

AMC Faces Class Action Over Hidden “Convenience Fees”

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Last week, a Pennsylvania moviegoer filed a class action lawsuit against AMC arguing that the theater company charges deceptive “junk fees” when consumers buy tickets online.

According to the complaint, AMC displays a price for each ticket at the beginning of the purchase flow. Later in the flow, AMC adds a “Convenience Fee,” which is mandatory unless a consumer instead elects to pay an annual \$17.99 fee to join “AMC Stubs Premiere,” the company’s loyalty program.

The plaintiff alleges that in other jurisdictions (such as New York) where it is explicitly required by law to do so, AMC displays its all-in price from the start and discloses its fees upfront. Because Pennsylvania does not have a similar law, customers in that state get a different experience. Among other things, the plaintiffs seek damages, refunds of the convenience fees, and an injunction to stop AMC’s current fee practices.

As more states pass laws to address how companies display fees, companies have to decide whether to approach compliance on a state-by-state basis or to try to comply with the most restrictive standard across all states. The outcome of this case could impact how companies think about the former strategy.