

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
DALLAS DIVISION**

YOLANDA HAYES, individually and on
behalf of all others similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

-against-

NATIONAL CREDIT AUDIT
CORPORATION,

Defendant.

Civil Case Number:

CIVIL ACTION

**CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT
AND
DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL**

Plaintiff, YOLANDA HAYES (hereinafter, “Plaintiff”), brings this class action complaint by and through the undersigned attorneys, Marcus & Zelman, LLC, against Defendant NATIONAL CREDIT AUDIT CORPORATION (hereinafter “Defendant” or “NCAC”), 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.
3. The rights and obligations established by section 15 U.S.C. § 1692g were considered by the Senate at the time of passage of the FDCPA to be a “significant feature” of the Act. See *S. Rep. No. 382, 95th Cong., 1st Sess. 4, at 4, reprinted in 1977 U.S.C.C.A.N. 1695, 1696.*

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

4. The Court has jurisdiction over this class action under 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).
5. Venue is proper in this judicial district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(2).

NATURE OF THE ACTION

6. Plaintiff brings this class action on behalf of a class of consumers seeking redress for Defendant’s actions of using an unfair and unconscionable means to collect a debt.
7. Defendant's actions violated § 1692 *et seq.* of Title 15 of the United States Code, commonly referred to as the Fair Debt Collections Practices Act (“FDCPA”) which prohibits debt collectors from engaging in false, deceptive or misleading practices.
8. Plaintiff is seeking damages, and declaratory and injunctive relief.

PARTIES

9. Plaintiff is a natural person and a resident of the State of Maryland, and is a “Consumer” as defined by 15 U.S.C. §1692(a)(3).
10. NCAC is a collection agency with its place of business located in Dallas, Texas.
11. Upon information and belief, Defendant is a company that uses the mail, telephone, or facsimile in a business the principal purpose of which is the collection of debts, or that regularly collects or attempts to collect debts alleged to be due another.
12. Defendant is a “debt collector,” as defined under the FDCPA under 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(6).

ALLEGATIONS OF FACT

13. 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.
14. Some time prior to September 21, 2017, an obligation was allegedly incurred to NORTHWEST CROSSING APARTMENTS.
15. The NORTHWEST CROSSING APARTMENTS 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.
16. The alleged NORTHWEST CROSSING APARTMENTS obligation is a "debt" as defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(5).
17. NORTHWEST CROSSING APARTMENTS is a "creditor" as defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(4).
18. Defendant contends that the NORTHWEST CROSSING APARTMENTS debt is past due.
19. Defendant is a company that uses mail, telephone or facsimile in a business the principal purpose

of which is the collection of debts, or that regularly collects or attempts to collect debts incurred or alleged to have been incurred for personal, family or household purposes on behalf of creditors.

20. On or about September 21, 2017, the Defendant caused to be delivered to the Plaintiff an email in an attempt to collect the alleged NORTHWEST CROSSING APARTMENTS debt. *See Exhibit A.*

21. Upon information and belief, the September 21, 2017 email was the first communication between the Defendant and Plaintiff regarding the NORTHWEST CROSSING APARTMENTS debt.

22. The September 21, 2017 email was sent or caused to be sent by persons employed by Defendant as a “debt collector” as defined by 15 U.S.C. §1692a(6).

23. The September 21, 2017 email is a “communication” as defined by 15 U.S.C. §1692a(2).

24. The Plaintiff received and read the email sometime after September 21, 2017.

25. The email stated in part:

“Please contact NCAC at 1.800.779.4894, ext 7233 to make arrangements to satisfy the balance OR you have options to make your payment before your credit score is adversely affected...”

26. Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. §1692g(a)(3) a debt collector must within five days after the initial communication, send the consumer a written notice containing a statement that unless the consumer, within thirty days after receipt of the notice, disputes the validity of the debt, or any portion thereof, the debt will be assumed valid by the debt collector.

27. Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. §1692g(a)(4)) a debt collector must within five days after the initial communication, send the consumer a written notice containing a statement that if the consumer notifies the debt collector in writing within the thirty-day period that the debt, or any portion thereof, is disputed, the debt collector will obtain verification of the debt or a copy of a judgment against the consumer and a copy of such verification or judgment will be mailed to the consumer

by the debt collector.

28. Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. §1692g(a)(5) a debt collector must within five days after the initial communication, send the consumer a written notice containing a statement that if the consumer notifies the debt collector in writing within the thirty-day period, the debt collector will provide the consumer with the name and address of the original creditor.
29. The Defendant's failure to provide a validation notice to the Plaintiff left the Plaintiff, as it would any least sophisticated consumer, unsure as to her rights pertaining to the alleged debt.
30. The Plaintiff, as would any least sophisticated consumer, was left unaware that she was entitled to dispute the alleged debt with the debt collector within thirty days of receipt of the email.
31. The Plaintiff, as would any least sophisticated consumer, was left unaware that she was entitled to request verification of the alleged debt from the debt collector.
32. The Plaintiff, as would any least sophisticated consumer, was left unaware that she was entitled to request the name and address of the original creditor for the alleged debt.
33. Congress adopted the debt validation provisions of section 1692g to guarantee that consumers would receive adequate notice of their rights under the FDCPA. *Wilson*, 225 F.3d at 354, citing *Miller v. Payco-General Am. Credits, Inc.*, 943 F.2d 482, 484 (4th Cir.1991).
34. Congress further desired to "eliminate the recurring problem of debt collectors dunning the wrong person or attempting to collect debts which the consumer has already paid." S.Rep. No. 95-382, at 4 (1977), reprinted in 1977 U.S.C.C.A.N. 1695, 1699.
35. The rights afforded to consumers under Section 1692g are amongst the most powerful protections provided by the FDCPA.
36. Once a consumer makes proper timely notice of a dispute, the debt collector is required by law to cease collection of the account until verification of the debt is obtained.

37. By providing an inaccurate validation notice, the Defendant caused the Plaintiff real harm.

CLASS ALLEGATIONS

38. Plaintiff brings claims, pursuant to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (hereinafter “FRCP”) Rule 23, individually and on behalf of the following consumer class (the “Class”) consisting of: a) All consumers b) who were sent an email from the Defendant c) attempting to collect a consumer debt stemming from unpaid rent d) that fails to include a validation notice (e) which email was sent on or after a date one year prior to the filing of this action and on or before a date 21 days after the filing of this action.

39. 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.

40. Excluded from the Plaintiff Classes are the Defendants and all officers, 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.

41. 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*, violate 15 U.S.C. § 1692g.

42. The Plaintiffs’ claims are typical of the class members, as all are based upon the same facts and legal theories.

43. 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.

44. 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*, violate 15 U.S.C. § 1692g.
- (c) **Typicality:** The Plaintiffs' 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 averse 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.

45. 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.
46. 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).

COUNT I

VIOLATIONS OF THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT 15 U.S.C. §1692g *et seq.*

47. 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.
48. 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. § 1692g.
49. The Defendant violated said provision by failing to provide the consumer with the validation notice in violation of § 1692g(a)(3), 1692g(a)(4) and 1692g(a)(5).
50. By reason thereof, Defendant is liable to Plaintiff for judgment that Defendant's conduct violated Section 1692g *et seq.* of the FDCPA, actual damages, statutory damages, costs and attorneys' fees.

DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY

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

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands judgment against Defendants as follows:

- (a) Declaring that this action is properly maintainable as a Class Action and certifying Plaintiff as Class representative and the undersigned as Class Counsel;
- (b) Awarding Plaintiff and the Class statutory damages;
- (c) Awarding Plaintiff and the Class actual damages;
- (d) Awarding Plaintiff costs of this Action, including reasonable attorneys' fees and expenses;
- (e) Awarding pre-judgment interest and post-judgment interest; and
- (f) Awarding Plaintiff and the Class such other and further relief as this Court may deem just and proper.

Dated: December 1, 2017

MARCUS ZELMAN, LLC

By: /s/ Yitzchak Zelman
Yitzchak Zelman, Esq.
1500 Allaire Avenue, Suite 101
Ocean, New Jersey 07712
Phone: (732) 695-3282
Facsimile: (732) 298-6256
Email: yzelman@marcuszelman.com
Attorneys for Plaintiff

From: Ellen M. Garner
Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2017 9:38 AM
To: 'yhayes41@gmail.com' <yhayes41@gmail.com>
Subject: Redacted - NORTHWEST CROSSING APARTMENTS - \$2,791.22
Importance: High

Ms. Hayes:

National Credit Audit Corporation (NCAC) received your final bill from NORTHWEST CROSSING APARTMENTS - \$2,791.22 for collection.

Attached is the breakdown of all charges

This may adversely impact your CREDIT SCORE and your future housing needs.

Please contact NCAC at 1.800.779.4894, ext 7233 to make arrangements to satisfy the balance OR you have options to make your payment before your credit score is adversely affected...

- Pay on line at payncac.com
- Complete the attached credit card authorization form and email back to this email address and your payment will be applied to your account.
- Mail your payment to NCAC, P.O. BOX 515489, DALLAS, TX 75251 (*please include the subject account # on your payment*)
- Call, 1.800.779.4894, ext 7233 to discuss payment arrangements or pay your balance.

NCAC is a debt collector. This is an attempt to collect a debt; any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

Kind regards,

Ellen Garner
Collection Representative
National Credit Audit Corporation
First Advantage
O: 800 779-4894 Ext 7233
F: 314 489-5093
ellen.garner@fadv.com

The information in this email and any attachments to it is intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom it is addressed and may be confidential and/or legally privileged. If you are not an intended recipient, or if you have received this email in error, please contact us immediately by telephone or by returning the email to the sender and delete the original and all copies of this transmission.

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

YOLANDA HAYES, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated,

(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff Out of State - Maryland (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)

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

Marcus & Zelman, LLC, 1500 Allaire Avenue, Ocean, NJ 07712. (845)367-7146

DEFENDANTS

NATIONAL CREDIT AUDIT CORPORATION

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 incorporation status: 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)

Large table with categories: CONTRACT, REAL PROPERTY, CIVIL RIGHTS, TORTS, PRISONER PETITIONS, 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, 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 USC 1692. Brief description of cause: Defendant violated the FDCPA.

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 12/01/2017 SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD /s/ Yitzchak Zelman

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

RECEIPT # AMOUNT APPLYING IFP JUDGE MAG. JUDGE

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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. When the petition for removal is granted, check this box.
 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 a related case exists, whether pending or closed, insert the docket numbers and the corresponding judge names for such cases. A case is related to this filing if the case: 1) involves some or all of the same parties and is based on the same or similar claim; 2) involves the same property, transaction, or event; 3) involves substantially similar issues of law and fact; and/or 4) involves the same estate in a bankruptcy appeal.

Date and Attorney Signature. Date and sign the civil cover sheet.

ClassAction.org

This complaint is part of ClassAction.org's searchable class action lawsuit database and can be found in this post: [Lawsuit: National Credit Audit Corporation Left Validation Rights Out of Collection Email](#)
