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MELCHOR DIAZ

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF ORANGE

MELCHOR DIAZ, individually, on behalf
of others similarly situated, and as an
aggrieved employee and private attorney
general,

Plaintiff,

vs.

HOUSE FOODS AMERICA
CORPORATION, a California corporation;
and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No.: 30-2020-01141058-CU-OE-CXC

**FIRST AMENDED CLASS ACTION AND
REPRESENTATIVE ACTION
COMPLAINT**

DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY

- (1) VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA
LABOR CODE §§ 510 AND 1198
(UNPAID OVERTIME)**
- (2) VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA
LABOR CODE §§ 226.7 AND 512(a)
(UNPAID MEAL PERIOD
PREMIUMS)**
- (3) VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA
LABOR CODE § 226.7 (UNPAID
REST PERIOD PREMIUMS)**
- (4) VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA
LABOR CODE §§ 1194, 1197 AND
1197.1 (UNPAID MINIMUM
WAGES)**
- (5) VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA
LABOR CODE §§ 201, 202 AND 203
(FINAL WAGES NOT TIMELY
PAID)**
- (6) VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA
LABOR CODE §§ 204 (WAGES
NOT TIMELY PAID DURING**

- EMPLOYMENT)
- (7) VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA
LABOR CODE § 226(a) (FAILURE
TO PROVIDE ACCURATE WAGE
STATEMENTS)
- (8) VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA
LABOR CODE § 1174 (d)
(FAILURE TO KEEP ACCURATE
PAYROLL RECORDS)
- (9) VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA
BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS
CODE § 17200, ET SEQ.
- (10) VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA
LABOR CODE § 2699, ET SEQ.
(PRIVATE ATTORNEYS
GENERAL ACT)

1 Plaintiff MELCHOR DIAZ (“Plaintiff”), individually and on behalf of other members of
2 the general public similarly situated, and as a private attorney general, alleges as follows:

3 **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

4 1. Plaintiff brings this action against Defendants HOUSE FOODS AMERICA
5 CORPORATION and DOES 1 THROUGH 50 (hereinafter also collectively referred to as
6 “Defendants”) for California Labor Code violations, unfair business practices, and civil penalties
7 stemming from Defendants’ failure to pay overtime compensation, failure to provide meal
8 periods, failure to authorize and permit rest periods, failure to pay minimum wage, failure to
9 timely pay wages, failure to provide accurate wage statements, and failure to maintain accurate
10 payroll records.

11 2. Plaintiff’s First through Ninth Causes of Action are brought as a class action on
12 behalf of himself and similarly situated current and former employees of Defendants (hereinafter
13 collectively referred to as the “Class” or “Class Members”, as defined more fully in paragraph
14 14, below) pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure section 382. The monetary damages
15 and restitution sought by Plaintiff exceeds the minimal jurisdiction limits of the Superior Court
16 and will be established according to proof at trial.

17 3. Plaintiff’s Tenth Cause of Action is brought as a representative action on behalf
18 of himself and certain other current and former employees of Defendants against whom one or
19 more of the alleged violations was committed (hereinafter collectively referred to as the
20 “Aggrieved Employees”) pursuant to California Labor Code sections 2698, et seq. Plaintiff is an
21 aggrieved employee against whom one or more of the alleged violations occurred. The civil
22 penalties sought by Plaintiff exceed the minimal jurisdiction limits of the Superior Court and will
23 be established according to proof at trial.

24 4. The Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to the California Constitution,
25 Article VI, Section 10, which grants the superior court “original jurisdiction in all other causes”
26 except those given by statute to other courts. The statutes under which this action is brought do
27 not specify any other basis for jurisdiction.

28 5. This Court has jurisdiction over Defendants because, upon information and belief,

1 Defendants are citizens of California, have sufficient minimum contacts in California, or
2 otherwise intentionally avail themselves of the California market so as to render the exercise of
3 jurisdiction over them by the California courts consistent with traditional notions of fair play and
4 substantial justice.

5 6. Venue is proper in this Court because, upon information and belief, Defendants
6 maintain offices, have agents, and/or transact business in the State of California, County of
7 Orange.

8 **PARTIES**

9 7. Plaintiff MELCHOR DIAZ is an individual residing in the County of Orange,
10 State of California.

11 8. Defendant HOUSE FOODS AMERICA CORPORATION is, and at all times
12 herein mentioned was, a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of
13 California, and registered to do business in the state of California.

14 9. Plaintiff is ignorant of the identities of defendants Does 1 through 50, inclusive,
15 and therefore sues these defendants by such fictitious names. The Doe defendants may be
16 individuals, partnerships, or corporations. Plaintiff is informed and believe, and thereon alleges,
17 that, at all times mentioned herein, each of the Doe defendants was the parent, subsidiary, agent,
18 servant, employee, co-venturer, and/or co-conspirator of each of the other defendants, and was at
19 all times mentioned acting within the scope, purpose, consent, knowledge, ratification and
20 authorization of such agency, employment, joint venture and conspiracy. Plaintiff will amend this
21 Complaint to allege their true names and capacities when ascertained. Plaintiff is informed and
22 believes and thereon alleges that each of the fictitiously named Doe defendants is responsible in
23 some manner for the occurrences herein alleged, and that Plaintiff's damages as herein alleged
24 were proximately caused by its conduct. Defendant HOUSE FOODS AMERICA
25 CORPORATION and Doe Defendants 1 through 50 are collectively referred to herein as
26 "Defendants."

27 10. Defendants are and at all times herein mentioned were, (a) conducting business in
28 the County of Orange, State of California, and (b) the employer of Plaintiff consistent with the

California Labor Code and Industrial Welfare Commission Wage Orders (“Wage Orders”).

11. Plaintiff further alleges that Defendants, directly or indirectly controlled or affected the working conditions, wages, working hours, and conditions of employment of Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees so as to make each of said Defendants employers and employers jointly liable under the statutory provisions set forth herein.

CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS

12. Plaintiff brings the First through Ninth Causes of Action as class action on his own behalf and on behalf of all other members of the general public similarly situated, and, thus, seeks class certification under Code of Civil Procedure section 382.

13. The proposed class is defined as follows: All current and former non-exempt employees of Defendants within the State of California at any time commencing four (4) years preceding the filing of Plaintiff’s complaint up until the time that notice of the certified class action is provided to the class (hereinafter referred to as the “Class” or “Class Members.”)

14. Plaintiff reserves the right to establish other subclasses as appropriate.

15. The Class is ascertainable and there is a well-defined community of interest in the litigation:

- a. Numerosity: The Class Members are so numerous that joinder of all Class Members is impracticable. The membership of the entire Class is unknown to Plaintiff at this time; however, the Class is estimated to be over fifty (50) individuals and the identity of such membership is readily ascertainable by inspection of Defendants’ employment records.
- b. Typicality: Plaintiff’s claims are typical of all other Class Members demonstrated herein. Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the other Class Members with whom he has a well-defined community of interest.
- c. Adequacy: Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect the interests of each Class Member, with whom he has a well-defined community of interest and typicality of claims, as demonstrated herein. Plaintiff has no interest that is antagonistic to the other Class Members. Plaintiff’s attorneys, the proposed class counsel, are

versed in the rules governing class action discovery, certification, and settlement. Plaintiff has incurred, and during the pendency of this action will continue to incur, costs and attorneys' fees, that have been, are, and will be necessarily expended for the prosecution of this action for the substantial benefit of each Class Member.

- d. Superiority: A class action is superior to other available methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of this litigation because individual joinder of all Class Members is impractical.
- e. Public Policy Considerations: Certification of this lawsuit as a class action will advance public policy objectives. Employers of this great state violate employment and labor laws every day. Current employees are often afraid to assert their rights out of fear of direct or indirect retaliation. However, class actions provide the Class Members who are not named in the complaint anonymity that allows for the vindication of their rights.

16. There are common questions of law and fact as to the Class that predominate over questions affecting only individual members. The following common questions of law or fact, among others, exist as to the members of the Class:

- a. Whether Defendants' failure to pay wages, without abatement, or reduction, in accordance with the California Labor Code was willful;
- b. Whether Defendants had a corporate policy and practice of failing to pay Plaintiff and the other Class Members for all hours worked, and missed, short, late or interrupted meal periods and rest breaks in violation of California law;
- c. Whether Defendants required Plaintiff and the other Class Members to work more than eight (8) hours per day and/or more than forty (40) hours per week and failed to pay the legally required overtime compensation to Plaintiff and the other Class Members;
- d. Whether Defendants deprived Plaintiff and the other Class Members of meal and/or rest periods or required Plaintiff and the other Class Members to work

- 1 during meal and/or rest periods without compensation;
- 2 e. Whether Defendants failed to pay meal period premium wages to Class Members
- 3 when they were not provided with a legally compliant meal period;
- 4 f. Whether Defendants failed to pay rest period premium wages to class Members
- 5 when they were not authorized and permitted to take legally compliant rest
- 6 periods.
- 7 g. Whether Defendants failed to pay minimum wages to Plaintiff and the other Class
- 8 Members for all hours worked;
- 9 h. Whether Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and the other Class Members the
- 10 required minimum wage pursuant to California law;
- 11 i. Whether Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and the other Class Members proper
- 12 overtime compensation pursuant to California law;
- 13 j. Whether Defendants failed to pay all wages due to Plaintiff and the other Class
- 14 Members within the time required upon their discharge or resignation from
- 15 employment;
- 16 k. Whether Defendants failed to timely pay all wages due to Plaintiff and the other
- 17 Class Members during their employment;
- 18 l. Whether Defendants complied with wage reporting as required by the California
- 19 Labor Code, including section 226;
- 20 m. Whether Defendants kept complete and accurate payroll records as required by
- 21 the California Labor Code, including section 1174(d);
- 22 n. Whether Defendants' conduct was with malice, fraud or oppression;
- 23 o. Whether Defendants' conduct was willful or reckless;
- 24 p. Whether Defendants engaged in unfair business practices in violation of
- 25 California Business & Professions Code section 17200, et seq. based on its
- 26 improper withholding of compensation and deduction of wages;
- 27 q. The appropriate amount of damages, restitution, and/or monetary penalties
- 28 resulting from Defendants' violation of California law; and

r. Whether Plaintiff and the other Class Members are entitled to compensatory damages pursuant to the California Labor Code.

GENERAL ALLEGATIONS

17. Defendants are a manufacturer of tofu and specialty Asian food products.

18. Defendants employed Plaintiff to work as a production employee from approximately August 9, 2019 to September 20, 2019.

19. At all relevant times set forth herein, Defendants employed Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees as hourly-paid or non-exempt employees.

20. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants had the authority to hire and terminate Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees; to directly or indirectly control work rules, working conditions, wages, working hours, and conditions of employment of Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees; and to hire and terminate the employment of Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees.

21. At all times herein mentioned, Defendants were subject to the Labor Code of the State of California and the applicable Industrial Welfare Commission Orders.

22. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges that Defendants engaged in an ongoing and systematic scheme of wage abuse against their hourly-paid or non-exempt employees. As set forth in more detail below, this scheme involved, *inter alia*, regularly requiring Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees to work off the clock without compensation, thereby failing to pay them for all hours worked, including minimum and overtime wages. Defendants also implemented policies that prohibited Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees from accurately recording the actual time worked, resulting in a failure to pay Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees all wages owed. In addition, Defendants routinely failed to permit Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees to take timely and duty-free meal periods and rest periods in violation of California law.

23. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants have implemented policies and practices which failed to provide Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees with timely and duty-free meal periods. Defendants routinely failed to relieve Plaintiff, the Class,

1 and the Aggrieved Employees of all duties during their meal periods, regularly failed to relinquish
2 control over Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees during their meal periods,
3 regularly failed to permit Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees a reasonable
4 opportunity to take their meal periods, and regularly impeded or discouraged Plaintiff, the Class,
5 and the Aggrieved Employees from taking thirty (30) minute uninterrupted meal breaks no later
6 than the end of their fifth hour of work and/or from taking a second thirty (30) minute
7 uninterrupted meal break no later than their tenth hour of work for shifts lasting more than ten
8 (10) hours. Defendants also failed to maintain accurate records of meal periods taken by Plaintiff,
9 the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees.

10 24. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants did not adequately
11 inform Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees of their right to take meal periods under
12 California law. Moreover, Defendants systematically disregarded their own written policies
13 regarding the provision and timing of meal periods for Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved
14 Employees. Instead, Defendants' actual policy and practice was to schedule Plaintiff, the Class,
15 and the Aggrieved Employees in a way the prohibited them from taking timely and duty-free meal
16 periods, and to require Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees to work through their
17 meal periods, for which they were not compensated.

18 25. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants failed to pay
19 Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees premium wages for meal periods that were
20 missed, late, interrupted, or shortened in violation of California law. Defendants knew or should
21 have known that Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees were entitled to receive all
22 meal periods or payment of one additional hour of pay at their regular rate of pay when a meal
23 period was missed, short, late, and/or interrupted. Notwithstanding this knowledge, Defendants
24 routinely failed to provide legally compliant meal periods to Plaintiff, the Class, and the
25 Aggrieved Employees, and routinely failed pay one additional hour of pay to Plaintiff, the Class,
26 and the Aggrieved Employees at their regular rate of pay when a meal period was missed, short,
27 late, and/or interrupted.

28 26. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants have implemented

1 policies and practices which prohibited Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees from
2 taking timely and duty-free rest periods. Defendants regularly failed to provide, authorize, and
3 permit Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees to take full, uninterrupted, off-duty rest
4 periods for every shift lasting three and one-half (3.5) to six (6) hours and/or two full,
5 uninterrupted, off-duty rest periods for every shift lasting six (6) to ten (10) hours, and failed to
6 make a good faith effort to authorize, permit, and provide such rest breaks in the middle of each
7 work period.

8 27. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants did not adequately
9 inform Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees of their right to take rest periods under
10 California law. Moreover, Defendants systematically disregarded their own written policies
11 regarding the provision and timing of rest periods for Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved
12 Employees. Instead, Defendants' actual policy and practice was to schedule Plaintiff, the Class,
13 and the Aggrieved Employees in a way that regularly prohibited them from taking timely and
14 duty free rest periods, and to regularly require Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees
15 to work through their rest periods. Moreover, Defendant prohibit Plaintiff, the Class and the
16 Aggrieved Employees from leaving its premises during purported rest periods.

17 28. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants failed to pay
18 Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees premium wages for rest periods that were
19 missed, late, interrupted, or shortened in violation of California law. Defendants knew or should
20 have known that Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees were entitled to receive all
21 rest periods or payment of one additional hour of pay at their regular rate of pay when a rest period
22 was missed, short, late, and/or interrupted. Notwithstanding this knowledge, Defendants routinely
23 failed to authorize and permit Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees to take duty-free
24 rest periods, and failed to pay one additional hour of pay to Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved
25 Employees at their regular rate of pay when a rest period was missed, short, late and/or
26 interrupted.

27 29. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendant regularly required
28 Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees to perform work off-the-clock. Although

Defendants prohibited overtime, Defendants still regularly required that Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees complete all of their assigned duties. To do so, Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees were regularly required to perform work off-the-clock for which they were not compensated.

30. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants implemented policies that prohibited Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees from accurately recording the actual time worked, resulting in a failure to pay Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees all wages owed.

31. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees worked more than eight (8) hours in a day, and/or forty (40) hours in a week.

32. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to pay overtime compensation to Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees when they worked in excess of eight (8) hours in a single work day and/or forty (40) hours in a single work week. Defendants knew or should have known that Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees were entitled to receive certain wages for overtime compensation and that they were not receiving wages for overtime compensation.

33. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to pay Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees at least minimum wages for all hours worked. Defendants knew or should have known that Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees were entitled to receive at least minimum wages for all hours worked and that they were not receiving at least minimum wages for all hours worked. Defendants' failure to pay minimum wages included, *inter alia*, failing to pay Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees at the required minimum wage pursuant to California law, requiring Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees to perform work off the clock.

34. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to pay Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees all wages owed to them upon discharge or resignation. Defendant knew or should have known that Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved

1 Employees were entitled to receive all wages owed to them upon termination within the time
2 permissible under California Labor Code section 202. Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved
3 Employees did not receive payment of all final wages owed to them upon discharge or resignation,
4 including overtime compensation and minimum wages within any time permissible under
5 California Labor Code section 202.

6 35. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to
7 pay Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees all wages within any time permissible
8 under California law, including, *inter alia*, California Labor Code section 204. Defendants knew
9 or should have known that Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees were entitled to
10 receive all wages owed to them during their employment. Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved
11 Employees did not receive payment of all wages, including overtime compensation, minimum
12 wages, and meal and rest period premiums, within any time permissible under California Labor
Code section 204.

13 36. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to
14 provide complete or accurate wage statements to Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved
15 Employees. Defendants knew or should have known that Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved
16 Employees were entitled to receive complete and accurate wage statements in accordance with
17 California law, but, in fact, they did not receive complete and accurate wage statements from
18 Defendants. The deficiencies included, *inter alia*, the failure to include the total number of hours
19 worked, the actual gross wages earned, and the full name and address of the legal entity of the
20 employer.

21 37. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to
22 keep complete or accurate payroll records for Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees.
23 Defendants knew or should have known that Defendants were required keep complete and
24 accurate payroll records for Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees in accordance with
25 California law, but, in fact, did not keep complete and accurate payroll records.

26 38. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants knew or should have
27 known that they had a duty to compensate Plaintiff, the Class, and the Aggrieved Employees
28

1 pursuant to California law. Defendants had the financial ability to pay such compensation, but
2 willfully, knowingly, and intentionally failed to do so, and falsely represented to Plaintiff, the
3 Class, and the Aggrieved Employees that they paid all wages owed to them, all in order to increase
4 Defendants' profits.

5 39. California Labor Code section 218 states that nothing in Article 1 of the Labor
6 Code shall limit the right of any wage claimant to "sue directly ... for any wages or penalty due
7 to him [or her] under this article."

8 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

9 **(Violation of California Labor Code §§ 510 and 1198)**

10 **(Against All Defendants)**

11 40. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and
12 every allegation set forth above.

13 41. California Labor Code section 1198 and the applicable Industrial Welfare
14 Commission ("IWC") Wage Order provide that it is unlawful to employ persons without
15 compensating them at a rate of pay either time-and-one-half or two-times that person's regular
16 rate of pay, depending on the number of hours worked by the person on a daily or weekly basis.

17 42. Specifically, the applicable IWC Wage Order provides that Defendants are and
18 were required to pay Plaintiff and the other Class Members employed by Defendants, and working
19 more than eight (8) hours in a day or more than forty (40) hours in a workweek, at the rate of
20 time-and-one-half for all hours worked in excess of eight (8) hours in a day or more than forty
21 (40) hours in a workweek.

22 43. The applicable IWC Wage Order further provides that Defendants are and were
23 required to pay Plaintiff and the Class overtime compensation at a rate of two times their regular
24 rate of pay for all hours worked in excess of twelve (12) hours in a day and for all hours worked
25 in excess of eight (8) hours on the seventh day of work in a workweek.

26 44. California Labor Code section 510 codifies the right to overtime compensation at
27 one-and-one-half times the regular hourly rate for hours worked in excess of eight (8) hours in a
28 day or forty (40) hours in a week or for the first eight (8) hours worked on the seventh day of

work, and no overtime compensation at twice the regular hourly rate for hours worked in excess of twelve (12) hours in a day or in excess of eight (8) hours in a day on the seventh day of work.

45. During the relevant time period, Plaintiff and the other Class Members regularly worked in excess of eight (8) hours in a day, and/or in excess of forty (40) hours in a week.

46. During the relevant time period, Defendants intentionally and willfully failed to pay overtime wages owed to Plaintiff and the other Class Members.

47. Defendants' failure to pay Plaintiff and the other Class Members the unpaid balance of overtime compensation, as required by California laws, violates the provisions of California Labor Code sections 510 and 1198, and is therefore unlawful.

48. Pursuant to California Labor Code section 1194, Plaintiff and the other Class Members are entitled to recover unpaid overtime compensation, as well as interest, costs, and attorneys' fees.

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION

(Violation of California Labor Code §§ 226.7 and 512(a))

(Against All Defendants)

49. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and every allegation set forth above.

50. At all relevant times, the relevant IWC Order and California Labor Code sections 226.7 and 512(a) were applicable to Plaintiff and the other Class Members' employment by Defendants.

51. At all relevant times, California Labor Code section 226.7 provides that no employer shall require an employee to work during any meal or rest period mandated by an applicable order of the California IWC.

52. At all relevant times, the applicable IWC Wage Order and California Labor Code section 512(a) provide that an employer may not require, cause or permit an employee to work for a work period of more than five (5) hours per day without providing the employee with a meal period of not less than thirty (30) minutes, except that if the total work period per day of the employee is no more than six (6) hours, the meal period may be waived by mutual consent of

1 both the employer and employee.

2 53. At all relevant times, California Labor Code section 512(a) further provides that
3 an employer may not require, cause or permit an employee to work for a work period of more
4 than ten (10) hours per day without providing the employee with a second uninterrupted meal
5 period of not less than thirty (30) minutes, except that if the total hours worked is no more than
6 twelve (12) hours, the second meal period may be waived by mutual consent of the employer and
7 the employee only if the first meal period was not waived.

8 54. During the relevant time period, Plaintiff and the other Class Members who were
9 scheduled to work for a period of time longer than six (6) hours, and who did not waive their
10 legally-mandated meal periods by mutual consent, were required to work for periods longer than
11 five (5) hours without an uninterrupted meal period of not less than thirty (30) minutes.

12 55. During the relevant time period, Plaintiff and the other Class Members who were
13 scheduled to work for a period of time in excess of ten (10) hours were required to work for
14 periods longer than ten (10) hours without a second uninterrupted meal period of not less than
15 thirty (30) minutes.

16 56. During the relevant time period, Defendants intentionally and willfully required
17 Plaintiff and the other Class Members to miss their meal periods and to take meal periods that
18 were late, shortened, or interrupted, and failed to compensate Plaintiff and the other Class
19 Members the full meal period premium for missed, shortened, late, or interrupted meal periods.

20 57. During the relevant time period, Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and the other
21 Class Members the full meal period premiums due pursuant to California Labor Code section
22 226.7.

23 58. Defendants' conduct violates the applicable IWC Wage Order and California
24 Labor Code sections 226.7 and 512(a).

25 59. Pursuant to the applicable IWC Wage Order and California Labor Code section
26 226.7(b), Plaintiff and the other Class Members are entitled to recover from Defendants one
27 additional hour of pay at the employee's regular rate of compensation for each work day that the
28 meal period was not provided.

1 **THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION**

2 **(Violation of California Labor Code § 226.7)**

3 **(Against All Defendants)**

4 60. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and
5 every allegation set forth above.

6 61. At all times herein set forth, the applicable IWC Wage Order and California Labor
7 Code section 226.7 were applicable to Plaintiff and the other class members' employment by
8 Defendants.

9 62. At all relevant times, California Labor Code section 226.7 provides that no
10 employer shall require an employee to work during any rest period mandated by an applicable
11 order of the California IWC.

12 63. At all relevant times, the applicable IWC Wage Order provides that “[e]very
13 employer shall authorize and permit all employees to take rest periods, which insofar as
14 practicable shall be in the middle of each work period” and that the “rest period time shall be
15 based on the total hours worked daily at the rate of ten (10) minutes net rest time per four (4)
16 hours or major fraction thereof unless the total daily work time is less than three and one-half
17 (3.5) hours.”

18 64. During the relevant time period, Defendants required Plaintiff and other Class
19 Members to work four (4) or more hours without authorizing or permitting a ten (10) minute rest
20 period per each four (4) hour period worked.

21 65. During the relevant time period, Defendants willfully required Plaintiff and the
22 other Class Members to work during rest periods, failed to allow Plaintiff and the other class
23 Member to take any rest period and/or failed to authorize and permit Plaintiff and the other Class
24 members to take uninterrupted, duty-free rest breaks.

25 66. During the relevant time period, Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and the other
26 Class Members the full rest period premium due pursuant to California Labor Code section 226.7
27 for work performed during rest periods, and/or for failure to authorize and permit Plaintiff and
28 other Class Members from taking uninterrupted rest periods.

67. Defendants' conduct violates applicable IWC Wage Orders and California Labor Code section 226.7.

68. Pursuant to the applicable IWC Wage Orders and California Labor Code section 226.7(b), Plaintiff and the other Class Members are entitled to recover from Defendants one additional hour of pay at the employees' regular hourly rate of compensation for each work day that the rest period was not provided.

FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Violation of California Labor Code §§ 1194, 1197, and 1197.1)

(Against All Defendants)

69. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and every allegation set forth above.

70. At all relevant times, California Labor Code sections 1194, 1197, and 1197.1 provide that the minimum wage to be paid to employees and the payment of a lesser wage than the minimum so fixed is unlawful.

71. During the relevant time period, Defendants regularly failed to pay minimum wage to Plaintiff and the other Class Members as required pursuant to California Labor Code sections 1194, 1197, and 1197.1.

72. Defendants' failure to pay Plaintiff and the other Class Members the minimum wage as required violates California Labor Code sections 1194, 1197, and 1197.1. Pursuant to those sections, Plaintiff and the other Class Members are entitled to recover the unpaid balance of their minimum wage compensation as well as interest, costs, and attorneys' fees, and liquidated damages in an amount equal to the wages unlawfully unpaid and interest thereon.

73. Pursuant to California Labor Code section 1194.2, Plaintiff and the other Class Members are entitled to recover liquidated damages in an amount equal to the wages unlawfully unpaid and interest thereon.

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FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Violation of California Labor Code §§ 201, 202, 203)

(Against All Defendants)

74. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and every allegation set forth above.

75. At all relevant times herein set forth, California Labor Code sections 201 and 202 provide that if an employer discharges an employee, the wages earned and unpaid at the time of discharge are due and payable immediately, and if an employee quits his or her employment, his or her wages shall become due and payable not later seventy-two (72) hours thereafter, unless the employee has given seventy-two (72) hours' notice of his or her intention to quit, in which case the employee is entitled to his or her wages at the time of quitting.

76. During the relevant time period, the employment of Plaintiff and many other Class Members with Defendant ended, i.e. was terminated by quitting or discharge. Defendants intentionally and willfully failed to pay Plaintiff and other Class Members who are no longer employed by Defendants all of their wages, earned and unpaid, including but not limited to minimum wages, straight time wages, and overtime wages, within seventy-two (72) hours of their leaving Defendants' employ.

77. Defendants' failure to pay Plaintiff and other Class Members who are no longer employed by Defendants their wages, earned and unpaid, within seventy-two (72) hours of their leaving Defendants' employ, is in violation of California Labor Code sections 201 and 202.

78. California Labor Code section 203 provides that if an employer willfully fails to pay wages owed, in accordance with sections 201 and 202, then the wages of the employee shall continue as a penalty from the due date thereof at the same rate until paid or until an action is commenced; but the wages shall not continue for more than thirty (30) days.

79. Plaintiff and other Class Members who are no longer employed by Defendants are entitled to recover from Defendants the statutory penalty wages for each day they were not paid, up to a thirty (30) day maximum pursuant to California Labor Code section 203.

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statement in writing showing (1) gross wages earned, (2) total hours worked by the employee, (3) the number of piece-rate units earned and any applicable piece rate if the employee is paid on a piece-rate basis, (4) all deductions, provided that all deductions made on written orders of the employee may be aggregated and shown as one item, (5) net wages earned, (6) the inclusive dates of the period for which the employee is paid, (7) the name of the employee and his or her social security number, (8) the name and address of the legal entity that is the employer, and (9) all applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the corresponding number of hours worked at each hourly rate by the employee. The deductions made from payments of wages shall be recorded in ink or other indelible form, properly dated, showing the month, day, and year, and a copy of the statement or a record of the deductions shall be kept on file by the employer for at least three years at the place of employment or at a central location within the State of California.

88. Defendants have intentionally and willfully failed to provide Plaintiff and the Class with complete and accurate wage statements. The deficiencies include, but are not limited to the failure list the total number of hours worked, the actual gross wages earned, the correct rates of pay, and the name and address of the legal entity of the employer.

89. Because of Defendants' violation of California Labor Code section 226(a), Plaintiff and the Class have suffered injury and damage to their statutorily-protected rights.

90. More specifically, Plaintiff and the Class have been injured by Defendants' intentional and willful violation of California Labor Code section 226(a) because they were denied both their legal right to receive, and their protected interest in receiving, accurate and itemized wage statements pursuant to California Labor Code section 226(a).

91. Plaintiff and the Class are entitled to recover from Defendants the greater of their actual damages caused by Defendants' failure to comply with California Labor Code section 226(a), or an aggregate penalty not exceeding four thousand dollars per employee.

92. Plaintiff and the Class are also entitled to injunctive relief to ensure compliance with this section, pursuant to California Labor Code section 226(g).

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1 **EIGHTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

2 **(Violation of California Labor Code § 1174(d))**

3 **(Against All Defendants)**

4 93. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and
5 every allegation set forth above.

6 94. Pursuant to California Labor Code section 1174(d), an employer shall keep, at a
7 central location in the state or at the plants or establishments at which employees are employed,
8 payroll records showing the hours worked daily by and the wages paid to, and the number of
9 piece-rate units earned by and any applicable piece rate paid to, employees employed at the
10 respective plants or establishments. These records shall be kept in accordance with rules
11 established for this purpose by the commission, but in any case, shall be kept on file for not less
12 than three years.

13 95. Defendants have intentionally and willfully failed to keep accurate and complete
14 payroll records showing the hours worked and the wages paid to Plaintiff and the Class.

15 96. Because of Defendants' violation of California Labor Code section 1174(d),
16 Plaintiff and the Class have suffered injury and damage to their statutorily-protected rights.

17 97. More specifically, Plaintiff and the Class have been injured by Defendants'
18 intentional and willful violation of California Labor Code section 1174(d) because they were
19 denied both their legal right and protected interest, in having available, accurate and complete
20 payroll records pursuant to California Labor Code section 1174(d).

21 **NINTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

22 **(Violation of Cal. Business & Professions Code §§ 17200, et seq.)**

23 **(Against All Defendants)**

24 98. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and
25 every allegation set forth above.

26 99. Defendants' conduct, as alleged herein, has been, and continues to be, unfair,
27 unlawful and harmful to Plaintiff and the Class, to the general public, and Defendants'
28 competitors. Accordingly, Plaintiff seeks to enforce important rights affecting the public interest

1 within the meaning of Code of Civil Procedure section 1021.5.

2 100. Defendants' activities as alleged herein are violations of California law, and
3 constitute unlawful business acts and practices in violation of California Business & Professions
4 Code section 17200, *et seq.*

5 101. A violation of California Business & Professions Code section 17200, *et seq.* may
6 be predicated on the violation of any state or federal law. In this instant case, Defendants' policies
7 and practices of requiring employees, including Plaintiff and the Class, to work overtime without
8 paying them proper compensation violate California Labor Code sections 510 and 1198.
9 Additionally, Defendants' policies and practices of requiring employees, including Plaintiff and
10 the Class, to work through their meal and rest periods without paying them proper compensation
11 violate California Labor Code sections 226.7 and 512(a). Moreover, Defendants' policies and
12 practices of failing to timely pay wages to Plaintiff and the Class violate California Labor Code
sections 201, 202, 203 and 204.

13 102. Defendants also violated California Labor Code sections, 221, 226(a), 1194, 1197,
14 1197.1, 510, and 1174(d).

15 103. As a result of the herein described violations of California law, Defendants
16 unlawfully gained an unfair advantage over other businesses.

17 104. Plaintiff and the Class have been personally injured by Defendants' unlawful
18 business acts and practices as alleged herein, including but not necessarily limited to the loss of
19 money and/or property.

20 105. Pursuant to California Business & Professions Code sections 17200, *et seq.*,
21 Plaintiff and the Class are entitled to restitution of the wages withheld and retained by Defendants
22 during a period that commences four years prior to the filing of this Complaint; an award of
23 attorneys' fees pursuant to California Code of Civil procedure section 1021.5 and other applicable
24 laws; and an award of costs.

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TENTH CAUSE OF ACTION
(Violation of California Labor Code § 2699, Et Seq.)
(Against All Defendants)

106. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and every allegation set forth above.

107. Plaintiff brings his tenth cause of action as a representative action on behalf of himself and similarly Aggrieved Employees in the capacity as a private attorney general pursuant to the Private Attorneys General Act of 2004, California Labor Code section 2698, et seq. (“PAGA”).

108. PAGA specifically provides for a private right of action to recover civil penalties for violations of the Labor Code as follows: “Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any provision of this code that provides for a civil penalty to be assessed and collected by the Labor and Workforce Development Agency or any of its departments, divisions, commissions, boards, agencies, or employees, for a violation of this code, may, as an alternative, be recovered through a civil action brought by an aggrieved employee on behalf of himself or herself and other current or former employees pursuant to the procedures specified in Section 2699.3.” Cal. Lab. Code § 2699(a).

109. Plaintiff was employed by Defendants and the Labor Code violations alleged above were committed against him during his time of employment. Plaintiff is therefore, an “aggrieved employee” under PAGA.

110. As set forth in detail above, during all times relevant to this Action, Defendant has routinely subjected Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees to violations of California Labor Codes by:

- a. Failing to pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees all earned minimum wage compensation in violation of Labor Code §§ 1194 and 1198 *et seq.*;
- b. Failing to pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees all earned overtime compensation in violation of Labor Code §§ 204, 510, 1194, and 1198 *et seq.*;

- c. Failing to provide legally required meal periods to Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees, and failing to pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees an additional hour of premium pay for meal period violations in violation of Labor Code §§ 226.7 and 512.
- d. Failing to provide authorize and permit Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees to take duty-free rest periods, and failing to pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees an additional hour of premium pay for rest period violations in violation of Labor Code §§ 226.7 and 512.
- e. Failing to timely pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees all wages at end of their employment in violation of Labor Code § 203.
- f. Failing to timely pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees all wages owed during employment in violation of Labor Code § 204.
- g. Failing to furnish Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees with complete, accurate, itemized wage statements in violation of Labor Code § 226;
- h. Failing to maintain accurate records relating to Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees' work periods, meal periods, total daily hours, and hours per pay period.

111. Pursuant to California Labor Code sections 2699 and 2699.5, Plaintiff, individually and on behalf of the Aggrieved Employees and the State of California, requests and is entitled to recover penalties against Defendants for the Labor Code violations described above, including but not limited to penalties under California Code of Regulations Title section 11010, penalties under California Labor Code sections 2699, 558, 210, 1197.1, 226, 226.3 and 1174.5, and any and all additional penalties and sums as provided by the California Labor Code and/or other statutes. The exact amount of the applicable penalties, in all, is in an amount to be shown according to proof at trial.

112. Plaintiff has exhausted his administrative remedies pursuant to Labor Code § 2699.3. On May 12, 2020, Plaintiff, through his counsel of record, by online filing with the Labor and Workforce Development Agency ("LWDA") and by certified mail to the Defendants, notified

1 Defendants and the LWDA of the specific provisions of the Labor Code and IWC Wage Orders
2 that Defendants have violated, including the facts and theories to support the violations, and of
3 Plaintiff's intent to bring a claim for civil penalties under PAGA. Plaintiff also paid the filing fee
4 required under Labor Code § 2699.3. As of the filing of this Complaint, more than 65 days have
5 elapsed since the mailing of Plaintiff's May 12, 2020 notice, and the Labor and Workforce
6 Development Agency has not indicated that it intends to investigate the violations discussed in the
7 notice. Accordingly, Plaintiff may commence a civil action to recover penalties for himself and
8 other Aggrieved Employees pursuant to Labor Code § 2699.3.

9 113. Plaintiff was compelled to retain the services of counsel to file this court action to
10 protect his interests and the Aggrieved Employees, and to assess and collect the civil penalties
11 owed by Defendants. Plaintiff therefore seeks an award of reasonable attorney's fees and costs
12 pursuant to Labor Code § 2699(g)(1), and any other applicable statute.

13 114. Plaintiff may amend this complaint as a matter of right pursuant to California
14 Labor Code § 2699.3 as this complaint has been filed within sixty days of the time periods
15 specified in Labor Code §2699.3

16 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

17 WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, individually and on behalf of all other members of the general
18 public similarly situated, and as a private attorney general, prays for relief and judgment against
19 Defendants, jointly and severally, as follows:

20 **Class Certification**

- 21 1. That this action be certified as a class action;
- 22 2. That Plaintiff be appointed as the representative of the Class;
- 23 3. That counsel for Plaintiff be appointed as Class Counsel; and
- 24 4. That Defendants provide to Class Counsel immediately the names and most
25 current/last known contact information (address, e-mail and telephone numbers) of all class
26 members.

27 **As to the First Cause of Action**

- 28 5. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated California

1 Labor Code sections 510 and 1198 and applicable IWC Wage Orders by willfully failing to pay
2 all overtime wages due to Plaintiff and other Class Members;

3 6. For general unpaid wages at overtime wage rates and such general and special
4 damages as may be appropriate;

5 7. For pre-judgment interest on any unpaid overtime compensation commencing
6 from the date such amounts were due;

7 8. For reasonable attorneys' fees and costs of suit incurred herein pursuant to
8 California Labor Code section 1194;

9 9. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

10 **As to the Second Cause of Action**

11 10. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated California
12 Labor Code sections 226.7 and 512 and applicable IWC Wage Orders by willfully failing to
13 provide all meal periods (including second meal periods) to Plaintiff and the Class;

14 11. That the Court make an award to Plaintiff and the Class of one (1) hour of pay at
15 each employee's regular rate of compensation for each workday that a meal period was not
16 provided;

17 12. For all actual, consequential, and incidental losses and damages, according to
18 proof;

19 13. For premium wages pursuant to California Labor Code section 226.7(b);

20 14. For pre-judgment interest on any unpaid wages from the date such amounts were
21 due;

22 15. For reasonable attorneys' fees and costs of suit incurred herein;

23 16. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

24 **As to the Third Cause of Action**

25 17. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated California
26 Labor Code section 226.7 and applicable IWC Wage Orders by willfully failing to provide all rest
27 periods to Plaintiff and the Class;

28 18. That the Court make an award to Plaintiff and the Class of one (1) hour of pay at

each employee's regular rate of compensation for each workday that a rest period was not provided;

19. For all actual, consequential, and incidental losses and damages, according to proof;

20. For premium wages pursuant to California Labor Code section 226.7(b);

21. For pre-judgment interest on any unpaid wages from the date such amounts were due;

22. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

As to the Fourth Cause of Action

23. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated California Labor Code sections 1194, 1197, and 1197.1 by willfully failing to pay minimum wages to Plaintiff and the Class;

24. For general unpaid wages and such general and special damages as may be appropriate;

25. For statutory wage penalties pursuant to California Labor Code section 1197.1 for Plaintiff and the Class in the amount as may be established according to proof at trial;

26. For pre-judgment interest on any unpaid compensation from the date such amounts were due;

27. For reasonable attorneys' fees and costs of suit incurred herein pursuant to California Labor Code section 1194(a);

28. For liquidated damages pursuant to California Labor Code section 1194.2;

29. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

As to the Fifth Cause of Action

30. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated California Labor Code sections 201, 202, and 203 by willfully failing to pay all compensation owed at the time of termination of the employment of Plaintiff and other Class Members no longer employed by Defendants;

31. For all actual, consequential, and incidental losses and damages, according to

1 proof;

2 32. For statutory wage penalties pursuant to California Labor Code section 203 for
3 Plaintiff and other Class Members who have left Defendants' employ;

4 33. For pre-judgment interest on any unpaid compensation from the date such amounts
5 were due;

6 34. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

7 **As to the Sixth Cause of Action**

8 35. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated California
9 Labor Code section 204 by willfully failing to pay all compensation owed at the time required by
10 California Labor Code section 204 to Plaintiff and the Class;

11 36. For all actual, consequential, and incidental losses and damages, according to
12 proof;

13 37. For pre-judgment interest on any unpaid compensation from the date such amounts
14 were due including interest pursuant to California Labor Code section 218.6;

15 38. For such other and further relief as the Court deems just and proper.

16 **As to the Seventh Cause of Action**

17 39. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated the record
18 keeping provisions of California Labor Code section 226(a) and applicable IWC Wage Orders as
19 to Plaintiff and the Class, and willfully failed to provide accurate itemized wage statements
20 thereto;

21 40. For actual, consequential and incidental losses and damages, according to proof;

22 41. For statutory penalties pursuant to California Labor Code section 226(e);

23 42. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

24 **As to the Eighth Cause of Action**

25 43. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated California
26 Labor Code section 1174(d) by willfully failing to keep accurate and complete payroll records for
27 Plaintiff and the Class as required by California Labor Code section 1174(d);

28 44. For actual, consequential and incidental losses and damages, according to proof;

45. For statutory penalties pursuant to California Labor Code section 1174.5;

46. For such other and further relief as the court may deem just and proper.

As to the Ninth Cause of Action

47. That the Court decree, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated California Business and Professions Code sections 17200, et seq. by failing to provide Plaintiff and the Class all overtime compensation due to them, failing to provide all meal and rest periods to Plaintiff and the Class, failing to pay at least minimum wages to Plaintiff and the Class, failing to pay Plaintiff and other Class Members' wages timely as required by California Labor Code section 201, 202 and 204 and by violating California Labor Code sections 226(a), and 1174(d).

48. For restitution of unpaid wages to Plaintiff and the Class and all pre-judgment interest from the day such amounts were due and payable;

49. For the appointment of a receiver to receive, manage and distribute any and all funds disgorged from Defendants and determined to have been wrongfully acquired by Defendants as a result of violation of California Business and Professions Code sections 17200, et seq.;

50. For reasonable attorneys' fees and costs of suit incurred herein pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure section 1021.5

51. For injunctive relief to ensure compliance with this section, pursuant to California Business and Professions Code sections 17200, et seq.; and

52. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

As to the Tenth Cause of Action

53. For statutory attorneys' fees and costs pursuant to 2699(g)(1) of Cal. Labor Code;

54. For the imposition of civil penalties pursuant to California Labor Code §§ 2699, 210, 558, 226, 226.3, 1174.5, 1197.1, and all other penalties allowed by the California Labor Code and/or other applicable statutes; and

55. For such other relief as the Court deems just and proper

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1 Dated: July 17, 2020

PROTECTION LAW GROUP

2
3 By: 

4 Heather Davis
5 Amir Nayebdadash
6 S. Emi Minne

7 Attorneys for Plaintiff
8 MELCHOR DIAZ
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DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY

Plaintiff demands a trial by jury as to all causes of action triable by a jury.

Dated: July 17, 2020

PROTECTION LAW GROUP

By: 

Heather Davis
Amir Nayebdadash
S. Emi Minne

Attorneys for Plaintiff
MELCHOR DIAZ