

Notice to Consumers

From: Court-Appointed Receiver for Strategic Financial Solutions

Date: April 10, 2024

RE: Update regarding *Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, et al. v. StratFS, LLC (f/k/a Strategic Financial Solutions, LLC), et al.*, Case No. 1:24-cv-00040-EAW-MJR

As a supplement to previous notice and receiver website updates, we are providing this update concerning Strategic Financial Solutions and related parties (“Strategic”) which were placed under the control of a receiver in a lawsuit filed by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and seven state Attorney Generals’ offices. They allege that Strategic and law firms which work with Strategic (including the one representing you) are taking illegal advances fees for their debt relief services. Recently, the Court preliminarily found that Strategic and the law firms were taking unlawful advance fees from clients and issued a Preliminary Injunction prohibiting them from doing so. Some important information about the lawsuit and your rights follows:

- 1) **Lawsuit Filed:** On January 10, 2024, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, and the States of New York, Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Wisconsin (“Plaintiffs”) filed a lawsuit against Strategic Financial Solutions and affiliated companies (“Strategic”) and related individuals (the “Defendants”) alleging they operated a debt-relief operation that collects unlawful advance fees. (A copy of the complaint with a complete list of Defendants can be accessed [here](#).) The Defendants vigorously contest the lawsuit.
- 2) **Temporary Restraining Order Entered:** On January 11, 2024, the Court entered a Temporary Restraining Order (“TRO”), prohibiting the taking of advance fees, freezing Strategic’s assets and appointing what is known as a “receiver” to take temporary control over Strategic. (A copy of the TRO can be found at the link provided above.)
- 3) **Intervenor Law Firms:** A number of the debt relief law firms (“Law Firms”), including yours, who were not named in the Complaint, but which work closely with Defendants, filed a motion to participate in and defend against the lawsuit. The Court allowed the Law Firms to do so. The Law Firms are as follows: Anchor Law Firm, PLLC; Bedrock Legal Group; Boulder Legal Group; Bradon Ellis Law Firm LLC; Canyon Legal Group, LLC; Chinn Legal Group, LLC; Clear Creek Legal, LLC; Credit Advocates Law Firm, LLC; Great Lakes Law Firm; Greenstone Legal Group; Gustafson Consumer Law Group, LLC; Hailstone Legal Group; Hallock & Associates LLC; Hallock and Associates; Harbor Legal Group; Heartland Legal Group; Leigh Legal Group, PLLC; Level One Law; Meadowbrook Legal Group; Michel Law, LLC; Monarch Legal Group; Moore Legal Group, LLC; Newport Legal Group, LLC; Northstar Legal Group; Option 1 Legal; Pioneer Law Firm P.C.; Rockwell Legal Group; Royal Legal Group; Slate Legal Group; Spring Legal Group; Stonepoint Legal Group; The Law Firm of Derek Williams, LLC; The Law Office of Melissa Michel LLC; Whitestone Legal Group; and Wyolaw, LLC.

4) **Preliminary Injunction Entered:** After a two-day evidentiary hearing and consideration of briefs filed by the parties and the Law Firms, on March 4, 2024, the Court entered a Preliminary Injunction (“PI”) against the Defendants and preliminarily determined that Defendants and the Law Firms have taken unlawful advance fees from consumers in violation of the Telemarketing Sales Rule (“TSR”). The Court also confirmed the appointment of the Receiver. (A copy of the PI and Decision and Order can be found at the link provided above.) The Defendants and the Law Firms have appealed the PI ruling.

5) **No Further Advance Fees:** The PI prohibits Strategic and the Law Firms from taking any further advance fees from you during the pendency of the lawsuit. No advance fees have been taken from your funds deposited in accounts at Global and Reliant Asset Management (“RAM”) since January 12, 2024. The client funds in the Global and RAM accounts belong to you, and you may withdraw or direct them as you see fit.

6) **Settlement Payments Can Continue:** If you are presently making payments to a creditor(s) pursuant to a debt settlement, the Receiver has confirmed with Global and RAM that previously scheduled payments to creditors will continue to be made and that deposits to fund settlements with creditors can still be made. In other words, if you have an active settlement, it may still be funded by money currently on deposit in your dedicated account, and if you need to deposit additional money into that account to fund scheduled settlement payments, then you are able to do so.

7) **No Further Settlements:** Your debts that were not settled prior to issuance of the TRO have not been, and will not be, negotiated or settled by Defendants while the PI remains in place unless the Court instructs otherwise.

8) **Receiver Will Seek Instruction from the Court:** The Receiver will be filing a Report and a Request for Immediate Instructions with the Court. In that Report/Request, the Receiver will be seeking guidance from the Court on next steps. Once the Court has issued an Order with those instructions, the Receiver will provide immediate notice to you.

9) **Customer Service:** Customer service operators are answering phones and responding to emails, but wait times will be lengthy due to the volume of calls and emails. Unfortunately, the customer service representatives will not be able to give you any guidance on the lawsuit or the path forward beyond what is described above. If you must contact customer service, email is the best way to do so.

We understand that you may have many questions and will provide another update as soon as we have further guidance from the Court.