

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Stewart Abramson, individually and on
behalf of a class of all persons and entitled
similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

v.

American Advisors Group, et al.,

Defendants.

Case No. 2:19-cv-01341-MJH

~~PROPOSED~~ PRELIMINARY APPROVAL
ORDER

This Court has reviewed the motion for preliminary approval of class settlement filed in this Action, including the Settlement Agreement and Release (“Settlement Agreement”).¹ Based on this review and the findings below, the Court finds good cause to grant the motion.

FINDINGS:

1. The Court hereby preliminarily approves the Settlement Agreement and the terms and conditions of settlement set forth therein, subject to further consideration at the Final Approval Hearing.

2. The Court has conducted a preliminary assessment of the fairness, reasonableness, and adequacy of the Agreement and hereby finds that the settlement falls within the range of reasonableness meriting possible final approval. The Court therefore preliminarily approves the proposed settlement as set forth in the Settlement Agreement.

3. The Long-Form Notice, Email Notice, Postcard Notice, Claim Form, and Opt-Out Form (all attached to the Settlement Agreement), and their manner of transmission, comply with Rule 23 and due process because the notices and forms are reasonably calculated to adequately

¹ Capitalized terms in this Order, unless otherwise defined, have the same definitions as those terms in the Settlement Agreement.

advise class members of (i) the pending lawsuit, (ii) the proposed settlement, and (iii) their rights, including the right to either participate in the settlement, exclude themselves from the settlement, or object to the settlement.

4. For settlement purposes only, the Class is so numerous that joinder of all Class Members is impracticable.

5. For settlement purposes only, Plaintiff's claims are typical of the Settlement Class' claims.

6. For settlement purposes only, there are questions of law and fact common to the Settlement Class which predominate over any questions affecting only individual Settlement Class Members.

7. For settlement purposes only, class certification is superior to other available methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of the controversy.

IT IS ORDERED THAT:

8. **Settlement Approval.** The Settlement Agreement, including the Long-Form Notice, Email Notice, Postcard Notice, Claim Form, and Opt-Out Form attached to the Settlement Agreement as Exhibits 2-6 are preliminarily approved.

9. **Appointment of the Settlement Administrator and the Provision of Class Notice.** Kurtzman Carson Consultants, LLC is appointed as the Settlement Administrator. AAG and the Settlement Administrator will notify Class Members of the settlement in the manner specified under Section 4 of the Settlement Agreement.

10. **Claim for a Settlement Award.** Class Members who want to receive an award under the Settlement Agreement must accurately complete and deliver a Claim Form to the Settlement Administrator no later than ninety (90) calendar days after the entry of this Order.

11. Objection to Settlement. Any Class Member who has not submitted a timely written exclusion request pursuant to paragraph 13 below and who wishes to object to the fairness, reasonableness, or adequacy of the Settlement Agreement, the Fees, Costs, and Expenses Award, or the Service Payment must deliver written objections to the Settlement Administrator (by postal mail or email) or the Court no later than ninety (90) calendar days after the entry of this Order. Written objections must: (a) clearly identify the case name and number; (b) include the full name and the unique identification number for the Settlement Class Member assigned by the Settlement Administrator; (c) include the address, telephone number, and email address (optional) of the objecting Settlement Class Member; (d) include the full name, address, telephone number, and email address of the objector's counsel, and the state bar(s) to which counsel is admitted (if the objector is represented by counsel); and (e) provide a detailed explanation stating the specific reasons for the objection, including any legal and factual support and any evidence in support of the objection. Any Class Member who timely submits a written objection, as described in this paragraph, has the option to appear at the Final Approval Hearing, either in person or through personal counsel, to object to the fairness, reasonableness, or adequacy of the Settlement Agreement or the proposed settlement, the Service Payment, or to the Fees, Costs, and Expenses Award. However, Settlement Class Members (with or without their attorneys) intending to make an appearance at the Final Approval Hearing must include on a timely and valid objection a statement substantially similar to "Notice of Intention to Appear." Only Settlement Class Members who submit timely objections including Notices of Intention to Appear may speak at the Final Approval Hearing. If a Settlement Class Member makes an objection through an attorney, the Settlement Class Member will be responsible for his or her personal attorney's fees and costs. The objection will not be valid if it only objects to the lawsuit's appropriateness or merits.

12. Failure to Object to Settlement. Settlement Class Members who fail to object to the Settlement Agreement in the manner specified above will: (1) be deemed to have waived their right to object to the Settlement Agreement; (2) be foreclosed from objecting (whether by a

subsequent objection, intervention, appeal, or any other process) to the Settlement Agreement; and (3) not be entitled to speak at the Final Approval Hearing.

13. Requesting Exclusion. Settlement Class Members may elect not to be part of the Class and not to be bound by this Settlement Agreement. Individual requests for exclusion may be submitted to the Settlement Administrator electronically (through the Settlement Website) or by postal mail, but if submitted by postal mail, each Settlement Class Member must pay for postage. No mass opt-outs are allowed. All requests for exclusion must be in writing and must: (a) clearly identify the case name and number; (b) include the full name and the unique identification number for the Settlement Class Member assigned by the Settlement Administrator; (c) include the address, telephone number, and email address (optional) of the Settlement Class Member seeking exclusion; (d) contain a statement that the requestor does not wish to participate in the settlement; and (e) be signed personally by the Settlement Class Member. A request for exclusion must be submitted no later than ninety (90) calendar days after entry of this Order.

14. Provisional Certification. The Settlement Class is provisionally certified as a class of all persons in the United States who were a regular user or subscriber to numbers assigned to wireless carriers to which a call was made or attempted by AAG, either directly or by Complete Business Marketing Company, LLC DBA Exclusive Prospect (“EP”) for the benefit of AAG, using any automated telephone dialing system or artificial or prerecorded voice message, or a regular user or subscriber to phone numbers that were not assigned to wireless carriers to which a call was made or attempted by AAG either directly or by EP for the benefit of AAG, from January 1, 2017 to May 1, 2020. Excluded from the Class are the Court, the officers and directors of AAG, and persons who timely and validly request exclusion from the Settlement Class. The Class Period is from January 1, 2017 through May 1, 2020.

15. Conditional Appointment of Class Representative and Class Counsel. Plaintiff is conditionally certified as the class representative to implement the Parties’ settlement in

accordance with the Settlement Agreement. The law firms of Paronich Law, P.C., Murray Murphy Moul + Basil LLP, and Morrow & Artim, PC are conditionally appointed as Settlement Class Counsel. Plaintiff and Settlement Class Counsel must fairly and adequately protect the Settlement Class' interests.

16. Stay of Other Proceedings. The Court hereby orders that any actions or proceedings in any court in the United States involving any Released Claims asserted by any Releasing Parties, except any matters necessary to implement, advance, or further the approval of the Settlement Agreement are stayed pending the Final Approval Hearing and issuance of any Final Order and Judgment.

17. Termination. If the Settlement Agreement terminates for any reason, the following will occur: (a) class certification will be automatically vacated; (b) Plaintiff and Settlement Class Counsel will stop functioning as the class representative and class counsel, respectively, except to the extent previously appointed by the Court; and (c) this Action will revert to its previous status in all respects as it existed immediately before the Parties executed the Settlement Agreement, other than as to payments made to, or owed for work already incurred by, the Settlement Administrator. Neither the settlement nor this Order will waive or otherwise impact the Parties' rights or arguments.

18. No Admissions. Nothing in this Order is, or may be construed as, an admission or concession on any point of fact or law by or against any Party.

19. Stay of Dates and Deadlines. All discovery and pretrial proceedings and deadlines are stayed and suspended until further notice from the Court, except for such actions as are necessary to implement the Settlement Agreement and this Order.

20. Modifications. Counsel for the Parties are hereby authorized to utilize all reasonable procedures in connection with the administration of the settlement which are not materially inconsistent with either this Order or the terms of the Agreement. The Parties may

further modify the Settlement Agreement prior to the Final Approval Hearing so long as such modifications do not materially change the terms of the settlement provided therein. The Court may approve the Settlement Agreement with such modifications as may be agreed to by the Parties, if appropriate, without further notice to Settlement Class Members.

21. Final Approval Hearing. On September 29, 2020, at 9 a.m., this Court will hold a Fairness Hearing to determine whether the Settlement Agreement should be finally approved as fair, reasonable, and adequate. Plaintiff's motion in support of the Final Judgment shall be filed on or before fourteen (14) calendar days before the Final Approval Hearing. Any brief AAG may choose to file shall be filed on or before seven (7) calendar days before the Final Approval Hearing. This Court may order the Fairness Hearing to be postponed, adjourned, or continued. If that occurs, the updated hearing date shall be posted on the Settlement Website, but other than the website posting, the Parties will not be required to provide any additional notice to Settlement Class Members.

22. Summary Timeline. The Agreement and this Order provide for the following timeline dates and deadlines related to the provision of notice and the Final Approval Hearing:

Last day for AAG to provide the Settlement Administrator the Class List	On or before 14 days after entry of this Order
Last day for the Settlement Administrator to publish the Settlement Website and begin operating a toll-free telephone line, email address, and P.O. Box to accept inquiries from Settlement Class Members	On or before 30 days after entry of this Order
Settlement Administrator provides Email Notice and Postcard Notice to Settlement Class Members	On or before 30 days after entry of this Order

Last day for Settlement Class Counsel to file motion in support of Fees, Costs, and Expenses Award and apply for Service Payment	On or before 69 days after entry of this Order
Last day for Settlement Class Members to file Claim Forms, object, or request exclusion from the Settlement Class	On or before 90 days after entry of this Order
Last day for Settlement Class Counsel to file motion in support of Final Approval	On or before 14 days before Final Approval Hearing
Last day for AAG to file optional brief in support of Settlement	On or before 7 days before Final Approval Hearing

SO ORDERED this 6th day of May, 2020.



THE HONORABLE MARILYN J. HORAN
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT