UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT NORTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORKx	
MICHELE CAMPBELL, on behalf of herself and all others similarly situation,	
Plaintiff	CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT
-against-	1:17-cv-1111 (BKS/DJS)
I.C. SYSTEM, INC.,	
Defendantx	

# **PRELIMINARY STATEMENT**

- 1. The Plaintiff MICHELE CAMPBELL ("Plaintiff") brings this lawsuit based upon improper and violative debt collection practices utilized and otherwise invoked by the abovenamed Defendant. These collection practices are expressly prohibited by the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act ("FDCPA"), 15 U.S.C. § 1692 *et seq*.
- 2. Based upon the Defendant's violations of the FDCPA, as set forth and alleged herein, the Plaintiff, and the class she seeks to represent, are entitled to statutory damages, attorneys fees, and costs, all pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k.

# **PARTIES**

- 3. The Plaintiff is a natural person.
- 4. At all times relevant to this Complaint, the Plaintiff was a citizen of, and otherwise resided in, Saratoga County, New York.
- 5. The Defendant I.C. System, Inc. ("IC"), is a corporate debt collection entity and maintains a principle place of business located at 444 Highway 96 East, St. Paul, Minnesota.
- 6. The 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 U.S. Mail, telephone, and Internet.
- 7. The Defendant is a "debt collector" as that term is defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(6)

## **JURISDICTION & VENUE**

- 8. Jurisdiction of this Court arises under 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(d) and 28 U.S.C. § 1331.
- Venue is appropriate in this federal district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1391(b) because a
  substantial part of the events giving rise to the claims of the Plaintiff occurred within this
  federal judicial district.

## FACTS CONCERNING THE PLAINTIFF

- 10. The Plaintiff is alleged by the Defendant to be indebted to an entity doing business as Northway Animal Emergency Clinic (NAEC) for a debt which was incurred for personal purposes.
- 11. The monetary obligation alleged to be owed by the Plaintiff is a "debt" as that term is defined in the FDCPA, 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(5).
- 12. The Plaintiff is a "consumer" as that term is defined in the FDCPA, 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(3).
- 13. At a time unknown to the Plaintiff the alleged debt went into default and was referred to the Defendant IC for collection purposes.
- 14. In the attempt to collect the alleged debt from the Plaintiff, the Defendant sent two identical letters to the Plaintiff.
- 15. One letter is dated January 11, 2017 and the other letter is dated February 17, 2017. A copy of each said letter is attached hereto as Exhibit "1" and incorporated by reference herein.
- 16. The letter is a standard form computer generated letter which was drafted by persons whose identity(ies) presently unknown by the Plaintiff and otherwise utilized by the Defendant in its normal course of business.
- 17. The Defendant's form letter states (in part):

If you fail to contact us to discuss payment of this account, our client has authorized us to pursue additional remedies to recover the balance due, including referring the account to an attorney.

Interest at the rate of 16% annually is being accrued by I.C. System, Inc. as of 9/13/2016.

Please pay this account today or immediately contact us to make payment arrangements.

- 18. The statements set forth in the collection letter constitute false, deceptive and misleading assertions designed to confuse and mislead the least sophisticated consumer.
- 19. Although the form letter states that the Plaintiff's account would be forwarded to an attorney by the Defendant, no such referral was ever intended based upon the de minimis amount of the debt, which allegedly totaled \$488.23 as said amount is set forth in the February 17, 2017 letter sent by the Defendant to the Plaintiff.
- 20. The statement concerning the accrual of interest by the Defendant is deceptive and misleading as the statement does not disclose whether the interest accrual constitutes a collection fee or whether the alleged interest accrual is due and owing to the creditor NAEC.
- 21. The command to contact the Defendant "immediately" constitutes an overall false sense of urgency including in regard to creating the false impression that the Plaintiff's alleged debt would be imminently referred to an attorney unless the Plaintiff contacted the Defendant and made arrangements for payment of the alleged debt.
- 22. The false, deceptive and misleading statements set forth in the Defendant's collection letter are material in that said statements affect the least sophisticated consumer's decision and/or ability to pay and/or challenge an alleged debt.

#### **CLASS ALLEGATIONS**

23. This action is brought as a class action. Plaintiff brings this action on behalf of herself and on behalf of all other persons similarly situated pursuant to Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

- 24. This claim is brought on behalf of a class consisting of:
  - a. all persons, with addresses in the State of New York, who, within a time period commencing from one year prior to the date of the filing of the Complaint received a collection communication from the Defendant IC which is identical in content and form to the computer generated collection communications sent to the Plaintiff (Exhibit "1" hereto).
- 25. The identities of all class members are readily ascertainable from records maintained by the Defendant.
- 26. Excluded from the class defined heretofore herein are the Defendant and all officers, members, partners, managers, directors, and employees of the Defendant and their respective immediate families, and legal counsel for all parties to this action and all members of their immediate families.
- 27. There are questions of law and fact common to the class, which common issues predominate over any issues involving only individual class members.
- 28. The Plaintiff's claims are typical of the class members, as all are based upon the same facts and legal theories.
- 29. The Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the class defined in this Complaint. The Plaintiff has retained counsel with experience in handling consumer lawsuits, complex legal issues, and class actions, and neither the Plaintiff nor his attorney has any interests, which might cause them not to vigorously pursue this action.
- 30. 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:
  - (a) <u>Numerosity:</u> The Plaintiff is informed and believes, and on that basis alleges, that

the class defined above is so numerous that joinder of all members of the class would be impractical.

- 31. <u>Common Questions Predominate:</u> Common questions of law and fact exist as to all members of the class and those questions predominate over any questions or issues involving only individual class members. The principal issues are whether the Defendant IC utilized false, deceptive and misleading debt collection means in the attempts to collect alleged personal debts.
  - (c) <u>Typicality:</u> The Plaintiff's claims are typical of the claims of the class members.

    Plaintiff and all members of the class have claims arising out of the Defendant's common uniform course of conduct complained of herein.
  - (d) Adequacy: The Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the class members insofar as Plaintiff has no interests that are adverse to the absent members of the class. The Plaintiff is committed to vigorously litigating this matter. Plaintiff has also retained counsel experienced in handling consumer lawsuits, complex legal issues, and class actions. Neither the Plaintiff nor her counsel has any interests which might cause them not to vigorously pursue the instant class action lawsuit.
  - (e) <u>Superiority:</u> 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.

(f) Certification of the 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 class predominate over any questions affecting any individual member of the class, and a class action is superior to other available methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of the controversy.

## **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

## VIOLATION OF THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT

32. The Defendant violated the FDCPA. The Defendant's violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

The Defendant violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692e by using false, deceptive and misleading debt collection means during attempts to collect alleged consumer debts;

The Defendant violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692e(2)(A) by misrepresenting the character and legal status of alleged consumer debts;

The Defendant violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692e(5) by threatening unintended legal action in conjunction with alleged consumer debts.

# PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff requests that the Court enter judgment in favor of the Plaintiff and the class as set forth below:

(i) The maximum statutory damages for himself and the class as are allowed pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(2)(A);

- (ii) Attorney's fees, litigation expenses, and costs pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(B)(3); and
- (iii) For such other and further relief as may be just and proper.

# **JURY DEMAND**

Plaintiff demands that this case be tried before a Jury.

DATED: New York, New York September 28, 2017

ROBERT L. ARLEO, ESQ. P.C.

By: / s / Robert L. Arleo ROBERT L. ARLEO 380 Lexington Avenue 17<sup>th</sup> Floor New York, New York 10168 PHONE (212) 551-1115 FAX: (518) 751-1801

> Email: <u>robertarleo@gmail.com</u> Attorney for the Plaintiff

IC System P.O. Box 64437 St. Paul, MN 55164-0437



January 11, 2017

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Michele Campbell

**ACCOUNT SUMMARY** 

Creditor: Northway Animal Emergency Clinic Account No:

I.C. System Reference No:

Principal Due: Interest Before 9/13/2016 Due \$19.87 \$17.30 Interest Since 9/13/2016 Due:

\$476.44 **BALANCE DUE:** 

\$439.27

\$0.00 has been Paid Since Placement

Michele Campbell:

We have contacted you several times regarding the balance stated in the account summary, which remains unpaid.

Our office has reported this debt to credit reporting agencies and you have the right to inspect those credit files in accordance with federal law.

If you fail to contact us to discuss payment of this account, our client has authorized us to pursue additional remedies to recover the balance due, including referring the account to an attorney.

Interest at the rate of 16% annually is being accrued by I.C. System, Inc. as of 9/13/2016.

Please pay this account today or immediately contact us to make payment arrangements.

If you will be receiving a tax refund and would like to use it to pay your account, please call us to make payment arrangements.

We are a debt collector attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

This does not contain a complete list of the rights consumers have under Federal, State, or Local laws.

New York City Department of Consumer Affairs License No. 0908324 and 1266437.

0540 - System - 076786879 - 1SC - ICSystem.WFD - 725746 - 00001377 - 05401SC 1 of 1

➤ Billing Phone Number: \_

➤ E-Mail Address: > Address Changed? Make Changes Below

Michele Campbell

PAYMENT OPTIONS



Make online payment at: www.yourpayment.com Reference No: PIN:



Mail check or money order payable to I.C. System, Inc. with this portion of letter. Include Reference Number 109897485-1-19.



Call us: 800-279-9525.

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I.C. System, Inc. PO Box 64378 Saint Paul, MN 55164-0378 P.O. Box 64437 St. Paul, MN 55164-0437

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Toll-Free No: 800-279-9525

ACCOUNT SUMMARY

Creditor: Northway Animal Emergency Clinic
Account No:

I.C. System Reference No:

Principal Due:

Interest Before 9/13/2016 Due

Interest Since 9/13/2016 Due:

\$439.27

Interest Since 9/13/2016 Due:

\$29.09

BALANCE DUE:

\$488.23

\$0.00 has been Paid Since Placement

www.yourpayment.com



February 17, 2017

# վերիսիրովիսագույթիսիիութիվիիկիկիցի

Michele Campbell

Michele Campbell:

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Please pay this account today or immediately contact us to make payment arrangements.

If you will be receiving a tax refund and would like to use it to pay your account, please call us to make payment arrangements.

Beth Brown

We are a debt collector attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

This does not contain a complete list of the rights consumers have under Federal, State, or Local laws.

New York City Department of Consumer Affairs License No. 0908324 and 1266437.

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Make online payment at: www.yourpayment.com
Reference No:

PIN:



Mail check or money order payable to I.C. System, Inc. with this portion of letter. Include Reference Number 109897485-1-19.



Call us: 800-279-9525.

➤ Billing Phone Numb	eı	Numl	Phone	Billing	>
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➤ E-Mail Address:

➤ Address Changed? Make Changes Below Michele Campbell

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I.C. System, Inc. PO Box 64378 Saint Paul, MN 55164-0378

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JS 44 (Rev. 06/17)

## **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				DEFENDANTS					
MICHELE CAMPBELL, et al.				I.C. SYSTEM, INC.,					
(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff  (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)			County of Residence of First Listed Defendant  (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)  NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF						
(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, 2008) ROBERT L. ARLEO, ESC 380 Lexington Avenue 17 New York, NY 10168 21	Q., P.C. Robert L. Ark 7th Fl.	<i>'</i>		THE TRACT Attorneys (If Known)	OF LAND IN	WOLVED.			
II. BASIS OF JURISDI		One Box Only)	III. CI	<u>I</u> TIZENSHIP OF P	RINCIPA	L PARTIES	Place an "X" in	One Box f	or Plainti <u>f</u>
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☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant	☐ 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizensh	nip of Parties in Item III)		tizen of Another State 2 2 Incorporated and F of Business In A		Another State			
				en or Subject of a reign Country	3 🗖 3	Foreign Nation		□ 6	□ 6
IV. NATURE OF SUIT		nly) DRTS	FO	ORFEITURE/PENALTY		here for: Nature o		escription STATUT	
□ 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 &	PERSONAL INJUR  365 Personal Injury - Product Liability Product Liability Personal Injury - Product Liability Product Liability 368 Asbestos Personal Injury Product Liability PERSONAL PROPER 370 Other Fraud 371 Truth in Lending 380 Other Personal Property Damage Product Liability PRISONER PETITION Habeas Corpus: 463 Alien Detainee 510 Motions to Vacate Sentence 530 General 535 Death Penalty Other:	TY	St Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881 00 Other  LABOR 0 Fair Labor Standards Act 10 Labor/Management Relations 10 Railway Labor Act 11 Family and Medical Leave Act 10 Other Labor Litigation 11 Employee Retirement Income Security Act  IMMIGRATION 12 Naturalization Application 15 Other Immigration Actions	422 Appc   423 With 28 U   PROPEI   820 Copy   830 Pater New   840 Trade   862 Black   863 DIW   864 SSID   865 RSI (	eal 28 USC 158 drawal ISC 157  RTY RIGHTS  rrights at t - Abbreviated Drug Application emark  SECURITY  (1395ff) k Lung (923)  C/DIWW (405(g)) D Title XVI	□ 375 False Cl □ 376 Qui Tan 3729(a) □ 400 State Re □ 410 Antitrus □ 430 Banks a □ 450 Comme: □ 460 Deporta □ 470 Rackete Corrupt □ 490 Cable/S: □ 850 Securiti □ Exchan; □ 891 Agricult □ 893 Environ: □ 895 Freedon Act □ 896 Arbitrat □ 899 Adminis Act/Rev	aims Act in (31 USC) apportion t t ind Bankin rece tion er Influenc Organizati er Credit at TV ess/Commo ge aututory Ac ural Acts mental Mat in of Inforn ion strative Pre iew or Api Decision ttionality of	ment g eed and ions dities/ etions ters nation occdure occdure
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VI. CAUSE OF ACTIO	Cite the U.S. Civil State  Brief description of ca	ause.		Do not cite jurisdictional state the Fair Debt Collection			ec 1692 et s	eq.	
VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:	UNDER RULE 2	S IS A CLASS ACTION	N D	EMAND \$ stat damages/costs.	C	CHECK YES only	if demanded in	complai	nt:
VIII. RELATED CASI IF ANY	(See instructions):	JUDGE			DOCKE	ET NUMBER			
DATE 10/5/17 FOR OFFICE USE ONLY		signature of at /s/ Robert L. Ar		OF RECORD					
	MOUNT \$400.00	APPLYING IFP		JUDGE	BKS	MAG. JUD	GE DJS		

# **ClassAction.org**

This complaint is part of ClassAction.org's searchable class action lawsuit database and can be found in this post: <u>Class Action Claims I.C. System Debt Notice Falsely Hinted at Attorney Involvement</u>