

Kane Moon (SBN 249834)
kane.moon@moonyanglaw.com
Lilit Ter-Astvatsatryan (SBN 320389)
lilit@moonyanglaw.com
MOON & YANG, APC
1055 W. Seventh St., Suite 1880
Los Angeles, California 90017
Telephone: (213) 232-3128
Facsimile: (213) 232-3125

Attorneys for Plaintiff Pablo Vargas Perez

**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ**

PABLO VARGAS PEREZ, individually, and on
behalf of all others similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

vs.

PIZZA MY HEART, INC., a California
corporation; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive,

Defendants

Case No.: 21CV03089

**FIRST AMENDED REPRESENTATIVE
ACTION COMPLAINT:**

1. Civil Penalties Under PAGA [Cal. Lab.
Code § 2699, et seq.].

Action Filed: December 28, 2021
PAGA Notice Filed: December 24, 2021
LWDA Case No. LWDA-CM-859569-21

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION & PRELIMINARY STATEMENT	1
THE PARTIES	3
A. Plaintiff.....	3
B. Defendants.....	3
ALLEGATIONS COMMON TO ALL CAUSES OF ACTION	4
FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION	8
PRAYER FOR RELIEF	10
DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL	11

1 Plaintiff Pablo Vargas Perez (“Plaintiff”), based upon facts that either have evidentiary
2 support or are likely to have evidentiary support after a reasonable opportunity for further
3 investigation and discovery, alleges as follows:

4 **INTRODUCTION & PRELIMINARY STATEMENT**

5 1. Plaintiff brings this action against Defendants Pizza My Heart, Inc., and Does 1
6 through 10 (collectively referred to as “Defendants”) for California Labor Code violations
7 stemming from Defendants’ failure to pay minimum wages, failure to pay overtime wages,
8 failure to provide meal periods, failure to authorize and permit rest periods, failure to maintain
9 accurate records of hours worked and meal periods, failure to timely pay all wages to terminated
10 employees, failure to indemnify necessary business expenses, and failure to furnish accurate
11 wage statements.

12 2. For over 50 years, California’s courts and legislature have recognized that this
13 State’s wage-and-hour laws serve a compelling public interest of fostering a stable job market.
14 Wages are not ordinary debts. Because of the economic position of the average worker and his
15 or her family, it is essential to the public welfare that employers obey the wage-and-hour laws so
16 that employees are promptly paid the minimum/overtime wages that the Legislature has required
17 for employees. So fundamental are California’s wage-and-hour laws that the Legislature has
18 criminalized certain types of violations. In extending extra protection to deter violations of these
19 underlying statutes—since Plaintiff is not seeking general and/or special damages, restitution or
20 other damages other than civil penalties—California has enacted the PAGA to permit an
21 individual to bring an action for PAGA penalties only, which is the precise and sole nature of this
22 action.

23 3. All non-exempt California employees of Defendants, beginning December 24,
24 2020 to the present, are “Aggrieved Employees.”

25 4. Plaintiff brings this action against Defendants seeking only to recover penalties on
26 behalf of all Aggrieved Employees that worked for Defendants, and on behalf of the State of
27 California. Plaintiff does not seek to recover anything other than penalties as permitted by
28 California Labor Code Section 2699 at this time. To the extent that statutory violations are

1 mentioned for wage violations, Plaintiff does not seek underlying general and/or special damages
2 for those violations, but simply penalties as permitted by California Labor Code Section 2699,
3 declaratory relief, and injunctive relief for himself and all aggrieved employees as permitted by
4 the PAGA.

5 5. Defendants own/owned and operate/operated an industry, business, and
6 establishment within the State of California, including Santa Cruz County. As such, and based
7 upon all the facts and circumstances incident to Defendants' business in California, Defendants
8 are subject to the California Labor Code, Wage Orders issued by the Industrial Welfare
9 Commission ("IWC"), and the California Business & Professions Code.

10 6. Despite these requirements, throughout the statutory period Defendants
11 maintained a systematic, company-wide policy and practice of:

- 12 (a) Failing to pay employees for all hours worked, including all minimum
13 wages, and overtime wages in compliance with the California Labor Code
14 and IWC Wage Orders;
- 15 (b) Failing to provide employees with timely and duty-free meal periods in
16 compliance with the California Labor Code and IWC Wage Orders, failing
17 to maintain accurate records of all meal periods taken or missed, and
18 failing to pay an additional hour's pay for each workday a meal period
19 violation occurred;
- 20 (c) Failing to authorize and permit employees to take timely and duty-free rest
21 periods in compliance with the California Labor Code and IWC Wage
22 Orders, and failing to pay an additional hour's pay for each workday a rest
23 period violation occurred;
- 24 (d) Failing to indemnify employees for necessary business expenses incurred;
- 25 (e) Willfully failing to pay employees all minimum wages, overtime wages,
26 meal period premium wages, and rest period premium wages due within
27 the time period specified by California law when employment terminates;
28 and

- (f) Failing to maintain accurate records of the hours that employees worked.
- (g) Failing to provide employees with accurate, itemized wage statements containing all the information required by the California Labor Code and IWC Wage Orders.

7. On information and belief, Defendants, and each of them were on actual and constructive notice of the improprieties alleged herein and intentionally refused to rectify their unlawful policies. Defendants' violations, as alleged above, during all relevant times herein were willful and deliberate.

8. At all relevant times, Defendants were and are legally responsible for all of the unlawful conduct, policies, practices, acts and omissions as described in each and all of the foregoing paragraphs as the employer of Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees. Further, Defendants are responsible for each of the unlawful acts or omissions complained of herein under the doctrine of "respondeat superior".

THE PARTIES

A. Plaintiff

9. Plaintiff is a California resident that worked for Defendants in the County of Santa Cruz, State of California, as a cook, from approximately 2012 to April 2021.

10. Plaintiff reserves the right to seek leave to amend this complaint to add new plaintiffs, if necessary, in order to establish suitable representative(s) pursuant to *La Sala v. American Savings and Loan Association* (1971) 5 Cal.3d 864, 872, and other applicable law.

B. Defendants

11. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based upon that information and belief alleges, that Defendant Pizza My Heart, Inc. is:

- (a) A California corporation with its principal place of business in Santa Cruz, California.
- (b) A business entity conducting business in numerous counties throughout the State of California, including in Santa Cruz County; and
- (c) The former employer of Plaintiff, and the current and/or former employer

of the Aggrieved Employees. Pizza My Heart, Inc. suffered and permitted Plaintiff and the The Aggrieved Employees to work, and/or controlled their wages, hours, or working conditions.

12. Plaintiff does not currently know the true names or capacities of the persons or entities sued herein as Does 1-10, inclusive, and therefore sues said Defendants by such fictitious names. Each of the Doe Defendants was in some manner legally responsible for the damages suffered by Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees as alleged herein. Plaintiff will amend this complaint to set forth the true names and capacities of these Defendants when they have been ascertained, together with appropriate charging allegations, as may be necessary.

13. At all times mentioned herein, the Defendants named as Does 1-10, inclusive, and each of them, were residents of, doing business in, availed themselves of the jurisdiction of, and/or injured a significant number of the Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees in the State of California.

14. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that at all relevant times each Defendant, directly or indirectly, or through agents or other persons, employed Plaintiff and the other employees described in the Aggrieved Employees definitions below, and exercised control over their wages, hours, and working conditions. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that, at all relevant times, each Defendant was the principal, agent, partner, joint venturer, officer, director, controlling shareholder, subsidiary, affiliate, parent corporation, successor in interest and/or predecessor in interest of some or all of the other Defendants, and was engaged with some or all of the other Defendants in a joint enterprise for profit, and bore such other relationships to some or all of the other Defendants so as to be liable for their conduct with respect to the matters alleged below. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that each Defendant acted pursuant to and within the scope of the relationships alleged above, that each Defendant knew or should have known about, and authorized, ratified, adopted, approved, controlled, aided and abetted the conduct of all other Defendants.

ALLEGATIONS COMMON TO ALL CAUSES OF ACTION

15. Plaintiff is a California resident who worked for Defendants in the County of

1 Santa Cruz, State of California, as a cook, from approximately 2012 to April 2021. During the
2 statutory period, Defendants classified Plaintiff as non-exempt from California's overtime
3 requirements, and paid Plaintiff an hourly wage.

4 16. Throughout the statutory period, Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff for all hours
5 worked (including minimum wages and overtime wages), failed to provide Plaintiff with
6 uninterrupted meal periods, failed to authorize and permit Plaintiff to take uninterrupted rest
7 periods, failed to indemnify Plaintiff for necessary business expenses, failed to timely pay all
8 final wages to Plaintiff when Defendants terminated Plaintiff's employment, and failed to furnish
9 accurate wage statements to Plaintiff. As discussed below, Plaintiff's experience working for
10 Defendants was typical and illustrative.

11 17. Throughout the statutory period, Defendants maintained a policy and practice of
12 not paying Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees for all hours worked, including all overtime
13 wages. Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees were required to work off-the-clock,
14 uncompensated. For example, Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees were occasionally too
15 busy to clock out for meal periods, and therefore sometimes had to clock out for meal periods but
16 continue working, off the clock and uncompensated. Also throughout the statutory period,
17 Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees did not receive all tips that they were entitled. In
18 maintaining a practice of not paying all wages owed, Defendants failed to maintain accurate
19 records of the hours Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees worked.

20 18. Throughout the statutory period, Defendants have wrongfully failed to provide
21 Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees with legally compliant meal periods. Defendants
22 sometimes, but not always, required Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees to work in excess of
23 five consecutive hours a day without providing 30-minute, continuous and uninterrupted, duty-
24 free meal period for every five hours of work, or without compensating Plaintiff and the
25 Aggrieved Employees for meal periods that were not provided by the end of the fifth hour of
26 work or tenth hour of work. Defendants also did not adequately inform Plaintiff and the
27 Aggrieved Employees of their right to take a meal period by the end of the fifth hour of work, or,
28 for shifts greater than 10 hours, by the end of the tenth hour of work. Accordingly, Defendants'

1 policy and practice was to not provide meal periods to Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees in
2 compliance with California law.

3 19. Throughout the statutory period, Defendants have wrongfully failed to authorize
4 and permit Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees to take timely and duty-free rest periods.
5 Defendants sometimes, but not always, required Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees to work
6 in excess of four consecutive hours a day without Defendants authorizing and permitting them to
7 take a 10-minute, continuous and uninterrupted, rest period for every four hours of work (or
8 major fraction of four hours), or without compensating Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees
9 for rest periods that were not authorized or permitted. Defendants also did not adequately inform
10 Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees of their right to take a rest period. Moreover, Defendants
11 did not have adequate policies or practices permitting or authorizing rest periods for Plaintiff and
12 the Aggrieved Employees, nor did Defendants have adequate policies or practices regarding the
13 timing of rest periods. Defendants also did not have adequate policies or practices to verify
14 whether Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees were taking their required rest periods. Further,
15 Defendants did not maintain accurate records of employee work periods, and therefore
16 Defendants cannot demonstrate that Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees took rest periods
17 during the middle of each work period. Accordingly, Defendants' policy and practice was to not
18 authorize and permit Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees to take rest periods in compliance
19 with California law.

20 20. Throughout the statutory period, Defendants wrongfully required Plaintiff and the
21 Aggrieved Employees to pay expenses that they incurred in direct discharge of their duties for
22 Defendants without reimbursement. For example, Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees were
23 required to use their own personal cellular telephone for work purposes, such as to inform
24 supervisors of missing ingredients, and communicating with supervisors. Also, Plaintiff and the
25 Aggrieved Employees used their own vehicles for purposes of obtaining ingredients and items
26 from other store locations. However, Defendants failed to reimburse Plaintiff and the Aggrieved
27 Employees for automobile expenses, including gas and mileage.

28 21. Throughout the statutory period, Defendants willfully failed and refused to timely

1 pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees at the conclusion of their employment all wages for
2 all minimum wages, overtime wages, meal period premium wages, and rest period premium
3 wages. Further, Defendants did not pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees their final
4 paychecks immediately upon termination.

5 22. Throughout the statutory period, Defendants failed to furnish Plaintiff and the
6 Aggrieved Employees with accurate, itemized wage statements showing all applicable hourly
7 rates, and all gross and net wages earned (including correct hours worked, correct wages earned
8 for hours worked, correct overtime hours worked, correct wages for meal periods that were not
9 provided in accordance with California law, correct wages for rest periods that were not
10 authorized and permitted to take in accordance with California law, and Defendant's address).
11 Further, the wage statements do not show Defendant's address as required by California law. As
12 a result of these violations of California Labor Code § 226(a), the Plaintiff and the Aggrieved
13 Employees suffered injury because, among other things:

- 14 (a) the violations led them to believe that they were not entitled to be paid
15 minimum wages, overtime wages, meal period premium wages, and rest
16 period premium wages to which they were entitled, even though they were
17 entitled;
- 18 (b) the violations led them to believe that they had been paid the minimum,
19 overtime, meal period premium, and rest period premium wages, even
20 though they had not been;
- 21 (c) the violations led them to believe they were not entitled to be paid
22 minimum, overtime, meal period premium, and rest period premium wages
23 at the correct California rate even though they were;
- 24 (d) the violations led them to believe they had been paid minimum, overtime,
25 meal period premium, and rest period premium wages at the correct
26 California rate even though they had not been;
- 27 (e) the violations hindered them from determining the amounts of minimum,
28 overtime, meal period premium, and rest period premium owed to them;

- 1 (f) in connection with their employment before and during this action, and in
2 connection with prosecuting this action, the violations caused them to have
3 to perform mathematical computations to determine the amounts of wages
4 owed to them, computations they would not have to make if the wage
5 statements contained the required accurate information;
- 6 (g) by understating the wages truly due them, the violations caused them to
7 lose entitlement and/or accrual of the full amount of Social Security,
8 disability, unemployment, and other governmental benefits;
- 9 (h) the wage statements inaccurately understated the wages, hours, and wages
10 rates to which Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees were entitled, and
11 Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees were paid less than the wages and
12 wage rates to which they were entitled.

13 Thus, Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees are owed the amounts provided for
14 in California Labor Code § 226(e), including actual damages.

15 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

16 **(Against all Defendants for Failure to Pay Minimum Wages for All Hours Worked)**

17 23. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein
18 paragraphs 1 through 22 in this First Amended Complaint.

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

21 25. California Labor Code § 2699(a) specifically provides for a private right of action
22 to recover penalties for violations of the Labor Code: “Notwithstanding any other provision of
23 law, any provision of this code that provides for a civil penalty to be assessed and collected by
24 the Labor and Workforce Development Agency or any of its departments, divisions,
25 commissions, boards, agencies, or employees, for a violation of this code, may, as an alternative,
26 be recovered through a civil action brought by an aggrieved employee on behalf of himself or
27 herself and other current or former employees pursuant to the procedures specified in Section
28 2699.3.”

1 26. Plaintiff has exhausted his administrative remedies pursuant to California Labor
2 Code § 2699.3. On December 24, 2021, Plaintiff gave written notice by online filing to the
3 Labor and Workforce Development Agency and by certified mail to Defendants of the specific
4 provisions of the Labor Code that Defendants have violated against Plaintiff and current and
5 former aggrieved employees, including the facts and theories to support the violations. At the
6 time of this filing, 65 days has elapsed since Plaintiff provided notice, but the Labor and
7 Workforce Development Agency has not indicated that it intends to investigate Defendants’
8 Labor Code violations discussed in the notice. Accordingly, Plaintiff may commence a civil
9 action to recover penalties under Labor Code § 2699 pursuant to § 2699.3 for the violations of
10 the Labor Code described in this Complaint. These penalties include, but are not limited to,
11 penalties under California Labor Code §§ 210, 226.3, 558, 1197.1, and 2699(f)(2).

12 27. In addition, Plaintiff seeks penalties for Defendants’ violation of California Labor
13 Code § 1174(d). Pursuant to California Labor Code § 1174.5, any person, including any entity,
14 employing labor who willfully fails to maintain accurate and complete records required by
15 California Labor Code § 1174 is subject to a penalty under § 1174.5. Pursuant to the applicable
16 IWC Order § 7(A)(3), every employer shall keep time records showing when the employee
17 begins and ends each work period. Meal periods, and total hours worked daily shall also be
18 recorded. Additionally, pursuant to the applicable IWC Order § 7(A)(5), every employer shall
19 keep total hours worked in the payroll period and applicable rates of pay.

20 28. During the time period of employment for Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees,
21 Defendants failed to maintain records pursuant to the Labor Code and IWC Orders by failing to
22 maintain accurate records showing meal periods, and accurate records showing when employees
23 begin and end each work period. Defendants’ failure to provide and maintain records required by
24 the Labor Code IWC Wage Orders deprived Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees the ability to
25 know, understand and question the accuracy and frequency of meal periods, and the accuracy of
26 their hours worked stated in Defendants’ records. Therefore, Plaintiff and the Aggrieved
27 Employees had no way to dispute the resulting failure to pay wages, all of which resulted in an
28 unjustified economic enrichment to Defendants. As a direct result, Plaintiff and the Aggrieved

1 Employees have suffered and continue to suffer, substantial losses related to the use and
2 enjoyment of such wages, lost interest on such wages and expenses and attorney's fees in seeking
3 to compel Defendants to fully perform its obligation under state law, all to their respective
4 damage in amounts according to proof at trial. Because of Defendants' knowing failure to
5 comply with the Labor Code and applicable IWC Wage Orders, Plaintiff and the Aggrieved
6 Employees have also suffered an injury in that they were prevented from knowing,
7 understanding, and disputing the wage payments paid to them.

8 29. Based on the conduct described in this First Amended Complaint, Plaintiff is
9 entitled to an award of civil penalties on behalf of himself, the State of California, and similarly
10 Aggrieved Employees of Defendants. The exact amount of the applicable penalties, in all, is in
11 an amount to be shown according to proof at trial. These penalties are in addition to all other
12 remedies permitted by law.

13 30. In addition, Plaintiff seeks an award of reasonable attorney's fees and costs
14 pursuant to California Labor Code § 2699(g)(1), which states, "Any employee who prevails in
15 any action shall be entitled to an award of reasonable attorney's fees and costs."

16 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

17 Plaintiff, on behalf of himself, the State of California, and similarly Aggrieved Employees
18 of Defendants, prays for relief and judgment against Defendants, jointly and severally, as
19 follows:

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

21 31. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated the California
22 Labor Code by failing to pay wages for all hours worked (including minimum and overtime
23 wages), failing to provide meal periods, failing to maintain accurate records of meal periods,
24 failing to authorize and permit rest periods, failing to maintain accurate records of all hours
25 worked and meal periods, failing to reimburse business expenses, failing to pay final wages at
26 termination, and failing to furnish accurate wage statements;

27 32. For all civil penalties pursuant to California Labor Code § 2699, et seq., and all other
28 applicable Labor Code provisions;

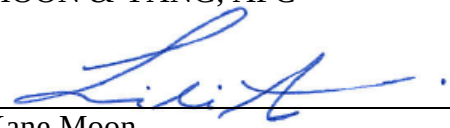
1 33. For reasonable attorneys' fees and costs of suit incurred herein pursuant to California
2 Labor Code § 2699;

3 34. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem equitable and appropriate.

4 Respectfully submitted,

5 Dated: March 14, 2022

MOON & YANG, APC

7 By: 

8 Kane Moon
Lilit Ter-Astvatsatryan

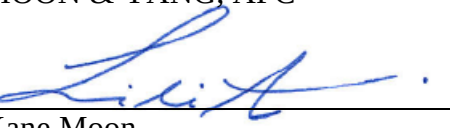
9 Attorneys for Plaintiff

10
11 **DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL**

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

13
14 Dated: March 14, 2022

MOON & YANG, APC

15 By: 

16 Kane Moon
Lilit Ter-Astvatsatryan

17 Attorneys for Plaintiff
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

1 **PROOF OF SERVICE**

2 STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
3) ss
4 COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES)

5 I am employed in the county of Los Angeles, State of California. I am over the age of 18
6 and not a party to the within action; my business address is 1055 West Seventh Street, Suite 1880,
Los Angeles, California 90017. On March 14, 2022, I served the foregoing document described as:

7 **FIRST AMENDED REPRESENTATIVE ACTION COMPLAINT**

8 X by E-mailing ____ the original X a true copy to the following:

9 Boris Sorsher
10 Sarah G. Bennett
11 **FISHER & PHILLIPS LLP**
12 2050 Main Street, Suite 1000
13 Irvine, California 92614
14 Telephone: (949) 851-2424
Facsimile: (949) 851-0152
bsorsher@fisherphillips.com
sbennett@fisherphillips.com

15 *Attorneys for Defendants PIZZA MY HEART, INC.*

16 [✓] **BY U.S. MAIL:** I deposited such envelope in the mail at Los Angeles, California. The envelope was
17 mailed with postage thereon fully prepaid. I am "readily familiar" with the firm's practice of collection
18 and processing correspondence for mailing. Under that practice it would be deposited with U.S. postal
service on that same day with postage thereon fully prepaid at Los Angeles, California in the ordinary
19 course of business. I am aware that on motion of the party served, service is presumed invalid if postal
cancellation date or postage meter date is more than one day after date of deposit for mailing in affidavit.

20 X (State) I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of
21 California that the above is true and correct.

22 Executed on March 14, 2022, at Los Angeles, California.

23
24 Ivette Hernandez

25 Name

26
27
28 
Signature