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**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF BUTTE**

RAQUEL ESPINOZA, individually, and on
behalf of all others similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

v.

DELALLO'S ITALIAN FOODS, INC., a
Pennsylvania corporation; and DOES 1 through
10, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No.: 21CV02640

CLASS ACTION

[Assigned to: Hon. Stephen E. Benson, Dept.
6]

**DECLARATION OF PLAINTIFF
RAQUEL ESPINOZA IN SUPPORT OF
PLAINTIFF'S MOTION FOR FINAL
APPROVAL OF CLASS ACTION
SETTLEMENT**

DECLARATION OF PLAINTIFF RAQUEL ESPINOZA

I, Raquel Espinoza, declare as follows:

1. I am an adult resident of the State of California, and, if called as a witness in this action, I would testify truthfully to the matters described in this declaration. All of the matters described in this declaration are within my personal knowledge, except those matters that are stated to be upon information and belief. As to such matters, I believe them to be true.

2. I make this declaration entirely of my own free will and choice. I have not been promised any benefit for doing so, and I have not been pressured into giving this declaration. Before signing this declaration, I was given the opportunity to review it, make changes, and verify the accuracy of its contents.

3. I am a former employee of DeLallo's Italian Foods, Inc. ("Defendant"). I worked for Defendant from approximately 2014 to approximately March 2021 as an hourly-paid, non-exempt employee. Throughout the entirety of my employment, I was subject to all of Defendant's policies and practices that have been alleged as unlawful in the Class Action Complaint and Private Attorneys General Act ("PAGA") Notice sent to Defendant and the Labor & Workforce Development Agency ("LWDA").

4. I initiated this lawsuit because I was concerned that I was not paid properly for all the hours that I worked, and I was not provided all of my meal and rest breaks.

5. By originating this lawsuit as a class representative, I hoped that I might be able to change Defendant's policies to better protect the working conditions of my co-workers. I also understood that it was my duty as a class representative to represent the best interests of the class, know about the lawsuit, assist my attorneys, and keep updated on the case.

6. I have invested a lot of personal time and energy into this lawsuit. As detailed more fully below, I have spent approximately 55 hours on this case. I made it a priority to be actively involved because I wanted to do everything I can to assist my attorneys in prosecuting this case.

7. Throughout this case, I spent a lot of time on the phone with my attorneys to get updates about the case and provide them with information. For example, during some of the phone calls, my attorneys and I were able to identify instances when I was not paid correctly.

1 Additionally, leading up to the mediation in November 2022, I had multiple lengthy phone calls
2 with Wilshire Law Firm regarding the claims at issue and what was to transpire at the mediation.

3 8. Throughout the case, I also spent time looking for documents relevant to the case to
4 send to my attorneys. I spent numerous hours looking for these documents, including when I first
5 contacted my attorneys, before my attorneys filed the case, and before my case was mediated. I
6 also spent time reviewing legal documents in this case, including the retainer and settlement
7 agreement and discussed, in detail, the terms with my attorneys.

8 9. Additionally, I made myself fully available on the day of mediation and was in
9 continuous contact with my attorneys to assist with any questions or issues that may have arisen.

10 10. I believe the settlement is a good settlement and I would recommend that the Court
11 approve it because I believe that this settlement is fair, adequate, and reasonable. I am glad that I
12 had the opportunity to represent the class in this lawsuit and that I was able to recover money
13 through a settlement for the class.

14 11. I did not make the decision to file a class action lightly. I was concerned by the
15 attention a publicly filed lawsuit, and especially a class action, would attract. My name would be
16 associated with a lawsuit that I filed against my former employer. I am mindful that prospective
17 employers might find out that I sued Defendant. Nevertheless, I felt that important rights were at
18 stake that hurt everyone, and something ought to be done about it.

19 12. I also understand that there was financial risk in bringing this lawsuit. For example,
20 I knew that if I did not prevail in this lawsuit that I could potentially be responsible for Defendant's
21 attorneys' fees and costs.

22 13. I understand that the settlement agreement provides a service payment to me in the
23 amount of \$7,500. I believe this amount is fair compensation for my time and effort on this case,
24 for helping to prosecute this case, and the risks with respect to my future employment. For
25 example, I have not been able to find employment since working for Defendant. I believe this is
26 in-part because I filed this lawsuit.

27 14. In addition, the settlement requires that I enter into a general release, which I
28 understand is broader than the release that will bind other class members. I am receiving no

1 compensation additional to that provided for in the settlement.

2 15. Based on my involvement in this case and the benefits provided to my former co-
3 workers, I can say I helped stand up for the other workers who were too afraid to say anything to
4 management because they did not want to risk losing their jobs or risk the stigma of suing an
5 employer. I was not afraid to take that risk because I strongly care about helping out my former
6 co-workers.

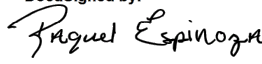
7 16. I reviewed (and ultimately signed) the Class Action and PAGA Settlement
8 Agreement and Class Notice in full and my attorneys answered all the questions I had. I believe
9 the settlement terms and allocations are fair, adequate, and reasonable given the strength of the
10 class claims and Defendant's defenses.

11 17. I have no conflicts of interest with any class member or the Settlement
12 Administrator, CPT Group, Inc.

13 18. I am not aware of any other pending matter or action asserting claims that will be
14 extinguished or adversely affected by the Settlement.

15 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California and the United
16 States that the foregoing is true and correct.

17 Executed on 4/1/2024, at Santa Ana, California.

18
19 DocuSigned by:

20 2DD02B30FAA249C...
Raquel Espinoza

Espinoza v. Delallo's Italian Foods, Inc., et al.
21CV02640

I, Rebecca Padilla, state that I am employed in the aforesaid County, State of California; I am over the age of eighteen years and not a party to the within action; my business address is 3055 Wilshire Blvd., 12th Floor, Los Angeles, California 90010. My electronic service address is rpadilla@wilshirelawfirm.com.

On April 2, 2024, I served the foregoing **DECLARATION OF PLAINTIFF RAQUEL ESPINOZA IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFF'S MOTION FOR FINAL APPROVAL OF CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT**, on the interested parties by placing a true copy thereof, enclosed in a sealed envelope by following one of the methods of service as follows:

Julie A. Marquis
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Attorneys for Defendant

(X) **BY UPLOAD:** I hereby certify that the documents were uploaded by my office to the State of California Labor and Workforce Development Agency Online Filing Site.

(X) **BY E-MAIL:** I hereby certify that this document was served from Los Angeles, California, by e-mail delivery on the parties listed herein at their most recent known email address or e-mail of record in this action.

I declare under the penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California, that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on April 2, 2024, at Los Angeles, California.


Rebecca Padilla