

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

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION and
PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK,

Plaintiffs,

v.

NATIONAL CHECK REGISTRY, LLC,
et al.,

Defendants.

Case No. 14-CV-490-A

**STIPULATION TO ENTER
PRELIMINARY INJUNCTION**

Plaintiffs Federal Trade Commission (“FTC”) and The People of the State of New York (“State of New York,” and, collectively with the FTC, “Plaintiffs”) have filed a complaint seeking a permanent injunction and other equitable relief, pursuant to Section 13(b) of the Federal Trade Commission Act (“FTC Act”), 15 U.S.C. § 53(b), Section 814(a) of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act (“FDCPA”), 15 U.S.C. § 1692l(a), N.Y. Executive Law § 63(12), and N.Y. General Business Law Articles 22-A, § 349, and 29-H, § 602, and a motion for preliminary injunction pursuant to Rule 65 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. On motion by Plaintiffs, this Court on June 24, 2014 entered a temporary restraining order (“TRO”) with asset freeze, appointment of a receiver, and other equitable relief against Defendants National Check Registry, LLC, Check Systems, LLC, Interchex Systems, LLC, American Mutual Holdings, Inc., Goldberg Maxwell, LLC, Morgan Jackson, LLC, Mullins & Kane, LLC, Buffalo Staffing, Inc., eCapital Services, LLC, Joseph C. Bella, III, Diane L. Bella, and Luis A. Shaw. By agreement of the parties and the Court on the same date, the Court extended the TRO until July 15, 2014.

FINDINGS OF FACT

By stipulation of the parties, the Court finds as follows:

1. Plaintiffs and Stipulating Defendants have stipulated and agreed to the entry of this preliminary injunction order without any admission of wrongdoing or violation of law, and without a finding by the Court of law or fact other than stated below.
2. This Court has jurisdiction over the subject matter of this case, there is good cause to believe it will have jurisdiction over all the parties hereto, and venue in this district is proper;
3. Stipulating Defendants waive all rights to seek judicial review or otherwise to challenge or contest the validity of their Stipulation hereto or to this order;
4. Plaintiffs assert there is good cause to believe that Stipulating Defendants National Check Registry, LLC, Check Systems, LLC, Interchex Systems, LLC, American Mutual Holdings, Inc., Goldberg Maxwell, LLC, Morgan Jackson, LLC, Mullins & Kane, LLC, Buffalo Staffing, Inc., eCapital Services, LLC, Joseph C. Bella, III, Diane L. Bella, and Luis A. Shaw have engaged and are likely to continue to engage in acts or practices that violate Section 5(a) of the FTC Act, 15 U.S.C. § 45(a), the FDCPA, 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692 – 1692p, New York Executive Law § 63(12), New York General Business Law § 349, and NY General Business Law § 601 and that Plaintiffs are therefore likely to prevail on the merits of this action;
5. Plaintiffs assert there is good cause to believe that consumers will suffer immediate and continuing harm from Stipulating Defendants' ongoing violations of Section 5(a) of the

FTC Act, the FDCPA, New York Executive Law, and New York General Business Law unless Stipulating Defendants are restrained and enjoined by Order of this Court;

6. Plaintiffs assert there is good cause for continuing the receivership over the Stipulating Receivership Defendants (as defined below) and continuing the asset freeze as modified below;
7. No security is required of any agency of the United States for issuance of a preliminary injunction, Fed. R. Civ. P. 65(c); and
8. The entry of this Preliminary Injunction is in the public interest.

DEFINITIONS

- A. **“Assets”** means any legal or equitable interest in, right to, or claim to, any real or personal property, including, without limitation, chattels, goods, instruments, equipment, fixtures, general intangibles, leaseholds, mail or other deliveries, inventory, checks, notes, accounts, credits, contracts, receivables, shares of stock, and all cash, wherever located.
- B. **“Consumer”** means any person.
- C. **“Corporate Defendants”** means National Check Registry, LLC, Check Systems, LLC, Interchex Systems, LLC, American Mutual Holdings, Inc., Goldberg Maxwell, LLC, Morgan Jackson, LLC, Mullins & Kane, LLC, Buffalo Staffing, Inc., and eCapital Services, LLC, and their successors, assigns, affiliates, or subsidiaries, and each of them by whatever names each might be known.
- D. **“Debt”** means any obligation or alleged obligation to pay money arising out of a transaction, whether or not such obligation has been reduced to judgment.

- E. **“Defendants”** means the Individual Defendants and the Corporate Defendants, individually, collectively, or in any combination, and each of them by whatever names each might be known.
- F. **“Document”** and **“Electronically Stored Information”** are synonymous in meaning and equal in scope to the usage of the terms in Rule 34(a) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and include but are not limited to:
- i. The original or a true copy of any written, typed, printed, electronically stored, transcribed, taped, recorded, filmed, punched, or graphic matter or other data compilations of any kind, including, but not limited to, letters, email or other correspondence, messages, memoranda, interoffice communications, notes, reports, summaries, manuals, magnetic tapes or discs, tabulations, books, records, checks, invoices, work papers, journals, ledgers, statements, returns, reports, schedules, or files; and
 - ii. Any electronically stored information stored on any server, Blackberrys or any type of mobile device, flash drives, personal digital assistants (“PDAs”), desktop personal computer and workstations, laptops, notebooks, and other portable computers, or other electronic storage media, whether assigned to individuals or in pools of computers available for shared use, or personally owned but used for work-related purposes; backup disks and tapes, archive disks and tapes, and other forms of offline storage, whether stored onsite with the computer used to generate them, stored offsite in another company facility, or stored, hosted, or otherwise maintained offsite by a third-party; and computers and related offline storage used by Defendants or Defendants’ participating associates, which may include persons who are not employees of the company or who do not work on company

premises.

- G. **“Electronic Data Host”** means any person or entity in the business of storing, hosting, or otherwise maintaining electronically stored information.
- H. **“Financial Institution”** means any bank, savings and loan institution, credit union, or any financial depository of any kind, including, but not limited to, any brokerage house, trustee, broker-dealer, escrow agent, title company, commodity trading company, or precious metal dealer.
- I. **“Individual Defendants”** means Joseph C. Bella, III, Diane L. Bella, and Luis A. Shaw.
- J. **“Person”** means a natural person, an organization or other legal entity, including a corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, limited liability company, association, cooperative, or any other group or combination acting as an entity.
- K. The terms **“and”** and **“or”** shall be construed conjunctively or disjunctively as necessary to make the applicable phrase or sentence inclusive rather than exclusive.
- L. **“Stipulating Defendants”** means the Individual Defendants and the Corporate Defendants, individually, collectively, or in any combination, and each of them by whatever names each might be known.
- M. **“Stipulating Receivership Defendants”** means the Corporate Defendants with the exception of Stipulating Defendant Buffalo Staffing, Inc. The Stipulating Receivership Defendants also includes any other business related to the Stipulating Defendants’ debt collection business and which the Receiver has reason to believe is owned or controlled in whole or in part by any of the Defendants. Buffalo Staffing, Inc. is not a Stipulating

Receivership Defendant, *provided* that certain financial accounts of Buffalo Staffing are Receivership assets as set forth by Section IX.

ORDER

PROHIBITED REPRESENTATIONS AND DEBT COLLECTION ACTIVITIES

I. IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that in connection with the collection or the attempted collection of any debt, Stipulating Defendants and their successors, assigns, officers, agents, servants, employees, and attorneys, and those persons or entities in active concert or participation with any of them who receive actual notice of this Order by personal service or otherwise, whether acting directly or through any corporation, subsidiary, division, or other device, are hereby restrained and enjoined from:

A. Misrepresenting, or assisting others who are misrepresenting, expressly or by implication, orally or in writing, any of the following:

1. that consumers have committed check fraud or another criminal act;
2. that Stipulating Defendants are affiliated with government entities, including law enforcement agencies;
3. that Stipulating Defendants are acting on behalf of an attorney;
4. that non-payment of a purported debt will result in a consumer's arrest, in the revocation of the consumer's driver's license, or in the seizure, garnishment, or attachment of a consumer's property or wages;
5. that any Stipulating Defendant or any other person has taken, intends to take, or has authority to take formal legal action against a consumer who fails to pay any debt; or

6. the character, amount, or legal status of a debt;
- B. Communicating with any person other than the consumer, his attorney, a consumer reporting agency if otherwise permitted by law, the creditor, the attorney of the creditor, or the attorney of the debt collector for purposes other than acquiring location information about a consumer, without having obtained directly the prior consent of the consumer or the express permission of a court of competent jurisdiction, and when not reasonably necessary to effectuate a postjudgment judicial remedy;
- C. Communicating or threatening to communicate the nature of a claim to the debtor's employer prior to obtaining final judgment against the debtor;
- D. Disclosing or threatening to disclose information concerning the existence of a debt known to be disputed by the debtor without disclosing that fact;
- E. Failing to disclose or disclose adequately in the initial communication with a consumer that any Stipulating Defendant or any other person is a debt collector attempting to collect a debt and that any information obtained will be used for that purpose;
- F. Threatening to take action that is not lawful or that any Stipulating Defendant or any other person does not intend to take;
- G. Collecting fees that are not expressly authorized by the agreement creating the debt or permitted by law;
- H. Continuing to collect on a debt after being informed that the consumer did not owe the debt without any reasonable basis for doing so;

- I. Using any false representation or deceptive means to collect or attempt to collect a debt, or to obtain information concerning a consumer; and
- J. Failing to provide consumers, within five days after the initial communication with a consumer, a written notice containing: (1) the amount of the debt; (2) the name of the creditor to whom the debt is owed; (3) 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 to be valid by Stipulating Defendants; (4) a statement that if the consumer notifies Stipulating Defendants in writing within the thirty-day period that the debt, or any portion thereof, is disputed, Stipulating Defendants 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 Stipulating Defendants; and (5) a statement that, upon the consumer's written request within the thirty-day period, Stipulating Defendants will provide the consumer with the name and address of the original creditor, if different from the current creditor.
- K. Providing any staffing functions for a debt collector, including but not limited to training, recruitment, hiring, managing, or placement services.

ASSET FREEZE

II. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Stipulating Defendants are hereby restrained and enjoined from directly or indirectly:

- A. Transferring, liquidating, converting, encumbering, pledging, loaning, selling, concealing, dissipating, disbursing, assigning, spending, withdrawing, granting a

lien or security interest or other interest in, or otherwise disposing of any funds, real or personal property, accounts, contracts, consumer lists, or any other assets, or any interest therein, wherever located, including outside the United States, that are: (1) owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by any Stipulating Defendants, in whole or in part, or held, in whole or in part for the benefit of any Stipulating Defendants; (2) in the actual or constructive possession of any Stipulating Defendants; or (3) owned, controlled by, or in the actual or constructive possession of any corporation, partnership, or other entity directly or indirectly owned, managed, or controlled by, or under common control with any Stipulating Defendants, and any assets held by, for, or under the name of any Stipulating Defendants at any bank or savings and loan institution of any Stipulating Defendants, or with any broker-dealer, escrow agent, title company, commodity trading company, precious metal dealer, or other financial institution or depository of any kind;

- B. Opening or causing to be opened any safe deposit boxes titled in the name of any Stipulating Defendants, or subject to access by any Stipulating Defendants;
- C. Incurring charges or cash advances on any credit card, debit card, or checking card issued in the name, singly or jointly, of any Stipulating Defendants;
- D. Incurring liens or encumbrances on real property, personal property or other assets in the name, singly or jointly, of any Stipulating Defendants; and
- E. Cashing any checks from consumers, clients, or customers of any Stipulating Defendants.

- F. The funds, property, and assets affected by this Section shall include: (a) all assets of each Stipulating Defendant as of the time this Order is entered, and (b) those assets obtained after entry of this Order that are obtained from any debt collection activities that predate the entry of this Order. This Section does not prevent any Stipulating Defendant from opening new financial accounts.

RETENTION OF ASSETS AND RECORDS BY FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND OTHER THIRD PARTIES

III. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that any financial or brokerage institution or depository, escrow agent, title company, commodity trading company, trust, entity, or person that holds, controls, or maintains custody of any account or asset owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by any Stipulating Defendants, or has held, controlled, or maintained any account or asset of, or on behalf of, any Stipulating Defendants, upon service with a copy of this Order, shall:

- A. Hold and retain within its control and prohibit Stipulating Defendants from withdrawing, removing, assigning, transferring, pledging, encumbering, disbursing, dissipating, converting, selling, gifting, or otherwise disposing of any accounts, assets, funds, or other property that are owned by, held in the name of, for the benefit of, or otherwise controlled by, directly or indirectly, any Stipulating Defendants, in whole or in part, except:
1. accounts that are exempted from the asset freeze pursuant to the Stipulation Regarding Exemption of Certain Accounts from Asset Freeze approved by this Court on July 2, 2014 (Dkt. 23);

2. accounts, assets, funds, or other property owned by, held in the name of, for the benefit of, or otherwise controlled by, directly or indirectly, Stipulating Defendant Buffalo Staffing, Inc., in whole or in part, that are not subject to Section IX(C) of this Order;
 3. as directed in writing by the Receiver regarding accounts, documents, or assets under the Receiver's control as set forth in Section IX, or;
 4. by further order of the Court.
- B. Deny the Stipulating Defendants access to any safe deposit box titled in the name of any Stipulating Defendants, individually or jointly, or subject to access by any Stipulating Defendants, whether directly or indirectly.
- C. Provide counsel for Plaintiffs and the Receiver, within three (3) business days after being served with a copy of this Order, a certified statement setting forth:
1. the identification number of each such account or asset titled (1) in the name, individually or jointly, of any Stipulating Defendants; (2) held on behalf of, or for the benefit of, any Stipulating Defendants; (3) owned or controlled by any Stipulating Defendants; or (4) otherwise subject to access by any Stipulating Defendants, directly or indirectly;
 2. the balance of each such account, or a description of the nature and value of such asset as of the close of business on the day on which this Order is served, and, if the account or other asset has been closed or removed, the date closed or removed, the total funds removed in order to close the account, and the name of the person or entity to whom such account or

- other asset was remitted;
3. the identification of any safe deposit box that is either titled in the name of any Stipulating Defendants, or is otherwise subject to access by any Stipulating Defendants; and
 4. if an account, safe deposit box, or other asset has been closed or removed, the date closed or removed, the balance on such date, and the manner in which such account or asset was closed or removed.
- D. Provide counsel for Plaintiffs and the Receiver, within three (3) business days after being served with a request, copies of all documents pertaining to such account or asset, including but not limited to originals or copies of account applications, account statements, signature cards, checks, drafts, deposit tickets, transfers to and from the accounts, all other debit and credit instruments or slips, currency transaction reports, 1099 forms, and safe deposit box logs; provided that such institution or custodian may charge a reasonable fee.
- E. *Provided*, that a financial institution does not have to provide the information required in this sub-section if (1) the financial institution has complied with the similar provision set forth in the TRO; and (2) the information provided has not changed.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND ACCOUNTING

- IV. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that each Stipulating Defendant, within three (3) business days of service of this Order, shall prepare and deliver to counsel for Plaintiffs:

- A. For the Individual Defendants, a completed financial statement accurate as of the date of service of this Order upon such Defendant (unless otherwise agreed upon with FTC counsel) on the form of **Attachment A** to this Order captioned, “Form Re: Financial Statement for Individual Defendant.”
- B. For the Corporate Defendants, a completed financial statement accurate as of the date of service of this Order upon such Defendant (unless otherwise agreed upon with FTC counsel) in the form of **Attachment B** to this Order captioned, “Form Re: Financial Statement for Business Entity Defendant.”
- C. For each Stipulating Defendant, a completed statement, verified under oath, of all payments, transfers or assignments of funds, assets, or property worth \$2,500 or more since January 1, 2011. Such statement shall include: (a) the amount transferred or assigned; (b) the name of each transferee or assignee; (c) the date of the transfer or assignment; and (d) the type and amount of consideration paid the Defendant. Each statement shall specify the name and address of each financial institution and brokerage firm at which the Defendant has accounts or safe deposit boxes. Said statements shall include assets held in foreign as well as domestic accounts.
- D. *Provided*, Defendants do not have to provide such financial reports if (1) they have complied with the similar provision set forth in the TRO; and (2) the information provided has not changed.

CONSUMER CREDIT REPORTS

- V. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that Plaintiffs may obtain credit reports concerning any Stipulating Defendants pursuant to Section 604(a)(1) of the Fair Credit Reporting Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1681b(a)(1), and that, upon written request, any credit reporting agency from which such reports are requested shall provide them to Plaintiffs.

REPATRIATION OF FOREIGN ASSETS

- VI. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that, within five (5) business days following the service of this Order, each Stipulating Defendant shall:
- A. Provide counsel for Plaintiffs with a full accounting of all assets, accounts, funds, and documents outside of the territory of the United States that are held either:
 - (1) by them; (2) for their benefit; (3) in trust by or for them, individually or jointly; or (4) under their direct or indirect control, individually or jointly;
 - B. Transfer to the territory of the United States all assets, accounts, funds, and documents in foreign countries held either: (1) by them; (2) for their benefit; (3) in trust by or for them, individually or jointly; or (4) under their direct or indirect control, individually or jointly;
 - C. Hold and retain all repatriated assets, accounts, funds, and documents, and prevent any transfer, disposition, or dissipation whatsoever of any such assets, accounts, funds, or documents; and
 - D. Provide Plaintiffs access to all records of accounts or assets of the Stipulating Defendants held by financial institutions located outside the territorial United

States by signing the Consent to Release of Financial Records attached to this Order as **Attachment C**.

- E. *Provided*, Stipulating Defendants do not have to provide such financial reports if (1) they have complied with the similar provision set forth in the TRO; and (2) the information provided has not changed.

NON-INTERFERENCE WITH REPATRIATION

VII. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Stipulating Defendants, and each of their successors, assigns, members, officers, agents, servants, employees, and attorneys, and those persons in active concert or participation with them who receive actual notice of this Order by personal service or otherwise, whether acting directly or through any entity, corporation, subsidiary, division, affiliate or other device, are hereby restrained and enjoined from taking any action, directly or indirectly, which may result in the encumbrance or dissipation of foreign assets, or in the hindrance of the repatriation required by Section VI of this Order, including but not limited to:

- A. Sending any statement, letter, fax, e-mail or wire transmission, telephoning or engaging in any other act, directly or indirectly, that results in a determination by a foreign trustee or other entity that a “duress” event has occurred under the terms of a foreign trust agreement, until such time that all assets have been fully repatriated pursuant to Section VI of this Order; and
- B. Notifying any trustee, protector or other agent of any foreign trust or other related entities of either the existence of this Order, or of the fact that repatriation is

required pursuant to a Court Order, until such time that all assets have been fully repatriated pursuant to Section VI.

CONTINUATION OF RECEIVER

VIII. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Patricia Hamill shall continue to serve as Receiver for the business activities of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants with the full power of an equity receiver. The Receiver shall be the agent of this Court and solely the agent of this Court in acting as Receiver under this Order. The Receiver shall be accountable directly to this Court. The Receiver shall comply with any laws and Local Rules of this Court governing receivers.

DUTIES OF RECEIVER

IX. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Receiver is directed and authorized to accomplish the following:

- A. Assume full control of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants by removing, as the Receiver deems necessary or advisable, any director, officer, independent contractor, employee, or agent of any of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants, including any named Stipulating Defendant, from control of, management of, or participation in, the affairs of the Receivership Stipulating Defendants;
- B. Take exclusive custody, control, and possession of all assets, documents, and electronically stored information of, or in the possession, custody, or under the control of, the Stipulating Receivership Defendants, wherever situated. The Receiver shall have full power to divert mail and to sue for, collect, receive, take in possession, hold, and manage all assets and documents of the Stipulating

Receivership Defendants and other persons or entities whose interests are now held by or under the direction, possession, custody, or control of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants. *Provided, however*, that the Receiver shall not attempt to collect or receive any amount from a consumer if the Receiver believes the consumer was a victim of the unlawful conduct alleged in the complaint in this matter;

- C. Take exclusive custody, control, and possession of all funds, property, and assets in any bank accounts, money market accounts, or other financial accounts, including but not limited to checking accounts, savings accounts, and certificates of deposit, held by Stipulating Defendant Buffalo Staffing, Inc., individually or jointly, or held by others for the benefit of Stipulating Defendant Buffalo Staffing, Inc., *provided* that the funds, property, and assets affected by this provision include: (a) assets obtained on or prior to July 7, 2014 and (b) assets obtained, directly or indirectly, from any debt collection activities that predate the entry of this Order;
- D. Take all steps necessary to secure the business premises of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants. Such steps may include, but are not limited to, the following, as the Receiver deems necessary or advisable:
1. serving and filing this Order;
 2. completing a written inventory of all Receivership assets;
 3. obtaining pertinent information from all employees and other agents of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants, including, but not limited to, the

name, home address, social security number, job description, method of compensation, and all accrued and unpaid commissions and compensation of each such employee or agent, and all computer hardware and software passwords;

4. videotaping all portions of the location;
 5. securing the location by changing the locks and disconnecting any computer modems or other means of access to the computer or other records maintained at that location;
 6. requiring any persons present on the premises at the time this Order is served to leave the premises, to provide the Receiver with proof of identification, or to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Receiver that such persons are not removing from the premises documents or assets of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants; and
 7. requiring all employees, independent contractors, and consultants of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants to complete a questionnaire submitted by the Receiver;
- E. Conserve, hold, and manage all Receivership assets, and perform all acts necessary or advisable to preserve the value of those assets, in order to prevent any irreparable loss, damage, or injury to consumers or to creditors of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants, including, but not limited to, obtaining an accounting of the assets and preventing transfer, withdrawal, or misapplication of assets;

- F. Liquidate any and all securities or commodities owned by or for the benefit of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants that the Receiver deems to be advisable or necessary;
- G. Enter into contracts and purchase insurance as the Receiver deems to be advisable or necessary;
- H. Prevent the inequitable distribution of assets and determine, adjust, and protect the interests of consumers and creditors who have transacted business with the Stipulating Receivership Defendants;
- I. Manage and administer the business of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants until further order of this Court by performing all incidental acts that the Receiver deems to be advisable or necessary, which includes retaining, hiring, or dismissing any employees, independent contractors, or agents;
- J. Choose, engage, and employ attorneys, accountants, appraisers, and other independent contractors and technical specialists as the Receiver deems advisable or necessary in the performance of duties and responsibilities under the authority granted by this Order;
- K. Make payments and disbursements from the Receivership estate that are necessary or advisable for carrying out the directions of, or exercising the authority granted by, this Order. The Receiver shall apply to the Court for prior approval of any payment of any debt or obligation incurred by the Stipulating Receivership Defendants prior to the date of entry of this Order, except payments that the Receiver deems necessary or advisable to secure assets of the Stipulating

- Receivership Defendants, such as rental payments;
- L. Determine and implement the manner in which the Stipulating Receivership Defendants will comply with, and prevent violations of, this Order and all other applicable laws, including, but not limited to, revising sales materials and implementing monitoring procedures;
- M. Institute, compromise, adjust, appear in, intervene in, or become party to such actions or proceedings in state, federal, or foreign courts that the Receiver deems necessary and advisable to preserve or recover the assets of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants, or that the Receiver deems necessary and advisable to carry out the Receiver's mandate under this Order;
- N. Defend, compromise, adjust, or otherwise dispose of any or all actions or proceedings instituted in the past or in the future against the Receiver in his role as Receiver, or against the Stipulating Receivership Defendants, that the Receiver deems necessary and advisable to preserve the assets of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants or that the Receiver deems necessary and advisable to carry out the Receiver's mandate under this Order;
- O. Continue and conduct the business of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants in such manner, to such extent, and for such duration as the Receiver may in good faith deem to be necessary or appropriate to operate the business profitably and lawfully, if at all; *provided* that the continuation and conduct of the business shall be conditioned upon the Receiver's good faith determination that the businesses can be lawfully operated at a profit using the assets of the receivership estate;

- P. Take depositions and issue subpoenas to obtain documents and records pertaining to the receivership estate and compliance with this Order. Subpoenas may be served by agents or attorneys of the Receiver and by agents of any process server retained by the Receiver;
- Q. Open one or more bank accounts in the Western District of New York as designated depositories for funds of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants. The Receiver shall deposit all funds of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants in such a designated account and shall make all payments and disbursements from the receivership estate from such account(s);
- R. Maintain accurate records of all receipts and expenditures that the Receiver makes as Receiver;
- S. Cooperate with reasonable requests for information or assistance from any state or federal law enforcement agency; and
- T. Be responsible for maintaining the chain of custody of all of Stipulating Defendants' records in his possession, pursuant to procedures to be established in writing with the approval of Plaintiffs.

COOPERATION WITH RECEIVER

X. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that:

- A. Stipulating Defendants and their officers, agents, directors, servants, employees, salespersons, independent contractors, attorneys, corporations, subsidiaries, affiliates, successors, and assigns, and all other persons or entities in active concert or participation with them, who receive actual notice of this Order by

personal service or otherwise, whether acting directly or through any trust, corporation, subsidiary, division, or other device, or any of them, shall fully cooperate with and assist the Receiver. Stipulating Defendants' cooperation and assistance shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Providing any information to the Receiver that the Receiver deems necessary to exercising the authority and discharging the responsibilities of the Receiver under this Order, including but not limited to allowing the Receiver to inspect documents and assets and to partition office space;
2. Providing any password and executing any documents required to access any computer or electronic files in any medium, including but not limited to electronically stored information stored, hosted or otherwise maintained by an electronic data host; and
3. Advising all persons who owe money to the Stipulating Receivership Defendants that all debts should be paid directly to the Receiver.

B. Stipulating Defendants and their officers, directors, agents, servants, employees, attorneys, successors, assigns, and all other persons or entities directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, under their control, and all other persons in active concert or participation with them who receive actual notice of this Order by personal service or otherwise, are hereby restrained and enjoined from directly or indirectly:

1. Transacting any of the business of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants;

2. Destroying, secreting, erasing, mutilating, defacing, concealing, altering, transferring or otherwise disposing of, in any manner, directly or indirectly, any documents, electronically stored information, or equipment of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants, including but not limited to contracts, agreements, consumer files, consumer lists, consumer addresses and telephone numbers, correspondence, advertisements, brochures, sales material, sales presentations, documents evidencing or referring to Stipulating Defendants' services, debt collection training materials, debt collection scripts, data, computer tapes, disks, or other computerized records, books, written or printed records, handwritten notes, telephone logs, "verification" or "compliance" tapes or other audio or video tape recordings, receipt books, invoices, postal receipts, ledgers, personal and business canceled checks and check registers, bank statements, appointment books, copies of federal, state or local business or personal income or property tax returns, photographs, mobile devices, electronic storage media, accessories, and any other documents, records or equipment of any kind that relate to the business practices or business or personal finances of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants or any other entity directly or indirectly under the control of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants;
3. Transferring, receiving, altering, selling, encumbering, pledging, assigning, liquidating, or otherwise disposing of any assets owned,

controlled, or in the possession or custody of, or in which an interest is held or claimed by, the Stipulating Receivership Defendants, or the Receiver;

4. Excusing debts owed to the Stipulating Receivership Defendants;
5. Failing to notify the Receiver of any asset, including accounts, of a Stipulating Receivership Defendant held in any name other than the name of the Receivership Defendant, or by any person or entity other than the Stipulating Receivership Defendant, or failing to provide any assistance or information requested by the Receiver in connection with obtaining possession, custody, or control of such assets;
6. Failing to create and maintain books, records, and accounts which, in reasonable detail, accurately, fairly, and completely reflect the incomes, assets, disbursements, transactions and use of monies by the Stipulating Defendants or any other entity directly or indirectly under the control of the Stipulating Defendants;
7. Doing any act or refraining from any act whatsoever to interfere with the Receiver's taking custody, control, possession, or managing of the assets or documents subject to this Receivership; or to harass or to interfere with the Receiver in any way; or to interfere in any manner with the exclusive jurisdiction of this Court over the assets or documents of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants; or to refuse to cooperate with the Receiver or the Receiver's duly authorized agents in the exercise of their duties or

authority under any Order of this Court; and

8. Filing, or causing to be filed, any petition on behalf of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants for relief under the United States Bankruptcy Code, 11 U.S.C. § 101 et seq., without prior permission from this Court.

C. Stipulating Defendant Buffalo Staffing, Inc. shall provide the Receiver notice, with at least twenty-four (24) hours advance notice, of any withdrawal, removal, assignment, transfer, pledge, encumbrance, disbursement, dissipation, conversion, sale, gift, or other disposal of any accounts, assets, funds, or other property that is valued at \$1,000 or more, and that is owned by, held in the name of, for the benefit of, or otherwise controlled by, directly or indirectly, Buffalo Staffing, Inc., in whole or in part. Notice shall be provided by email to each of the following:

- Receiver Patricia M. Hamill at phamill@conradobrien.com
- Kevin D. Kent, Esquire at kkent@conradobrien.com
- John Sinatra, Esquire at jsinatra@hodgsonruss.com

Provided that Stipulating Defendant Buffalo Staffing Inc. is not required to provide the notice required under this provision for payroll expenditures.

DELIVERY OF RECEIVERSHIP PROPERTY

XI. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that:

A. Immediately upon service of this Order upon them or upon their otherwise obtaining actual knowledge of this Order, or within a period permitted by the Receiver, Stipulating Defendants, or any other person or entity, including but not limited to financial institutions and electronic data hosts, shall transfer or deliver

access to, possession, custody, and control of the following to the Receiver:

1. All assets of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants;
 2. All documents and electronically stored information of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants, including, but not limited to, books and records of accounts, all financial and accounting records, balance sheets, income statements, bank records (including monthly statements, canceled checks, records of wire transfers, records of ACH transactions, and check registers), client or customer lists, title documents and other papers;
 3. All assets belonging to members of the public now held by the Stipulating Receivership Defendants;
 4. All keys, computer and other passwords, entry codes, combinations to locks required to open or gain or secure access to any assets or documents of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants, wherever located, including, but not limited to, access to their business premises, means of communication, accounts, computer systems, or other property; and
 5. Information identifying the accounts, employees, properties, or other assets or obligations of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants.
- B. In the event any person or entity fails to deliver or transfer immediately any asset or otherwise fails to comply with any provision of this Section XII, the Receiver may file *ex parte* with the Court an Affidavit of Non-Compliance regarding the failure. Upon filing of the affidavit, the Court may authorize, without additional process or demand, Writs of Possession or Sequestration or other equitable writs

requested by the Receiver. The writs shall authorize and direct the United States Marshal or any sheriff or deputy sheriff of any county (pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 4(c)(1)) to seize the asset, document, or other thing and to deliver it to the Receiver.

COMPENSATION FOR RECEIVER

XII. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Receiver and all personnel hired by the Receiver as herein authorized, including counsel to the Receiver and accountants, are entitled to reasonable compensation for the performance of duties pursuant to this Order, and for the cost of actual out-of-pocket expenses incurred by them, from the assets now held by or in the possession or control of, or which may be received by, the Stipulating Receivership Defendants. The Receiver shall file with the Court and serve on the parties periodic requests for the payment of such reasonable compensation, with the first such request filed no more than sixty (60) calendar days after the date of the TRO. The Receiver shall not increase the hourly rates used as the bases for such fee applications without prior approval of the Court.

RECEIVER'S REPORTS

XIII. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Receiver shall periodically report to this Court regarding: (1) the steps taken by the Receiver to implement the terms of this Order; (2) the value of all liquidated and unliquidated assets of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants; (3) the sum of all liabilities of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants; (4) the steps the Receiver intends to take in the future to: (a) prevent any diminution in the value of assets of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants, (b) pursue receivership assets

from third parties, and (c) adjust the liabilities of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants, if appropriate; (5) whether the business of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants can be operated lawfully and profitably; and (6) any other matters which the Receiver believes should be brought to the Court's attention. *Provided, however*, if any of the required information would hinder the Receiver's ability to pursue receivership assets, the portions of the Receiver's report containing such information may be filed under seal and not served on the parties.

RECEIVER'S BOND

XIV. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the bond in the sum of \$5,000 previously filed by the Receiver with the Clerk of this Court shall remain in effect, conditioned that the Receiver will well and truly perform the duties of the office and abide by and perform all acts the Court directs.

PROHIBITION ON RELEASE OF CONSUMER INFORMATION

XV. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, except as required by a law enforcement agency, law, regulation or court order, Stipulating Defendants and their officers, agents, servants, employees, and attorneys, and all other persons in active concert or participation with any of them who receive actual notice of this Order by personal service or otherwise, are restrained and enjoined from disclosing, using, or benefitting from consumer information, including the name, address, telephone number, email address, social security number, other identifying information, or any data that enables access to a consumer's account (including a credit card, bank account, or other financial account), of any person which any Stipulating Defendant obtained prior to entry of this Order in connection with any

debt collection service.

STAY OF ACTIONS

XVI. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that:

A. Except by leave of this Court, during pendency of the Receivership ordered herein, Stipulating Defendants and all other persons and entities be and hereby are stayed from taking any action to establish or enforce any claim, right, or interest for, against, on behalf of, in, or in the name of, the Stipulating Receivership Defendants, any of their subsidiaries, affiliates, partnerships, assets, documents, or the Receiver or the Receiver's duly authorized agents acting in their capacities as such, including, but not limited to, the following actions:

1. Commencing, prosecuting, continuing, entering, or enforcing any suit or proceeding, except that such actions may be filed to toll any applicable statute of limitations;
2. Accelerating the due date of any obligation or claimed obligation; filing or enforcing any lien; taking or attempting to take possession, custody, or control of any asset; attempting to foreclose, forfeit, alter, or terminate any interest in any asset, whether such acts are part of a judicial proceeding, are acts of self-help, or otherwise;
3. Executing, issuing, serving, or causing the execution, issuance or service of, any legal process, including, but not limited to, attachments, garnishments, subpoenas, writs of replevin, writs of execution, or any other form of process whether specified in this Order or not; or

4. Doing any act or thing whatsoever to interfere with the Receiver taking custody, control, possession, or management of the assets or documents subject to this Receivership, or to harass or interfere with the Receiver in any way, or to interfere in any manner with the exclusive jurisdiction of this Court over the assets or documents of the Stipulating Receivership Defendants;

B. This Section XVI does not stay:

1. The commencement or continuation of a criminal action or proceeding;
2. The commencement or continuation of an action or proceeding by a governmental unit to enforce such governmental unit's police or regulatory power;
3. The enforcement of a judgment, other than a money judgment, obtained in an action or proceeding by a governmental unit to enforce such governmental unit's police or regulatory power; or
4. The issuance to a Stipulating Receivership Defendant of a notice of tax deficiency; and

C. Except as otherwise provided in this Order, all persons and entities in need of documentation from the Receiver shall in all instances first attempt to secure such information by submitting a formal written request to the Receiver, and, if such request has not been responded to within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt by the Receiver, any such person or entity may thereafter seek an Order of this Court with regard to the relief requested.

PRESERVATION OF RECORDS AND TANGIBLE THINGS

XVII. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Stipulating Defendants and their successors, assigns, officers, agents, servants, employees, and attorneys, and those persons or entities in active concert or participation with any of them who receive actual notice of this Order by personal service or otherwise, whether acting directly or through any corporation, subsidiary, division, or other device, are hereby restrained and enjoined from destroying, erasing, mutilating, concealing, altering, transferring, or otherwise disposing of, in any manner, directly or indirectly, any documents or records that relate to the business practices, or business and personal finances, of Stipulating Defendants, or an entity directly or indirectly under the control of Stipulating Defendants.

LIMITED EXPEDITED DISCOVERY

XVIII. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Plaintiffs are granted leave to conduct certain expedited discovery, and that, commencing with the time and date of this Order, in lieu of the time periods, notice provisions, and other requirements of Rules 26, 30, 34, and 45 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, expedited discovery as to parties and non-parties shall proceed as follows:

- A. Plaintiffs may, upon three (3) calendar days' notice, take the deposition of any person or entity, whether or not a party, in any judicial district, for the purpose of discovering: (1) the assets of Defendants; (2) location of documents; and (3) compliance with this Order. Depositions may be conducted telephonically or in person. Deposition transcripts that have not been signed by the witness may be used at the preliminary injunction hearing in this matter. *Provided that,*

notwithstanding Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 30(a)(2), this Section shall not preclude any future depositions by Plaintiffs. *Provided further*, that any deposition taken pursuant to this Section shall be in addition to, and not subject to, the presumptive limits on depositions set forth in Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 30(a)(2)(A).

- B. Plaintiffs may serve interrogatories for the purpose of discovering: (1) the assets of Defendants; (2) location of documents; and (3) compliance with this Order. Defendants shall respond within five (5) calendar days after Plaintiffs serve such interrogatories. *Provided that*, notwithstanding Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 33(a)(1), this Subsection shall not preclude any future interrogatories by Plaintiffs.
- C. Plaintiffs may, upon five (5) calendar days' notice, including through the use of a Rule 45 Subpoena, demand the production of documents from any person or entity, whether or not a Defendant, relating to: (1) the assets of Defendants; (2) the location of documents; and (3) compliance with this Order. *Provided that* two (2) calendar days' notice shall be deemed sufficient for the production of any such documents that are maintained or stored only as electronic data.
- D. Plaintiffs are granted leave to subpoena documents immediately from any financial institution, account custodian, or other entity or person that holds, controls, or maintains custody of any account or asset of any Defendants, or has held, controlled or maintained custody of any account or asset of any Defendants concerning the nature, location, status, and extent of Defendants' assets, and

compliance with this Order, and such financial institution, account custodian or other entity shall respond to such subpoena within five (5) business days after service.

- E. For purposes of discovery pursuant to this Section, service shall be sufficient if made by facsimile or by overnight courier.

SERVICE OF THIS ORDER

- XIX. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that copies of this Order may be served by facsimile transmission, personal or overnight delivery, or U.S. Express Mail, by agents and employees of Plaintiffs or any state or federal law enforcement agency or by private process server, on Stipulating Defendants or any other persons or entities that may be subject to any provision of this Order.

DISTRIBUTION OF ORDER BY STIPULATING DEFENDANTS

- XX. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that within three (3) calendar days after service of this Order, Stipulating Defendants shall provide a copy of this Order to each of their agents, employees, directors, officers, subsidiaries, affiliates, attorneys, independent contractors, representatives, franchisees, and all persons in active concert or participation with Stipulating Defendants. Within five (5) calendar days following this Order, Stipulating Defendants shall provide Plaintiffs with an affidavit identifying the names, titles, addresses, and telephone numbers of the persons that Stipulating Defendants have served with a copy of this Order in compliance with this provision.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH PLAINTIFFS

XXI. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, for the purposes of this Order, because mail addressed to the FTC is subject to delay due to heightened security screening, all correspondence and service of pleadings on

A. Plaintiff Federal Trade Commission shall be sent either via electronic transmission or via Federal Express to: Colin Hector, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Room CC-10232, Washington, DC 20580.

Email: chector@ftc.gov; Telephone: (202) 326-3376; Facsimile: (202) 326-3768; and

B. Plaintiff State of New York shall be sent either via electronic transmission or via Federal Express to James M. Morrissey, Assistant Attorney General, 350 Main Street, Ste. 300A, Buffalo, NY 14202; Facsimile: (716) 853-8414.

JURISDICTION

XXII. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Court shall retain jurisdiction of this matter for all purposes.

IT IS SO STIPULATED

/s/ Dennis Vacco
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Attorney for Plaintiff State of New York

IT IS SO ORDERED, this 10th day of July, 2014.

s/ Richard J. Arcara
RICHARD J. ARCARA
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE