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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 a required by leading of the Clerk of Court for the court of the Clerk of Court for the court of the Clerk of Court for the court fo

provided by local rules of court. purpose of initiating the civil do	cket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCT	IONS ON NEXT PAGE O	F THIS FOR	M.)	1771, 15 10441		227
(a) PLAINTIFFS William Margerum, individually and on behalf of all others similarly				DEFENDANTS Peerless Credit Services, Inc. and John Does 1-25			
situated							
(b) County of Residence of	f First Listed Plaintiff	ontgomery	ļ	County of Residence	e of First Liste	ed Defendant	
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(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, A	Address and Talanhous Number			Attorneys (If Known,	1)		
Antranig Garibian, Esq. G	Baribian Law Offices, F	C		,	*		
1800 JFK Blvd, Suite 300							
215-326-9179 ag@garib	ianlaw.com						
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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT OR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA 2837

DESIGNATION FORM

	se plaintiff to indicate the category of the case for the purpose of assignment to the appropriate calendar) 1166 Rosemont Terrace, Pennsburg, PA 18073				
Address of Plaintiff:Address of Defendant:	725 Maple Road, Middletown, PA 17057				
Place of Accident, Incident or Transaction:	See Plaintiff address				
RELATED CASE, IF ANY: Case Number:	Judge:	Date Terminated:			
Civil cases are deemed related when Yes is answer	ered to any of the following questi	ons:			

Place of Accident, Incident or Transaction:	See Plaintiff	address
RELATED CASE, IF ANY:		
Case Number:	Judge:	Date Terminated:
Civil cases are deemed related when Yes is answer		
 Is this case related to property included in an previously terminated action in this court? 	earlier numbered suit pending or within one year	Yes No 🗸
Does this case involve the same issue of fact pending or within one year previously terming	or grow out of the same transaction as a prior suit nated action in this court?	Yes No 🗸
Does this case involve the validity or infring numbered case pending or within one year principle.	ement of a patent already in suit or any earlier reviously terminated action of this court?	Yes No 🗸
case filed by the same individual?	rpus, social security appeal, or pro se civil rights	Yes No 🗸
I certify that, to my knowledge, the within case this court except as noted above. DATE: 07/06/2018	is is not related to any case now pending o	r within one year previously terminated action in 94538 Attorney I.D. # (if applicable)
A. Federal Question Cases: 1. Indemnity Contract, Marine Contract, 2. FELA 3. Jones Act-Personal Injury 4. Antitrust 5. Patent 6. Labor-Management Relations 7. Civil Rights 8. Habeas Corpus 9. Securities Act(s) Cases 10. Social Security Review Cases 11. All other Federal Question Cases (Please specify): Fair debt coll	2. Airplane Pers 3. Assault, Defa 4. Marine Perso 5. Motor Vehicl 6. Other Person 7. Products Lial 8. Products Lial 9. All other Div	ntract and Other Contracts sonal Injury mation nal Injury le Personal Injury nal Injury (Please specify): bility bility bility
(The	ARBITRATION CERTIFICATION effect of this certification is to remove the case from eligibi	ility for arbitration.)
I,	, counsel of record or pro se plaintiff, do hereby certify:	
Pursuant to Local Civil Rule 53.2, § 3 exceed the sum of \$150,000.00 exclu	3(c) (2), that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the sive of interest and costs:	he damages recoverable in this civil action case
Relief other than monetary damages	is sought.	JIJL - 5 2018 .
DATE:	Attorney-at-Law / Pro Se Plaintiff	Attorney I.D. # (if applicable)

NOTE: A trial de novo will be a trial by jury only if there has been compliance with F.R.C.P. 38.

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

CASE MANAGEMENT TRACK DESIGNATION FORM

CIVIL ACTION

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(b) Social Security – Cases requesting review of a decision of the Secretary of Health and Human Services denying plaintiff Social Security Benefits.					
c) Arbitration – Cases required to be designated for arbitration under Local Civil Rule 53.2.					
(d) Asbestos – Cases involving claims for personal injury or property damage from exposure to asbestos.					
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(f) Standard Management –	Cases that do not fall into an	ny one of the other tracks.		(x)	
7/2/18	Ant He	William Margerum			
Date	Attorney-at-law	Attorney for			
215-326-9179	267-238-3701	ag@garibianla	w.com		
Telephone	FAX Number	E-Mail Addı	'ess		

(Civ. 660) 10/02

William Margerum et al.



July 2, 2018

18 2837

Via First Class Mail

Clerk's Office U.S. District Court, EDPA 2609 U.S. Courthouse 601 Market Street Philadelphia, PA 19106-1797

RE: William Margerum v. Peerless Credit Services, Inc.

Dear Sir/Madam:

Enclosed please find a Civil Action Complaint and Summons as referenced above. My firm's check in the amount of \$400.00 to cover the cost of filing same is also enclosed herewith. Kindly file the original of record and return a timestamped copy in the enclosed return envelope.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Sincerely

ANTRAŇIG GARIBIAN

AG/ds Enclosures

JUL -5 2018

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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA



William Margerum, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

18 2837

C.A. No.:

CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT
DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

JUL 05 2018

KATE GORMAN, Clerk

Peerless Credit Services, Inc. and John Does 1-25,

-V.-

Defendants.

Plaintiff William Margerum (hereinafter, "Plaintiff" or "Margerum") brings this Class Action Complaint by and through his attorneys, Garibian Law Offices, P.C., against Defendant Peerless Credit Services, Inc. (hereinafter "Defendant Peerless" or "Defendant"), 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

1. Congress enacted the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act ("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 FDCPA 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 FDCPA. Id. § 1692k.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 3. The Court has jurisdiction over this class action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331 and 15 U.S.C. § 1692 et. seq. The Court has pendent jurisdiction over the state law claims in this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1367(a).
- 4. Venue is proper in this judicial district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(2) as this is where a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to the claim occurred.

NATURE OF THE ACTION

- 5. Plaintiff brings this class action on behalf of a class of Pennsylvania consumers under § 1692 et seq. of Title 15 of the United States Code, commonly referred to as the Fair Debt Collections Practices Act ("FDCPA").
 - 6. Plaintiff is seeking damages.

PARTIES

- 7. Plaintiff is a resident of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, County of Montgomery, residing at 1166 Rosemont Terrace, Pennsburg, PA 18073.
- 8. Defendant Peerless is a "debt collector" as the phrase is defined in 15 U.S.C. § 1692(a)(6) and used in the FDCPA with an address at 725 Maple Road, Middletown, PA 17057.

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- 9. Upon information and belief, Defendant is a company that uses the mail, telephone, and facsimile and regularly engages in business the principal purpose of which is to attempt to collect debts alleged to be due another.
- 10. John Does l-25, are fictitious names of individuals and businesses alleged for the purpose of substituting names of defendants whose identities will be disclosed in discovery and who should be made parties to this action.

CLASS ALLEGATIONS

- Plaintiff brings this claim on behalf of the following class, pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(a) and 23(b)(3).
 - 12. The Class consists of:
 - a. all individuals with addresses in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania;
 - b. to whom Defendant Peerless sent a collection letter attempting to collect a consumer debt;
 - c. regarding collection of a debt;
 - d. that imposed an additional convenience fee for credit card payments;
 - e. which letter was sent on or after a date one (1) year prior to the filing of this action and on or before a date twenty-one (21) days after the filing of this action.
- 13. The identities of all class members are readily ascertainable from the records of Defendant Peerless and those companies and entities on whose behalf they attempt to collect and/or have purchased debts.
- 14. Excluded from the Plaintiff Class 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.

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- 15. There are questions of law and fact common to the Plaintiff Class, 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. §§ 1692e and 1692f.
- 16. The Plaintiff's claims are typical of the class members, as all are based upon the same facts and legal theories. The Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the Plaintiff 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 attorneys have any interests, which might cause them not to vigorously pursue this action.
- 17. 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. <u>Numerosity:</u> The Plaintiff is informed and believes, and on that basis alleges, that the Plaintiff Class defined above is so numerous that joinder of all members would be impractical.
 - b. <u>Common Questions Predominate:</u> Common questions of law and fact exist as to all members of the Plaintiff Class 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 to this Complaint as Exhibit A violate 15 § 1692e and §1692f.
 - c. <u>Typicality:</u> The Plaintiff's claims are typical of the claims of the class members.

 The Plaintiff and all members of the Plaintiff Class have claims arising out of the Defendants' common uniform course of conduct complained of herein.

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- 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 class members. 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 his counsel have 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.
- 18. 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 Class 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.
- 19. Depending on the outcome of further investigation and discovery, Plaintiff may, at the time of class certification, seek to certify a class(es) only as to particular issues pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(c)(4).

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

- 20. Plaintiff repeats, reiterates and incorporates the allegations contained in paragraphs numbered above herein with the same force and effect as if the same were set forth at length herein.
- 21. Some time prior to August 30, 2017, an obligation was allegedly incurred to St. Luke's Physician Group ("St. Luke's").
- 22. The obligation arose out of a transaction involving a medical debt incurred by Plaintiff with St. Luke's which was incurred solely for personal purposes.
 - 23. The alleged St. Luke's obligation is a "debt" as defined by 15 U.S.C.§ 1692a(5).
 - 24. St. Luke's is a "creditor" as defined by 15 U.S.C.§ 1692a(4).
 - 25. St. Luke's contracted with the Defendant to collect the alleged debt.
- 26. Defendant collects and attempts to collect debts incurred or alleged to have been incurred for personal, family or household purposes on behalf of creditors using the United States Postal Services, telephone and internet.

August 30, 2017 Collection Letter

- 27. On or about August 30, 2017, Defendant sent the Plaintiff an initial collection letter (the "Letter") regarding the alleged debt owed to St. Luke's. See Letter attached as Exhibit A.
- 28. The Letter indicated that Defendant charges a \$3.00 convenience fee for payment via credit card.
 - 29. Plaintiff never agreed to the fee.
- 30. The addition of this collection fee by Defendant which was neither authorized by the agreement creating the debt nor permitted by law, was an attempt to collect an amount not owed by Plaintiff.

- 31. Defendant misled and deceived Plaintiff into believing that he owed an additional \$3.00 when this charge is a violation of the FDCPA.
- 32. As a result of Defendant's deceptive, misleading and false debt collection practices, Plaintiff has been damaged.

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

- 33. Plaintiff repeats, reiterates and incorporates the allegations contained in the paragraphs above herein with the same force and effect as if the same were set forth at length herein.
- 34. Defendant's debt collection efforts attempted and/or directed towards the Plaintiff violated various provisions of the FDCPA, including but not limited to 15 U.S.C. § 1692e.
- 35. Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. §1692e, a debt collector may not use any false, deceptive, or misleading representation or means in connection with the collection of any debt.
 - 36. Defendant violated the FDCPA by:
 - a. Making a false and misleading representation in violation of §1692e(10).
- 37. As a result of Defendant's violation of Section 1692e et seq. of the FDCPA, Defendant is liable for actual damages, statutory damages, costs and attorneys' fees.

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

- 38. 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.
- 39. 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. § 1692f.
- 40. Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. §1692f, a debt collector may not use any unfair or unconscionable means in connection with the collection of any debt.
 - 41. Defendant violated this section by
 - a. unfairly advising Plaintiff that he owed Defendant more money than the amount of his debt; and
 - b. attempting to collect an amount not expressly authorized by the underlying agreement creating the debt or permitted by law in violation of § 1692f(1).
- 42. As a result of Defendant's violation of Section 1692f et seq. of the FDCPA, Defendant is liable for actual damages, statutory damages, costs and attorneys' fees.

DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY

43. 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 William Margerum, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated, demands judgment from Defendant Peerless Credit Services, Inc. as follows:

- 1. Declaring that this action is properly maintainable as a Class Action and certifying Plaintiff as Class representative, and Antranig Garibian, Esq. as Class Counsel;
 - 2. Awarding Plaintiff and the Class statutory damages;
 - 3. Awarding Plaintiff and the Class actual damages;
- 4. Awarding Plaintiff costs of this action, including reasonable attorneys' fees and expenses;
 - 5. Awarding pre-judgment interest and post-judgment interest; and
- 6. Awarding Plaintiff and the Class such other and further relief as this Court may deem just and proper.

Dated: July 2, 2018 Respectfully Submitted,

GARIBIAN LAW OFFICES, P.C.

Antranig Garibian, Esq.

PA Bar No. 94538

1800 JFK Boulevard, Suite 300

Philadelphia, PA 19103

Ph: 215-326-9179 ag@garibianlaw.com

Counsel for Plaintiff William Margerum

EXHIBIT A

Toll Uros: (844) 227-845 PO Box 518 IF PAYING BY CREDIT CARD, COMPLETE ALL, SIGN AND HETUR Middletown, PA 17057-0518 CHECK CARD USING FOR PAYMENT 17881 WAS WASTERGAN RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED CARD NUMBER PLUS & DIGIT SECURITY CODE (on back of card) CARDHOLDER SIGNATURE DATE: August 30, 2017 A convenience fee of \$3.00 will be added for credit card intyments նիլիկիուիկոլանիրությունիցինինակությիլ Nighillali hisarrakan da da alamaha ad William Margerum Peerless Credit Services, Inc. PO Box 518 olae Middletown, PA 17057-0518 ***Detach Upper Portion and Return with Payment*** Our Account #: 731041 - 2E Responsible Party: William Margerum Account# Regarding Amt Owed Serv Date STŁUKE'S PHYSICIAN GRP 5315 \$200.00 04/07/17 \$200.00 Total: Dear William Margerum: This letter has been sent to you by a debt collection agency. Quadient has hired our office to collect your overdue balance. Unless you notify this office within 30 days after recoving this notice that you dispute the validity of this debt or any portion thereof, this office will assume this debt is valid off you notify this office in writing within 30 days from receiving this notice, 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 this office in writing within 30 gave after receiving this notice, this office will provide you with the name and address of the original creditor. This is an attempt to collect a debt. Any information obtained will be used for this purpose. All communications from this office now and in the future will be attempts to collect a debt. We alk that you resolve this matter. Please respond to our office. To protect all parties calls with for office are resended. Sincerely MS IPHES EAT 195 Payment should be made thready no new office Please the elevant we count apestions to goe of he t paydy Madelladd Carrier ac a carrier picase Calliand (Office of their cur Velesia al and medical and literature and the part of the part of

ClassAction.org

This complaint is part of ClassAction.org's searchable class action lawsuit database and can be found in this post: <u>Lawsuit Filed Against Peerless Credit Services for 'Misleading' Debt Collection Practices</u>