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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

FOR THE COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

JACOB GREENWELL, individually, and on behalf of other members of the general public similarly situated and on behalf of all other aggrieved employees pursuant to the California Private Attorney General Act,

Plaintiffs,

vs.

ENVIGO RMS, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company; and DOES 1 through 100, inclusive

Defendants.

Case Nos.: RG21108069

Honorable Victoria Kolakowski
Department 16

CLASS ACTION

PLAINTIFF'S NOTICE OF MOTION AND MOTION FOR FINAL APPROVAL OF CLASS ACTION AND PAGA SETTLEMENT, CLASS COUNSEL AWARD, AND CLASS REPRESENTATIVE ENHANCEMENT AWARD; MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES

Date:	March 17, 2026
Time:	2:30 p.m.
Department:	16
Complaint Filed:	June 25, 2021
FAC Filed:	July 23, 2024
Trial Date:	None Set

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on March 17, 2026 at 2:30 p.m., in Department 16 of the above-entitled Court, located at 1225 Fallon Street, Oakland, California 94612, Plaintiff Jacob Greenwell ("Plaintiff" or "Class Representative") will and hereby does move for an order granting final approval of:

1. Making final the Court's previous preliminary certification of the class for settlement purposes, and approving the First Amended Joint Stipulation of Class Action and PAGA Settlement and Release of Claims ("Settlement," "Agreement," or "Settlement Agreement"), on the grounds that the Settlement is fair, adequate, and reasonable because, *inter alia*:

- An anticipated Net Settlement Amount of approximately **$251,094.30** will be fully distributed to the Settlement Class Members who do not submit a timely and valid Request for Exclusion ("Participating Settlement Class Members");
- A FCRA Settlement Amount of **$100,000.00** will be fully distributed to the FCRA Class Members who do not submit a timely and valid Request for Exclusion ("Participating FCRA Class Members"); and
- **No Objections** and **No Request for Exclusions** were submitted to the settlement administrator, Attius Administration, LLC ("Atticus" or "Settlement Administrator");

2. Awarding payment in the amount of **$278,250.00** to Lawyers *for* Justice, PC ("Class Counsel"), representing thirty-five percent (35%) of the Gross Settlement Amount, for attorneys' fees, which is reasonable and justified on a percentage-basis and also based on a lodestar cross-check;

3. Awarding payment in the amount of **$25,655.70** to Class Counsel for reimbursement of litigation costs and expenses;

4. Awarding payment in the amount of **$30,000.00** to the Settlement Administrator for Settlement Administrator Costs;

5. Awarding payment in the amount of **$10,000.00** to Plaintiff Jacob Greenwell, as a Class Representative Enhancement Award; and

6. Approving the allocation of the penalties under the Private Attorneys General Act of 2004, California Labor Code § 2698, *et seq.* ("PAGA"), in the amount of $100,000.00 ("PAGA Settlement Amount"), of which 75%, or $75,000.00, will be paid to the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency ("LWDA") ("LWDA Payment") and 25%, or $25,000 will be distributed to

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PAGA Employees on a *pro rata* basis, based on PAGA Workweek during the PAGA Period ("PAGA Employee Amount").

This motion is made pursuant to Rules 3.764 and 3.1113(e) of the California Rules of Court, which, respectively, require that a memorandum in support of class certification not exceed 20 pages, require approval by the Court of a class action settlement, and permit the Court to extend the page limit for memoranda, and California Labor Code section 2699(l)(2), which requires approval by the Court of a PAGA settlement. Unless otherwise specified, all citations and references to the Private Attorneys General Act of 2004, California Labor Code sections 2698, *et seq.* ("PAGA") are to the version of that statute prior to the recent amendment effective July 1, 2024; the amended statute does not apply to the Actions, or the Settlement pursuant to California Labor Code section 2699(v)(1), as amended, because the notice to the Labor and Workforce Development Agency was filed prior to June 19, 2024.

This motion is based upon the following Memorandum of Points and Authorities; the Declarations of Class Counsel (Helene Mayer), Class Representative (Jacob Greenwell), and Settlement Administrator (Bryn Bridley of Atticus) in support thereof; the pleadings and other records on file with the Court in these matters; and such evidence and oral argument as may be presented at the hearing on this motion.

Dated: February 23, 2026

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By: Helene Mayer

Helene Mayer
Attorneys for Plaintiff and the Class

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MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES

I. SUMMARY OF MOTION

Plaintiff Jacob Greenwell ("Plaintiff" or "Class Representative") seeks final approval of: (1) the settlement reached between Plaintiff and Defendant Envigo RMS, LLC, ("Defendant") (together with Plaintiff, the "Parties") which provides for Defendant's payment of a Gross Settlement Amount of $795,000.00;[1] (2) attorneys' fees in the amount of $278,250.00, which is thirty-five percent (35%) of the Gross Settlement Amount ("Class Counsel Fees"), and reimbursement of litigation costs and expenses in the amount of $25,655.70 ("Class Counsel Costs") (together, referred to as the "Class Award") to Lawyers *for* Justice, PC ("Class Counsel")[2]; (3) payment in the amount of $30,000.00 to Atticus Administration, LLC ("Settlement Administrator Costs")[3]; (4) payment in the amount of $10,000.00 to Plaintiff Jacob Greenwell ("Class Representative Enhancement Award")[4]; (5) payment in the amount of $100,000.00 to FCRA Class Members ("FCRA Settlement Amount")[5]; and (5) allocation of $100,000.00 for penalties under the Private Attorneys General Act of 2004, California Labor Code § 2698, *et seq.* ("PAGA Settlement Amount")[6].

Plaintiff requests that the Court make final its preliminary certification of the Class for settlement purposes. The Settlement resolves the Released Class Claims and provides relief to a class consisting of the following individuals: all current and former hourly-paid or non-exempt employees who worked for Defendant (including any entities that merged with Defendant) within the State of California at any time during the Class Period (i.e., the time period from June 25, 2017 through August 31, 2023) ("Settlement Class" or "Settlement Class Members").[7]

The Settlement also resolves the Released FCRA Class Claims and provides relief to a class consisting of the following individuals: all of Defendant's (including any entities that merged with Defendant) current and former employees and prospective applicants for employment in the United States who applied for a job with Defendant on whom a background check was performed at any time

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[1] First Amended Joint Stipulation of Class Action and PAGA Settlement and Release of Claims ("Settlement," "Agreement," "Settlement Agreement"), ¶ I.27.
[2] *Id.*, ¶¶ I.4 & III.88.
[3] *Id.*, ¶ I.54.
[4] *Id.*, ¶ I.11.
[5] *Id.*, ¶ I.23.
[6] *Id.*, ¶ I.40.
[7] *Id.*, ¶¶ I.6 & I.7.

during the FCRA Class Period (i.e., the time period from June 25, 2016 through August 31, 2023) ("FCRA Class" or "Class Members")[8] (together with the Settlement Class Members, "Class" or "Class Members")[9].

The Settlement also resolves the Released PAGA Claims pertaining to the employment of the following alleged aggrieved employees: all persons who were employed by Defendant (including any entities that merged with Defendant) in California as hourly paid or non-exempt employees at any time during the PAGA Period (i.e., the time period from October 7, 2019 through August 31, 2023) ("PAGA Employees").[10]

These matters involved, and the settlement is the product of meaningful and extensive investigations, and review and analysis of thousands of pages of information, documents, and data exchanged by the Parties in the course of litigation and mediation and settlement negotiations (which involved one full day mediation conducted by Eve Wagner, Esq.).[11]

These cases have required 330.60 hours of attorney time by Class Counsel.[12] As will be demonstrated herein, the request for attorneys' fees, which represents thirty-five percent (35%) of the Gross Settlement Amount, is fully supported by the use of the percentage-fee method. Courts have historically awarded fees of up to fifty percent (50%) of the recovery. The requested attorneys' fees are also supported under the lodestar cross-check method.

The requests for the Class Counsel Award, Class Representative Enhancement Award, Settlement Administrator Costs, FCRA Settlement Amount, and allocation for the PAGA Settlement Amount were fully disclosed in the Notice of Class Action Settlement ("Class Notice") that was mailed to the Class Members. Most importantly, as of the date of this Motion, *no Class Member has objected to the Settlement or to the contemplated Class Counsel Award, Class Representative Enhancement Award, Settlement Administrator Costs, FCRA Settlement Amount, or allocation for PAGA Settlement Amount.*

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[8] Settlement Agreement, ¶¶ I.20 & I.21.
[9] *Id.*, ¶ I.9.
[10] *Id.*, ¶¶ I.38 & I.41.
[11] Declaration of Helene Mayer ("Mayer Decl."), ¶ 12.
[12] *Id.*, Exh. 1.

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The Settlement is fair, adequate, and reasonable, and is the product of arm's-length, good-faith negotiations by experienced counsel presided over by a highly-regarded mediator who is experienced in mediating wage-and-hour class action lawsuits. Accordingly, the Court should grant final approval of the Settlement, and award the Class Counsel Award, Class Representative Enhancement Award, Settlement Administrator Costs, FCRA Settlement Amount, and allocation for the PAGA Settlement Amount in the full amounts requested herein.

In order to efficiently present the Court with adequate information to determine whether to grant final approval of the Settlement, and award Class Counsel Award, Class Representative Enhancement Award, Settlement Administrator Costs, FCRA Settlement Amount, and allocation for the PAGA Settlement Amount, Plaintiff also moves for an order permitting the filing of this single consolidated memorandum, although it exceeds the page limit established by California Rules of Court, 3.1113(e), instead of filing several separate motions.

II. RELEVANT PROCEDURAL HISTORY AND FACTUAL BACKGROUND SINCE PRELIMINARY APPROVAL

For a discussion of relevant procedural history and facts regarding these matters since preliminary approval, please see the Declaration of Helene Mayer at paragraphs 2 to 4.

III. THE CLASS SHOULD BE CERTIFIED FOR SETTLEMENT PURPOSES

For the reasons previously addressed by way of Plaintiff's moving and supporting papers for the Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlement (namely, that the relevant class certification factors are satisfied, i.e., ascertainability, numerosity, community of interest, typicality, adequacy of representation, superiority, and manageability), as well as the reasons discussed herein regarding the completion of the due process notice procedure, the Court is requested to now make final its preliminary certification of the class for settlement purposes.

IV. SUMMARY OF THE SETTLEMENT TERMS, NOTICE PROCESS, AND PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

Under the terms of the Settlement Agreement, Defendant has agreed to pay Gross Settlement Amount of $795,000.00 on a non-reversionary basis, and separately the amounts necessary to pay its share of payroll taxes due.[13] Within fifteen (15) days of the Effective Date, Defendant agrees to pay via four (4) installment payments – an initial payment of $200,000.00 (the "First Payment) plus Defendant's share of payroll taxes on such amount into an interest-bearing Qualified Settlement Fund ("QSF") established by the Settlement Administrator for administration of the Settlement.[14] Within three months of the First Payment, Defendant shall make a second payment of $200,000.00 (the "Second Payment) plus Defendant's share of payroll taxes on such amount into the QSF.[15] Within six months of the First Payment, Defendant shall make a third payment of $200,000.00 (the "Third Payment) plus Defendant's share of payroll taxes on such amount into the QSF.[16] Within nine months of the First Payment, Defendant shall make a final payment of $195,000.00 (the "Final Payment) plus Defendant's share of payroll taxes on such amount into the QSF.[17]

Subject to approval by the Court, the Net Settlement Amount will be calculated by deducting the Class Counsel Award, Class Representative Enhancement Award, FCRA Settlement Amount, PAGA Settlement Amount, and Settlement Administrator Costs from the Gross Settlement Amount.[18] The Net Settlement Amount, which is estimated to be $251,094.30, will be fully distributed to Participating Settlement Class Members in accordance with the Settlement Agreement.[19] The FCRA Settlement Amount of $100,000.00 will be distributed to the to Participating FCRA Class Members in accordance with the Settlement Agreement.[20] The PAGA Settlement Amount of $100,000.00 will be distributed to the Labor and Workforce Development Agency ("LWDA") (in the amount of $75,000.00) and to the PAGA Employees (in the amount of $25,000.00) in accordance with the Settlement Agreement.[21]

Atticus Administration, LLC, ("Settlement Administrator" or "Atticus") will determine each Participating Settlement Class Member's (i.e., Settlement Class Members who did not timely opt out of the Class Settlement) *pro rata* share of the Net Settlement Amount ("Individual Settlement Payment(s)")[22], according to the following methodology: the Settlement Administrator will divide the

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[13] Settlement Agreement, ¶ I.27.
[14] *Id.*, ¶ III.80.
[15] *Ibid.*
[16] *Ibid.*
[17] *Ibid.*
[18] *Id.*, ¶ I.32.
[19] *Id.*, ¶ III.82.
[20] *Id.*, ¶ III.84.
[21] *Id.*, ¶ III.91.
[22] *Id.*, ¶ I.29.

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final Net Settlement Amount by the Compensable Workweeks of all Participating Settlement Class Members to yield the "Final Compensable Workweek Value," and multiply each Participating Settlement Class Member's individual Compensable Workweeks by the Final Compensable Workweek Value to yield hers, his, or their estimated Individual Settlement Payment.[23]

The Settlement Administrator issue each Participating FCRA Class Member's (i.e., FCRA Class Members who did not timely opt out of the FCRA Settlement) Individual FCRA Settlement Payment[24] on an equal *pro rata* basis of the FCRA Settlement Amount.[25]

The Settlement Administrator will calculate each PAGA Employees' *pro rata* share of the PAGA Employee Amount ("Individual PAGA Settlement Payment")[26] as follows: the Settlement Administrator will divide the PAGA Employee Amount, i.e., 25% of the PAGA Settlement Amount, by the total number of Compensable Pay Periods worked by all PAGA Employees to yield the "PAGA Compensable Pay Period Value," and multiply each PAGA Employee's individual Compensable Pay Periods by the PAGA Compensable Pay Period Value to yield hers, his, or their Individual PAGA Settlement Payment.[27]

Class Members had forty-five (45) calendar days from the initial mailing of the Class Notice ("Response Deadline") to: (a) submit a Request for Exclusion; (b) submit a Notice of Objection; (c) submit a Compensable Workweeks Dispute.[28] Class Members who received a re-mailed Class Notice had their Response Deadline extended by the longer of fourteen (14) calendar days from the date of re-mailing or the remaining original Response Deadline.[29] The Response Deadline was January 10, 2026, and the extended Response Deadline was January 24, 2026, for Class Members who were re-mailed the Class Notice.[30] ***As of the date of this motion, the Settlement Administrator has received zero (0) written requests for exclusion from the Class Settlement or FCRA Settlement ("Requests for Exclusion") and zero (0) written objections to the Class Settlement or FCRA Settlement ("Objections") from Class***

[23] Settlement Agreement, ¶ III.82.b.
[24] *Id.*, ¶ I.28.
[25] *Id.*, ¶ III.84.
[26] *Id.*, ¶ I.30.
[27] *Id.*, ¶ III.85.
[28] *Id.*, ¶ I.51.
[29] *Id.*, ¶ III.74.
[30] Declaration of Bryn Bridley on Class Notice and Settlement Administration ("Atticus Decl.") ¶ 10.

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Members.[31]

Each Individual Settlement Payment will be allocated as follows: 33.33% as wages which will be reported on an IRS Form W-2; and 66.67% as interest, penalties, and non-wage damages, which will be reported on an IRS Form 1099.[32] The Settlement Administrator will withhold the employee's share of taxes and withholdings with respect to the wages portion of the Individual Settlement Payment, and issue checks to Participating Settlement Class Members for their Individual Settlement Payments net of these taxes and withholdings.[33] Defendant will pay the employer's share of payroll taxes and contributions with respect to the wage portion of Individual Settlement Payments in addition to the Gross Settlement Amount.[34] The Individual PAGA Settlement Payments will be allocated as one hundred percent (100%) penalties, and will be reported on an IRS Form-1099, (if applicable) by the Settlement Administrator.[35] The Individual FCRA Settlement Payments will be allocated as one hundred percent (100%) penalties, and will be reported on an IRS Form-1099, (if applicable) by the Settlement Administrator.[36]

Within seven (7) days following the funding of the First Payment, the Settlement Administrator shall distribute the following payments: (a) Individual PAGA Settlement Payments to PAGA Employees, (b) LWDA Payment to the LWDA, and (c) Class Representative Enhancement Award to Plaintiff.[37] Within seven (7) days following the funding of the Second Payment, the Settlement Administrator shall distribute the following payments: (a) Individual FCRA Settlement Payments to Participating FCRA Class Members and (b) 50% of the Individual Settlement Payments to Participating Settlement Class Members.[38] Within seven (7) days following the funding of the Third Payment, the Settlement Administrator shall distribute the following payments: (a) 50% of the Individual Settlement Payments to Participating Settlement Class Members.[39] Within seven (7) days following the funding of the Final Payment, the Settlement Administrator shall distribute the following payments: (a) Class Counsel Award to Class Counsel and (b) Settlement Administrator Costs to itself.[40]

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[31] Atticus Decl., ¶¶ 12 & 13.
[32] Settlement Agreement, ¶ III.83.
[33] *Ibid*.
[34] *Id*., ¶ III.80.
[35] *Id*., ¶ III.85.
[36] *Id*., ¶ III.84.
[37] *Id*., ¶¶ III.85 & III.87.
[38] *Id*., ¶¶ III.83 & III.84.
[39] *Id*., ¶ III.83.
[40] *Id*., ¶¶ III.88 & III.89.

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Individual Settlement Payment, Individual FCRA Settlement Payment, and Individual PAGA Settlement Payment checks will be valid and negotiable for one hundred eighty (180) calendar days from the date the checks are mailed, and thereafter, shall be canceled.[41] The funds associated with such canceled checks will be distributed by the Settlement Administrator to Alameda Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children as a *cy pres* recipient pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure Section 384.[42] All Settlement Class Member and PAGA Employees shall be bound by the terms and conditions of this Settlement Agreement regardless of whether or not they cash or otherwise negotiate their Individual Settlement Payment, Individual FCRA Settlement Payment, and/or Individual PAGA Settlement Payment checks.[43]

V. <u>THE SETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION PROCESS</u>

The Court directed Atticus to administer and effectuate the notice and settlement administration process, as set forth in the Court's September 29, 2025, Preliminary Approval Order. On November 13, 2025, Atticus received a mailing list from Defendant's counsel that contained each Class Members' last known full name; last known address; Social Security number; Compensable Workweeks; and Compensable Pay Periods (collectively, "Class Member List").[44]

The Class List contained information for 4,143 unique Class Members, of which, 48 were Settlement Class Members and PAGA Employees, 3,925 were FCRA Class Members, and 170 were Settlement Class Members, FCRA Class Members, and PAGA Employees.[45] The mailing addresses contained in the Class List were processed and updated utilizing the U.S. Postal Service's National Change of Address Database ("NCOA").[46]

Atticus also identified and brought to the attention of the Parties the fact that 1,134 FCRA Class Member records did not include sufficient mailing address information to distribute notice.[47] These 1,134 records were sent to a professional address tracing service wherein addresses were obtained for 557 of the incomplete records.[48] Addresses were not obtained for the remaining 577 records and Class Notices were

[41] Settlement Agreement, ¶ III.86.
[42] *Ibid*.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Atticus Decl., ¶ 4.
[45] *Id*., ¶ 5.
[46] *Id*., ¶ 8.
[47] *Id*., ¶ 7.
[48] *Ibid*.

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not mailed to those 577 individuals.[49]

On November 26, 2025, Atticus mailed the Class Notice via U.S. first class mail to all 3,566 Class Members (i.e., Settlement Class Members and FCRA Class Members referred to together regardless of whether persons are members of one or both of the defined classes) for whom mailing addresses were received and/or obtained.[50] Class Members were sent one (1) of the three (3) versions of the Class Notice according to their status as Settlement Class Members, FCRA Class Members, and/or PAGA Employees.[51]

A total of 7 Class Notices were returned with a forwarding address and Atticus promptly re-mailed the Class Notices to the forwarding addresses.[52] Atticus performed a skip-trace search on 580 Class Notices that were returned to Atticus without forwarding addresses, located an updated address for 451 Class Members, and promptly re-mailed the Class Notice to the updated addresses, 60 of which were returned to Atticus a second time.[53] New addresses were not obtained for the other 129 records sent to trace.[54] Twenty-six (26) undeliverable records were not traced because they were returned to Atticus after the Response Deadline.[55] There are 215 mailed Class Notices that remain undeliverable.[56]

The Settlement Administrator has received zero (0) Objections and zero (0) Requests for Exclusion from Class Members by the Response Deadline of January 10, 2026 or the extended Response Deadline of January 24, 2026 for those Class Notices that were re-mailed.[57]

To date, there are 218 Settlement Class Members who did not submit a timely and valid Request for Exclusion ("Participating Settlement Class Members"), and who will be paid their portion of the Net Settlement Amount.[58] To date, there are 4,085 FCRA Class Members who did not submit a timely and valid Request for Exclusion ("Participating FCRA Class Members"), and who will be paid their portion of the FCRA Settlement Amount.[59] To date, there are 139 PAGA Employees who will be paid their

[49] Atticus Decl., ¶ 7.
[50] *Id.*, ¶ 9.
[51] *Ibid.*
[52] *Id.*, ¶ 10.
[53] *Ibid.*
[54] *Ibid.*
[55] *Ibid.*
[56] *Ibid.*
[57] *Id.*, ¶¶ 12 & 13.
[58] *Id.*, ¶ 21.
[59] *Ibid.*

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portion of the PAGA Employee Amount.[60] The Net Settlement Amount of approximately $251,094.30, the FCRA Settlement Amount of $100,000.00, and the PAGA Employee Amount of $25,000.00 will be distributed in accordance with the terms of the Settlement.[61]

VI. **THE COURT SHOULD GRANT FINAL APPROVAL OF THE CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT.**

In reviewing a class settlement, the court need not reach any ultimate conclusions on the issues of fact and law that underlie the merits of the dispute. *7-Eleven Owners for Fair Franchising v. Southland Corp.* (2000) 85 Cal.App.4th 1135, 1146. The inquiry is not whether the settlement agreement is the best one that class members could have possibly obtained, but whether the settlement, taken as a whole, is "fair, adequate, and reasonable"—and the trial court has broad discretion to determine this. *Chavez v. Netflix, Inc.* (2008) 162 Cal.App.4th 43, 52-55. A settlement need not obtain 100 percent of the damages sought in order to be fair, reasonable, and ultimately, meaningful. *Wershba v. Apple Computer, Inc.* (2001) 91 Cal.App.4th 224, 251. Even if the proposed settlement affords relief that is substantially narrower than it would be if the case were to be successfully litigated, that is no bar to a class settlement because the public interest may indeed be served by a voluntary settlement in which each side gives ground in the interest of avoiding prolonged litigation. *Id.*

To determine whether the settlement is fair and reasonable, relevant factors to consider are:

> the strength of plaintiffs' case, the risk, expense, complexity and likely duration of further litigation, the risk of maintaining class action status through trial, the amount offered in settlement, the extent of discovery completed and the stage of the proceedings, the experience and views of counsel, the presence of a governmental participant, and the reaction of the class members to the proposed settlement.

Dunk v. Ford Motor Co. (1996) 48 Cal.App.4th 1794, 1801. The list of factors is not exclusive and the court can consider different factors based on the circumstances of each case." *Wershba* at 245. At the final approval stage, a presumption of fairness exists where, as here:

> "(1) the settlement is reached through arm's-length bargaining; (2) investigation and discovery are sufficient to allow counsel and the court to act intelligently; (3) counsel is experienced in similar litigation; and (4) the percentage of objectors is small."

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[60] Atticus Decl., ¶ 21.
[61] *Id.*, ¶¶ 16-20.

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Id. at 1802. "Due regard should be given to what is otherwise a private consensual agreement between the parties." *Dunk* at 1801.

A. <u>The Settlement Resulted from Arm's-Length Negotiations Based Upon Extensive Investigation and Formal and Informal Discovery.</u>

The Parties actively litigated the cases since the initial complaint was filed on June 25, 2021, as well as the companion PAGA case which was separately filed on June 25, 2021 but settled globally in the above-captioned action. Class Counsel conducted significant investigation, and extensive formal and informal discovery into the facts of the cases, to assess the veracity, strength, and scope of the claims, and was preparing for class certification and trial prior to reaching the Settlement.[62]

The Parties informally exchanged a large volume of information, documents, and data throughout the course of the litigation and in connection with the mediations and settlement negotiations.[63] Class Counsel conducted significant formal and informal discovery and investigation into the facts of the actions, to assess the veracity, strength, and scope of the claims, and were preparing the actions for class certification and trial, prior to reaching the Settlement. The Parties exchanged thousands of pages of information, documents, and data throughout the course of the litigation and in connection with the mediation and settlement negotiations. The volume of records and documents that Class Counsel reviewed and analyzed included, and were not limited to: a sampling of Class Members' time and payroll data, Plaintiff's personnel records, Defendant's Handbooks, earning statements, time punch data, company policy acknowledgements, job descriptions, Defendant's operations and employment practice, policies, and procedures, among other information and documents. Class Counsel had the opportunity to interview and obtain information from Plaintiff and percipient witnesses, and reviewed and analyzed a volume of information, data, and documents obtained from Plaintiff, Defendant, and other sources. Class Counsel developed liability, damages, violation, and penalties valuation models in the course of litigation and in connection with the mediation and settlement negotiations, and met and conferred with Defendant's counsel on numerous occasions, e.g., to discuss issues relating to the pleadings, case management, motion practice, formal and informal discovery, and the production of information,

[62] Mayer Decl., ¶ 5.
[63] *Id.*, ¶ 7.

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documents, and data in the course of litigation and in connection with mediation and settlement negotiations, and settlement. Other work performed by Class Counsel included, and was not limited to, case strategy and analysis; researching, drafting, reviewing, and/or revising the pleadings, motion-related papers, the mediation briefing and supporting materials, and settlement documents; drafting and propounding multiple sets of formal written discovery requests on Defendant and notices of depositions of Defendant's persons most knowledgeable designees; reviewing Defendant's responses and objections to written discovery requests and deposition notices; and preparing for and attending court proceedings, mediation, and settlement negotiations, among other tasks. Class Counsel had the opportunity to interview Plaintiff and other percipient witnesses.[64]

The Parties participated in a formal, full-day mediation conducted by Eve Wagner, Esq., who is well-regarded mediator experienced in mediating complex labor and employment matters.[65] In the course of mediation and settlement negotiations, the Parties exchanged extensive information, documents, and data and discussed all aspects of the cases, including and not limited to, the risks and delays of further litigation, the risks and expenses to the Parties of proceeding with class certification, representative adjudication, and trial; the law relating to class certification, manageability, off-the-clock theory, rounding, regular rates of pay, meal and rest periods, expense reimbursements, recordkeeping and wage statement requirements, representative PAGA claims and penalties, violations of the Fair Credit Reporting Act, and wage-and-hour law and enforcement; Plaintiff's claims and allegations, and Defendant's defenses thereto, as well as the evidence produced and analyzed; and the possibility of appeals, among other things.[66] During all settlement discussions, the Parties conducted their negotiations at arm's length in an adversarial position.[67] Arriving at a settlement that was acceptable to the Parties was not easy.[68] Defendant and its counsel felt very strongly about Defendant's ability to prevail on the merits and to avoid class certification and representative adjudication and prevail on the merits, while, Plaintiff and Class Counsel believed that they would be able to obtain class certification and prevail at trial.[69] After conducting initial disclosures, significant formal and informal discovery and investigations, extensive

[64] Mayer Decl., ¶ 7.
[65] *Id.*, ¶ 9.
[66] *Id.*, ¶ 9.
[67] *Ibid.*
[68] *Ibid.*
[69] *Ibid.*

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settlement negotiations, and with the aid of the mediator's evaluation, the Parties agreed that these matters was well-suited for settlement given the legal issues relating to Plaintiff's principal claims, as well as the costs and risks to the Parties that would attend further litigation.[70]

The Settlement takes into account the strengths and weaknesses of each side's position and the uncertainty of how these matters might have concluded at certification, trial, and/or appeals.[71] The Settlement was based on thousands of pages of facts, evidence, and investigation.[72] Additionally, Class Counsel has extensive experience in handling complex wage-and-hour actions, including significant experience in employment class action litigation.[73]

B. <u>The Risks Inherent in Continued Litigation Favor Final Approval of the Settlement.</u>

The risks inherent in litigating the claims through certification proceedings, trial, and/or appeals, favor resolving these matters for an Gross Settlement Amount of $795,000.00.[74] The Settlement was calculated using information and data uncovered through extensive case investigation, formal and informal discovery, and the exchange of information in the context of litigation mediation, and ongoing settlement negotiations.[75] Had the actions not settled, Defendant would have vigorously challenged class certification, manageability, and liability. Defendant contended that individualized questions of fact predominated over any common issues, and these issues would pose challenges to certification and representative adjudication. Defendant would have likely argued again at trial, if any, that Plaintiff's claims were not appropriate for class-wide and/or representative adjudication. On the other hand, Defendant also faced the risk of the Court certifying a class and allowing a jury to decide Plaintiff's claims on a class-wide or representative basis. Also, preparation for trial would have been expensive for all Parties.

It is preferable to reach an early resolution of a dispute because such resolutions save time and money that would otherwise go to litigation. If these matters had settled after further litigation, the settlement amount would have taken into account the additional costs incurred, and there might have been

[70] Mayer Decl., ¶ 9.
[71] *Id.*, ¶¶ 7 & 9.
[72] *Id.*, ¶¶ 7 & 8.
[73] *Id.*, ¶¶ 14-19.
[74] *Id.*, ¶¶ 9 & 20.
[75] *Id.*, ¶¶ 6-9.

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less money available for Settlement Class Members, FCRA Class Members, PAGA Employees, and the State of California after all was said and done. This is not just an abstract contention. The risks and expenses of further litigation outweighed any benefit that might have been gained otherwise. These risks of further litigation include a determination that the claims were unsuitable for class treatment and/or representative adjudication, failure to obtain certification, class de-certification after certification of a class, allowing a jury to decide the claims asserted in these matters, and the real possibility of no recovery after years of litigation. Additionally, the Parties were moving into the phase of the litigation where they would have to conduct a significant amount of additional discovery, including and not limited to, depositions of Defendant's Person Most Knowledgeable designees, expert witnesses, and percipient witnesses, such as managers, supervisors, and other current and former employees throughout the State of California. Additional discovery would have certainly arisen, which would have cost the Parties additional time and money. In contrast, the Settlement provides real and significant benefits for the Settlement Class Members, PAGA Employees, FCRA Class Members, and the State of California here and now, while avoiding the further expenses, risks, and delay of prolonged litigation with only the possibility of recovery.

It would be grossly inefficient for such a large class of current and former employees to bring individual actions to recover from Defendant for the alleged violations of wage-and-hour laws. Moreover, the potential individual recovery that could be obtained by a Class Member would not be significant enough to provide him or her with the incentive to sue. By granting final approval of the Settlement, the Court can approve a resolution that provides a certain and substantial recovery for Settlement Class Members, FCRA Members, PAGA Employees, and the State of California.

C. The Settlement Is Fair, Reasonable, and Adequate.

The Settlement, which provides for a Gross Settlement Amount of $795,000.00, represents a fair, reasonable, and adequate resolution of these matters. The Settlement was calculated using information and data uncovered through extensive case investigation, formal and informal discovery, and the exchange of information in the context of litigation, mediation, and extensive settlement negotiations. The Settlement takes into account the potential risks and rewards inherent in any case and, in particular, in these matters. Moreover, considering the facts in these matters, Gross Settlement Amount represents a considerable recovery.

The Gross Settlement Amount will be fully paid out, in accordance with the terms of the Settlement. As discussed in Section IV, *supra*, each Participating Settlement Class Member will be paid a *pro rata* share of the Net Settlement Amount (which is currently estimated to be $251,094.30), based on the number of Workweeks credited to them, each PAGA Employee will be paid a *pro rata* share of the PAGA Employee Amount, based on the number of PAGA Workweek during the PAGA Period credited to them, and each Participating FCRA Class Members will be paid an equal *pro rata* share of the FCRA Settlement Amount.[76] The highest Individual Settlement Payment to a Participating Settlement Class Member is currently estimated to be $4,222.61 and the average Individual Settlement Payment is currently estimated to be $1,151.81.[77] The highest Individual PAGA Settlement Payment to a PAGA Employee is current estimated to be $417.91 and the average Individual PAGA Settlement Payment is currently estimated to be $179.86.[78] The estimated prorated payment amount owed to each Participating FCRA Class Member is current estimated to be $24.39.[79] These are significant individual recoveries, particularly in light of the risks of litigation.

Class Counsel believes that the Settlement as a whole is fair, reasonable, and adequate.[80] Although Class Counsel's recommendations are not conclusive, the Court can properly take the recommendations into account, particularly if Class Counsel appears to be competent, has experience with this type of litigation, and significant discovery and investigation have been completed, as is the case here. Conte & Newberg, *Newberg on Class Actions* (4th Ed., 2002) § 11.47. Accordingly, the Court should grant final approval of the Settlement.

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[76] Settlement Agreement, ¶¶ I.28-I.30. The *pro rata* allocation here is a fair and reasonable way to distribute the Net Settlement Amount that is payable to the Participating Settlement Class Members, the PAGA Employee Amount that is payable to the PAGA Employees, and the FCRA Settlement Amount that is payable to the Participating FCRA Class Members. At the final approval stage, "[a]n allocation formula need only have a reasonable, rational basis [to warrant approval], particularly if recommended by experienced and competent class counsel." *In re American Bank Note Holographics, Inc., Securities Litigation* (S.D.N.Y. 2001) 127 F.Supp.2d 418, 429-30.
[77] Atticus Decl., ¶ 20.
[78] *Id.*, ¶ 18.
[79] *Id.*, ¶ 17.
[80] Mayer Decl., ¶ 22.

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D. The Class Was Represented by Competent Counsel.

Class Counsel has extensive experience in employment class action law and complex wage-and-hour litigation.[81] Lawyers *for* Justice, PC has been appointed class counsel in numerous complex wage-and-hour cases, and has recovered millions of dollars for individuals in California.[82] Both Parties' counsel were capable of assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the Class Members' claims against Defendant and the benefits of the Settlement under the circumstances of the lawsuits and in the context of a private, consensual settlement agreement.

E. There Are No Written Objections to the Class or FCRA Settlement.

The Settlement has been well received by the Class – ***not a single Class Member objected to or opted out of the Settlement.***[83] Specifically, no objections have been made as to the Gross Settlement Amount or contemplated Class Counsel Award, Class Representative Enhancement Award, Settlement Administrator Costs, FCRA Settlement Amount, and allocation for the PAGA Settlement Amount. California courts have consistently found that a small number of objectors indicates support for a settlement and strongly favors final approval.[84]

Here, the lack of any objections speaks volumes about the fairness, reasonableness, and adequacy of this Settlement. Accordingly, the Settlement as a whole is presumed to be fair, reasonable, and adequate, and the Court should grant final approval of the Settlement in its entirety. *Dunk*, 48 Cal.App.4th at 1802.

VII. THE CLASS COUNSEL'S FEES REQUESTED SHOULD BE APPROVED.

A. A Fee Award of a Percentage of the Entire Fund Is Appropriate.

Under the terms of the Settlement Agreement, Defendant will pay a Gross Settlement Amount of $795,000.00.[85] The requested attorneys' fees are thirty-five percent (35%) of the total value of the monetary settlement.[86] In light of Class Counsel's successful prosecution and resolution of these matters, the requested attorneys' fees are appropriate and reasonable.

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[81] Mayer Decl., ¶¶ 14-19.
[82] *Ibid.*
[83] Atticus Decl., ¶¶ 12 & 13.
[84] *Wershba*, *supra*, 91 Cal.App.4th at 250-51 (final approval granted despite 20 objectors); *7-Eleven Owners*, *supra*, 85 Cal.App.4th at 1152-53 (final approval granted despite 9 objectors).
[85] Settlement Agreement, ¶ I.27.
[86] *Id.*, ¶ III.88.

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Where the amount of a settlement is a "certain easily calculable sum of money," California courts may calculate attorneys' fees as a reasonable percentage of the settlement. Weil and Brown, California Practice Guide, *Civil Procedure Before Trial*, Chapter 14, § 14:145; *In re Bluetooth Headset Prods. Liab. Litig.* (9th Cir. 2011) 654 F.3d 935, 942 (The percentage method is particularly appropriate where a monetary settlement has been recovered and "the benefit [recovered can be] easily quantified."); *see also Laffitte v. Robert Half Int'l Inc.* (2016) 1 Cal.5th 480, 503; *Dunk* at 1808. Courts may calculate and award attorneys' fees as a percentage of a monetary fund that has, by litigation, been preserved or recovered for the benefit of others. *Laffitte* at 486 & 506. Trial courts "retain the discretion to forgo a lodestar cross-check and [may] use other means to evaluate the reasonableness of a requested percentage fee." *Id.* (internal quotes omitted); see also *Wershba*, *supra*, 91 Cal.App. 4th at 253.

Courts award fees as an economic incentive for lawyers to pursue litigation that will enhance and facilitate access to the judicial system for meritorious claims, deter wrongdoing, and address multiple similar alleged wrongs that would not be economically feasible to pursue individually, such as here. See A. Conte, *Attorney Fee Awards* (2d ed. 1993) 104, at 6.

The percentage fee method is preferred in representative actions because "it better approximates the workings of the marketplace than the lodestar approach." *Lealao v. Beneficial Cal., Inc.* (2000) 82 Cal.App.4th 19, 49. California law provides that the award for attorneys' fees should be equivalent to fees freely negotiated in the legal marketplace and paid in comparable litigation based on the result achieved and risk incurred. *Id.* at 47-50; *Laffitte* at 503. In cases where the settlement agreement provides that the defendant will pay the plaintiff's attorneys a percentage of the fund created by the settlement, use of that percentage method is appropriate. *Lealao* at 32. Fee awards that are too small will "chill the private enforcement essential to the vindication of many legal rights and obstruct the representative actions that often relieve the courts of the need to separately adjudicate numerous claims." *Id.* at 53. Therefore, fees in representative actions should approximate the probable terms of a contingent fee contract negotiated by a sophisticated attorney and client in comparable litigation. *Id.* at 48. "The ultimate goal . . . is the award of a 'reasonable' fee to compensate counsel for their efforts, irrespective of the method of calculation." *Consumer Privacy Cases* (2009) 175 Cal.App.4th 545, 557-58 (quoting *Apple Computer, Inc. v. Superior Court* (2005) 126 Cal.App.4th, 1253, 1270).

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Class Counsel's application for attorneys' fees in light of the facts and circumstances surrounding the cases is well-within the range of reasonableness. Courts have awarded fees as high as 50% of the settlement in complex actions, depending on the circumstances of the case.[87]

Class Counsel has performed significant work in these matters, as discussed in the Declaration of Helene Mayer with the very real possibility of an unsuccessful outcome and no fee recovery of any kind.[88] In the present matter, Class Counsel has borne all of the risks and costs of litigation and will not receive any compensation until recovery is obtained.[89] Class Counsel is experienced in complex wage-and-hour litigation and used that experience to obtain a significant settlement recovery for Plaintiff, the Class, and the State of California.[90] Considering the amount of fees requested, work performed, risks incurred, results obtained, and experience of Class Counsel in handling similar matters, Plaintiff maintains that the requested attorneys' fees are reasonable and should be awarded.

Compensating class counsel in class litigation on a percentage basis, as requested herein, makes good sense because: (1) it is consistent with the private marketplace where contingent fee attorneys are customarily compensated on such a basis; (2) it aligns the interests of class counsel and absent class members in achieving the maximum possible resolution of the case; and (3) it encourages the most efficient and expeditious resolution of the litigation by providing an incentive for early, yet reasonable, settlement. The attorney fee request here satisfies all of these factors and should be approved on a percentage basis.

The percentage method is consistent with, and is intended to mirror, the practice in the private marketplace where contingent-fee attorneys typically negotiate percentage-fee arrangements with their clients. The named plaintiff's agreement to pay a contingent fee is powerful evidence of a reasonable fee. One of the best ways to demonstrate the value of counsel's work to the class is to review the consideration agreed to be paid by the named plaintiff. If the named plaintiff has employed counsel on a contingency-fee basis, it would indeed be inequitable for the members of the class, who will enjoy the

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[87] *See In re Ampicillin Antitrust Litig.* (D.D.C. 1981) 526 F.Supp. 494 (awarding attorneys' fees in the amount of 45% of the $7.3 million total settlement amount); *Beech Cinema, Inc. v. Twentieth-Century Fox Film Corp.* (S.D.N.Y. 1979) 480 F.Supp. 1195 (awarding approximately 53% of the settlement as attorneys' fees). California courts routinely approve attorneys' fees awards "average[ing] around one-third of the recovery." *Chavez v. Netflix, Inc.* (2008) 162 Cal.App.4th 43, 66 n.11 (lower court found the range of contingency fees in marketplace to be 20%-40% and determined such a percentage fee was appropriate).

[88] Mayer Decl., ¶¶ 10-11.

[89] *Id.*, ¶¶ 10-11, & 20.

[90] *Id.*, ¶¶ 14-19.

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benefits of the settlement without incurring the risks of bringing the claim, to pay less than the named plaintiff. In this case, Plaintiff has agreed to a contingency fee agreement of at least thirty-five percent (35%) of the recovery.[91]

Class Counsel has obtained a substantial recovery on behalf of Plaintiff, the Class, and the State of California and the results achieved justify an attorneys' fees award that is the equivalent of the standard market fee and that is consistent with the contingency-fee agreement entered into by and between Plaintiff and Class Counsel. Thus, the requested attorneys' fees are appropriate.

B. The Attorneys' Fees Requested Are Reasonable Based on the Factors Considered in Determination of Fee Awards.

The factors which courts consider in determining whether fee awards are reasonable, all of which support the fee award requested by Class Counsel, are: the time and labor required; the novelty and difficulty of the questions involved; the skill requisite to perform the legal services properly; the preclusion of other employment by the attorney due to the acceptance of the case; the customary fee; whether the fee is fixed or contingent; the time limitation imposed by the client or the circumstances; the amount involved and results obtained; the experience, reputation, and ability of the attorney; the undesirability of the case; the nature and length of the professional relationship with the client; and awards in similar cases. *Camden I Condominium Association, Inc. v. Dunkel* (11th Cir. 1991) 946 F.2d 768, 772. Some of the most relevant factors to this Court's fee determination will be addressed below.

The award of attorneys' fees in the amount of $278,5250.00 (which is 35% of the Gross Settlement Amount) is commensurate with the time, effort, and expense dedicated to these matters, the contingent nature of Class Counsel's fee recovery and the risks taken, the skill and determination required, the results that Class Counsel has achieved, and the value of the settlement that Class Counsel has obtained in these matters.

1. Time & Labor.

Class Counsel used its experience and skills, and dedicated the full extent of resources, to litigate and bring these matters to a successful conclusion.[92]

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[91] Mayer Decl., ¶ 10.
[92] *Id.*, ¶¶ 7-9, & 12.

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As outlined in the Declaration of Helene Mayer, Class Counsel has fully and actively participated in litigation of these matters.[93] Prior to commencing the lawsuit, Class Counsel had conducted a significant amount of investigation into the factual and legal issues, Defendant's business and its operations, and employment policies, practices, and procedures.[94] During the litigation of these matters, Class Counsel had the opportunity to interview Plaintiff and other percipient witnesses; reviewed and analyzed a large volume of information, documents and data obtained from Defendant, Plaintiff, and other sources; and prepared liability, damages, penalties, and valuation calculations.[95] Class Counsel also met and conferred with Defendant's counsel on numerous occasions, e.g., to discuss issues relating to the pleadings, case management, motion practice, formal and informal discovery, and the production of information, documents, and data in the course of litigation and in connection with mediation and settlement negotiations, and settlement.[96]

Counsel has dedicated staffing and monetary resources necessary to prosecute these matters diligently and with maximum efficiency and has fully and actively participated in the litigation process.[97] The Attorney Task and Time Chart, which is attached as "**EXHIBIT 1**" to the accompanying Declaration of Helene Mayer, sets forth in detail the hours that attorneys at Lawyers *for* Justice, PC have spent performing tasks in these matters.[98] Class Counsel has spent **330.60 hours** performing tasks and to obtain a significant recovery in these matters.[99] These hours were required to bring these matters to its successful conclusion. In light of the value of Class Counsel's work and the carrying of costs involved in litigating these matters, the requested attorneys' fees are fair, adequate, and reasonable.

2. The Skill Required to Perform Legal Services Properly.

The skill required to properly litigate these matters is evident from the results achieved, the steps necessary to reach those results, and that Defendant retained well-respected counsel to represent it.

Class Counsel exercised its skill to perform significant investigation, analysis, and research prior to filing the cases, during the litigation, and prior to and during the mediation and settlement negotiations.

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[93] Mayer Decl., ¶¶ 7-9 & Exh. 1.
[94] *Id.*, ¶ 8.
[95] *Id.*, ¶ 7.
[96] *Ibid.*
[97] *Id.*, ¶ 12 & Exh. 1.
[98] *Id.*, Exh. 1.
[99] *Id.*, ¶ 12 & Exh. 1.

Class Counsel took steps to prepare the matter for class certification and representative adjudication and had every intention of taking these matters to trial on a class-wide basis if Defendant did not offer an appropriate class-wide settlement. Despite all of the obstacles that had to be overcome, as demonstrated in the Declaration of Helene Mayer, Class Counsel used its extensive experience in the handling of class actions and complex wage-and-hour matters in order to obtain the Settlement with maximum efficiency.[100]

3. Whether the Fee Is Fixed or Contingent.

Plaintiff entered into a contingency fee agreement with Class Counsel, and the representation of the Class provided by Class Counsel has been wholly contingent.[101] Class Counsel has invested **330.60 hours** of time to obtain relief on behalf of Plaintiff, the Class, and the State of California.[102] Class Counsel has also incurred litigation costs and expenses in the amount of $25,655.70.[103] Thus, Class Counsel has borne all of the risks and costs of litigation and will not receive any compensation until recovery is obtained.[104]

In determining the reasonableness of a fee award in a class action settlement, whether or not representation is provided on a contingency basis is an important factor:

> A contingent fee must be higher than a fee for the same legal services paid as they are performed. The contingent fee compensates the lawyer not only for the legal services he renders but for the loan of those services. A lawyer who both bears the risk of not being paid and provides legal services is not receiving the fair market value of his work if he is paid only for the second of these functions. If he is paid no more, competent counsel will be reluctant to accept fee award cases.

Cates v. Chiang (2013) 213 Cal.App.4th 791, 823 (internal quotes and citations omitted). Class Counsel litigated these matters on a contingent basis with all of the concomitant risk factors inherent in such an uncertain undertaking. Had Class Counsel not been successful, the time that Class Counsel has devoted to litigating these matters would have been for naught, and would not have produced any fee or any reimbursement of costs or expenses. *See Vizcaino v. Microsoft* (9th Cir. 2002) 290 F.3d 1043, 1048-49 (discussing the risks of engaging in litigation without certainty of compensation).

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[100] Mayer Decl., ¶¶ 14-19.
[101] *Id.*, ¶ 10.
[102] *Id.*, ¶ 12 & Exh. 1.
[103] *Id.*, ¶ 20.
[104] *Ibid.*

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4. *The Amount Involved and the Results Achieved.*

The Settlement represents an excellent resolution of these matters, given the risks inherent in litigating the matter through class certification proceedings, trial, and/or appeals. Had these matters not settled, Defendant would have vigorously challenged certifiability, manageability, and liability. Defendant, however, faced risks if the Court certified a class and allowed a jury to decide the claims. Additionally, preparing these matters for trial would have been expensive for the Parties. The Settlement at this stage is preferred over continued litigation because such resolutions save time and money that would otherwise go to litigation. The risks and expenses of further litigation outweighed any benefit that might have been gained otherwise. The Settlement provides an immediate recovery, as opposed to an uncertain result in the future after costly, risk, and prolonged litigation involving expert discovery, trial preparation, class certification proceedings, and appellate review of those proceedings.

The results achieved, in light of the difficulties inherent in similar cases and the specific difficulties faced in these matters, are considerable.[105] Class Counsel obtained a settlement of $795,000.00.[106] The Settlement has yielded a positive response from the Class Members—no Class Members objected to the Class Settlement.[107]

5. *The Reputation and Ability of the Attorneys.*

Lawyers *for* Justice, PC is a recognized class action law firm that employed its attorneys' knowledge, skills, and experience in bringing these cases to a successful conclusion.[108] Class Counsel has years of complex and class action litigation experience, has recovered millions of dollars on behalf of thousands of individuals in California, and has successfully handled numerous significant wage-and-hour class action and complex cases. [109]

C. <u>The Lodestar Methodology Also Justifies Approval of the Requested Fees.</u>

While the percentage-of-the-benefit approach is endorsed as the better approximation of the workings of the marketplace than the lodestar approach, courts may also use the lodestar method to "cross-check" the results of the other.[110] The lodestar is calculated based on reasonable hours at

[105] Mayer Decl., ¶¶ 7-9.
[106] Settlement Agreement, ¶ I.27.
[107] Atticus Decl., ¶ 13.
[108] Mayer Decl., ¶¶ 14-19.
[109] *Ibid.*
[110] *Laffitte*, *supra*, 1 Cal.5th at 505 (explaining that "[a] lodestar cross-check is simply a quantitative method for bringing a

(Footnote continued)

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reasonable prevailing hourly rates for the attorneys, and counsel is entitled to compensation for every hour reasonably spent on the matter. *Ketchum v. Moses* (2001) 24 Cal.4th 1122, 1131-33. The reasonableness of hours is assessed by "the entire course of the litigation, including pretrial matters, settlement negotiations, discovery, litigation tactics, and the trial itself[.]" *Vo v. Las Virgenes Municipal Water Dist.* (2000) 79 Cal.App.4th 440, 447.

As discussed above in Part VII.B.1, *infra*, and also discussed in the Declaration of Helene Mayer, Class Counsel expended significant time and labor in this highly contested matter.[111] Class Counsel has been actively involved in the prosecution of the cases, and the work performed in said cases has precluded other employment.[112] Class Counsel bore the risk that, despite all of its efforts and skills employed, there may be no recovery.[113] Ultimately, Class Counsel was successful in reaching a settlement of $795,000.00.[114] The Attorney Task and Time Chart sets forth in detail the numerous tasks that Class Counsel perfsormed in these matters, and the time required for completing those tasks.[115] The chart demonstrates that Class Counsel has spent a total of **330.60 hours** litigating these matters and finalizing the Settlement.[116] In light of the facts and circumstances of these matters, as well as the results that Class Counsel has achieved, Class Counsel has spent a reasonable number of hours performing work on these matters. In addition, Class Counsel will continue to perform work on these matters through the date of final approval and in connection with the implementation of the Settlement.

As set forth in the Declaration of Helene Mayer, the professional background and experience of Class Counsel support a reasonable rate of compensation of at least $850 per hour for services provided by Class Counsel.[117] Lawyers *for* Justice, PC has been awarded attorneys' fees, compensating the firm at the blended rate of at least $850 per hour for legal service performed, by courts of this state.[118] While the

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measure of the time spent by counsel into the trial court's reasonableness determination" and "the lodestar calculation . . . does not override the trial court's primary determination of the fee as a percentage" and "does not impose an absolute maximum or minimum on the potential fee award."); *see also, e.g.*, *Vizcaino*, 290 F.3d at 1050 ("[W]hile the primary basis of the fee award remains the percentage method, the lodestar may provide a useful perspective on the reasonableness of a given percentage award.").

[111] Mayer Decl., ¶¶ 11-12 & Exh. 1.
[112] *Id.*, ¶ 11.
[113] *Id.*, ¶¶ 10, 11, & 20.
[114] Settlement Agreement, ¶ I.27.
[115] Mayer Decl., Exh. 1.
[116] *Id.*, ¶ 11 & Exh. 1.
[117] *Id.*, ¶ 12.
[118] *Ibid.*

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circumstances of every case are unique, the fact remains that the work performed by Class Counsel in these matters justify the requested attorneys' fees.

Applying the rate of $850 per hour to 330.60 hours worked by Class Counsel, would place a base lodestar value of $281,010.00 on the services provided by Class Counsel. However, Class Counsel only seeks an attorneys' fee award of $278,250.00 (equal to 35% of sthe Gross Settlement Amount).

The lodestar method as a cross-check to the percentage award sought herein, strongly supports the reasonableness of the requested attorneys' fees. The nature of the work performed, skill exercised, and the outcome in these matters—which involves an osought.ng monetary recovery involving a Gross Settlement Amount of $795,000.00 (with a Net Settlement Amount of approximately at least $251,094.30 to be paid to Participating Settlement Class Members (with gross Individual Settlement Payments averaging approximately more than $1,151.81), payment of $25,000.00 to PAGA Employees, (with Individual PAGA Payment averaging approximately $179.86), payment of $187,500.00 to the State of California, and payment of $100,000.00 to Participating FCRA Class Members (with Individual FCRA Payment averaging approximately $29.39)—support the percentage fee sought . Accordingly, the Court is respectfully requested to award attorneys' fees in the amount of $278,250.00 to Class Counsel.

VIII. <u>REIMBURSEMENT OF CLASS COUNSEL'S COSTS SHOULD BE APPROVED.</u>

The Settlement provides for reimbursement of litigation costs and expenses of up to $30,000.00. As set forth in the Declaration of Helene Mayer, Class Counsel only seeks reimbursement of $25,655.70 in litigation costs and expenses incurred in these matters.[119] This amount was reasonable and necessary in the prosecution of these matters and to obtain the Settlement, and is equal to the maximum amount allocated under the Settlement Agreement.[120] The cost savings of $4,344.3 will be part of the Net Settlement Amount, which will be distributed to the Participating Settlement Class Members in accordance with the Settlement. Accordingly, Plaintiff requests that the Court award litigation costs and expenses in the amount of $25,655.70 to Class Counsel.

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[119] Mayer Decl., ¶ 19 & Exh. 2.
[120] *Ibid*.

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IX. THE SETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATOR COSTS SHOULD BE APPROVED.

As set forth in the accompanying Atticus Declaration, the total costs incurred and to be incurred by Atticus for the notice and settlement administration process are $30,000.00.[121] The costs incurred and to be incurred include, but are not limited to, processing and mailing payments to Plaintiff, Class Counsel, Participating Class Members, and PAGA Employees; printing, and mailing Class Notices and tax forms to the Participating Class Members and PAGA Employees as directed by the Court; receiving and reporting the Requests for Exclusion, Notices of Objection, and Compensable Workweeks Disputes; providing declaration(s) as necessary in support of preliminary and/or final approval of this Settlement; and other tasks as the Parties mutually agree or the Court orders the Settlement Administrator to perform.[122]

Accordingly, the Court should grant final approval of payment to Atticus, a necessary third-party for its handling of the notice and settlement process, in the amount of $30,000.00.

X. THE CLASS REPRESENTATIVE ENHANCEMENT AWARD SHOULD BE APPROVED.

Plaintiff requests a Class Representative Enhancement Award, in the amount of $10,000.00 to himself, for his efforts and work spearheading the prosecution of these matters and serving as the Class Representative, as well as his broader individual waiver and release of claims with a California Civil Code Section 1542 waiver. Such enhancement awards are common, and the one requested here is reasonable.[123]

Plaintiff spent a substantial amount of time and effort providing the facts and evidence necessary to support the prosecution of the claims.[124] Plaintiff was available whenever Class Counsel needed his and actively tried to obtain, and gave, information to support the pursuit of these matters.[125] For example, Defendant propounded discovery requests on Plaintiff, and Plaintiff spent time reviewing said discovery

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[121] Atticus Decl., ¶ 22.
[122] Atticus Decl., ¶ 22; Settlement Agreement ¶ 90.
[123] Vranken v. Atlantic Richfield Co. (N.D. Cal. 1995) 901 F.Supp. 294, 299 (Relevant factors considered by courts are the financial and other risk to, the notoriety and personal difficulties encountered by, and the amount of time and efforts spent by the class representative, as well as the duration of the litigation and the personal benefit (or lack thereof) enjoyed by the class representatives as a result of the litigation; approving $50,000 participation award to a single class representative based on such factors).
[124] Mayer Decl., ¶ 20; Declaration of Jacob Greenwell ("Greenwell Decl."), ¶¶ 3-6.
[125] *Ibid*.

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requests and providing information and documents in response thereto.[126] Additionally, Plaintiff attended his deposition and spent time reviewing his deposition transcript.[127]

Accordingly, it is appropriate and just for Plaintiff Jacob Greenwell to receive $10,000.00 as a reasonable Class Representative Enhancement Award, in addition to his individual settlement payment(s).

XI. <u>CONCLUSION</u>

For the foregoing reasons, the Court is respectfully requested to grant final approval of the Settlement, approve and award the Class Counsel Award to Class Counsel, the Class Representative Enhancement Award to Plaintiff, the Settlement Administrator Costs to the Settlement Administrator, the FCRA Settlement Amount, and the PAGA Settlement Amount, in their entirety, as sought herein; and permit the filing of a memorandum that exceeds the page limit.

Dated: February 23, 2026

LAWYERS *for* JUSTICE, PC

By: Helene Mayer

Helene Mayer
Attorneys for Plaintiff and the Class

[126] Mayer Decl., ¶ 20; Greenwell Decl., ¶ 4.
[127] *Ibid.*

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