

HAIG B. KAZANDJIAN LAWYERS, APC

Haig B. Kazandjian, Esq. Bar No.: 278622

haig@hbklawyers.com

Cathy Gonzalez, Esq., Bar No.: 310625

cathy@hbklawyers.com

Kevin Crough, Esq., Bar No.: 323904

kevin@hbklawyers.com

801 North Brand Boulevard, Suite 970

Glendale, California 91203

Telephone: 1-818-696-2306

Facsimile: 1-818-696-2307

Attorneys for Plaintiff ELSY RAMIREZ

individually and on behalf of all other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

ELSY RAMIREZ, an individual, on behalf of)
 herself and all other AGGRIEVED)
 EMPLOYEES)

Plaintiff,

vs.

MELROSE GARDENS LA, LLC, a California)
 Limited Liability Corporation; DENISE)
 ROMERO, an individual; and DOES 1 through)
 100, inclusive,)

Defendants.

Case No. 21STCV05842

**COMPLAINT FOR ENFORCEMENT
 UNDER THE PRIVATE ATTORNEYS
 GENERAL ACT, CALIFORNIA LABOR
 CODE § 2698, ET SEQ.**

Violation of California Labor Code § 2698, et
 seq. (California Labor Code Private Attorneys
 General Act of 2004)

Plaintiff ELSY RAMIREZ (hereinafter referred to as “REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF”)
 alleges as follows:

PARTIES

1. REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF is an individual who resides in California and
 was employed by MELROSE GARDENS LA, LLC, from on or about December 28, 2018 until on

1 or about June 2, 2020.

2 2. REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF is informed and believes, and based on such
3 information and belief, alleges that at all times mentioned herein, MELROSE GARDENS LA,
4 LLC is a California Limited Liability Corporation, licensed to do business and actually doing
5 business in the State of California.

6 3. REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF is informed and believes, and based on such
7 information and belief, alleges that DEFENDANTS are an assisted living facility, and have
8 numerous locations throughout California. Thus, DEFENDANTS are subject to the applicable
9 California laws as alleged throughout this Complaint.

10 4. REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF is unaware of the true names and capacities,
11 whether corporate, individual, or otherwise, of DEFENDANTS named as DOES 1 through 100,
12 inclusive. Pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure section 474, REPRESENTATIVE
13 PLAINTIFF will seek leave of court to amend this complaint to state said DEFENDANTS' true
14 names and capacities when the same have been ascertained. REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF is
15 informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that said fictitiously-named DEFENDANTS are
16 responsible in some manner for the injuries and damages to REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and
17 the other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES as further alleged herein.

18 5. The AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES worked for all of the DEFENDANTS or for
19 either of the DEFENDANTS as non-exempt, hourly-paid employees. Nothing in this Complaint
20 should be interpreted as limiting the AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES to non-exempt, hourly-paid
21 employees who worked for all DEFENDANTS only.

22 6. The definition of "employer" for purposes of the California Labor Code includes
23 irregular working arrangements, and was specifically drafted in order to prevent evasion and
24 subterfuge of California's labor laws. To that end, REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF is informed
25 and believes, and based thereon alleges, that DEFENDANTS, including any as of now unknown
26 entities, must be classified as joint-employers for purposes of liability for civil penalties under the
27 Private Attorneys General Act ("PAGA"). As such, DEFENDANTS are each liable for civil
28 penalties for violation of the California Labor Code as to REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and

1 the other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES.

2 7. The term “DEFENDANTS” used throughout this Complaint includes all named
3 DEFENDANTS whether corporate, individual, or otherwise, and all unnamed DEFENDANTS
4 whether corporate, individual, or otherwise, that are now unknown but are referred to throughout
5 this Complaint as DOES 1 through 100, inclusive.

6 8. REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF is informed and believes, and based thereon
7 alleges, that DEFENDANT DENISE ROMERO (hereinafter, “DEFENDANT ROMERO”) is an
8 individual who resides in the State of California and the County of LOS ANGELES.
9 DEFENDANT ROMERO was and is an agent of DEFENDANTS, and in that capacity was and is
10 responsible for overseeing and implementing DEFENDANTS timekeeping policies and procedures
11 that REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and the other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES were made to
12 follow.

13 9. This is only a Private Attorney General Action Complaint, pursuant to California
14 Labor Code section 2699 et seq., on behalf of REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and all other
15 persons similarly situated who worked for DEFENDANTS in their California locations as non-
16 exempt, hourly employees (herein collectively identified as “AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES”) for:

17 (i) Failure to provide employment records in violation of Labor Code sections 226,
18 432, and 1198.5;

19 (ii) failure to pay overtime and double time in violation of Labor Code sections 510 and
20 the applicable Wage Orders;

21 (iii) failure to provide rest and meal periods in violation of Labor Code sections 226.7,
22 512(a), and the applicable Wage Orders;

23 (iv) failure to pay minimum wage in violation of Labor Code sections 1182.2, 1194,
24 1197, 1197.1, and the applicable Wage Orders;

25 (v) failure to keep accurate payroll records and provide itemized wage statements in
26 violation of Labor Code sections 226(a), 1174(d), 1198, and the applicable Wage Orders;

27 (vi) failure to pay reporting time wages in violation of California Code of Regulations,
28 Title 8, section 11050(5)(A);

1 (vii) failure to pay split shift wages in violation of California Code of Regulations
2 11050(4)(C);

3 (viii) failure to pay all wages earned on time in violation of Labor Code section 204;

4 (ix) failure to pay all wages earned upon discharge or resignation in violation of Labor
5 Code sections 201, 202, and 203;

6 (x) failure to provide basic information at the time of hiring and when employment
7 changes occur in violation of Labor Code section 2810.5(a)(1)(A)-(C) (Wage Theft Prevention
8 Act).

9 (xi) failure to reimburse necessary, business-related expenses in violation of Labor Code
10 sections 2800 and 2802;

11 (xii) failure to provide notice of paid sick time and accrual in violation of Labor Code
12 section 246;

13 (xiii) employers, and individuals acting on behalf of employers, violating or causing to be
14 violated a section of the Labor Code or any Wage Order in violation of Labor Code section 558(a).

15 **VENUE AND JURISDICTION**

16 10. Venue is proper under California Code of Civil Procedure section 395 and under
17 California Government Code section 12965(b), in that REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFFS'
18 injuries were incurred within the County of Los Angeles, the actions giving rise to
19 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFFS' Complaint arose within the County of Los Angeles, and
20 DEFENDANTS are located in the County of Los Angeles.

21 11. This Court has jurisdiction over REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFFS' claims for
22 civil penalties under the PAGA, California Labor Code sections 2698 *et seq.*

23 **SCOPE**

24 12. The "AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES" are DEFENDANTS current and former hourly-
25 paid, non-exempt employees, who either were or are employed in the State of California from July
26 30, 2020 through the date of judgment in this action.

27 **STATEMENT OF FACTS**

28 13. REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF was hired by DEFENDANTS as a receptionist
3.

1 on or about December 20, 2018. DEFENDANTS are California Limited Liability Company that
2 does business as an assisted living facility. REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF worked for
3 DEFENDANTS up until on or about June 2, 2020 and received a final pay check on or about June
4 8, 2020.

5 14. While employed with DEFENDANTS, REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other
6 AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES that REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF seeks to represent in this
7 action, working as non-exempt, hourly-paid employees were regularly required to work off-the-
8 clock, and/or during their rest and/or meal periods.

9 15. REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF filed a PAGA Notice on July 30, 2020 by serving
10 a PAGA Notice to all named DEFENDANTS and to the LWDA in compliance with Labor Code
11 section 2699.3. As of October 3, 2020, 65 Days after REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF's PAGA
12 Notice, REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF has not received correspondence from the LWDA
13 regarding its intent to investigate PLAINTIFF's claims.

14 16. California Labor Code Section 226 provides, "An employer who receives a written
15 or oral request to inspect or copy records pursuant to subdivision (b) pertaining to a current or
16 former employee [records of hours worked and wages paid]...shall comply with the request as
17 soon as practicable, but no later than 21 calendar days from the date of the request."

18 17. California Labor Code Section 432 provides, "If an employee signs any instrument
19 relating to the obtaining or holding of employment, he shall be given a copy of the instrument upon
20 request."

21 18. California Labor Code Section 1198.5 provides that every employee shall be
22 permitted to inspect and obtain a copy of their personnel records upon request.

23 19. In accordance with the process set out in Labor Code Section 226,
24 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF requested, in writing by letter via certified first-class mail to
25 DEFENDANTS and regular first-class mail to DEFENDANTS, that DEFENDANTS provide
26 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF with wage and payroll history, all documents signed by
27 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF pursuant to Labor Code Section 432, and a copy of
28 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF's personnel records pursuant to Labor Code Section 1198.5.

1 20. The time periods provided to DEFENDANTS by Labor Code Sections 226, 432,
2 1198.5 and any other relevant statutes have elapsed since DEFENDANTS received
3 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF's correspondence requesting documents pursuant to Labor Code
4 Sections 226, 432, and 1198.5, and a copy of REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF's personnel
5 records pursuant to Labor Code Section 1198.5. However, DEFENDANTS failed to provide
6 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF with any of the employment documents to which
7 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF is entitled.

8 21. REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF is informed and believes, and based thereon
9 alleges, that DEFENDANTS failed to provide records in compliance with Labor Code Sections
10 226, 432, and 1198.5 to other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES in response to their requests.

11 22. California Labor Code sections 510 and the applicable Wage Orders require
12 employers to pay employees working more than eight (8) hours in a day or more than 40 hours in a
13 week at the rate of at least time-and-one-half (1.5) times their regular rate of pay ("overtime") for
14 time such worked, and two (2) times their regular rate of pay ("double time") for such hours
15 worked in excess of 12 hours in a day. "Regular rate" includes all remuneration, including non-
16 discretionary bonuses and incentives.

17 23. During the relevant time period, REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other
18 AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES regularly worked in excess of eight (8), and in excess of 12, hours in
19 a workday and/or 40 hours in a workweek.

20 24. DEFENDANTS routinely required REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and the other
21 AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES to perform work tasks before and/or after their scheduled shifts,
22 and/or during off-the-clock meal breaks, and/or during rest breaks. As a consequence,
23 DEFENDANTS willfully failed to pay REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and the other
24 AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES all of the wages to which they were entitled.

25 25. California Labor Code sections 226.7, 512(a), and the applicable Wage Orders
26 require employers to pay employees one (1) additional hour of pay at the employees' regular rate
27 for each work day that a legally compliant meal and/or rest break was not provided. Employers
28 cannot require, cause, or permit an employee to work more than five (5) hours per day without

1 providing an uninterrupted meal break. If an employee works over ten (10) hours in a workday,
2 employers are required to either provide a second, uninterrupted 30-minute meal break or pay
3 employees an additional one (1) hour of pay at the employees' regular rate. If the employer fails to
4 properly record a valid meal period, it is presumed that no meal period was provided. Furthermore,
5 no employer shall require an employee to work during any rest period. Rest periods requirements
6 are based on the total hours worked; employees are legally entitled to ten (10) minutes per four (4)
7 hours, or major fraction thereof, that employee worked.

8 26. DEFENDANTS failed to provide REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other
9 AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES with the required rest and meal break periods. REPRESENTATIVE
10 PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES were routinely required to work through these
11 periods instead, because of understaffing, inadequate coverage, unreasonably high workload and
12 expectations, and/or other actions, inactions, or decisions made by and within the sole control and
13 discretion of DEFENDANTS.

14 27. REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES worked
15 shifts in excess of five (5) hours without a meal break, and worked shifts of ten (10) hours or more
16 without a second meal break, due to understaffing, inadequate coverage, unreasonably high
17 workload and expectations, and/or other actions, inactions, or decisions made by and within the
18 sole control and discretion of DEFENDANTS.

19 28. REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF is informed and believes, and based thereon
20 alleges, that any purported appearance of meal and rest break compliance is because
21 DEFENDANTS systematically and routinely clocked out for and/or otherwise altered the
22 timekeeping records of REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES
23 in an attempt to hide the aforementioned infractions. DEFENDANTS, knowingly and contrary to
24 law and public policy, employed a tactic of clocking-out employees for rest and/or meal periods
25 that were never taken and/or were legally non-compliant, and/or otherwise falsified or altered
26 timekeeping records.

27 29. DEFENDANTS knew, or should have known, that their behavior caused
28 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES to work through the

1 above-described meal and/or rest periods. As a company-wide policy, DEFENDANTS still chose
2 not to pay meal and rest period premiums required by law.

3 30. California Labor Code sections 1182.12, 1194, 1197, and 1197.1 require employers
4 to pay the minimum wage as set by the IWC. California Labor Code section 1182.12, as amended
5 by Senate Bill 3, Chapter 4, Section 3, defines the minimum wage as;

6 (1) For any employer who employs 26 or more employees:

7 (A) From January 1, 2017, to December 31, 2017, \$10.50 per hour.

8 (B) From January 1, 2018, to December 31, 2018, \$11 per hour.

9 (C) From January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2019, \$12 per hour.

10 (D) From January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020, \$13 per hour.

11 (E) From January 1, 2021, to December 31, 2021, \$14 per hour.

12 (F) From January 1, 2022, and until adjusted by subdivision (c) \$15 per hour.

13 (2) For any employer who employs 25 or fewer employees:

14 (A) From January 1, 2018, to December 31, 2018, \$10.50 per hour.

15 (B) From January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2019, \$11 per hour.

16 (C) From January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020, \$12 per hour.

17 (D) From January 1, 2021, to December 31, 2021, \$13 per hour.

18 (E) From January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022, \$14 per hour.

19 (F) From January 1, 2023, and until adjusted by subdivision (c) \$15 per hour.

20 31. The minimum wage standard applies to each hour employees worked for which they
21 were not paid. Therefore, employer's failure to pay for any particular hour worked by an employee
22 is unlawful even if averaging an employee's total pay over all hours worked, paid or not, results in
23 an average hourly wage above minimum wage.

24 32. As alleged throughout this Complaint, due to the company-wide failures of
25 DEFENDANTS, REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES were
26 forced to work off-the-clock before and/or after their scheduled work shifts, and/or during rest
27 breaks, and/or during meal breaks. DEFENDANTS failed to pay REPRESENTATIVE
28 PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES minimum wage for this time and/or falsified

1 timekeeping records to hide this fact.

2 33. California Labor Code 226(a) requires employers to create and provide to
3 employees true and accurate employment records. California Labor Code section 226(e) provides
4 that if an employer fails to furnish an employee with same, the employee is entitled to recover the
5 greater of all actual damages, or \$50.00 for an initial infraction, and \$100 per employee for each
6 subsequent violation in any pay period. California Labor Code 226.3 imposes civil penalties on any
7 employer in violation of section 226(a) at \$250 per employee violation in an initial citation, and
8 \$1,000 per employee for each subsequent violation.

9 34. California Labor Code 1174(d) requires employers to keep payroll records showing
10 hours worked, and wages paid to and/or number of piece-rate units earned, for all employees.
11 California Labor Code section 1174.5 subjects employers to a \$500 penalty for failing to maintain
12 same.

13 35. California Labor Code section 1198 provides that maximum hours and standard
14 conditions of labor are fixed by the Labor Commissioner in the applicable Wage Orders. Pursuant
15 to the applicable Wage Order, employers must keep accurate records of when employees begin and
16 end each work period and each meal period.

17 36. DEFENDANTS knowingly provided employees with records that do not meet the
18 statutory requirements of truth and accuracy, because DEFENDANTS failed to truthfully and
19 accurately document, among other things, employees off-the-clock work. As a result,
20 DEFENDANTS failed to accurately list the correct amount of gross and/or net wages earned by
21 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and the other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES.

22 37. The statements in question are deficient in many other ways, including, but not
23 limited to: failure to list total hours worked, failing to list applicable hourly rates and the numbers
24 of hours worked at each rate, failure to provide employees with the ability to easily access wage
25 statements and get hard copies at no expense to the employee, and/or failure to state all hours
26 worked as a result of off-the-clock work.

27 38. DEFENDANTS willfully failed to maintain accurate payroll records for
28 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES as a result of

1 DEFENDANTS failure to accurately record employees rest breaks, and/or meal breaks, and/or off-
2 the-clock work. DEFENDANTS failure makes it impossible for REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF
3 and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES to accurately determine the extent of their underpayment,
4 thereby causing further injuries to each of them.

5 39. California Labor Code section 204 requires that all wages earned, other than those
6 due upon termination, be paid on time as defined by the statute.

7 40. As a result of the numerous company-wide failures of DEFENDANTS as described
8 throughout this Complaint, DEFENDANTS failed to pay REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and
9 other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES all wages due to them, including, but not limited to: minimum
10 wages, overtime wages, and/or double time wages within the statutorily required time period.

11 41. California Labor Code sections 201, 202, and 203 provide that employees who are
12 terminated are due all wages earned immediately. Employees who resign their employment without
13 giving 72-hours' notice are due all wages earned within 72 hours of their resignation. Employees
14 who resign their employment giving 72-hours' notice are entitled to all wages earned at the time
15 their resignation becomes effective.

16 42. DEFENDANTS terminated their employment relationship with
17 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF on June 2, 2020. Accordingly, REPRESENTATIVE
18 PLAINTIFF was due all wages earned immediately.

19 43. When REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF finally received EMPLOYEE's final
20 paycheck on June 8, 2020, that final paycheck was legally deficient in that it did not account for all
21 wages earned despite DEFENDANTS knowing that such wages were due to REPRESENTATIVE
22 PLAINTIFF. Due to the company-wide failures of DEFENDANTS as described throughout this
23 Complaint, DEFENDANTS similarly failed to pay other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES timely
24 wages upon their discharge or resignation.

25 44. Codified in California Labor Code section 2810.5, California's Wage Theft
26 Protection Act requires employers to provide employees with basic information at the time of
27 hiring and when changes occur to their employment. The Wage Theft Protection Act provides that
28 an employee must be furnished with written notice of, at the time of hiring; rate of pay (including

1 overtime), whether paid by hour, salary, piece-rate, shift, day, week, commission, or otherwise, and
2 allowances claimed such as meal or lodging. This notice must include a statement that the
3 employee can accrue and use sick leave, has the right to request and use paid sick leave, may not
4 be terminated or retaliated against for requesting or using paid sick leave, and has the right to file a
5 complaint against any employer who does so retaliate.

6 45. DEFENDANTS hired REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF on or about December 20,
7 2018, and REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF continued to work for DEFENDANTS until on or
8 about June 2, 2020. During that time, changes, including, but not limited to, raises, promotions,
9 title changes, relocations, and new and additional assignments were earned by and/or assigned to
10 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF. As a result of each of these, changes occurred to
11 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF's employment as defined by Labor Code 2810.5(a)(1)(A)-(C)
12 and the Wage Theft Prevention Act.

13 46. When hired and each time such changes to REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and
14 other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES employment occurred, DEFENDANTS were required to
15 furnish documents to REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES
16 with such basic information and written notice of, among other things, their rate of pay (including
17 overtime), their right to accrue and request paid sick leave, and their right to file a complaint
18 against DEFENDANTS should they infringe upon such rights. DEFENDANTS failed to furnish
19 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES with such written
20 notices as required.

21 47. California Labor Code Sections 2800 and 2802 require that an employer indemnify
22 employees for all necessary expenditures or losses incurred by the employee in direct consequence
23 of the discharge of their duties.

24 48. REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES were
25 directed and expected to incur personal expenses on behalf of DEFENDANTS while performing
26 their job duties. Such personal expenses include, but are not limited to: use of personal cell phone,
27 travel expenses, and parking expenses. REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and the other
28 AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES would not have been able to successfully accomplish their job duties

1 absent incurring these personal expenses. DEFENDANTS failed to indemnify
2 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES for all necessary
3 expenditures or losses accordingly.

4 49. California Labor Code section 246 provides that an employee who works for the
5 same employer for more than 30 days is entitled to paid sick days. Paid sick leave is to accrue at a
6 rate not less than one (1) hour per every 30 hours worked, such accrual beginning at the
7 commencement of employment. Employers must provide employees with written notice setting the
8 amount of sick leave available (or paid time off in lieu thereof) for use on either itemized wage
9 statements (as described in Labor Code section 226) or in a separate writing accompanying such
10 wage statements.

11 50. REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF was hired by DEFENDANTS on or about
12 December 20, 2018 and worked for DEFENDANTS until on or about June 2, 2020.
13 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES worked for
14 DEFENDANT for more than 30 days, triggering the protections of Labor Code section 246 as
15 described above. Nevertheless, DEFENDANTS failed to furnish upon REPRESENTATIVE
16 PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES, either on itemized wage statements or in a
17 separate writing accompanying such wage statements, the amount of sick leave available to
18 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES.

19 51. As such, DEFENDANTS unlawfully retained and continue to retain paid sick leave
20 that should have been paid to REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED
21 EMPLOYEES but for DEFENDANTS failure to properly institute and/or adhere to a legally
22 compliant paid sick leave program. REPRESENTATIVE EMPLOYEE is informed and believes,
23 and based thereon alleges, that these practices were experienced and continue to be experienced by
24 the other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES.

25 52. California Labor Code section 558(a) provides that any employer, including
26 individuals acting on behalf of employers, that violates, or causes to be violated, a section of the
27 Labor Code or any applicable Wage Orders are subject to the following penalties;

- 28 • \$50 for any initial violation for each underpaid employee for each pay period for

1 which the employee was underpaid in addition to an amount sufficient to recover
2 unpaid wages;

- 3 • \$100 for each subsequent violation for each underpaid employee for each pay period
4 for which the employee was underpaid in addition to an amount to recover unpaid
5 wages;

6 53. Labor Code section 558.1 permits joint and several liability as to both an individual
7 and employer for violations of Labor Code sections 203, 226, 226.7, 1194, and 2802. Labor Code
8 section 558(c) provides that the penalties in this section are in addition to any other civil penalty.

9 54. DEFENDANTS are employers, and DEFENDANT ROMERO, acting on behalf
10 thereof, violated REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES' rights
11 by violating, or causing to be violated, various sections of this code as described throughout this
12 Complaint.

13 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

14 **(VIOLATION OF LABOR CODE § 2698, *ET SEQ.*)**

15 **(By REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF Against DEFENDANT(S) and Does 1 through 10,**
16 **inclusive)**

17 55. REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF incorporates by reference the allegations
18 contained in each of the preceding paragraphs and each and every part thereof with the same force
19 and effect as though fully set forth herein.

20 56. PAGA expressly establishes that any provisions of the California Labor Code which
21 provides for a civil penalty to be assessed and collected by the LWDA, or any of its departments,
22 divisions, commissions, boards, agencies or employees for a violation of the California Labor
23 Code, may be recovered through a civil action brought by an aggrieved employee on behalf of
24 himself or herself, and other current or former employees.

25 57. Whenever the LWDA, or any of its departments, divisions, commissions, boards,
26 agencies, or employees has discretion to assess a civil penalty, a court in a civil action is authorized
27 to exercise the same discretion, subject to the same limitations and conditions, to assess a civil
28 penalty.

1 58. REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and the other hourly-paid or non-exempt
2 employees, are “AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES” within the meaning of California Labor Code
3 section 2699(c) as they are all current or former employees of DEFENDANT, and one or more of
4 the alleged violations was committed against them.

5 **Failure to Provide Employment Records**

6 59. DEFENDANTS failure to provide REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other
7 AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES with employment records constitutes unlawful and/or unfair activity
8 and is prohibited by California Labor Code 226, 432, and 1198.5.

9 **Failure to Pay Overtime / Double Time**

10 60. DEFENDANTS failure to pay legally required overtime and double time wages to
11 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES is in violation of the
12 Wage Orders and constitutes unlawful and/or unfair activity prohibited by California Labor Code
13 sections 510 and 1198.

14 **Failure to Provide Meal and Rest Periods**

15 61. DEFENDANTS failure to provide legally required meal and rest periods to
16 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES constitutes unlawful
17 and/or unfair activity prohibited by California Labor Code sections 226.7, 512(a), and the
18 applicable Wage Orders.

19 **Failure to Pay Minimum Wages**

20 62. DEFENDANTS failure to pay legally required minimum wages to
21 REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES constitutes unlawful
22 and/or unfair activity prohibited by California Labor Code sections 1182.12, 1194, 1197, 1197.1,
23 and the applicable Wage Orders.

24 **Failure to Keep Accurate and Provide Itemized Wage Statements**

25 63. DEFENDANTS failure to keep accurate and provide itemized wage statements to
26 Plaintiff and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES constitutes unlawful and/or unfair activity
27 prohibited by California Labor Code section 226(a), 1174(d), and 1198.

28 **Failure to Timely Pay Wages During Employment**

1 64. DEFENDANTS failure to timely pay wages to REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF
2 and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES during their employment constitutes unlawful and/or
3 unfair activity prohibited by California Labor Code section 204.

4 **Failure to Timely Pay Wages Upon Termination**

5 65. DEFENDANTS failure to timely pay wages to REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF
6 and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES upon termination constitutes unlawful and/or unfair
7 activity prohibited by California Labor Code sections 201, 202, and 203.

8 **Failure to Provide Information Required by the Wage Theft Prevention Act**

9 66. DEFENDANTS failure to provide basic information to REPRESENTATIVE
10 PLAINTIFF and other AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES related to the conditions of their pay and their
11 rights regarding sick leave constitutes unlawful and/or unfair activity prohibited by California
12 Labor Code section 2810.5(a)(1)(A)-(C).

13 **Failure to Reimburse Necessary Business-Related Expenses and Costs**

14 67. DEFENDANTS failure to reimburse REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other
15 AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES for necessary business-related expenses and costs constitutes
16 unlawful and/or unfair activity prohibited by California Labor Code sections 2800 and 2802.

17 **Failure to Provide Notice of Paid Sick Time and Accrual**

18 68. DEFENDANTS failure to provide REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and other
19 AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES that works for DEFENDANTS for more than 30 days with written
20 notice setting the amount of sick leave available (or paid time off in lieu thereof) for use in their
21 itemized wage statements or in a separate writing accompanying such statements constitutes
22 unlawful and/or unfair activity prohibited by California Labor Code section 246.

23 **Civil Penalties**

24 69. DEFENDANT ROMERO's actions, as outlined above, on behalf of
25 DEFENDANTS that violated, or caused to be violated, the above-mentioned labor codes constitute
26 unfair and/or unlawful activity in violation of California Labor Code section 558(c). California
27 Labor Code section 558(c) specifically clarifies that penalties in this section are in addition to any
28 other civil penalty.

1 70. Pursuant to California Labor Code section 2699, REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF,
2 individually, and on behalf of all AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES, requests and is entitled to recover
3 penalties from DEFENDANTS and each of them, for violations of the Labor Code as more fully
4 described herein according to proof, interest, attorneys' fees and costs pursuant to California Labor
5 Code section 218.5, including but not limited to:

6 a. Penalties under California Labor Code section 2699 in the amount of a
7 hundred dollars (\$100) for each aggrieved employee per pay period for the initial violation,
8 and two hundred dollars (\$200) for each aggrieved employee per pay period for each
9 subsequent violation;

10 b. Penalties under California Code of Regulations Title 8 section 11010, et seq.
11 in the amount of fifty dollars (\$50) for each aggrieved employee per pay period for the
12 initial violation, and one hundred dollars (\$100) for each aggrieved employee per pay
13 period for each subsequent violation;

14 c. Penalties under California Labor Code section 210 in addition to, and
15 entirely independent and apart from, any other penalties provided in the California Labor
16 Code in the amount of a hundred dollars (\$100) for each aggrieved employee per pay
17 period for the initial violation, and two hundred dollars (\$200) for each aggrieved employee
18 per pay period for each subsequent violation; and

19 d. Any and all additional penalties and sums as provided by the California
20 Labor Code and/or other statutes, including, but not limited to, penalties pursuant to
21 California Labor Code 558(a).

22 71. Pursuant to California Labor Code section 2699(i), civil penalties recovered shall be
23 distributed as follows: seventy-five percent (75%) to the Labor and Workforce Development
24 Agency for the enforcement of labor laws and education of employers and employees about their
25 rights and responsibilities and twenty-five percent (25%) to the AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES.

26 72. Further, REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF is entitled to seek and recover
27 reasonable attorneys' fees and costs pursuant to California Labor Code sections 210, 218.5 and
28 2699 and any other applicable statute.

THEREFORE, REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF and the individuals he seeks to represent request relief as described below:

PRAYER

THEREFORE, REPRESENTATIVE PLAINTIFF prays for judgment against DEFENDANTS, and Does 1 through 100, and each of them, as follows:

1. Statutory attorneys' fees and costs under PAGA and California Code of Civil Procedure Section 1021.5;
2. Statutory penalties under PAGA;
3. Costs of suit; and
4. Such further relief as the Court deems just and proper.

Dated: February 15, 2021

HAIG B. KAZANDJIAN LAWYERS, APC.

By: /s/ Haig B. Kazandjian

Haig B. Kazandjian, Esq.,
Cathy Gonzalez, Esq.,
Kevin Crough, Esq.,
Attorneys for Plaintiff ELSY RAMIREZ
Individually and on behalf of other
AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES