

§ 1006.14

12 CFR Ch. X (1–1–25 Edition)

collection business or that the communication relates to the collection of a debt; and

(5) After the debt collector knows the consumer is represented by an attorney with regard to the subject debt and has knowledge of, or can readily ascertain, such attorney's name and address, not communicate with any person other than that attorney, unless the attorney fails to respond to the debt collector's communication within a reasonable period of time.

(c) *Frequency of location communications.* In addition to complying with § 1006.14(b)(1), a debt collector communicating with any person other than the consumer for the purpose of acquiring location information about the consumer must not communicate more than once with such person unless requested to do so by such person, or unless the debt collector reasonably believes that the earlier response of such person is erroneous or incomplete and that such person now has correct or complete location information.

§ 1006.14 Harassing, oppressive, or abusive conduct.

(a) *In general.* A debt collector must not engage in any conduct the natural consequence of which is to harass, oppress, or abuse any person in connection with the collection of a debt, including, but not limited to, the conduct described in paragraphs (b) through (h) of this section.

(b) *Repeated or continuous telephone calls or telephone conversations—(1) In general.* In connection with the collection of a debt, a debt collector must not place telephone calls or engage any person in telephone conversation repeatedly or continuously with intent to annoy, abuse, or harass any person at the called number.

(2) *Telephone call frequencies; presumptions of compliance and violation.* (i) Subject to the exclusions in paragraph (b)(3) of this section, a debt collector is presumed to comply with paragraph (b)(1) of this section and FDCPA section 806(5) (15 U.S.C. 1692d(5)) if the debt collector places a telephone call to a particular person in connection with the collection of a particular debt neither:

(A) More than seven times within seven consecutive days; nor

(B) Within a period of seven consecutive days after having had a telephone conversation with the person in connection with the collection of such debt. The date of the telephone conversation is the first day of the seven-consecutive-day period.

(ii) Subject to the exclusions in paragraph (b)(3) of this section, a debt collector is presumed to violate paragraph (b)(1) of this section and FDCPA section 806(5) if the debt collector places a telephone call to a particular person in connection with the collection of a particular debt in excess of either of the telephone call frequencies described in paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section.

(3) *Certain telephone calls excluded from the telephone call frequencies.* Telephone calls placed to a person do not count toward the telephone call frequencies described in paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section if they are:

(i) Placed with such person's prior consent given directly to the debt collector and within a period no longer than seven consecutive days after receiving the prior consent, with the date the debt collector receives prior consent counting as the first day of the seven-consecutive-day period;

(ii) Not connected to the dialed number; or

(iii) Placed to the persons described in § 1006.6(d)(1)(ii) through (vi).

(4) *Definition.* For purposes of this paragraph (b), particular debt means each of a consumer's debts in collection. However, in the case of student loan debts, the term particular debt means all student loan debts that a consumer owes or allegedly owes that were serviced under a single account number at the time the debts were obtained by a debt collector.

(c) *Violence or other criminal means.* In connection with the collection of a debt, a debt collector must not use or threaten to use violence or other criminal means to harm the physical person, reputation, or property of any person.

(d) *Obscene or profane language.* In connection with the collection of a debt, a debt collector must not use obscene or profane language, or language the natural consequence of which is to abuse the hearer or reader.

(e) *Debtor's list.* In connection with the collection of a debt, a debt collector must not publish a list of consumers who allegedly refuse to pay debts, except to a consumer reporting agency or to persons meeting the requirements of sections 603(f) or 604(a)(3) of the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. 1681a(f) or 1681b(a)(3)).

(f) *Coercive advertisements.* In connection with the collection of a debt, a debt collector must not advertise for sale any debt to coerce payment of the debt.

(g) *Meaningful disclosure of identity.* In connection with the collection of a debt, a debt collector must not place telephone calls without meaningfully disclosing the caller's identity, except as provided in § 1006.10.

(h) *Prohibited communication media—*

(1) *In general.* In connection with the collection of any debt, a debt collector must not communicate or attempt to communicate with a person through a medium of communication if the person has requested that the debt collector not use that medium to communicate with the person.

(2) *Exceptions.* Notwithstanding the prohibition in paragraph (h)(1) of this section:

(i) If a person opts out of receiving electronic communications from a debt collector, a debt collector may send an electronic confirmation of the person's request to opt out, provided that the electronic confirmation contains no information other than a statement confirming the person's request and that the debt collector will honor it;

(ii) If a person initiates contact with a debt collector using a medium of communication that the person previously requested the debt collector not use, the debt collector may respond once through the same medium of communication used by the person; or

(iii) If otherwise required by applicable law, a debt collector may communicate or attempt to communicate with a person in connection with the collection of any debt through a medium of communication that the person has requested the debt collector not use to communicate with the person.

§ 1006.18 False, deceptive, or misleading representations or means.

(a) *In general.* A debt collector must not use any false, deceptive, or misleading representation or means in connection with the collection of any debt, including, but not limited to, the conduct described in paragraphs (b) through (d) of this section.

(b) *False, deceptive, or misleading representations.* (1) A debt collector must not falsely represent or imply that:

(i) The debt collector is vouched for, bonded by, or affiliated with the United States or any State, including through the use of any badge, uniform, or facsimile thereof.

(ii) The debt collector operates or is employed by a consumer reporting agency, as defined by section 603(f) of the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. 1681a(f)).

(iii) Any individual is an attorney or that any communication is from an attorney.

(iv) The consumer committed any crime or other conduct in order to disgrace the consumer.

(v) A sale, referral, or other transfer of any interest in a debt causes or will cause the consumer to:

(A) Lose any claim or defense to payment of the debt; or

(B) Become subject to any practice prohibited by this part.

(vi) Accounts have been turned over to innocent purchasers for value.

(vii) Documents are legal process.

(viii) Documents are not legal process forms or do not require action by the consumer.

(2) A debt collector must not falsely represent:

(i) The character, amount, or legal status of any debt.

(ii) Any services rendered, or compensation that may be lawfully received, by any debt collector for the collection of a debt.

(3) A debt collector must not represent or imply that nonpayment of any debt will result in the arrest or imprisonment of any person or the seizure, garnishment, attachment, or sale of any property or wages of any person unless such action is lawful and the debt collector or creditor intends to take such action.