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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO

SARA SIMAS AND ADONTE
DONASTORG, individually and on behalf of
all others similarly situated,
Plaintiffs,

vs.

ASPEN DENTAL MANAGEMENT, INC.;
APEO, LLC; and DOES 1 through 20,
inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No. 34-2021-00307317-CU-OE-GDS

Assigned for All Purposes to:
Hon. Lauri A. Damrell, Department 28

**[PROPOSED] ORDER GRANTING
PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF CLASS
AND REPRESENTATIVE PAGA
ACTION SETTLEMENT**

Date: December 15, 2023
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Dept: 28
Reservation ID: A-307317-001

1 WHEREAS, the above-entitled action is pending before this Court as a putative class and
2 representative action (the “Action”);

3 WHEREAS, Plaintiff Sara Simas and Plaintiff Adonte Donastorg (“Plaintiffs”),
4 individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated and on behalf of the general public have
5 applied to this Court for an order preliminarily approving the settlement of the Action in
6 accordance with the Class Action Settlement Agreement and Release of Claims (the “Settlement”
7 or “Agreement”) entered into by Plaintiffs, on the one hand, and Defendant Aspen Dental
8 Management, Inc. and Defendant APEO, LLC (“Defendants”), on the other hand, which sets forth
9 the terms and conditions for a proposed settlement upon the terms and conditions set forth therein
10 (Plaintiffs and Defendants shall be collectively referred to herein as the “Parties”); and

11 WHEREAS, the Court has read and considered Plaintiffs’ Motion for Preliminary
12 Approval of Class and Representative PAGA Action Settlement.

13 NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, ADJUDGED, AND DECREED
14 THAT:

15 1. This Order incorporates by reference the definitions in the Settlement attached as
16 **Exhibit 1** to the Declaration of Alexander G.L. Davies in Support of Plaintiffs’ Motion for
17 Preliminary Approval of Class and Representative PAGA Action Settlement and all terms defined
18 therein shall have the same meaning in this Order.

19 2. It appears to the Court on a preliminary basis that (a) the Settlement is fair,
20 adequate and reasonable; (b) the Gross Settlement Amount and Net Settlement Amount are fair,
21 adequate and reasonable when balanced against the probable outcome of further litigation relating
22 to liability and damages issues; (c) sufficient investigation and research have been conducted such
23 that counsel for the Parties at this time are able to reasonably evaluate their respective positions;
24 (d) settlement at this time will avoid additional costs by all Parties, as well as avoid the delay and
25 risks that would be presented by the further prosecution of the Action; and (e) the Settlement has
26 been reached as the result of non-collusive, arms-length negotiations.

27 3. With respect to the Class and for purposes of proceeding pursuant to California
28 Code of Civil Procedure § 382 for approval of the settlement only, the Court finds on a

1 preliminary basis that (a) Class Members are ascertainable and so numerous that joinder of all
2 Class Members is impracticable; (b) there are questions of law and fact common to the Class that
3 predominate over any questions affecting only individual Class Members; (c) Plaintiffs' claims
4 are typical of the Class's claims; (d) class certification is a superior method for implementing the
5 Settlement and adjudicating this Action in a fair and efficient manner; (e) the Class Representative
6 can fairly and adequately protect the Class's interests; and (f) Class Counsel are qualified to serve
7 as counsel for the Class.

8 4. Accordingly, solely for purposes of effectuating this Settlement, this Court hereby
9 conditionally certifies the class for settlement purposes only. The Class is defined as all employees
10 of Defendants who were classified as non-exempt and worked within the State of California during
11 the period of March 8, 2017 through December 31, 2022 (the "Class Period").

12 5. Plaintiffs Sara Simas and Adonte Donastorg are hereby preliminarily appointed
13 and designated, for all purposes, as the Class Representatives and the attorneys of Aegis Law Firm,
14 PC are hereby preliminarily appointed and designated as counsel for the Class ("Class Counsel").
15 Class Counsel is authorized to act on behalf of the Class Members with respect to all acts or consents
16 required by, or which may be given pursuant to, the Settlement, and such other acts reasonably
17 necessary to consummate the Settlement. Any Class Member may enter an appearance either
18 personally or through counsel of such individual's own choosing and at such individual's own
19 expense. Any Class Member who does not enter an appearance or appear on his or her own will be
20 represented by Class Counsel.

21 6. Should, for whatever reason, the Settlement not become final, the fact that the
22 Parties were willing to stipulate to certification of the Class as part of the Settlement shall have no
23 bearing on, nor be admissible in connection with, the issue of whether a class should be certified in
24 a non-settlement context.

25 7. The Court hereby preliminarily approves the definition and disposition of the Gross
26 Settlement Amount and Net Settlement Amount and related matters provided for in the Settlement,
27 subject to modification at final approval.
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1 8. The Court hereby preliminarily approves Class Counsel attorneys' fees of up to one-
2 third of the Gross Settlement Amount, Class Counsel litigation expenses not to exceed \$18,000.00,
3 Class Representative Service Awards up to \$10,000.00 to each Plaintiff for a total of \$20,000.00,
4 payment to the LWDA and Aggrieved Employees in the amount of \$50,000.00, and costs of
5 administration not to exceed \$7,750.00, subject to final approval.

6 9. The Court hereby approves, as to form and content, the Class Notice, to be
7 distributed to Class Members. The Court finds that distribution of the Class Notice, substantially in
8 the manner and form set forth in the Settlement and this Order, meets the requirements of due
9 process, is the best notice practicable under the circumstances, and shall constitute due and
10 sufficient notice to all persons entitled thereto.

11 10. The Court hereby appoints ILYM Group, Inc. as Settlement Administrator and
12 hereby directs the Settlement Administrator to mail or cause to be mailed to Class Members the
13 Class Notice using the procedures set forth in the Settlement Agreement. Class Members who wish
14 to participate in the settlement provided for by the Settlement Agreement do not need to respond to
15 the Class Notice.

16 11. All costs of mailing of the Class Notice, whether foreseen or not, shall be paid
17 from the Gross Settlement Amount, including the cost of searching for Class Members' addresses
18 as provided in the Settlement, and all other reasonable costs of the Settlement Administrator up
19 to \$7,750.00 as provided in the Settlement.

20 12. Any Class Member may choose to opt-out of and be excluded from the Class as
21 provided in the Class Notice. Any such person who chooses to opt-out of and be excluded from the
22 Class will not be entitled to any recovery under the Settlement and will not be bound by the
23 Settlement or have any right to object, appeal or comment thereon. Class Members who have not
24 requested exclusion/opted-out shall be Participating Class Members and bound by all
25 determinations of the Court, the Settlement, and the Final Judgment.

26 13. A Final Fairness and Approval Hearing shall be held before this Court on
27 _____, _____, at _____ a.m./p.m., or a later date convenient for the Court, in Department
28 28 of the Superior Court for the State of California, County of Sacramento, located at 720 9th Street

1 Sacramento, California 95814. All papers in support of final approval and related awards for fees,
2 costs, and Plaintiffs' Class Representative Service Awards must be filed and served at least 16 court
3 days before the final approval hearing.

4 14. Any Participating Class Member may object to the Settlement by following the
5 instructions for submitting written objections that are set forth in the Settlement Agreement and
6 Class Notice, and/or by appearing at the Final Fairness and Approval Hearing to state an oral
7 objection. The Court shall retain final authority with respect to the consideration and admissibility
8 of any objections. Any Participating Class Member who objects to the Settlement shall be bound
9 by the order of the Court.

10 15. The Settlement is not a concession or admission, and shall not be used against the
11 Released Parties, as an admission or indication with respect to any claim of any fault or omission
12 by the Released Parties. Whether or not the Settlement is finally approved, neither the Settlement,
13 nor any document, statement, proceeding or conduct related to the Settlement, nor any reports or
14 accounts thereof, shall in any event be construed as, offered or admitted in evidence as, received as
15 or deemed to be evidence of a presumption, concession, indication or admission by Defendants of
16 any liability, fault, wrongdoing, omission, concession or damage in the Action, or in any other
17 action or proceeding, except for purposes of enforcing the Settlement once it receives final approval.

18 16. Pending the Final Approval and Fairness Hearing, all proceedings in this Action,
19 other than proceedings necessary to carry out or enforce the terms of the Settlement and this Order,
20 are hereby stayed.

21 17. Jurisdiction is hereby retained over this Action, the Parties to the Action, and each
22 of the Class Members for all matters relating to this Action, and this Settlement, including
23 (without limitation) all matters relating to the administration, interpretation, effectuation, and/or
24 enforcement of this Settlement and this Order.

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1 18. The Court reserves the right to adjourn or continue the date of any hearing and all
2 dates provided for in the Settlement without further notice to Class Members, and retains
3 jurisdiction to consider all further applications arising out of or connected with the proposed
4 Settlement.

5 DATED: _____

Honorable Lauri A. Damrell
JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT