

# STATE OF NEW YORK

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1424

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

## IN ASSEMBLY

January 11, 2021

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Introduced by M. of A. DINOWITZ -- read once and referred to the Committee on Consumer Affairs and Protection

AN ACT to amend the general business law, in relation to communications by mercantile establishments attempting to settle civil actions deriving from larceny prosecutions

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The general business law is amended by adding a new section  
2 349-g to read as follows:

3 § 349-g. Civil proceedings derivative of alleged larceny. 1. Whenever  
4 a mercantile establishment attempts to settle a civil action pursuant to  
5 section 11-105 of the general obligations law, all communications  
6 pertaining to such attempted settlement shall contain the following  
7 statement, which shall, if written, be in a conspicuous place, in font  
8 larger than the remainder of the communication, and, if spoken, read in  
9 its entirety:

10 "This is an attempt to reach a civil settlement agreement resulting  
11 from a larceny that allegedly involves you. Should you choose to agree  
12 to this settlement, you will be subject to the terms and conditions of  
13 such agreement, which are governed by §11-105 of New York State's Gener-  
14 al Obligations Law.

15 Should you refuse this agreement, you are still subject to §11-105 of  
16 New York State's General Obligations Law, which indicates that persons  
17 who commit larceny against the property of a mercantile establishment  
18 are civilly liable to such mercantile establishment in the amount of the  
19 retail price of the merchandise (only if such merchandise is not recov-  
20 ered in saleable condition), up to \$1,500, and a penalty in the amount  
21 that is the greater of \$75 or five-times the retail price, up to \$500.  
22 The mercantile establishment may file a civil lawsuit against you to  
23 pursue the recovery of these damages. These civil penalties prescribed

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 by law are entirely separate from any criminal penalties that may be  
2 brought against you.

3 Should you accept or refuse a civil settlement agreement, a mercantile  
4 establishment may still bring criminal charges against you in a court of  
5 law, unless such civil settlement agreement between you and the mercan-  
6 tile establishment precludes the mercantile establishment from pursuing  
7 criminal charges."

8 2. A mercantile establishment that violates this section shall be  
9 strictly liable for:

10 (a) Any actual damages sustained by defendant as a result of such  
11 failure;

12 (b) Treble the amount sought by the mercantile establishment in any  
13 such settlement agreement. In the case of multiple settlement offers,  
14 the amount to be trebled shall be the highest settlement amount sought  
15 by such mercantile establishment;

16 (c) In the case of any successful action to enforce the foregoing  
17 liability, the costs of the action, together with a reasonable attor-  
18 neys' fee as determined by the court.

19 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall apply to any  
20 prospective attempted settlements of such civil actions.