has a “Voice Print  
24 System” which it says; “is a secure and convenient way to confirm the identity of  
25 clients who call us. When clients call us and use Voice Print System, instead of  
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1 being asked questions for verification by a representative, their voices act as their  
2 means of instant access.”<sup>1</sup>

3 6. Defendant goes on to say; “Our Voice Print System uses leading-edge biometric  
4 voice verification technology. Biometrics is the use of a person's unique physical  
5 characteristics or traits to identify them. Some biometrics use finger printing, iris  
6 scanning and even facial features. The Voice Print System uses biometrics to  
7 assign a mathematical model to a person's voice – in essence, a "print" of their  
8 voice.”<sup>2</sup>

9 7. While Defendant claims that consumers must enroll into its Voice Print System,  
10 Plaintiffs allege that Defendant performs the same or similar voice examinations  
11 on anyone that calls it.

12 8. Plaintiffs allege that Defendant was secretly using voice print technology for years  
13 prior to publishing its existence and seeking enrollment.

14 9. Defendant does not obtain “express written consent” from any callers before  
15 examining and analyzing their voices.

16 10. Even those that enroll into its Voice Print System do it verbally over the phone<sup>3</sup>,  
17 which does not satisfy the CIPA requirement of express written consent.

18 11. Recognizing the need to protect its residents from situations like these, California  
19 enacted the California Invasion of Privacy Act (“CIPA”), and specifically Cal.  
20 Pen. Code § 637.3, to regulate entities that examine or record California residents’  
21 voice prints or voice stress patterns without obtaining the residents’ express  
22 written consent first.

23 12. Despite this law, Defendant disregards California residents’ statutorily protected  
24 privacy rights and unlawfully examines or records their voices in violation of  
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27 <sup>1</sup> <https://www.td.com/ca/products-services/investing/td-direct-investing/trading-platforms/voice-print-system-privacy-policy.jsp>

28 <sup>2</sup> <https://www.td.com/ca/products-services/investing/td-direct-investing/trading-platforms/voice-print-system-privacy-policy.jsp>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.td.com/ca/products-services/investing/td-direct-investing/trading-platforms/voice-print-system-enroll.jsp>

1 CIPA. Specifically, Defendant has violated (and continues to violate) CIPA  
2 because it uses a system which examines or records California residents’ “voice  
3 prints or voice stress patterns... to determine the truth or falsity of statements”  
4 without their express written consent.

5 **PARTIES**

6 13. Plaintiffs are natural persons and residents of the State of California.

7 14. Defendant is a corporation with its principal place of business located outside of  
8 California.

9 **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

10 15. This court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §  
11 1332(d) because there are more than 100 Class members and the aggregate amount  
12 in controversy exceeds \$5,000,000, exclusive of interest, fees, and costs, and at  
13 least one Class member is a citizen of a state different from Defendant.

14 16. This court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant because Defendant conducts  
15 business in this State and within this judicial district and the conduct alleged in  
16 this Complaint occurred in, and/or emanated from, this State and within this  
17 judicial district. Additionally, Plaintiffs reside in this judicial district.

18 17. Venue is proper in this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391 because a substantial  
19 part of the events giving rise to Plaintiffs’ claims took place within this District.

20 **BACKGROUND**

21 **I. The California Invasion of Privacy Act**

22 18. The California Legislature enacted the Invasion of Privacy Act to protect certain  
23 privacy rights of California residents. The legislature expressly recognized that  
24 devices and techniques which create a serious threat to privacy and the free  
25 exercise of personal liberties cannot be tolerated in a free and civilized society.

26 19. As part of the Invasion of Privacy Act, the California Legislature introduced Penal  
27 Code § 637.3. The purpose of the legislation was to prohibit any person or entity  
28 from using;

1 “any system which examines or records in any manner voice  
2 prints or other voice stress patterns of another person to  
3 determine the truth or falsity of statements made by such  
4 person without his or her express written consent given in  
5 advance of the examination or recordation.” Cal. Pen Code §  
6 637.3

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10 20. Creating a voice print requires extracting an individual’s phonetic features  
11 (including their unique speech patterns, tones, and other characteristics) from their  
12 voice. As such, a voice print serves as an audible “fingerprint” which can directly  
13 identify an individual and can even reveal the speaker’s behavioral traits.
- 14 21. The California Legislature intended to protect individuals from the unauthorized  
15 examination and recording of their voice prints, especially when it takes place  
16 without an individual’s knowledge or consent. Such surreptitious examination  
17 poses a serious threat to California residents’ privacy and personal liberties.
- 18 22. Individuals may bring an action against the violator of this section of CIPA to  
19 recover actual damages or \$1,000 for each violation, whichever is greater under  
20 Cal. Penal Code §637.3(c).

## 17 **II. Defendant Violated the California Invasion of Privacy Act**

- 18 23. No later than 2019, Defendant applied artificial intelligence to analyze call center  
19 conversations. Defendant converts speech into text then a Natural Language  
20 Processing model reads through the transcripts, identifies topics mentioned on the  
21 call, and analyzes it. The model’s analysis is then linked to the customer’s file  
22 with the company.<sup>4</sup>
- 23 24. Plaintiffs allege that Defendant actually began using similar voice technology  
24 around 2017 when its affiliate TD Bank integrated a system called TD VoicePrint  
25 into its call centers. When customers call, the system verifies their identify by  
26 using the sound of their voice. TD VoicePrint uses over 150 different

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28 <sup>4</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/tomdavenport/2019/07/16/how-td-ameritrade-uses-ai-to-hear-the-voice-of-the-customer/?sh=81573e36349e>

1 characteristics that make up one’s voice and transcribes them in real time into a  
2 unique algorithm that cannot be replicated.<sup>5</sup>

3 25. Defendant’s affiliate TD Bank states; “TD VoicePrint is a voice recognition  
4 security technology we can use to verify your identity whenever you call us. Your  
5 voiceprint, like your fingerprint, is unique to you.”<sup>6</sup>

6 26. Plaintiffs allege Defendant uses, and has been using, the same or similar system  
7 as its affiliate TD Bank since at least 2017.

8 27. Defendant recognizes consumers’ identities by (1) making a recording of the  
9 initial call with the consumer (2) examining that recording to identify specific  
10 stress patterns and other characteristics to create a “voice print” which is entered  
11 into a database then (3) examining all subsequent calls from that consumer and  
12 comparing the voice prints to those already on file for that consumer.

13 28. Defendant determines the truth or falsity of caller statements (even for first-time  
14 callers) by examining patterns. There are known audible indications of lying such  
15 as (1) change in breathing (2) repeating words or phrases (3) difficulty speaking<sup>7</sup>  
16 (4) change in speech patterns (5) unusual rise or fall in vocal tone<sup>8</sup> (6) odd  
17 inflection (7) context of use of contractions (8) lack of use of personal pronouns<sup>9</sup>  
18 (9) using a high-pitched voice (10) sudden change of volume (11) using phrases  
19 such as ‘I want to be honest with you,’ ‘honestly’ or ‘let me tell you the truth’ (12)  
20 using words such as ‘uh,’ ‘like’ and ‘um’ and (13) slip-ups and corrections<sup>10</sup> that  
21 can indicate a caller is not being truthful.

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25 <sup>5</sup> <https://www.thedrum.com/creative-works/project/tbwachiatday-new-york-td-bank-td-voice-print-experiment>

26 <sup>6</sup> <https://tdbank.intelliresponse.com/index.jsp?requestType=NormalRequest&question=What+is+TD+VoicePrint+and+how+do+I+enroll>

27 <sup>7</sup> <https://www.businessinsider.com/11-signs-someone-is-lying-2014-4>

28 <sup>8</sup> <https://www.forensicscolleges.com/blog/resources/10-signs-someone-is-lying>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/04/07/want-to-tell-if-someone-is-lying-to-you-a-body-language-expert-shares-the-biggest-signs-to-look-for.html>

<sup>10</sup> <https://time.com/5443204/signs-lying-body-language-experts/>

1 29. Defendant’s system uses the full audio of a call to determine its characteristics,  
2 meaning Defendant analyzes unique acoustic and behavioral features of a caller’s  
3 voice, including stress patterns to determine truth or falsity of statements.

4 30. The system Defendant uses is very similar to a Polygraph Test. Such a system is  
5 exactly what the California Legislature chose to regulate when it made it unlawful  
6 to use without express written consent.

7 31. Defendant did not obtain prior express written consent from Plaintiffs or Class  
8 members to examine their voices or record their unique voice prints to determine  
9 the truth or falsity of their statements in violation of Cal. Penal Code §637.3.

10 **FACTS SPECIFIC TO PLAINTIFFS**

11 32. Over the last few years, Plaintiffs have called Defendant on numerous occasions.

12 33. Starting with the first call, Defendant began examining and analyzing Plaintiffs’  
13 voices attempting to ascertain the truthfulness of Plaintiffs’ statements.

14 34. Defendant recorded Plaintiffs’ voices and created “voice prints” associated with  
15 Plaintiffs.

16 35. Defendant then automatically input Plaintiffs’ voice prints into its biometric voice  
17 print database.

18 36. When Plaintiffs subsequently called Defendant, Defendant utilized a system that  
19 examined Plaintiffs’ voices again and compared it to the voice prints it stored in  
20 its database from previous calls. Defendant did this to determine the truth or falsity  
21 of Plaintiffs’ statements, including to determine the true identity of Plaintiffs.

22 37. Plaintiffs have called Defendant on numerous occasions since Defendant began  
23 utilizing its voice analysis system. During at least one of these calls, Defendant  
24 examined and recorded Plaintiffs’ voice print and voice stress pattern passively,  
25 without Plaintiffs’ knowledge.

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1 38. Plaintiffs did not give consent – written or otherwise – to Defendant to collect  
2 voice prints and examine Plaintiffs’ voice for any purpose whatsoever.

3 39. Any applicable statute(s) of limitations has been tolled by the “delayed discovery”  
4 rule. Plaintiffs did not know (and had no way of knowing) that Plaintiffs’ voices  
5 were recorded for purposes of creating voice prints, or that Plaintiffs’ voice stress  
6 patterns were examined, because Defendant kept this information secret.

7 40. Plaintiffs have been exposed to the risks and harmful conditions created by  
8 Defendant’s violations of CIPA alleged herein.

9 41. Plaintiffs seek statutory damages under CIPA as compensation for the injuries  
10 Defendant caused.

11 **STANDING**

12 42. Defendant’s conduct constituted invasions of privacy because it disregarded  
13 Plaintiffs’ statutorily protected rights to privacy, in violation of CIPA.

14 43. Defendant caused Plaintiffs to (1) suffer invasions of legally protected interests.  
15 (2) The invasions were concrete because the injuries actually existed for Plaintiffs  
16 and continue to exist every time Plaintiffs call Defendant. The privacy invasions  
17 suffered by Plaintiffs and the Class were real and not abstract. Plaintiffs and the  
18 Class have a statutory right to be free from voice examination without first  
19 providing their express written consent. The voice examinations Defendant  
20 performed were meant to determine truth or falsity of statements, similar to a  
21 Polygraph Test. Plaintiffs and Class members were completely unaware they were  
22 being subject to such a test. Plaintiffs’ injuries were not divorced from concrete  
23 harm in that privacy has long been protected in the form of trespassing laws and  
24 the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution for example. Like here, an  
25 unreasonable search may not cause actual physical injury, but is considered serious  
26 harm, nonetheless. (3) The injuries here were particularized because they affected  
27 Plaintiffs in personal and individual ways. The injuries were individualized rather  
28 than collective since Plaintiffs’ unique voice patterns were examined without



1 consent during different calls on separate occasions. (4) Defendant's past invasions  
2 were actual and future invasions are imminent and will occur next time Plaintiffs  
3 call Defendant. Defendant continues to examine voices in California without  
4 express written consent. A favorable decision by this court would redress the  
5 injuries of Plaintiffs and the Class.

6 **CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS**

7 44. **Class Definition:** Plaintiffs bring this action pursuant to Federal Rules of Civil  
8 Procedure 23 and on behalf of Plaintiffs and a Class defined as follows:

9 All residents of the State of California that had their voice  
10 prints or other voice stress patterns examined or recorded by  
11 Defendant to determine the truth or falsity of their statements.

12 45. The following people are excluded from the Class: (1) any Judge or Magistrate  
13 presiding over this action and members of their families; (2) Defendant,  
14 Defendant's subsidiaries, parents, successors, predecessors, and any entity in  
15 which the Defendant or its parents have a controlling interest and their current or  
16 former officers and directors; (3) persons who properly execute and file a timely  
17 request for exclusion from the Class; (4) persons whose claims in this matter have  
18 been finally adjudicated on the merits or otherwise released; (5) Plaintiffs' counsel  
19 and Defendant's counsel; and (6) the legal representatives, successors, and assigns  
20 of any such excluded persons.

21 46. **Ascertainability and Numerosity:** The exact number of Class members is  
22 unknown to Plaintiffs at this time, but Defendant is a very large entity with millions  
23 of customers in the United States and California. Members of the Class will be  
24 easily identified through Defendant's records.

25 47. **Commonality and Predominance:** There are many questions of law and fact  
26 common to the claims of Plaintiffs and the Class, and those questions predominate  
27 over any questions that may affect individual members of the Class. Common  
28 questions for the Class include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- 1 a. Whether Defendant used a system which examined, or recorded Plaintiffs’  
2 and the Class’s voice prints or voice stress patterns;
- 3 b. Whether Defendant used voice prints or voice stress patterns to determine the  
4 truth or falsity of statements made by Plaintiffs and the Class; and
- 5 c. Whether Defendant obtained prior express written consent from Plaintiffs  
6 and the Class members.

7 48. **Typicality:** Plaintiffs’ claims are typical of the claims of all the other members of  
8 the Class. Plaintiffs and the Class members sustained substantially similar injuries  
9 as a result of Defendant’s uniform wrongful conduct, based upon the same  
10 interactions with Defendant that were made without exception as to Plaintiffs and  
11 the Class.

12 49. **Adequate Representation:** Plaintiffs will fairly and adequately represent and  
13 protect the interests of the Class and have retained counsel competent and  
14 experienced in complex litigation and class actions. Plaintiffs have no interest  
15 adverse to the Class, and Defendant has no defenses unique to Plaintiffs. Plaintiffs  
16 and Plaintiffs’ counsel are committed to vigorously prosecuting this action on  
17 behalf of the members of the Class and have the financial resources to do so.  
18 Neither Plaintiffs nor Plaintiffs’ counsel have any interest contrary to those  
19 interests of the of the Class.

20 50. **Superiority:** This case is appropriate for class certification because class  
21 proceedings are superior to all other available methods for the fair and efficient  
22 adjudication of this controversy because joinder of all parties is impracticable. The  
23 damage suffered by the individual members of the Class will likely be relatively  
24 small, especially given the burden and expense of individual prosecution of the  
25 complex litigation necessitated by Defendant’s actions. Thus, it would be virtually  
26 impossible for the individual members of the Class to obtain effective relief from  
27 Defendant’s misconduct. Even if members of the Class could sustain such  
28 individual litigation, it would still not be preferable to a class action because

1 individual litigation would increase the delay and expense to all parties due to the  
2 complex legal and factual controversies presented in this Complaint. By contrast,  
3 a class action presents far fewer management difficulties and provides the benefits  
4 of single adjudication, economies of scale, and comprehensive supervision by a  
5 single Court. Economies of time, effort, and expense will be fostered, and  
6 uniformity of decisions ensured.

7 **CAUSE OF ACTION**

8 **Violation of Cal. Penal Code § 637.3**

9 **(On Behalf of Plaintiffs and the Class)**

- 10 51. Plaintiffs incorporate the foregoing allegations as though fully set forth herein.
- 11 52. CIPA prohibits any person or entity from using “any system which examines or  
12 records in any manner voice prints or other voice stress patterns of another person  
13 to determine the truth or falsity of statements made by such person without his or  
14 her express written consent given in advance of the examination or recordation.”  
15 Cal. Penal Code § 637.3(a).
- 16 53. Defendant is a corporation and therefore an “entity” under CIPA. *Id.*
- 17 54. Defendant utilizes software that creates a “system” under CIPA because it  
18 examines, or records Plaintiffs’ and the Class’s voice prints or other voice stress  
19 patterns.
- 20 55. Defendant utilized the system to examine or record the voice prints of Plaintiffs  
21 and the Class when they called Defendant’s customer support lines that were  
22 connected to the voice printing and analysis system.
- 23 56. Defendant examined or recorded Plaintiffs’ and Class members’ voice prints to  
24 determine the truth or falsity of their statements – including, for example, their  
25 statements about who they claimed to be.

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1 57. Defendant did not obtain prior express written consent from Plaintiffs and the  
2 Class to use, examine, or record their voice prints or voice stress patterns for any  
3 purpose whatsoever.

4 58. On behalf of Plaintiffs and the Class, Plaintiffs seek: (1) injunctive and equitable  
5 relief as is necessary to protect the interests of Plaintiffs and the Class by requiring  
6 Defendant to comply with CIPA's requirements for the use, recording, and  
7 examination of voice prints or other voice stress patterns as described herein; and  
8 (2) damages of \$1,000 for each violation of CIPA pursuant to Cal. Penal Code §  
9 637.3(c).

10 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

11 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs, on behalf of Plaintiffs and the Class,  
12 respectfully requests this Court to enter an order:

- 13 A. Certifying this case as a class action on behalf of the Class defined above  
14 pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23, appointing Plaintiffs as the  
15 representatives of the Class, and appointing Plaintiffs' counsel as Class  
16 Counsel;
- 17 B. Declaring that Defendant's actions, as described above, violated CIPA;
- 18 C. Awarding statutory damages of \$1,000 for each violation of CIPA pursuant to  
19 Cal. Penal Code § 637.3(c);
- 20 D. Awarding injunctive and other equitable relief as is necessary to protect the  
21 interests of the Class;
- 22 E. Awarding Plaintiffs and the Class their reasonable litigation expenses and  
23 attorneys' fees;
- 24 F. Awarding Plaintiffs and the Class pre- and post-judgement interest, to the  
25 extent allowable; and
- 26 G. Awarding such other and further relief as equity and justice may require.

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**JURY TRIAL**

Pursuant to the Seventh Amendment of the United States Constitution,  
Plaintiffs demand a trial by jury for all issues so triable.

Respectfully submitted,

**SWIGART LAW GROUP**

Date: September 11, 2022

By: s/ Joshua Swigart  
Joshua B. Swigart, Esq.  
Josh@SwigartLawGroup.com  
Attorney for Plaintiffs

CIVIL COVER SHEET 22CV1369 L JLB

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

Derek Bruns, David Kauffman and Christopher Jorgens, individually and on behalf of others

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

(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number)

Swigart Law Group, 2221 Camino Del Rio S, Ste 308 San Diego, CA 92108 - 866-219-3343 & Daniel Shay, Esq

DEFENDANTS

TD Ameritrade, Inc.

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)

- Citizen of This State, Citizen of Another State, Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country, PTF DEF, 1 1, 2 2, 3 3, 4 4, 5 5, 6 6

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

Click here for: Nature of Suit Code Descriptions.

Table with 5 columns: CONTRACT, REAL PROPERTY, TORTS, CIVIL RIGHTS, PRISONER PETITIONS, FORFEITURE/PENALTY, LABOR, IMMIGRATION, BANKRUPTCY, SOCIAL SECURITY, FEDERAL TAX SUITS, OTHER STATUTES. Includes various legal categories like Insurance, Personal Injury, Real Estate, Labor, etc.

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 - 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): Class Action Fairness Act (CAFA), 28 U.S.C. § 1332(d) and California Invasion of Privacy Act (CIPA), Cal. Pen .Code 637.3 et seq.

Brief description of cause: Illegal examining or recording of voice prints or other voice stress patterns without express written consent.

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 9/11/2022 SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD s/ Joshua B. Swigart

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

RECEIPT # AMOUNT APPLYING IFP JUDGE MAG. JUDGE

**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 there are multiple nature of suit codes associated with the case, pick the nature of suit code that is most applicable. Click here for: [Nature of Suit Code Descriptions](#).
- V. Origin.** Place an "X" in one of the seven 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.  
 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 – Transfer. (6) Check this box when a multidistrict case is transferred into the district under authority of Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1407.  
 Multidistrict Litigation – Direct File. (8) Check this box when a multidistrict case is filed in the same district as the Master MDL docket.  
**PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE IS NOT AN ORIGIN CODE 7.** Origin Code 7 was used for historical records and is no longer relevant due to changes in statute.
- 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.

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