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

TIKOA CARTER, an individual, on behalf of
herself and others similarly situated,

PLAINTIFF,

v.

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY
ASSOCIATES, INC.; and DOES 1 thru 50,
inclusive,

DEFENDANTS.

CASE NO. 21STCV44618

[Case Assigned for All Purposes to Hon.
Kenneth R. Freeman in Dept. 14]

**DECLARATION OF KELSEY M.
SZAMET IN SUPPORT OF
PLAINTIFF'S MOTION FOR FINAL
APPROVAL OF CLASS SETTLEMENT
AND MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF
ATTORNEYS' FEES AND COSTS**

*[Filed concurrently with Motion for Final
Approval; Motion for Approval of Attorneys'
Fees and Costs; Declarations of Tikoa
Carter and Makenna Snow, Proposed Order
and Judgment]*

Date: April 30, 2024

Time: 11:00 AM

Dept.: 14

Complaint Filed: December 8, 2021

Trial Date: None set

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1. I am an attorney licensed to practice before all of the courts of the State of California. I am a partner in the law firm of Kingsley & Kingsley, APC and one of the attorneys of record for Plaintiff TIKOA CARTER in the above-entitled action. I have personal knowledge of the facts set forth herein, and if called upon as a witness, I could and would testify competently thereto.

3. I graduated cum laude from the University of California, San Diego in 2004 with a degree in Human Development. I graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles School of Law in 2008. I am admitted to practice before the following Courts: United States Supreme Court; United States District Court, Northern, Eastern, Southern and Central of California; all California State Courts.

LITIGATION BACKGROUND

5. On December 8, 2021, Plaintiff commenced this Action by filing a Complaint alleging causes of action against Defendant for (1) failure to provide rest breaks pursuant to Labor Code section 226.7; (2) failure to reimburse business-related expenses under Labor Code section 2802; (3) failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements pursuant to Labor Code section 226(a); (4) waiting time penalties pursuant to Labor Code section 203; and (5) violation of Business & Professions Code section 17200.

6. Also on December 8, 2021, pursuant to Labor Code section 2699.3, subd.(a), Plaintiff gave written notice to Defendant and the LWDA of the facts and allegations at issue.

5. On December 8, 2021, Plaintiff commenced this Action by filing a Complaint alleging causes of action against Defendant for (1) failure to provide rest breaks pursuant to Labor Code section 226.7; (2) failure to reimburse business-related expenses under Labor Code section 2802; (3) failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements pursuant to Labor Code section 226(a); (4) waiting time penalties pursuant to Labor Code section 203; and (5) violation of Business & Professions Code section 17200.

6. Also on December 8, 2021, pursuant to Labor Code section 2699.3, subd.(a), Plaintiff gave written notice to Defendant and the LWDA of the facts and allegations at issue.

7. On May 19, 2022, Plaintiff filed a First Amended Complaint alleging an additional cause of action for penalties pursuant to the Private Attorney General Act of 2004 (“PAGA”) (Lab. Code § 2699 et seq.).

8. Defendant denies the allegations in the Operative Complaint, denies any failure to comply with the laws identified in in the Operative Complaint and denies any and all liability for the causes of action alleged.

THE DISCOVERY PROCESS

9. On June 28, 2022, the Parties participated in an all-day mediation presided over by Todd A. Smith, Esq. which led to this Agreement to settle the Action.

10. Prior to mediation, Plaintiff obtained, through informal discovery, pertinent documents and data for the Class and PAGA Members so that the Parties could fully investigate the claims at issue and understand their strengths and weaknesses.

11. Plaintiff and her Counsel contend that the investigation was sufficient to satisfy the criteria for court approval set forth in *Dunk v. Foot Locker Retail, Inc.* (1996) 48 Cal.App.4th 1794, 1801 and *Kullar v. Foot Locker Retail, Inc.* (2008) 168 Cal.App.4th 116, 129-130 (“*Dunk/Kullar*”).

12. Defendant denies any liability or wrongdoing of any kind associated with the claims alleged in the action, disputes the damages and penalties claimed by Plaintiff, and further contends that, for any purpose other than settlement, Plaintiff's claims are not appropriate for class or representative action treatment. Defendant contends, among other things, that, at all times, it has complied with the Labor Code and Industrial Wage Commission Orders.

13. Based on their own independent investigation and evaluation, Class Counsel is of the opinion that the Settlement with Defendant is fair, reasonable and adequate, and in the best interest of the settlement classes in light of all known facts and circumstances, including the risk of significant delay, defenses asserted by Defendant, uncertainties regarding a class and representative action trial on the merits, and numerous potential appellate issues. Although Defendant denies any liability, Defendant is agreeing to this Settlement solely to avoid the cost of litigation. Accordingly, the Parties and their counsel desire to fully, finally, and forever settle.

1 compromise and discharge all disputes and claims arising from or relating to the Action on the
2 terms set forth here.

3 **SETTLEMENT**

4 14. On November 20, 2023, the Court issued an Order preliminarily approving the
5 settlement in this case, approving the proposed Class Notice, ordering that the Administrator send
6 notice to the Class, and setting a date for the Final Approval and Fairness Hearing.

7 15. For purposes of Settlement, the settlement class is defined as: “all persons who are
8 employed or have been employed as an hourly employee by SPEECH AND LANGUAGE
9 PATHOLOGY ASSOCIATES, INC., in the State of California who worked one or more pay
10 periods during the Covered Period.” (“Class”)

11 16. The Covered Period is December 8, 2017 through July 31, 2022.

12 17. Based on documents and other information produced by Defendant, there are
13 approximately 622 Settlement Class Members.

14 18. For purposes of the Agreement, the Aggrieved Employees are defined as: “all
15 persons who are employed or have been employed as an hourly employee by SPEECH AND
16 LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY ASSOCIATES, INC., in the State of California who worked one or
17 more pay periods from December 8, 2020 to July 31, 2022.” (“Aggrieved Employees” or “PAGA
18 Members”)

19 19. The PAGA Period is December 8, 2020 through July 31, 2022.

20 20. Based on documents and other information produced by Defendant, there are
21 approximately 367 PAGA Members.

22 21. As detailed fully in the Settlement Agreement, Defendant shall pay a Gross
23 Settlement Amount of \$565,450.00, which includes the sum of the Individual Class Payments, the
24 Class Representative service award, the Class Counsel Award, PAGA Payment, and the Settlement
25 Administration Costs.

26 **CLASS NOTICE**

27 22. The Court approved the proposed Class Notice and directed the mailing of the
28 Notice by first-class mail to Class Members in accordance with the proposed implementation

1 schedule.

2 **CLASS COUNSEL'S KULLAR ANALYSIS**

3 23. All settlement discussions were made by experienced and informed counsel, who
4 believe that this settlement represents a favorable resolution for the Class Members.

5 24. The settlement negotiations have been, at all times, adversarial and non-collusive,
6 with the aid of a mediator, and no self-dealing or other type of misconduct by either side has taken
7 place.

8 25. The Parties engaged in informal discovery that permitted Class Counsel to fairly
9 evaluate the strength of the case and the risks associated with ongoing litigation. In addition,
10 Defendant produced additional data and documents informally for purposes of settlement. This
11 included relevant policies and procedures, the number of allegedly violating itemized wage
12 statements at issue, the class size, and all versions of itemized wage statements issued to the Class
13 Members.

14 26. Receipt of appropriate discovery allowed Class Counsel to fairly evaluate the
15 exposure and risks associated with each claim alleged in the lawsuit.

16 27. Third, Class Counsel have significant experience in cases of this type, including
17 several years prosecuting wage, hour, and working condition violations.

18 28. Class Counsel believes that the settlement is fair, reasonable, adequate, and in the
19 best interests of the class and that the average recovery for each Class Member of over \$530.04 is
20 substantial, given the risks inherent in litigation and the defenses asserted.

21 29. The proposed settlement satisfies each of these factors.

22 30. This discovery permitted Class Counsel to fairly evaluate the strength of the case
23 and the risks associated with ongoing litigation.

24 31. Class Counsel is experienced in handling wage and hour class actions and, after
25 weighing all of the following factors, supports this Settlement.

26 **The Risks Associated with the Rest Break Claim**

27 32. Plaintiff and the Class Members' rest period claims arise from an allegedly
28 common course of conduct wherein Defendant did not provide employees with the opportunity to

1 take all rest periods in compliance with California law.

2 33. Plaintiff alleges that Defendant further violated California's rest period laws by
3 not paying Plaintiff and Class Members an extra hour of wages for each missed or improper rest
4 period.

5 34. Plaintiff and the Class Members consistently worked shifts of 3.5+ hours and
6 Plaintiff contends that they were not authorized or permitted to take all required rest breaks.

7 35. Plaintiff maintains that she and other Class Members were not able to take
8 compliant rest periods as required based on the length of the shift.

9 36. However, Plaintiff had to acknowledge there are cognizable risks as to recovery
10 on this claim.

11 37. There is no record keeping requirement for rest periods under California law and
12 there generally are no records associated with rest periods.

13 38. As such, Plaintiff had to acknowledge that Defendant could potentially defeat
14 certification of this claim if it was able to gather testimonial evidence from Class Members
15 indicating that they were provided the opportunity to take all required rest breaks each day.

16 39. Though Plaintiff does not believe this was the case, Plaintiff must acknowledge it
17 poses risks for the Class.

18 40. There is certainly risk as to both sides as to what multiple declarations and
19 depositions of class members might reveal.

20 41. Without admitting liability, Defendant contends that Plaintiff may have been
21 unique with respect to rest periods.

22 42. Plaintiff tended to worker shorter shifts, in a home setting with clients, while other
23 Class Members worked in a variety of settings including office settings and school settings, among
24 others.

25 43. Defendant argued that certainly in those settings, Class Members were regularly
26 afforded the opportunity to take all compliant rest periods.

27 44. If Defendant could establish that Plaintiff's experiences with rest periods were not
28 common to all Class Members, this could defeat class certification and pose great potential risk

1 that there would be no classwide recovery at all.

2 45. For these reasons, Plaintiff believes that discounting this claim was appropriate.

3 **The Risks Associated with the Reimbursement Claim**

4 46. Plaintiff contends that Defendant has failed to reimburse Plaintiff and Class
5 Members for business-related expenses, including for use of their cell phones, personal vehicles,
6 and internet and necessary educational materials such as, but not limited to, learning flash cards,
7 activity cards and supplies, and crayons necessary in executing Class Members' duties under
8 Defendant's employ.

9 47. Defendant strongly opposed this claim and provided evidence that it maintained a
10 lawful written reimbursement policy.

11 48. Defendant maintained that Plaintiff and all Class Members simply had to apply for
12 reimbursement of any business expenses and would be reimbursed accordingly.

13 49. Defendant also argued that personal laptop and cellphone usage were not required
14 as it provided phones and computers in its offices and that if Plaintiff did, it was by choice.

15 50. Defendant argued that if Plaintiff did occasionally need to use her personal laptop,
16 she may not have been typical of other class members as she worked in client's homes and all she
17 had to do was request reimbursement.

18 51. Defendant provided evidence that Plaintiff was reimbursed for expenses on
19 different occasions throughout the term of her employment.

20 52. In light of these arguments, Plaintiff believes that discounting this claim
21 significantly is appropriate.

22 **The Risks Associated with the Inaccurate Wage Statement Claim**

23 53. Plaintiff maintains that Defendant issued wage statements that violate Labor Code
24 §§ 226(a)(2) and (9).

25 54. Plaintiff alleges that she and Class Members are issued wage statements that do not
26 properly include the rates and the number of hours worked at the corresponding rate.

27 55. Plaintiff alleged that the wage statements provided to Class Members did not
28 contain the accurate total hours worked or all applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period

1 and the corresponding number of hours worked at each hourly rate by the employee as discussed
2 above. Plaintiff contends this information was not easily ascertainable from the wage statement
3 alone, because it was completely missing or inaccurate.

4 56. The wage statement claim is largely derivative of the rest break claim discussed
5 above and the risk analysis flows therefrom.

6 57. Plaintiff contends that because Defendant failed to provide all required rest periods
7 or pay one hour of premium pay in lieu thereof, that the itemized wage statements issued to her
8 and the class were not accurate. See *Naranjo v. Spectrum Security Services, Inc.* (2022) 13 Cal.5th
9 93, 120 [“In that situation, both that additional credited hour of work and the corresponding
10 premium pay owed must be reported on the wage statement. Failure to do so deprives the employee
11 of information needed to evaluate whether the payment is correct, and in so doing results in injury
12 under the terms of the statute.]

13 58. If Plaintiff is not able to establish that she and Class Periods were not provide the
14 opportunity to take all required rest periods, then the Class arguably cannot prevail on the Section
15 226(a) claim and the recovery could be nothing.

16 59. For this reason, Plaintiff determined that a discount was appropriate.

17 **The Risks Associated with the Waiting Time Penalty Claim**

18 60. Pursuant to *Murphy v. Kenneth Cole Productions, Inc.* (2002) 40 Cal.4th 1094,
19 1120, Plaintiff contended that break premium payments constitute “wages” under Labor Code §
20 203. (“We hold that section 226.7’s plain language, the administrative and legislative history, and
21 the compensatory purpose of the remedy compel the conclusion that the ‘additional hour of pay’
22 is a premium wage, not a penalty”).

23 61. To establish liability for waiting time penalties, Plaintiff would have to establish
24 not only that the underlying violations occurred, but also that Defendant’s conduct was “willful.”
25 Labor Code § 203.

26 62. As with the itemized wage statement claim, the waiting time penalty claim is
27 derivative of the rest break claim discussed above the risk analysis flows therefrom.

28 63. Because Plaintiff had concerns about her ability to prove the rest break claim on

1 classwide basis, Plaintiff believes that a significant discount of this claim is appropriate.

2 **The Risks Associated with the PAGA Claim**

3 64. Plaintiff discounted the PAGA claim for multiple reasons.

4 65. The aggrieved employees' PAGA claims are derivative of all the foregoing class
5 claims.

6 66. A court has discretion to award less than the maximum penalty.

7 67. The settlement class is arguably already compensated for these violations in the
8 proposed Settlement, and thus any PAGA recovery for these same violations could be construed
9 as duplicative.

10 68. Plaintiff contends that the Settlement's contemplated PAGA payment of
11 \$15,000.00 is appropriate.

12 69. There is significant expense associated with the class certification process, which
13 the Parties can avoid by entering into the contemplated Settlement now.

14 70. If the Court did eventually certify a wage statement class, trial of a case involving
15 approximately 622 Settlement Class Members would require the retention of expensive expert
16 witnesses, the accrual of extensive litigation costs, and a significant time overlay by the parties.

17 71. Given the complexity and unsettled nature of the issues in this case it is likely that
18 any outcome at trial would have resulted in a lengthy and costly appeal. An appeal would result in
19 further delay for the Settlement Class Members who are waiting for a resolution in this matter.

20 72. This case has not been certified to be tried as a class action. While Plaintiff believes
21 there is strong evidence to support certification of several possible subclasses, certification is
22 always hard fought and subject to judicial discretion. Moreover, in class actions, decertification is
23 always a possibility. In attempting to certify a class, the parties would need to conduct multiple
24 depositions, including of the Class Representative and of several person(s) most knowledgeable
25 regarding Defendant's wage and rest policies. There is a risk for both sides as to what these
26 depositions will reveal and whether they will support class certification to the extent expected.

27 **The Amount Offered in Settlement**

28 73. It was very difficult for the Parties to reach this Settlement of \$565,450.00.

1 74. This Settlement is the result of adversarial, non-collusive, and arms-length
2 negotiations. The Parties arrived at it after extensive investigation and discovery, careful
3 evaluation of the law, risks, and all information substantiating the amount of penalties reasonably
4 likely to be awarded to the class were the trier of fact to find Defendant liable, and the assistance
5 of an experienced mediator.

6 75. Per Plaintiff's Counsel's analysis of the time and pay records, the full value of the
7 Rest Period claim, without any discount, was approximately \$2,430,544.

8 76. As there are no records associated with rest periods, this amount assumes a 50%
9 rest break violation rate for all class members.

10 77. However, if Defendant Plaintiff's allegations were unique to her and that Class
11 Members were provided the opportunity to take all required rest periods, this amount could be
12 reduced to \$0.

13 78. Plaintiff determined that accepting a discount of the value of the rest claim was
14 appropriate.

15 79. With regard to the Reimbursement Claim analysis, Plaintiff believed that it was
16 reasonable to value the potential reimbursement at \$25 per month, per employee, for
17 reimbursement of personal cell phone usage, personal vehicles, and internet and necessary
18 educational materials. This assumption results in damages for this claim of \$360,675.

19 80. If the amount is reduced to \$5/month per Class Member, the amount is reduced to
20 \$72,135.

21 81. If Defendant could prove that it maintained a valid reimbursement policy,
22 reimbursed upon request as necessary, and made all other necessary items available such as laptops
23 and phones, this amount could be reduced to \$0.

24 82. Plaintiff determined that accepting a discount of the value of the reimbursement
25 claim was appropriate.

26 83. Plaintiff valued the Wage Statement Claim, without discount, at \$912,100.

27 84. Plaintiff used \$50 for the initial and \$100 for each subsequent wage statement
28 issued during the relevant liability period.

1 85. Due to the risk discussed above on the underlying rest period claim, Plaintiff
2 determined that a steep discount of this claim was fair for settlement purposes.

3 86. Plaintiff valued the Waiting Time Claim, tied to the rest period claim, at
4 \$1,369,181.

5 87. Considering the derivate nature of Labor Code §203 and the dispute over whether
6 class members were owed any premium pay wages, Plaintiff determined that accepting a discount
7 on this claim was appropriate.

8 88. Plaintiff calculated the value of the PAGA claim at \$931,000 for Settlement Class
9 Members (using \$100 per pay period) for the 9,311 pay periods during the PAGA liability period.

10 89. This assumes that the Court would not permit “stacking” of multiple penalties for
11 each of the underlying Labor Code Violations alleged.

12 90. The main risk taken into account with PAGA is the discretionary nature of the
13 penalty award.

14 91. A judge can award the statutory maximum of \$100 for the initial violation and
15 \$200 thereafter or – in theory – one cent per wage statement.

16 92. While there is a dearth of available authority, in Plaintiff’s view, were she to
17 succeed on any of the underlying Labor Code violations, it is not likely that a court would also
18 award a large amount of penalties of top of any damages recovered.

19 93. Per Plaintiff’s assessment, the maximum potential value of all of Plaintiff’s and the
20 Settlement Class Members’ claims was approximately \$6,003,500.

21 94. Clearly, this number is driven by the rest period claim and the wage statement and
22 waiting time penalty claims tied thereto.

23 95. Plaintiff perceived acute risks as the viability of recovery on these claims and as
24 result of the forgoing risks on the merits, Class Counsel believes the Gross Settlement Amount of
25 \$565,450.00 is fair and reasonable based on the facts at hand.

26 96. As outlined above, Class Counsel conducted a thorough investigation into the facts
27 of the claims alleged. The agreement to settle did not occur until Class Counsel exchanged and
28 possessed sufficient information to make an informed judgement regarding the likelihood of

1 success on the merits and the results that could be obtained through further litigation.

2 **ATTORNEY COMPETENCE**

3 97. Kingsley & Kingsley is very experienced in prosecuting employment litigation, and
4 since 2000 we have focused a substantial percentage of our practice on complex wage, hour, and
5 working condition violations. My firm is extremely well-versed in class action litigation and has
6 diligently and aggressively pursued this action. Kingsley & Kingsley currently serves as class
7 counsel for dozens of pending class action lawsuits in Northern, Central, and Southern California.
8 Below is a small but representative sampling of wage and hour class cases handled by my firm:

- 9 a. *Goodman v. Crystal Ventures, Inc.* (No. BC245561, L.A. Super. Ct.) In January
10 2002, Hon. Anthony Mohr granted final approval of settlement in the gross amount
11 of \$255,000 and the court approved the attorneys' fee request of 33 1/3%.
- 12 b. *Daniel v. Network Management Corp.* (No. BC274004, L.A. Super. Ct.) In
13 September 2003, the court granted final approval of Settlement in the gross amount
14 of \$475,000 and the court approved the attorneys' fee request of 30%.
- 15 c. *Johnston v. The Cheesecake Factory* (No. BC316180, L.A. Super. Ct.) In
16 December 2005, Honorable Rita Miller granted final approval of Settlement in the
17 gross amount of \$4,000,000 and the court granted attorneys' fees request of 30%.
- 18 d. *Tumino v. HOB Entertainment* (No. BC327962, L.A. Super. Ct.) In May 2006, the
19 Honorable Conrad R. Aragon granted final approval of Settlement in the gross
20 amount of \$1,000,000 and the court granted attorneys' fees request of 30%.
- 21 e. *Ryan v. Hilton Hotels Corporation*, (No. BC364260, L.A. Super. Ct.) In March
22 2008, the Honorable Mary Thornton House granted final approval of Settlement in
23 the gross amount of \$1,675,000.00 and the court granted attorneys' fees request of
24 33 1/3%.
- 25 f. *Gerritson v. Styles For Less, Inc.*, (No. BC402921, L.A. Super. Ct.) In September
26 2010, the Hon. Kenneth R. Freeman granted final approval of Settlement in the
27 gross amount of \$2,000,000.00, and the court granted attorneys' fees request of
28 33.3%.

- 1 g. *Lewis v. Collabrus, Inc., et al.*, (No. 109CV-142927, Santa Clara Super. Ct.) In
2 March 2012, the Honorable James P. Kleinberg granted final approval of
3 Settlement in the gross amount of \$2,000,000.00, and the court granted attorneys'
4 fees request of 33.3%.
- 5 h. *Hirschinger v. Blue Cross of California*, Los Angeles Superior Court (No.
6 BC402739, L.A. Super. Ct.) In June 2013, the Honorable Lee Smally Edmund
7 granted final approval of Settlement in the gross amount of \$4,700,000.00, and the
8 court granted attorneys' fees request of 38%.
- 9 i. *Anderson v. Total Renal Care, Inc.*, (No. BC388335, L.A. Super. Ct.) In January
10 2014, the Honorable William F. Highberger granted final approval of Settlement in
11 the gross amount of \$1,500,000.00 and the court granted attorneys' fees request of
12 33.33%.
- 13 j. *Westbrook v. International Surfacing Systems*, (No. RG10510015, Alameda Super.
14 Ct.) In August 2015, the Hon. Wynne Carvill granted final approval of Settlement
15 in the gross amount of \$995,000.00, and the court granted attorney's fees request
16 of 33.33%.
- 17 k. *Kane et al. v. Valley Slurry Seal*, (No. CV08-2483, Yolo Super. Ct.) In March 2016
18 after a class trial with a verdict in the class's favor, the Honorable Daniel P.
19 Maguire, awarded Kingsley & Kingsley and co-counsel \$996,232.72 in attorney's
20 fees.
- 21 l. *Aparacio v. Abercrombie & Fitch Stores, Inc.*, (No. BC499281, L.A. Super. Ct.) In
22 June 2016, the Hon. Kenneth Freeman granted final approval of Settlement in the
23 gross amount of \$2,000,000.00, and the court granted attorney's fees request of
24 33.33%.
- 25 m. *Pineda, et al. v. Grimmway Enterprises, Inc.*, (No. BCV-15-101333, Kern Super.
26 Ct.) In January 2018, the Hon. Stephen D. Schuett granted final approval of
27 Settlement in the gross amount of \$9,000,000 with attorneys' fees request of
28 33.33%.

1 98. Kingsley & Kingsley, APC filed its first motion for class certification in the year
2 2000 and since that time has been appointed class counsel on dozens of wage and hour class actions
3 that have been approved for class certification. Since 2011, Kingsley & Kingsley, APC has moved
4 for class certification in 16 matters and has successfully obtained class certification in 15 of those
5 cases. A brief sampling of which includes:

6 a. *Melendrez v. JK Communications*, No. BC497692, (L.A. Super. Ct., filed
7 December 19, 2012) (court granted contested class certification and appointed
8 Kingsley & Kingsley class counsel).

9 b. *Amaro et al. v Gerawan Farming, Inc.*, No. 1:14-cv-00147-DAD-SAB (E.D. Cal.,
10 filed February 3, 2014) (court granted contested class certification and appointed
11 Kingsley & Kingsley co-class counsel).

12 c. *Suarez v. Mazatlan, Inc.*, No. 37-2015-00002978-CU-OE-CTL (S.D. Super. Ct.,
13 filed January 27, 2015) (court granted contested class certification and appointed
14 Kingsley & Kingsley class counsel).

15 d. *Ruiz v. Daniel C. Salas Harvesting, Inc.*, Kings County Superior Court (16C0214).
16 contested class certification granted in June 2020.

17 e. *Weldon v. Geo Corrections & Detentions, LLC*, Kern County Superior Court
18 (BCV-16-102833), contested class certification granted in 2018.

19 f. *Patton v. Skyler Electric*, Nevada County Superior Court, (CU17-082544),
20 contested class certification granted in June 2020.

21 g. *Hameister v. Jaco Oil Company*, Kern County Superior Court (BCV-17-102876),
22 contested class certification granted in August 2020.

23 99. After factoring in the risks explained above, Class Counsel believes that the
24 proposed settlement is fair and reasonable.

25 100. There is no governmental participant in this action except arguably the LWDA.

26 101. This allocation distributes Settlement funds proportionally to each class member's
27 potential damages and should therefore be approved as fair, adequate, and reasonable.

28 ///

ATTORNEYS' FEE AWARD

102. As detailed fully in the Settlement Agreement and set forth above, the Settlement Agreement provides for Defendant to create a Gross Settlement Amount of \$565,450.00. From that fund, Plaintiff requests an award of attorneys' fees in the amount of \$185,598.50, or 1/3 of the Gross Settlement Amount created on behalf of members of the Class.

103. Class Counsel extensively addressed the perceived risks in this case in the concurrently filed Motion for Final Approval of Class Action Settlement and will not repeat that analysis here. In addition to the complexity of this case, Class Counsel has borne the entire risk and costs of this litigation during the entire time that it has been pending, all on a pure contingency basis. Through the investment of substantial effort and resources, Class Counsel has secured an outstanding Settlement on behalf of the Settlement Class Members. Defendant vigorously contested liability, the amount of claimed damages, and the propriety of class certification. It is this kind of situation, involving complex issues, that has been recognized as justifying a substantial attorney fee award.

104. I am very familiar with the contingent fee market throughout California and in the County area, particularly as it pertains to complex employment, wage and hour, and class action litigation. On behalf of my firm, I have negotiated numerous contingency fee agreements with plaintiffs, both as individuals and as representatives in class action suits. Many of those agreements provided that counsel will receive a fee that is between 33% and 40% of any recovery that is obtained, and, in addition, that counsel be reimbursed for the costs they incurred out of the recovery amount. The Plaintiff in this action signed a contingency fee agreement that stated that counsel would be able to make a fee of up to 40% of any recovery if the case settles. These are typical and standard percentages in employment-related contingency agreements throughout California. Indeed, in my opinion, the Class Members in this complex wage and hour case could not have retained competent counsel in California, particularly with the considerable skill and expertise of my firm, for any amount significantly less than the contingency fee percentage provided in this retainer agreement. Class Counsel has never been paid any money for attorneys' fees in this case and has advanced all costs.

1 105. There are always risks attendant to billing cases on a contingency basis. Those
2 risks are even higher in the current economic climate. Kingsley & Kingsley bills the vast majority
3 of its cases on contingency, and has been affected by recent bankruptcy filings. In three separate
4 cases, *Lozoya v. Shore House Café, Inc.*, No. 30-2008-00082103-CU-OE-CJC (Orange Super. Ct.
5 filed Mar. 7, 2008) and *Davis v. Crossfire Marketing Group, LLC*, No. CIVRS1207797 (San
6 Bernardino Super. Ct. filed October 5, 2012), the defendants both filed for bankruptcy protection
7 in June 2011 and January 2015 after years of litigation. My firm advanced costs and incurred
8 thousands of dollars in fees that will never be recovered.

9 106. Additionally, there are cases where Class Counsel takes on the extreme risk of
10 attempting to certify a class case, often times turning down class or individual settlement offers
11 that Class Counsel feels are not in the best interest of the class, only to lose class certification and
12 the costs and fees associated with the litigation. *See e.g., Prosad v. Del Taco Restaurant Services,*
13 *Inc.*, No. BC426538 (L.A. Super. Ct. filed Nov. 2009); *Perez v. Safelite Group, Inc.*, CV-10-8653-
14 RGK(FFMx) (C.D. Cal. filed October 5, 2010).

15 107. When Class Counsel's motions for class certification are denied, Class Counsel
16 often appeals the orders. Sometimes, these denials are overturned (*Perez v. Safelite Group, Inc.*,
17 553 Fed.Appx. 667 (9th Cir. 2015); *Anderson v. Total Renal Care, Inc.*, No. B236207 (Cal. Ct.
18 App. 2012)) and other times Class Counsel is unsuccessful (*Prosad v. Del Taco Restaurant*
19 *Services, Inc.*, No. B238605 (CA. Ct. App. 2012)).

20 108. In addition to appealing class certification denials, Kingsley & Kingsley has been
21 involved in numerous lengthy and protracted appeals process before the California Court of
22 Appeal, the Ninth Circuit, the Seventh Circuit, and the United States Supreme Court. Our firm
23 specifically has taken and lost some issues on appeal that required the write-off of significant legal
24 fees. Also, our firm has been successful on appeal and overturned unfavorable lower court rulings
25 or successfully fought to have successful rulings affirmed. Below is just a sample of some of these
26 appeals:

27 n. *D'Este v. Bayer Corp.*, 565 F.3d 1119 (9th Cir. 2009) (lower court ruling that
28 pharmaceutical sales representatives are exempt employees affirmed);

- 1 o. *Budrow v. Dave & Buster's of California, Inc.*, 171 Cal. App. 4th 875 (2009) (lower
2 court ruling in employer's favor that certain employees can share in mandatory tip
3 pool affirmed);
- 4 p. *Etheridge v. Reins Int'l California, Inc.*, 172 Cal. App. 4th 908 (2009) (lower court
5 ruling in employer's favor that certain employees can share in mandatory tip pool
6 affirmed);
- 7 q. *Areso v. CarMax, Inc.*, 195 Cal. App. 4th 996 (2011) (lower court ruling in
8 employer's favor approving employer's commission pay plan affirmed) ;
- 9 r. *Christopher v. SmithKline Beecham Corp.*, 132 S. Ct. 2156, 183 L. Ed. 2d 153
10 (2012) (lower court ruling that pharmaceutical sales representatives are exempt
11 employees affirmed);
- 12 s. *Schaefer-LaRose v. Eli Lilly & Co.*, 679 F.3d 560 (7th Cir. 2012) (lower court ruling
13 that pharmaceutical sales representatives are exempt employees affirmed);
- 14 t. *Fowler v. Carmax, Inc.*, No. B238426, 2013 WL 1208111 (Cal. Ct. App. Mar. 26,
15 2013), cert. granted, judgment vacated sub nom. *CarMax Auto Superstores*
16 *California, LLC v. Fowler*, 134 S. Ct. 1277, 188 L. Ed. 2d 290 (2014) (lower court
17 granted employer's motion to compel arbitration, Court of Appeal reversed, U.S.
18 Supreme Court affirmed lower court);
- 19 u. *Salazar v. Apple Am. Grp., LLC*, No. E059562, 2015 WL 314703 (Cal. Ct. App.
20 Jan. 26, 2015), review denied (Apr. 22, 2015), cert. denied, 136 S. Ct. 688, 193 L.
21 Ed. 2d 519 (2015) (lower court ruling in employee's favor on motion to compel
22 arbitration affirmed);
- 23 v. *Anaya v. J's Maint. Serv., Inc.*, No. B261662, 2016 WL 519867 (Cal. Ct. App. Feb.
24 9, 2016) (lower court ruling in employee's favor on motion to compel arbitration
25 affirmed);
- 26 w. *Cortez v. Doty Bros. Equipment Company, Inc.* (2017) 15 Cal.App.5th 1 (reversing
27 in part and affirming in part trial courts order compelling arbitration);
- 28 x. *Lopez v. Friant & Associates, L.L.C.* (2017) 15 Cal.App.5th 773 (reversing

summary judgement in favor of employer on wage statement claim);

y. *Kane v. Valley Slurry Seal Company*, Case No. C079558, Cal. Ct. App. May 8, 2018) (affirming judgement for employees after bench trial);

z. *Kim v. Reins International California*, Case No. S246911. Oral argument was held before the California Supreme Court on January 6, 2020 and a decision was published in March 2020.

109. Unlike plaintiffs' firms, which bear the risk of loss on contingency cases, defense firms are able to bill their clients for time spent on a case. As verified by a survey conducted by the National Law Journal nearly a decade ago, six California firms provided their hourly billing rates and of the six firms, five regularly charged in excess of \$500 for their partners. In fact, four of these firms charged as high as \$600, \$620, \$650 and up to \$850 per hour. These firms are located in Orange County, Los Angeles County, San Francisco County, and San Diego County. This survey is attached hereto as Exhibit "2".

110. While plaintiffs' firms strive to take on cases that are meritorious (for ethical as well as monetary reasons), as this Court knows, many of these cases hinge on the decision of class certification. Recently, there has been a renewed effort by defense counsel and/or their clients to challenge these cases and to push back, especially on certification motions. In addition, many novel legal issues have gone up on appeal, which has complicated the landscape for settlement.

CLASS COUNSEL'S HOURS AND HOURLY RATES ARE REASONABLE

111. Class Counsel's aggregate lodestar amounts to \$129,050.00 (without future hours), which represents 142.9 hours of attorney work on this litigation incurred from its inception through the filing of Plaintiff's Motion for Final Approval.

112. As such, Class Counsel is asking for a multiplier of 1.44.

113. The amount of time spent on this case (over 142.9 hours), which culminated in a very favorable proposed Settlement for the Settlement Class Members, is reasonable given the complexity and novelty of the issues involved, the vigorous defense, the length and intensity of the litigation, and the exceptional results obtained.

114. Class Counsel litigated this action with great efficiency in light of the amount of

1 work required to achieve the Settlement.

2 115. The requested hourly rates in this case range from \$800.00 per hour to \$1,100.00.

3 116. Class Counsel's hourly rates are fully supported by their experience and reputation
4 in handling complex employment litigation, including wage and hour class actions.

5 117. Mr. Kingsley is a 28-year attorney with expertise in wage and hour class action
6 lawsuits.

7 118. He has litigated several hundred such cases, including at the appellate level at the
8 U.S. Supreme Court, California Supreme Court, the Ninth Circuit, and the California Court of
9 Appeal.

10 119. He is also a prolific speaker at various seminars on employment law and has
11 contributed to legal publications on employment topics.

12 120. In light of the impending increase of experienced lawyers in specialized practice, I
13 believe that the hourly rates charged by my firm are fair and reasonable and are comparable to or
14 less than those charged by my colleagues in California and the national market for prosecuting or
15 defending class actions.

16 121. My office billed for the following two attorneys for work performed on this case:
17 Eric Kingsley, and me.

18 122. I am a partner at Kingsley & Kingsley, APC. I received my Bachelor of Arts
19 degree, *cum laude*, from the University of California San Diego and received my law degree from
20 UCLA School of Law in 2008, where I was active in the Women's Law Journal and community-
21 based legal clinics. I have been practicing since 2008 and is billed at \$800 per hour.

22 123. An article in the Wall Street Journal on February 9, 2016 titled *Legal Hours Cross*
23 *New Mark: \$1,500 an Hour* states that "a review of filings over the past three months in about two
24 dozen bankruptcy cases shows that senior partners routinely charge between \$1,200 and \$1,300 an
25 hour, with top rates at several large law firms exceeding \$1,400." The article also explains that
26 "despite low inflation and weak demand for legal services, rates at large corporate law firms have
27 risen by 3% to 4% a year since the economic downturn." Finally, the article notes that "the average
28 highest rate paid for law-firm partners was \$875 an hour in 2015." This article is attached hereto

as Exhibit “3”.

124. Class Counsel’s charged rate are commensurate with the prevailing market rates in Los Angeles County for attorneys of comparable experience and skill handling complex litigation.

125. Class Counsel’s rates in calculating the lodestar are the same rates charged to non-contingent hourly clients and thus necessarily reflect the current market value of counsel’s legal services.

126. Class Counsel made all reasonable attempts to avoid duplication of assignments and to assign tasks to timekeepers at the appropriate billing rates.

127. Finally, Class Counsel’s rates are in line with the 2023 - 2024 Laffey Matrix, which is a fee scale that courts often consult in determining the reasonableness of hourly rates. Under the adjusted Laffey Matrix, a reasonable rate for an attorney with 20+ years of experience, such as Mr. Kingsley, is \$1057, a reasonable rate for an attorney with 16 years of experience, such as Ms. Szamet, is \$878. A true and correct copy of the 2023-2024 Adjusted Laffey Matrix is attached hereto as Exhibit “4”.

128. Kingsley & Kingsley’s attorneys’ fees in the present case are broken down as follows:

<u>ATTORNEY</u>	<u>HOURS</u>	<u>HOURLY RATE</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>
Eric B. Kingsley	49.1	\$1,100.00	\$54,010.00
Kelsey M. Szamet	93.2	\$800.00	\$75,040.00
KINGSLEY TOTAL ATTORNEYS’ FEES	142.9		\$129,050.00¹

129. Kingsley & Kingsley, APC has spent significant time extensively investigating, researching, and litigating this matter, including but not limited to the following:

- aa. intake and interviewing Plaintiff and witnesses and flushing out facts and issues;
- bb. researching employer and related causes of action;

¹ The Total Attorneys’ Fees does not include Class Counsel anticipated 10-15 hours of future time to handle the final approval hearing in July and to oversee the administration process.

cc. researching other pending and former matters against Defendant;
dd. fact development and investigating Defendant's ownership structure
ee. researching and analyzing relevant claims under B&P 17200;
ff. investigation and discussion regarding job functions, duties, compensation, policies, and procedures, etc.;
gg. regular meetings and or communicating with the Plaintiff;
hh. regular meetings and or communicating with Co-Counsel;
ii. drafting pleadings (Complaints, Motion for Preliminary Approval, various documents related to Preliminary Approval, Motion for Final Approval, various documents related to Final approval, etc.);
jj. researching private right of action and various impact on class actions;
kk. interviewing and obtaining declarations from Class Members;
ll. preparing for and attending mediation;
mm. discussing issues related to damage model calculations;
nn. preparing and analyzing damage models;
oo. negotiating the terms of the settlement;
pp. reviewing and making changes to the Settlement Agreement;
qq. drafting and editing all documents for Preliminary and Final Approval;
rr. monitoring Notice and settlement administration procedures;
ss. coordinating and overseeing all aspects of the administration of the Settlement (review documentation, approve form and content, etc.); and multiple communications with defense counsel.

130. Based on the aggregate lodestar, Class Counsel is requesting a multiplier of 1.44.

131. I believe the request for attorneys' fees in the amount of \$185,598.50 is fair and reasonable given the complexity and novelty of the issues involved, the vigorous defense, and the exceptional results obtained. As explained above, Class Counsel's diligent litigation efforts and experience led to an outstanding settlement.

///

1 **FACTORS THAT SUPPORT THE APPROVAL OF A MULTIPLIER**

2 132. This case dealt with difficult legal and factual questions. Significantly, the risk
3 attendant to the underlying claims in this matter was great considering Defendant's defenses. As
4 discussed in detail in the extensive risk analysis section in Plaintiff's Motion for Preliminary
5 Approval of Settlement and will be discussed in Plaintiff's forthcoming Motion for Final Approval
6 of Class Action Settlement, were this case to proceed, Defendant would have a strong incentive to
7 litigate tenaciously. There are genuine issues in dispute such as the classification of employees,
8 federal pre-emption issues, and the potential variability across each boat with respect to meal and
9 rest periods.

10 133. As discussed above, Class Counsel are skilled wage and hour practitioners with
11 decades of experience who diligently prepared and litigated this matter as discussed.

12 134. To achieve the ultimate result in this case, Co-lead Class Counsel had to incur
13 substantial risk and expense and were precluded from taking other fee generating employment for
14 142.30 hours of attorney time.

15 135. This matter had been handled purely on a contingency fee basis and Class Counsel
16 have advanced many thousands of dollars in costs while deferring all payment of fees, with no
17 guarantee that any of the fees incurred or costs advanced would ever be recovered and diverting
18 significant firm resources to prosecution of this matter.

19 136. Class Counsel believe this is an exceptional result that has been well received by
20 Settlement Class Members.

21 **ATTORNEY COSTS**

22 137. In addition to their request for fees, Class Counsel further request reimbursement
23 of the reasonable out-of-pocket expenses advanced and/or incurred by them in connection with
24 this litigation, in the amount of \$15,000.00.

25 138. To date, Kingsley and Kingsley has incurred \$15,004.80 in costs.

26 139. Class Counsel anticipates incurring an additional \$600.00 in costs to file, serve,
27 and copy this motion; to prepare for and attend the hearing; and for future copy charges, however,
28 pursuant to the Settlement Agreement, Class Counsel shall not seek an amount in excess of

1 \$15,000.00 for litigation costs.

2 140. As such, Class Counsel is requesting a cost reimbursement of \$15,000.00.

3 141. All of the requested costs are reasonable in amount and were necessarily incurred
4 by Class Counsel in prosecuting this litigation.

5 142. All of these costs have been incurred in the course of this litigation, and all costs
6 advanced have already been paid by Class Counsel.

7 **THE NAMED PLAINTIFFS' ENHANCEMENT SHOULD BE APPROVED**

8 143. Plaintiff's Counsel request an enhancement of \$5,000.00 to the Class
9 Representative TIKOA CARTER for her work on behalf of the Class.

10 144. The time spent by TIKOA CARTER is significant and includes researching and
11 retaining competent counsel; providing information to Class Counsel regarding the nature of the
12 work at Defendant; compiling relevant documents; working closely with Class Counsel to develop
13 the theories of liability and martial relevant evidence; regularly discussing the status of the case
14 with Class Counsel; being available throughout the full-day of mediation; and responding
15 promptly to Class Counsel's communications regarding settlement.

16 145. As set forth in the Settlement Agreement, Plaintiff will also be entering into a
17 general release of liability pursuant to Civil Code Section 1542.

18 146. Class Counsel considers this to be a fair and reasonable enhancement.

19 147. The enhancement takes into consideration the time, effort, and expense incurred by
20 Ms. Carter in coming forward to litigate this matter on behalf of all Class Members.

21 148. Additionally, the Class Representative was at risk for paying for Defendant's legal
22 fees and costs in the event that Defendant prevailed at trial.

23 149. The Class has benefited from Ms. Carter's action in stepping forward on their
24 behalf to bring this lawsuit.

25 150. Further, The Class Notice disclosed the enhancement award.

26 151. As of today, no Settlement Class Member has objected to the proposed
27 enhancement.

28 152. Under the circumstances, a representative payment of \$5,000.00 is justified and the

1 Court should award this payment to TIKOA CARTER from the Gross Settlement Amount as
2 provided in the Settlement Agreement.

3 **PROOF OF SUBMISSION TO THE LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

4 **AGENCY**

5 153. As indicated on the Proof of Service, Plaintiff's accompanying Motion for Final
6 Approval of Attorneys' Fees and Costs ("Motion") was uploaded to the Labor and Workforce
7 Development Agency's ("LWDA") website on the date this Motion was filed. Proof of submission
8 of Plaintiff's Motion, all related documents, and copy of the email from the LWDA confirming
9 receipt is attached hereto as Exhibit "6".

10 **EXHIBITS**

11 154. Attached hereto as Exhibit "1" is a true and correct copy of the fully-executed Class
12 Action and PAGA Settlement Agreement that was preliminary approved by this Court on
13 November 20, 2023.

14 155. Attached hereto as Exhibit "2" is a true and correct copy of the ALM Research
15 2007 NLJ Billing Survey.

16 156. Attached hereto as Exhibit "3" is a true and correct copy of Wall Street Journal on
17 February 9, 2016 titled *Legal Hours Cross New Mark: \$1,500 an Hour*.

18 157. Attached hereto as Exhibit "4" is a true and correct copy of the 2023-2024 Adjusted
19 Laffey Matrix.

20 158. Attached hereto as Exhibit "5" is a true and correct copy of the Kingsley &
21 Kingsley, APC costs ledger reflecting costs incurred in this matter.

22 159. Attached hereto as Exhibit "6" is a true and correct copy of the proof of submission
23 to the LWDA as referenced in paragraph 153 above.

24 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the state of California that foregoing
25 is true and correct.

26 This declaration was executed this 29th day of March, 2024, in Altadena, California.

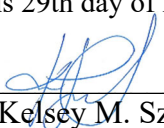
27
28 
Kelsey M. Szamet

EXHIBIT "1"

CLASS ACTION AND PAGA SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT AND CLASS NOTICEⁱ

This Class Action and PAGA Settlement Agreement (“Agreement”) is made by and between plaintiff TIKOA CARTER (“Plaintiff”) and defendant SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY ASSOCIATES, INC. (“Defendant”). The Agreement refers to Plaintiff and Defendant collectively as “Parties,” or individually as “Party.”

1. DEFINITIONS.

- 1.1. “Action” means the Plaintiff’s lawsuit alleging wage and hour violations against Defendant captioned *Tikoa Carter, an individual, on behalf of herself and others similarly situated Plaintiff, v. Speech and Language Pathology Associates, Inc.; and DOES 1 thru 50, inclusive, DEFENDANTS* Case No. 21STCV44618 initiated on December 8, 2021 and pending in Superior Court of the State of California, County of Los Angeles.
- 1.2. “Administrator” means ILYM Group, Inc., the neutral entity the Parties have agreed to appoint to administer the Settlement.
- 1.3. “Administration Expenses Payment” means the amount the Administrator will be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount to reimburse its reasonable fees and expenses in accordance with the Administrator’s “not to exceed” bid submitted to the Court in connection with Preliminary Approval of the Settlement.
- 1.4. “Aggrieved Employee” or “PAGA Member” means all persons who are employed or have been employed as an hourly employee by SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY ASSOCIATES, INC., in the State of California who worked one or more pay periods from December 8, 2020 to July 31, 2022
- 1.5. “Class” means all persons who are employed or have been employed as an hourly employee by SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY ASSOCIATES, INC., in the State of California who worked one or more pay periods during the Covered Period..
- 1.6. “Class Counsel” means Kingsley & Kingsley, APC.
- 1.7. “Class Counsel Fees Payment” and “Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment” mean the amounts allocated to Class Counsel for reimbursement of reasonable attorneys’ fees and expenses, respectively, incurred to prosecute the Action.
- 1.8. “Class Data” means Class Member identifying information in Defendant’s possession including the Class Member’s name, last-known mailing address, Social Security number, and number of Covered Period Workweeks and PAGA Pay Periods.

- 1.9. “Class Member” or “Settlement Class Member” means a member of the Class, as either a Participating Class Member or Non-Participating Class Member (including a Non-Participating Class Member who qualifies as an Aggrieved Employee).
- 1.10. “Class Member Address Search” means the Administrator’s investigation and search for current Class Member mailing addresses using all reasonably available sources, methods and means including, but not limited to, the National Change of Address database, skip traces, and direct contact by the Administrator with Class Members.
- 1.11. “Class Notice” means the COURT APPROVED NOTICE OF CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT AND HEARING DATE FOR FINAL COURT APPROVAL, to be mailed to Class Members in English in the form, without material variation, attached as Exhibit A and incorporated by reference into this Agreement.
- 1.12. “Covered Period” or “Release Period” means the period from December 8, 2017 to July 31, 2022.ⁱⁱ
- 1.13. “Class Representative” means the named Plaintiff in the operative complaint in the Action seeking Court approval to serve as a Class Representative.
- 1.14. “Class Representative Service Payment” means the payment to the Class Representative for initiating the Action and providing services in support of the Action.
- 1.15. “Court” means the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles.
- 1.16. “Defendant” means named Defendant SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY ASSOCIATES, INC..
- 1.17. “Defense Counsel” means Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith LLP.
- 1.18. “Effective Date” means the date by when both of the following have occurred: (a) the Court enters a Judgment on its Order Granting Final Approval of the Settlement; and (b) the Judgment is final. The Judgment is final as of the latest of the following occurrences: (a) if no Participating Class Member objects to the Settlement, the day the Court enters Judgment; (b) if one or more Participating Class Members objects to the Settlement, the day after the deadline for filing a notice of appeal from the Judgment; or if a timely appeal from the Judgment is filed, the day after the appellate court affirms the Judgment and issues a remittitur.
- 1.19. “Final Approval” means the Court’s order granting final approval of the Settlement.
- 1.20. “Final Approval Hearing” means the Court’s hearing on the Motion for Final Approval of the Settlement.
- 1.21. “Final Judgment” means the Judgment Entered by the Court upon Granting Final Approval of the Settlement.

- 1.22. “Gross Settlement Amount” means \$565,450.00 which is the total amount Defendant agrees to pay under the Settlement except as provided in Paragraph 10 below. The Gross Settlement Amount will be used to pay Individual Class Payments, Individual PAGA Payments, the LWDA PAGA Payment, Class Counsel Fees, Class Counsel Expenses, Class Representative Service Payment and the Administrator’s Expenses.
- 1.23. “Individual Class Payment” means the Participating Class Member’s pro rata share of the Net Settlement Amount calculated according to the number of Workweeks worked during the Covered Period.
- 1.24. “Individual PAGA Payment” means the Aggrieved Employee’s pro rata share of 25% of the PAGA Penalties calculated according to the number of Workweeks worked during the PAGA Period.
- 1.25. “Judgment” means the judgment entered by the Court based upon the Final Approval.
- 1.26. “LWDA” means the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency, the agency entitled, under Labor Code section 2699, subd. (i).
- 1.27. “LWDA PAGA Payment” means the 75% of the PAGA Penalties paid to the LWDA under Labor Code section 2699, subd. (i).
- 1.28. “Net Settlement Amount” means the Gross Settlement Amount, less the following payments in the amounts approved by the Court: Individual PAGA Payments, the LWDA PAGA Payment, Class Representative Service Payment, Class Counsel Fees Payment, Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment, and the Administration Expenses Payment. The remainder is to be paid to Participating Class Members as Individual Class Payments.
- 1.29. “Non-Participating Class Member” means any Class Member who opts out of the Settlement by sending the Administrator a valid and timely Request for Exclusion.
- 1.30. “PAGA Pay Period” means any Pay Period during which an Aggrieved Employee worked for Defendant for at least one day during the PAGA Period.
- 1.31. “PAGA Period” means the period from December 8, 2020 to July 31, 2022.ⁱⁱⁱ
- 1.32. “PAGA” means the Private Attorneys General Act (Labor Code §§ 2698. et seq.).
- 1.33. “PAGA Notice” means Plaintiff’s December 8, 2021 letter to Defendant and the LWDA providing notice pursuant to Labor Code section 2699.3, subd.(a).
- 1.34. “PAGA Penalties” means the total amount of PAGA civil penalties to be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount, allocated 25% to the Aggrieved Employees (\$3,750.00) and the 75% to LWDA (\$11,250.00) in settlement of PAGA claims.

- 1.35. “Participating Class Member” means a Class Member who does not submit a valid and timely Request for Exclusion from the Settlement.
- 1.36. “Plaintiff” means TIKOA CARTER, the named plaintiff in the Action.
- 1.37. “Preliminary Approval” means the Court’s Order Granting Preliminary Approval of the Settlement.
- 1.38. “Preliminary Approval Order” means the proposed Order Granting Preliminary Approval and Approval of PAGA Settlement.
- 1.39. “Released Class Claims” means the claims being released as described in Paragraph 6.2 below.
- 1.40. “Released PAGA Claims” means the claims being released as described in Paragraph 6.3 below.
- 1.41. “Released Parties” means: Defendant and each of its former and present directors, officers, shareholders, owners, members, attorneys, insurers, predecessors, successors, assigns, subsidiaries, and affiliates.
- 1.42. “Request for Exclusion” means a Class Member’s submission of a written request to be excluded from the Class Settlement signed by the Class Member.
- 1.43. “Response Deadline” means 60 days after the Administrator mails Notice to Class Members and Aggrieved Employees, and shall be the last date on which Class Members may: (a) fax, email, or mail Requests for Exclusion from the Settlement, or (b) fax, email, or mail his or her Objection to the Settlement. Class Members to whom Notice Packets are resent after having been returned undeliverable to the Administrator shall have an additional 14 calendar days beyond the Response Deadline has expired.
- 1.44. “Settlement” means the disposition of the Action effected by this Agreement and the Judgment.
- 1.45. “Workweek” means any week during which a Class Member worked for Defendant for at least one day, during the Covered Period.^{iv}

2. RECITALS.

- 2.1. On December 8, 2021, Plaintiff commenced this Action by filing a Complaint alleging causes of action against Defendant for (1) failure to provide rest breaks pursuant to Labor Code section 226.7; (2) failure to reimburse business-related expenses under Labor Code section 2802; (3) failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements pursuant to Labor Code section 226(a); (4) waiting time penalties pursuant to Labor Code section 203; and (5) violation of Business & Professions Code section 17200. On May 19,

2022, Plaintiff filed a First Amended Complaint alleging an additional cause of action against Defendant for penalties pursuant to the Private Attorney General Act of 2004 (“PAGA”) (Lab. Code § 2699 et seq.). The First Amended Complaint is the operative complaint in the Action (the “Operative Complaint”). Defendant denies the allegations in the Operative Complaint, denies any failure to comply with the laws identified in the Operative Complaint and denies any and all liability for the causes of action alleged.

- 2.2. Pursuant to Labor Code section 2699.3, subd.(a), Plaintiff gave timely written notice to Defendant and the LWDA by sending the PAGA Notice.
- 2.3. On June 28, 2022, the Parties participated in an all-day mediation presided over by Todd A. Smith, Esq. which led to this Agreement to settle the Action.
- 2.4. Prior to mediation, Plaintiff obtained, through informal discovery, pertinent documents and data for the Class and PAGA Members so that the Parties could fully investigate the claims at issue and understand their strengths and weaknesses. Plaintiff’s investigation was sufficient to satisfy the criteria for court approval set forth in *Dunk v. Foot Locker Retail, Inc.* (1996) 48 Cal.App.4th 1794, 1801 and *Kullar v. Foot Locker Retail, Inc.* (2008) 168 Cal.App.4th 116, 129-130 (“*Dunk/Kullar*”).
- 2.5. The Court has not granted class certification.
- 2.6. The Parties, Class Counsel and Defense Counsel represent that they are not aware of any other pending matter or action asserting claims that will be extinguished or affected by the Settlement.

3. MONETARY TERMS.

- 3.1. Gross Settlement Amount. Except as otherwise provided by Paragraph 10 below, Defendant promises to pay \$565,450.00 and no more as the Gross Settlement Amount and to separately pay any and all employer payroll taxes owed on the Wage Portions of the Individual Class Payments. Defendant has no obligation to pay the Gross Settlement Amount (or any payroll taxes) prior to the deadline stated in Paragraph 4.3 of this Agreement.^v The Administrator will disburse the entire Gross Settlement Amount without asking or requiring Participating Class Members or Aggrieved Employees to submit any claim as a condition of payment. None of the Gross Settlement Amount will revert to Defendant.
- 3.2. Payments from the Gross Settlement Amount. The Administrator will make and deduct the following payments from the Gross Settlement Amount, in the amounts specified by the Court in the Final Approval:
 - 3.2.1. To Plaintiff: Class Representative Service Payment to the Class Representative of not more than \$5,000.00 (in addition to any Individual Class Payment and any Individual PAGA Payment the Class Representative is entitled to receive as a Participating Class Member). Defendant will not oppose Plaintiff’s

request for a Class Representative Service Payment that does not exceed this amount. As part of the motion for Class Counsel Fees Payment and Class Litigation Expenses Payment, Plaintiff will seek Court approval for any Class Representative Service Payments no later than 16 court days prior to the Final Approval Hearing. If the Court approves a Class Representative Service Payment less than the amount requested, the Administrator will retain the remainder in the Net Settlement Amount. The Administrator will pay the Class Representative Service Payment using IRS Form 1099. Plaintiff assumes full responsibility and liability for employee taxes owed on the Class Representative Service Payment.

3.2.2. To Class Counsel: A Class Counsel Fees Payment of not more than 33-1/3%, which is currently estimated to be \$186,598.50 and a Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment of not more than \$15,000.00. Defendant will not oppose requests for these payments provided that do not exceed these amounts. Plaintiff and/or Class Counsel will file a motion for Class Counsel Fees Payment and Class Litigation Expenses Payment no later than [16 court] days prior to the Final Approval Hearing. If the Court approves a Class Counsel Fees Payment and/or a Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment less than the amounts requested, the Administrator will allocate the remainder to the Net Settlement Amount. Released Parties shall have no liability to Class Counsel or any other Plaintiff's Counsel arising from any claim to any portion any Class Counsel Fee Payment and/or Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment. The Administrator will pay the Class Counsel Fees Payment and Class Counsel Expenses Payment using one or more IRS 1099 Forms. Class Counsel assumes full responsibility and liability for taxes owed on the Class Counsel Fees Payment and the Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment and holds Defendant harmless, and indemnifies Defendant, from any dispute or controversy regarding any division or sharing of any of these Payments.

3.2.3. To the Administrator: An Administrator Expenses Payment not to exceed \$20,000.00 except for a showing of good cause and as approved by the Court. To the extent the Administration Expenses are less or the Court approves payment less than \$20,000.00, the Administrator will retain the remainder in the Net Settlement Amount.

3.2.4. To Each Participating Class Member: An Individual Class Payment calculated by (a) dividing the Net Settlement Amount by the total number of Workweeks worked by all Participating Class Members during the Covered Period and (b) multiplying the result by each Participating Class Member's Workweeks.

3.2.4.1. Tax Allocation of Individual Class Payments. 20% of each Participating Class Member's Individual Class Payment will be allocated to settlement of wage claims (the "Wage Portion"). The Wage Portions are subject to tax withholding and will be reported on an IRS W-2 Form. The 80% of each Participating Class Member's Individual Class Payment will be allocated to settlement of claims for [e.g., interest and penalties] (the "Non-Wage Portion").^{vi} The Non-Wage Portions are not subject to wage withholdings and will be

reported on IRS 1099 Forms. Participating Class Members assume full responsibility and liability for any employee taxes owed on their Individual Class Payment.

3.2.4.2. Effect of Non-Participating Class Members on Calculation of Individual Class Payments. Non-Participating Class Members will not receive any Individual Class Payments. The Administrator will retain amounts equal to their Individual Class Payments in the Net Settlement Amount for distribution to Participating Class Members on a pro rata basis.

3.2.5. To the LWDA and Aggrieved Employees: PAGA Penalties in the amount of \$15,000.00 to be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount, with 75% (\$11,250.00) allocated to the LWDA PAGA Payment and 25% (\$3,750.00) allocated to the Individual PAGA Payments.

3.2.5.1. The Administrator will calculate each Individual PAGA Payment by (a) dividing the amount of the Aggrieved Employees' 25% share of PAGA Penalties (\$3,750.00) by the total number of PAGA Period Pay Periods worked by all Aggrieved Employees during the PAGA Period and (b) multiplying the result by each Aggrieved Employee's PAGA Period Pay Periods. Aggrieved Employees assume full responsibility and liability for any taxes owed on their Individual PAGA Payment.

3.2.5.2. If the Court approves PAGA Penalties of less than the amount requested, the Administrator will allocate the remainder to the Net Settlement Amount. The Administrator will report the Individual PAGA Payments on IRS 1099 Forms.

4. SETTLEMENT FUNDING AND PAYMENTS.

4.1. Class Workweeks and Aggrieved Employee Pay Periods. Based on a review of its records to date, Defendant estimates there are 622 Class Members who collectively worked a total of 55,408 Workweeks, and 367 Aggrieved Employees who worked a total 9,185 of PAGA Pay Periods.

4.2. Class Data. Not later than 15 days after the Court grants Preliminary Approval of the Settlement, Defendant will simultaneously deliver the Class Data to the Administrator, in the form of a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. To protect Class Members' privacy rights, the Administrator must maintain the Class Data in confidence, use the Class Data only for purposes of this Settlement and for no other purpose, and restrict access to the Class Data to Administrator employees who need access to the Class Data to effect and perform under this Agreement. Defendant has a continuing duty to immediately notify Class Counsel if it discovers that the Class Data omitted class member identifying information and to provide corrected or updated Class Data as soon as reasonably feasible. Without any extension of the deadline by which Defendant must send the Class Data to the Administrator, the Parties and their counsel will expeditiously use best efforts, in good

faith, to reconstruct or otherwise resolve any issues related to missing or omitted Class Data.

- 4.3. Funding of Gross Settlement Amount. After the Effective Date, Defendant shall fully fund the Gross Settlement Amount, and also fund the amounts necessary to fully pay Defendant's share of payroll taxes by transmitting the funds to the Administrator no later than December 15, 2023.
- 4.4. Payments from the Gross Settlement Amount. Within 14 days after Defendant funds the Gross Settlement Amount, the Administrator will mail checks for all Individual Class Payments, all Individual PAGA Payments, the LWDA PAGA Payment, the Administration Expenses Payment, the Class Counsel Fees Payment, the Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment, and the Class Representative Service Payment. Disbursement of the Class Counsel Fees Payment, the Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment and the Class Representative Service Payment shall not precede disbursement of Individual Class Payments and Individual PAGA Payments.
- 4.4.1. The Administrator will issue checks for the Individual Class Payments and/or Individual PAGA Payments and send them to the Class Members via First Class U.S. Mail, postage prepaid. The face of each check shall prominently state the date (not less than 180 days after the date of mailing) when the check will be voided. The Administrator will cancel all checks not cashed by the void date. The Administrator will send checks for Individual Settlement Payments to all Participating Class Members (including those for whom Class Notice was returned undelivered). The Administrator will send checks for Individual PAGA Payments to all Aggrieved Employees including Non-Participating Class Members who qualify as Aggrieved Employees (including those for whom Class Notice was returned undelivered). The Administrator may send Participating Class Members a single check combining the Individual Class Payment and the Individual PAGA Payment. Before mailing any checks, the Settlement Administrator must update the recipients' mailing addresses using the National Change of Address Database.
- 4.4.2. The Administrator must conduct a Class Member Address Search for all other Class Members whose checks are returned undelivered without USPS forwarding address. Within 7 days of receiving a returned check the Administrator must re-mail checks to the USPS forwarding address provided or to an address ascertained through the Class Member Address Search. The Administrator need not take further steps to deliver checks to Class Members whose re-mailed checks are returned as undelivered. The Administrator shall promptly send a replacement check to any Class Member whose original check was lost or misplaced, requested by the Class Member prior to the void date.
- 4.4.3. For any Class Member whose Individual Class Payment check or Individual PAGA Payment check is uncashed and cancelled after the void date, the Administrator shall transmit the funds represented by such checks to the California Controller's Unclaimed Property Fund in the name of the Class Member thereby

leaving no "unpaid residue" subject to the requirements of California Code of Civil Procedure Section 384, subd. (b). If the Court does not approve of such, the Parties will agree upon a cy pres recipient within the meaning of CCP §384.

4.4.4. The payment of Individual Class Payments and Individual PAGA Payments shall not obligate Defendant to confer any additional benefits or make any additional payments to Class Members (such as 401(k) contributions or bonuses) beyond those specified in this Agreement.

6. RELEASES OF CLAIMS. Effective on the date when Defendant fully funds the entire Gross Settlement Amount and funds all employer payroll taxes owed on the Wage Portion of the Individual Class Payments, Plaintiff, Class Members, and Class Counsel will release claims against all Released Parties as follows:

6.1 Plaintiff's Release. Plaintiff and his or her respective former and present spouses, representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns generally, release and discharge Released Parties from all claims, transactions, or occurrences [that occurred during the Covered Period, including, but not limited to: (a) all claims that were, or reasonably could have been, alleged, based on the facts contained, in the Operative Complaint and (b) all PAGA claims that were, or reasonably could have been, alleged based on facts contained in the Operative Complaint, Plaintiff's PAGA Notice, [or ascertained during the Action and released under 6.2, below]. ("Plaintiff's Release.") Plaintiff's Release does not extend to any claims or actions to enforce this Agreement, or to any claims for vested benefits, unemployment benefits, disability benefits, social security benefits, workers' compensation benefits that arose at any time, or based on occurrences outside the Covered Period. Plaintiff acknowledges that Plaintiff may discover facts or law different from, or in addition to, the facts or law that Plaintiff now knows or believes to be true but agrees, nonetheless, that Plaintiff's Release shall be and remain effective in all respects, notwithstanding such different or additional facts or Plaintiff's discovery of them.

6.1.1 Plaintiff's Waiver of Rights Under California Civil Code Section 1542. For purposes of Plaintiff's Release, Plaintiff expressly waives and relinquishes the provisions, rights, and benefits, if any, of section 1542 of the California Civil Code, which reads:

A general release does not extend to claims that the creditor or releasing party does not know or suspect to exist in his or her favor at the time of executing the release, and that if known by him or her would have materially affected his or her settlement with the debtor or Released Party.

6.2 Release by Participating Class Members Who Are Not Aggrieved Employees: All Participating Class Members, on behalf of themselves and their respective former and present representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns, release Released Parties from (i) any and all claims, debts, liabilities, demands, obligations, penalties, guarantees, costs, expenses, attorney's fees, damages, action or

causes of action of whatever kind or nature, whether known or unknown, contingent or accrued, that are alleged, or that reasonably could have arisen out of the same facts alleged in the Action, including: (1) failure to provide rest breaks pursuant to Labor Code section 226.7; (2) failure to reimburse business-related expenses under Labor Code section 2802; (3) failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements pursuant to Labor Code section 226(a); (4) waiting time penalties pursuant to Labor Code section 203; (5) violation of Business & Professions Code section 17200; and (6) penalties pursuant to Labor Code section 2699. (collectively, the “Released Claims”) Except as set forth in Section 6.3 of this Agreement, Participating Class Members do not release any other claims, including claims for vested benefits, wrongful termination, violation of the Fair Employment and Housing Act, unemployment insurance, disability, social security, workers’ compensation, or claims based on facts occurring outside the Covered Period.

- 6.3 Release by Non-Participating Class Members Who Are Aggrieved Employees: All Non-Participating Class Members who are Aggrieved Employees are deemed to release, on behalf of themselves and their respective former and present representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns, the Released Parties from all claims for PAGA penalties that were alleged, or reasonably could have been alleged, based on the PAGA Period facts stated in the Operative Complaint, the PAGA Notice and ascertained in the course of the Action including, violations of Labor Code sections 201, 202, 203, 226(a), 226.7, and 2802.

7. MOTION FOR PRELIMINARY APPROVAL. The Parties agree to jointly prepare and file a motion for preliminary approval (“Motion for Preliminary Approval”) that complies with the Court’s current checklist for Preliminary Approvals.

- 7.1 DEFENDANT’s Declaration in Support of Preliminary Approval. Within 21 days of the full execution of this Agreement, Defendant will prepare and deliver to Class Counsel a signed Declaration from Defendant and Defense Counsel disclosing all facts relevant to any actual or potential conflicts of interest with the Administrator. In their Declarations, Defense Counsel and Defendant shall aver that they are not aware of any other pending matter or action asserting claims that will be extinguished or adversely affected by the Settlement.

- 7.2 Plaintiff’s Responsibilities. Plaintiff will prepare and deliver to Defense Counsel all documents necessary for obtaining Preliminary Approval, including: (i) a draft of the notice, and memorandum in support, of the Motion for Preliminary Approval that includes an analysis of the Settlement under *Dunk/Kullar* and a request for approval of the PAGA Settlement under Labor Code Section 2699, subd. (f)(2)); (ii) a draft proposed Order Granting Preliminary Approval and Approval of PAGA Settlement; (iii) a draft proposed Class Notice; (iv) a signed declaration from the Administrator attaching its “not to exceed” bid for administering the Settlement and attesting to its willingness to serve; competency; operative procedures for protecting the security of Class Data; amounts of insurance coverage for any data breach, defalcation of funds or other misfeasance; all facts relevant to any actual or potential conflicts of interest with Class Members; and the nature and extent of any financial relationship with Plaintiff, Class Counsel or Defense Counsel; (v)

a signed declaration from Plaintiff confirming willingness and competency to serve and disclosing all facts relevant to any actual or potential conflicts of interest with Class Members, or the Administrator; (v) a signed declaration from each Class Counsel firm attesting to its competency to represent the Class Members; its timely transmission to the LWDA of all necessary PAGA documents (initial notice of violations (Labor Code section 2699.3, subd. (a)), Operative Complaint (Labor Code section 2699, subd. (1)(1)), this Agreement (Labor Code section 2699, subd. (1)(2)); and all facts relevant to any actual or potential conflict of interest with Class Members, the Administrator and/or the Cy Pres Recipient. In their Declarations, Plaintiff and Class Counsel Declaration shall aver that they are not aware of any other pending matter or action asserting claims that will be extinguished or adversely affected by the Settlement.

7.3 Responsibilities of Counsel. Class Counsel and Defense Counsel are jointly responsible for expeditiously finalizing and filing the Motion for Preliminary Approval no later than 30 days after the full execution of this Agreement; obtaining a prompt hearing date for the Motion for Preliminary Approval; and for appearing in Court to advocate in favor of the Motion for Preliminary Approval. Class Counsel is responsible for delivering the Court's Preliminary Approval to the Administrator.

7.4 Duty to Cooperate. If the Parties disagree on any aspect of the proposed Motion for Preliminary Approval and/or the supporting declarations and documents, Class Counsel and Defense Counsel will expeditiously work together on behalf of the Parties by meeting in person or by telephone, and in good faith, to resolve the disagreement. If the Court does not grant Preliminary Approval or conditions Preliminary Approval on any material change to this Agreement, Class Counsel and Defense Counsel will expeditiously work together on behalf of the Parties by meeting in person or by telephone, and in good faith, to modify the Agreement and otherwise satisfy the Court's concerns.

8. SETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION.

8.1 Selection of Administrator. The Parties have jointly selected ILYM Group, Inc. to serve as the Administrator and verified that, as a condition of appointment, ILYM Group, Inc. agrees to be bound by this Agreement and to perform, as a fiduciary, all duties specified in this Agreement in exchange for payment of Administration Expenses. The Parties and their Counsel represent that they have no interest or relationship, financial or otherwise, with the Administrator other than a professional relationship arising out of prior experiences administering settlements.

8.2 Employer Identification Number. The Administrator shall have and use its own Employer Identification Number for purposes of calculating payroll tax withholdings and providing reports to state and federal tax authorities.

8.3 Qualified Settlement Fund. The Administrator shall establish a settlement fund that meets the requirements of a Qualified Settlement Fund ("QSF") under US Treasury Regulation section 468B-1.

8.4 Notice to Class Members.

- 8.4.1 No later than three (3) business days after receipt of the Class Data, the Administrator shall notify Class Counsel that the list has been received and state the number of Class Members, PAGA Members, Workweeks, and Pay Periods in the Class Data.
- 8.4.2 Using best efforts to perform as soon as possible, and in no event later than 14 days after receiving the Class Data, the Administrator will send to all Class Members identified in the Class Data, via first-class United States Postal Service (“USPS”) mail, the Class Notice substantially in the form attached to this Agreement as Exhibit A. The first page of the Class Notice shall prominently estimate the dollar amounts of any Individual Class Payment and/or Individual PAGA Payment payable to the Class Member, and the number of Workweeks and PAGA Pay Periods (if applicable) used to calculate these amounts. Before mailing Class Notices, the Administrator shall update Class Member addresses using the National Change of Address database.
- 8.4.3 Not later than 3 business days after the Administrator’s receipt of any Class Notice returned by the USPS as undelivered, the Administrator shall re-mail the Class Notice using any forwarding address provided by the USPS. If the USPS does not provide a forwarding address, the Administrator shall conduct a Class Member Address Search, and re-mail the Class Notice to the most current address obtained. The Administrator has no obligation to make further attempts to locate or send Class Notice to Class Members whose Class Notice is returned by the USPS a second time.
- 8.4.4 The deadlines for Class Members’ written objections, Challenges to Workweeks and/or Pay Periods, and Requests for Exclusion will be extended an additional 14 days beyond the 60 days otherwise provided in the Class Notice for all Class Members whose notice is re-mailed. The Administrator will inform the Class Member of the extended deadline with the re-mailed Class Notice.
- 8.4.5 If the Administrator, Defendant or Class Counsel is contacted by or otherwise discovers any persons who believe they should have been included in the Class Data and should have received Class Notice, the Parties will expeditiously meet and confer in person or by telephone, and in good faith, in an effort to agree on whether to include them as Class Members. If the Parties agree, such persons will be Class Members entitled to the same rights as other Class Members, and the Administrator will send, via email or overnight delivery, a Class Notice requiring them to exercise options under this Agreement not later than [14] days after receipt of Class Notice, or the deadline dates in the Class Notice, whichever are later.

8.5 Requests for Exclusion (Opt-Outs).

- 8.5.1 Class Members who wish to exclude themselves (opt-out of) the Class Settlement must send the Administrator, by fax, email, or mail, a signed written Request for Exclusion not later than 60 days after the Administrator mails the Class Notice (plus an additional 14 days for Class Members whose Class Notice is re-mailed). A Request for Exclusion is a letter from a Class Member or his/her representative that reasonably communicates the Class Member's election to be excluded from the Settlement and includes the Class Member's name, address and email address or telephone number. To be valid, a Request for Exclusion must be timely faxed, emailed, or postmarked by the Response Deadline.
- 8.5.2 The Administrator may not reject a Request for Exclusion as invalid because it fails to contain all the information specified in the Class Notice. The Administrator shall accept any Request for Exclusion as valid if the Administrator can reasonably ascertain the identity of the person as a Class Member and the Class Member's desire to be excluded. The Administrator's determination shall be final and not appealable or otherwise susceptible to challenge. If the Administrator has reason to question the authenticity of a Request for Exclusion, the Administrator may demand additional proof of the Class Member's identity. The Administrator's determination of authenticity shall be final and not appealable or otherwise susceptible to challenge.
- 8.5.3 Every Class Member who does not submit a timely and valid Request for Exclusion is deemed to be a Participating Class Member under this Agreement, entitled to all benefits and bound by all terms and conditions of the Settlement, including the Participating Class Members' Releases under Paragraphs 6.2 and 6.3 of this Agreement, regardless whether the Participating Class Member actually receives the Class Notice or objects to the Settlement.
- 8.5.4 Every Class Member who submits a valid and timely Request for Exclusion is a Non-Participating Class Member and shall not receive an Individual Class Payment or have the right to object to the class action components of the Settlement. Because future PAGA claims are subject to claim preclusion upon entry of the Judgment, Non-Participating Class Members who are Aggrieved Employees are deemed to release the claims identified in Paragraph 6.3 of this Agreement and are eligible for an Individual PAGA Payment.
- 8.6 Challenges to Calculation of Workweeks. Each Class Member shall have 60 days after the Administrator mails the Class Notice (plus an additional 14 days for Class Members whose Class Notice is re-mailed) to challenge the number of Class Workweeks and PAGA Pay Periods (if any) allocated to the Class Member in the Class Notice. The Class Member may challenge the allocation by communicating with the Administrator via fax, email or mail. The Administrator must encourage the challenging Class Member to submit supporting documentation. In the absence of any contrary documentation, the Administrator is entitled to presume that the Workweeks contained in the Class Notice are correct so long as they are consistent with the Class Data. The Administrator's determination of each Class Member's allocation of Workweeks and/or Pay Periods shall

be final and not appealable or otherwise susceptible to challenge. The Administrator shall promptly provide copies of all challenges to calculation of Workweeks and/or Pay Periods to Defense Counsel and Class Counsel and the Administrator's determination of the challenges.

8.7 Objections to Settlement.

8.7.1 Only Participating Class Members may object to the class action components of the Settlement and/or this Agreement, including contesting the fairness of the Settlement, and/or amounts requested for the Class Counsel Fees Payment, Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment and/or Class Representative Service Payment.

8.7.2 Participating Class Members may send written objections to the Administrator, by fax, email, or mail. In the alternative, Participating Class Members may appear in Court (or hire an attorney to appear in Court) to present verbal objections at the Final Approval Hearing. A Participating Class Member who elects to send a written objection to the Administrator must do so not later than 60 days after the Administrator's mailing of the Class Notice (plus an additional 14 days for Class Members whose Class Notice was re-mailed).

8.7.3 Non-Participating Class Members have no right to object to any of the class action components of the Settlement.

8.8 Administrator Duties. The Administrator has a duty to perform or observe all tasks to be performed or observed by the Administrator contained in this Agreement or otherwise.

8.8.1 Website, Email Address and Toll-Free Number. The Administrator will establish and maintain and use an internet website to post information of interest to Class Members including the date, time and location for the Final Approval Hearing and copies of the Settlement Agreement, Motion for Preliminary Approval, the Preliminary Approval, the Class Notice, the Motion for Final Approval, the Motion for Class Counsel Fees Payment, Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment and Class Representative Service Payment, the Final Approval and the Judgment. The Administrator will also maintain and monitor an email address and a toll-free telephone number to receive Class Member calls, faxes and emails.

8.8.2 Requests for Exclusion (Opt-outs) and Exclusion List. The Administrator will promptly review on a rolling basis Requests for Exclusion to ascertain their validity. Not later than 5 days after the expiration of the deadline for submitting Requests for Exclusion, the Administrator shall email a list to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel containing (a) the names and other identifying information of Class Members who have timely submitted valid Requests for Exclusion ("Exclusion List"); (b) the names and other identifying information of Class

Members who have submitted invalid Requests for Exclusion; (c) copies of all Requests for Exclusion from Settlement submitted (whether valid or invalid).

- 8.8.3 Weekly Reports. The Administrator must, on a weekly basis, provide written reports to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel that, among other things, tally the number of: Class Notices mailed or re-mailed, Class Notices returned undelivered, Requests for Exclusion (whether valid or invalid) received, objections received, challenges to Workweeks and/or Pay Periods received and/or resolved, and checks mailed for Individual Class Payments and Individual PAGA Payments (“Weekly Report”). The Weekly Reports must include provide the Administrator’s assessment of the validity of Requests for Exclusion and attach copies of all Requests for Exclusion and objections received.
- 8.8.4 Workweek and/or Pay Period Challenges. The Administrator has the authority to address and make final decisions consistent with the terms of this Agreement on all Class Member challenges over the calculation of Workweeks and/or Pay Periods. The Administrator’s decision shall be final and not appealable or otherwise susceptible to challenge.
- 8.8.5 Administrator’s Declaration. Not later than 14 days before the date by which Plaintiff is required to file the Motion for Final Approval of the Settlement, the Administrator will provide to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel, a signed declaration suitable for filing in Court attesting to its due diligence and compliance with all of its obligations under this Agreement, including, but not limited to, its mailing of Class Notice, the Class Notices returned as undelivered, the re-mailing of Class Notices, attempts to locate Class Members, the total number of Requests for Exclusion from Settlement it received (both valid or invalid), the number of written objections and attach the Exclusion List. The Administrator will supplement its declaration as needed or requested by the Parties and/or the Court. Class Counsel is responsible for filing the Administrator’s declaration(s) in Court.
- 8.8.6 Final Report by Settlement Administrator. Within 10 days after the Administrator disburses all funds in the Gross Settlement Amount, the Administrator will provide Class Counsel and Defense Counsel with a final report detailing its disbursements by employee identification number only of all payments made under this Agreement. At least 15 days before any deadline set by the Court, the Administrator will prepare, and submit to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel, a signed declaration suitable for filing in Court attesting to its disbursement of all payments required under this Agreement. Class Counsel is responsible for filing the Administrator's declaration in Court.

- 9. CLASS SIZE ESTIMATES [and ESCALATOR CLAUSE]** Based on its records, Defendant estimates that, as of the date of this Settlement Agreement, (1) there are 622 Class Members and 55,408 Total Workweeks during the Covered Period and (2) there were 367 Aggrieved Employees who worked 9,185 Pay Periods during the PAGA Period.^{vii} In no event can the settlement be less than \$10 per work week.

10. DEFENDANT’S RIGHT TO WITHDRAW. If the number of valid Requests for Exclusion identified in the Exclusion List exceeds 10% of the total of all Class Members, Defendant may, but is not obligated, elect to withdraw from the Settlement. The Parties agree that, if Defendant withdraws, the Settlement shall be void ab initio, have no force or effect whatsoever, and that neither Party will have any further obligation to perform under this Agreement; provided, however, Defendant will remain responsible for paying all Settlement Administration Expenses incurred to that point. Defendant must notify Class Counsel and the Court of its election to withdraw not later than thirty days after the Administrator sends the final Exclusion List to Defense Counsel; late elections will have no effect.

11. MOTION FOR FINAL APPROVAL. Not later than 16 court days before the calendared Final Approval Hearing, Plaintiff will file in Court, a motion for final approval of the Settlement that includes a request for approval of the PAGA settlement under Labor Code section 2699, subd. (l), a Proposed Final Approval Order and a proposed Judgment (collectively “Motion for Final Approval”). Plaintiff shall provide drafts of these documents to Defense Counsel not later than seven days prior to filing the Motion for Final Approval. Class Counsel and Defense Counsel will expeditiously meet and confer in person or by telephone, and in good faith, to resolve any disagreements concerning the Motion for Final Approval.

11.1 Response to Objections. Each Party retains the right to respond to any objection raised by a Participating Class Member, including the right to file responsive documents in Court no later than five court days prior to the Final Approval Hearing, or as otherwise ordered or accepted by the Court.

11.2 Duty to Cooperate. If the Court does not grant Final Approval or conditions Final Approval on any material change to the Settlement (including, but not limited to, the scope of release to be granted by Class Members), the Parties will expeditiously work together in good faith to address the Court’s concerns by revising the Agreement as necessary to obtain Final Approval. The Court’s decision to award less than the amounts requested for the Class Representative Service Payment, Class Counsel Fees Payment, Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment and/or Administrator Expenses Payment shall not constitute a material modification to the Agreement within the meaning of this paragraph.

11.3 Continuing Jurisdiction of the Court. The Parties agree that, after entry of Judgment, the Court will retain jurisdiction over the Parties, Action, and the Settlement solely for purposes of (i) enforcing this Agreement and/or Judgment, (ii) addressing settlement administration matters, and (iii) addressing such post-Judgment matters as are permitted by law.

11.4 Waiver of Right to Appeal. Provided the Judgment is consistent with the terms and conditions of this Agreement, specifically including the Class Counsel Fees Payment and Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment reflected set forth in this Settlement, the Parties, their respective counsel, and all Participating Class Members who did not object to the Settlement as provided in this Agreement, waive all rights to appeal from the

Judgment, including all rights to post-judgment and appellate proceedings, the right to file motions to vacate judgment, motions for new trial, extraordinary writs, and appeals. The waiver of appeal does not include any waiver of the right to oppose such motions, writs or appeals. If an objector appeals the Judgment, the Parties' obligations to perform under this Agreement will be suspended until such time as the appeal is finally resolved and the Judgment becomes final, except as to matters that do not affect the amount of the Net Settlement Amount.

- 11.5 Appellate Court Orders to Vacate, Reverse, or Materially Modify Judgment. If the reviewing Court vacates, reverses, or modifies the Judgment in a manner that requires a material modification of this Agreement (including, but not limited to, the scope of release to be granted by Class Members), this Agreement shall be null and void. The Parties shall nevertheless expeditiously work together in good faith to address the appellate court's concerns and to obtain Final Approval and entry of Judgment, sharing, on a 50-50 basis, any additional Administration Expenses reasonably incurred after remittitur. An appellate decision to vacate, reverse, or modify the Court's award of the Class Representative Service Payment or any payments to Class Counsel shall not constitute a material modification of the Judgment within the meaning of this paragraph, as long as the Gross Settlement Amount remains unchanged.

12. **AMENDED JUDGMENT.** If any amended judgment is required under Code of Civil Procedure section 384, the Parties will work together in good faith to jointly submit and a proposed amended judgment.

13. **ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS.**

- 13.1 No Admission of Liability, Class Certification or Representative Manageability for Other Purposes. This Agreement represents a compromise and settlement of highly disputed claims. Nothing in this Agreement is intended or should be construed as an admission by Defendant that any of the allegations in the Operative Complaint have merit or that Defendant has any liability for any claims asserted; nor should it be intended or construed as an admission by Plaintiff that Defendant's defenses in the Action have merit. The Parties agree that class certification and representative treatment is for purposes of this Settlement only. If, for any reason the Court does grant Preliminary Approval, Final Approval or enter Judgment, Defendant reserves the right to contest certification of any class for any reasons, and Defendant reserves all available defenses to the claims in the Action, and Plaintiff reserves the right to move for class certification on any grounds available and to contest Defendant's defenses. The Settlement, this Agreement and Parties' willingness to settle the Action will have no bearing on, and will not be admissible in connection with, any litigation (except for proceedings to enforce or effectuate the Settlement and this Agreement).
- 13.2 Confidentiality Prior to Preliminary Approval. Plaintiff, Class Counsel, Defendant and Defense Counsel separately agree that, until the Motion for Preliminary Approval of Settlement is filed, they and each of them will not disclose, disseminate and/or publicize, or cause or permit another person to disclose, disseminate or publicize, any of the terms

of the Agreement directly or indirectly, specifically or generally, to any person, corporation, association, government agency, or other entity except: (1) to the Parties' attorneys, accountants, or spouses, all of whom will be instructed to keep this Agreement confidential; (2) counsel in a related matter; (3) to the extent necessary to report income to appropriate taxing authorities; (4) in response to a court order or subpoena; or (5) in response to an inquiry or subpoena issued by a state or federal government agency. Each Party agrees to immediately notify each other Party of any judicial or agency order, inquiry, or subpoena seeking such information. Plaintiff, Class Counsel, Defendant and Defense Counsel separately agree not to, directly or indirectly, initiate any conversation or other communication, before the filing of the Motion for Preliminary Approval, any with third party regarding this Agreement or the matters giving rise to this Agreement except to respond only that "the matter was resolved," or words to that effect. This paragraph does not restrict Class Counsel's communications with Class Members in accordance with Class Counsel's ethical obligations owed to Class Members.

- 13.3 No Solicitation. The Parties separately agree that they and their respective counsel and employees will not solicit any Class Member to opt out of or object to the Settlement, or appeal from the Judgment. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to restrict Class Counsel's ability to communicate with Class Members in accordance with Class Counsel's ethical obligations owed to Class Members.
- 13.4 Integrated Agreement. Upon execution by all Parties and their counsel, this Agreement together with its attached exhibits shall constitute the entire agreement between the Parties relating to the Settlement, superseding any and all oral representations, warranties, covenants, or inducements made to or by any Party.
- 13.5 Attorney Authorization. Class Counsel and Defense Counsel separately warrant and represent that they are authorized by Plaintiff and Defendant, respectively, to take all appropriate action required or permitted to be taken by such Parties pursuant to this Agreement to effectuate its terms, and to execute any other documents reasonably required to effectuate the terms of this Agreement including any amendments to this Agreement.
- 13.6 Cooperation. The Parties and their counsel will cooperate with each other and use their best efforts, in good faith, to implement the Settlement by, among other things, modifying the Settlement Agreement, submitting supplemental evidence and supplementing points and authorities as requested by the Court. In the event the Parties are unable to agree upon the form or content of any document necessary to implement the Settlement, or on any modification of the Agreement that may become necessary to implement the Settlement, the Parties will seek the assistance of a mediator and/or the Court for resolution.
- 13.7 No Prior Assignments. The Parties separately represent and warrant that they have not directly or indirectly assigned, transferred, encumbered, or purported to assign, transfer, or encumber to any person or entity and portion of any liability, claim, demand, action, cause of action, or right released and discharged by the Party in this Settlement.

- 13.8 No Tax Advice. Neither Plaintiff, Class Counsel, Defendant nor Defense Counsel are providing any advice regarding taxes or taxability, nor shall anything in this Settlement be relied upon as such within the meaning of United States Treasury Department Circular 230 (31 CFR Part 10, as amended) or otherwise.
- 13.9 Modification of Agreement. This Agreement, and all parts of it, may be amended, modified, changed, or waived only by an express written instrument signed by all Parties or their representatives, and approved by the Court.
- 13.10 Agreement Binding on Successors. This Agreement will be binding upon, and inure to the benefit of, the successors of each of the Parties.
- 13.11 Applicable Law. All terms and conditions of this Agreement and its exhibits will be governed by and interpreted according to the internal laws of the state of California, without regard to conflict of law principles.
- 13.12 Cooperation in Drafting. The Parties have cooperated in the drafting and preparation of this Agreement. This Agreement will not be construed against any Party on the basis that the Party was the drafter or participated in the drafting.
- 13.13 Confidentiality. To the extent permitted by law, all agreements made, and orders entered during Action and in this Agreement relating to the confidentiality of information shall survive the execution of this Agreement.
- 13.14 Use and Return of Class Data. Information provided to Class Counsel pursuant to Cal. Evid. Code §1152, and all copies and summaries of the Class Data provided to Class Counsel by Defendant in connection with the mediation, other settlement negotiations, or in connection with the Settlement, may be used only with respect to this Settlement, and no other purpose, and may not be used in any way that violates any existing contractual agreement, statute, or rule of court. Not later than 90 days after the date when the Court discharges the Administrator's obligation to provide a Declaration confirming the final pay out of all Settlement funds, Plaintiff shall destroy, all paper and electronic versions of Class Data received from Defendant unless, prior to the Court's discharge of the Administrator's obligation, Defendant makes a written request to Class Counsel for the return, rather than the destructions, of Class Data.
- 13.15 Headings. The descriptive heading of any section or paragraph of this Agreement is inserted for convenience of reference only and does not constitute a part of this Agreement.
- 13.16 Calendar Days. Unless otherwise noted, all reference to "days" in this Agreement shall be to calendar days. In the event any date or deadline set forth in this Agreement falls on a weekend or federal legal holiday, such date or deadline shall be on the first business day thereafter.

- 13.17 Notice. All notices, demands or other communications between the Parties in connection with this Agreement will be in writing and deemed to have been duly given as of the third business day after mailing by United States mail, or the day sent by email or messenger, addressed as follows:

To Plaintiff:

Kingsley & Kingsley, APC
Eric B. Kingsley
Kelsey M. Szamet
Shannen T. Garrett
16133 Ventura Blvd., Suite 1200
Encino, CA 91436

To Defendant:

Lewis Brisbois
Nima Darouian
633 West 5th Street, Suite 4000
Los Angeles, CA 90071

- 13.18 Execution in Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts by facsimile, electronically (i.e. DocuSign), or email which for purposes of this Agreement shall be accepted as an original. All executed counterparts and each of them will be deemed to be one and the same instrument if counsel for the Parties will exchange between themselves signed counterparts. Any executed counterpart will be admissible in evidence to prove the existence and contents of this Agreement.

- 13.19 Stay of Litigation. The Parties agree that upon the execution of this Agreement the litigation shall be stayed, except to effectuate the terms of this Agreement. The Parties further agree that upon the signing of this Agreement that pursuant to CCP section 583.330 to extend the date to bring a case to trial under CCP section 583.310 for the entire period of this settlement process.

Plaintiff

Dated: August 12, 2022



Tikoa Carter

Defendant

Dated: August 12, 2022

Speech and Language Pathology Associates, Inc.

- 13.17 Notice. All notices, demands or other communications between the Parties in connection with this Agreement will be in writing and deemed to have been duly given as of the third business day after mailing by United States mail, or the day sent by email or messenger, addressed as follows:

To Plaintiff:

Kingsley & Kingsley, APC
Eric B. Kingsley
Kelsey M. Szamet
Shannen T. Garrett
16133 Ventura Blvd., Suite 1200
Encino, CA 91436

To Defendant:

Lewis Brisbois
Nima Darouian
633 West 5th Street, Suite 4000
Los Angeles, CA 90071

- 13.18 Execution in Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts by facsimile, electronically (i.e. DocuSign), or email which for purposes of this Agreement shall be accepted as an original. All executed counterparts and each of them will be deemed to be one and the same instrument if counsel for the Parties will exchange between themselves signed counterparts. Any executed counterpart will be admissible in evidence to prove the existence and contents of this Agreement.
- 13.19 Stay of Litigation. The Parties agree that upon the execution of this Agreement the litigation shall be stayed, except to effectuate the terms of this Agreement. The Parties further agree that upon the signing of this Agreement that pursuant to CCP section 583.330 to extend the date to bring a case to trial under CCP section 583.310 for the entire period of this settlement process.

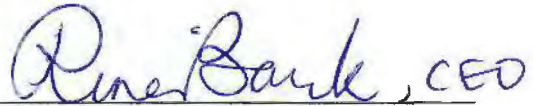
Plaintiff

Dated: August 12, 2022

Tikoa Carter

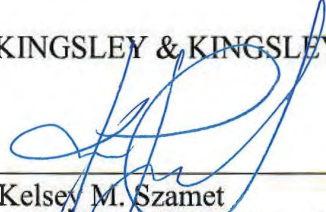
Defendant

Dated: August 12, 2022


Speech and Language Pathology Associates, Inc.

DATED: September 14, 2022

KINGSLEY & KINGSLEY, APC

By: 

Kelsey M. Szamet
Attorneys for Plaintiff and the Proposed Class

DATED: August 12, 2022

LEWIS BRISBOIS

By: 

Nima Darouian
Attorneys for Defendant Speech and Language
Pathology Associates, Inc.

EXHIBIT A

COURT APPROVED NOTICE OF CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT AND HEARING DATE FOR FINAL COURT APPROVAL

Tikoa Carter, an individual, on behalf of herself and others similarly situated Plaintiff, v. Speech and Language Pathology Associates, Inc.; and DOES 1 thru 50, inclusive, DEFENDANTS Case No. 21STCV44618

***The Superior Court for the State of California authorized this Notice. Read it carefully!
It's not junk mail, spam, an advertisement, or solicitation by a lawyer. You are not being sued.***

You may be eligible to receive money from an employee class action lawsuit (“Action”) against Speech and Language Pathology Associates, Inc. (abbreviate name; “DEFENDANT” or “Speech and Language” is used herein as a placeholder) for alleged wage and hour violations. The Action was filed by a former Defendant employee Tikoa Carter (“Plaintiff”) and seeks payment of (1) back wages and other relief for all persons who are employed or have been employed as an hourly employee by SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY ASSOCIATES, INC., in the State of California who worked one or more pay periods during the Covered Period (“Class” or “Class Members”); and (2) penalties under the California Private Attorney General Act (“PAGA”) for all persons who are employed or have been employed as an hourly employee by SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY ASSOCIATES, INC., in the State of California who worked one or more pay periods from December 8, 2020 to July 31, 2022 (“Aggrieved Employees” or “PAGA Members”).

The proposed Settlement has two main parts: (1) a Class Settlement requiring Defendant to fund Individual Class Payments, and (2) a PAGA Settlement requiring Defendant to fund Individual PAGA Payments and pay penalties to the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency (“LWDA”).

Based on Defendant’s records, and the Parties’ current assumptions, **your Individual Class Payment is estimated to be \$_____ (less withholding) and your Individual PAGA Payment is estimated to be \$_____**. The actual amount you may receive likely will be different and will depend on a number of factors. (If no amount is stated for your Individual PAGA Payment, then according to Defendant’s records you are not eligible for an Individual PAGA Payment under the Settlement because you didn’t work during the PAGA Period.)

The above estimates are based on Defendant’s records showing that **you worked _____ workweeks** during the Covered Period and **you worked _____ workweeks** during the PAGA Period. If you believe that you worked more workweeks during either period, you can submit a challenge by the deadline date. See Section 4 of this Notice.

The Court has already preliminarily approved the proposed Settlement and approved this Notice. The Court has not yet decided whether to grant final approval. Your legal rights are affected whether you act or not act. Read this Notice carefully. You will be deemed to have carefully read and understood it. At the Final Approval Hearing, the Court will decide whether to finally approve the Settlement and how much of the Settlement will be paid to Plaintiff and Plaintiff’s attorneys (“Class Counsel”). The Court will also decide whether to enter a judgment

that requires Defendant to make payments under the Settlement and requires Class Members and Aggrieved Employees to give up their rights to assert certain claims against Defendant.

If you worked for Defendant during the Covered Period and/or the PAGA Period, you have two basic options under the Settlement:

- (1) **Do Nothing.** You don't have to do anything to participate in the proposed Settlement and be eligible for an Individual Class Payment and/or an Individual PAGA Payment. As a Participating Class Member, though, you will give up your right to assert Covered Period wage claims and PAGA Period penalty claims against Defendant.
- (2) **Opt-Out of the Class Settlement.** You can exclude yourself from the Class Settlement (opt-out) by submitting the written Request for Exclusion or otherwise notifying the Administrator in writing. If you opt-out of the Settlement, you will not receive an Individual Class Payment. You will, however, preserve your right to personally pursue Covered Period wage claims against Defendant, and, if you are an Aggrieved Employee, remain eligible for an Individual PAGA Payment. You cannot opt-out of the PAGA portion of the proposed Settlement.

Defendant will not retaliate against you for any actions you take with respect to the proposed Settlement.

SUMMARY OF YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS AND OPTIONS IN THIS SETTLEMENT

You Don't Have to Do Anything to Participate in the Settlement	If you do nothing, you will be a Participating Class Member, eligible for an Individual Class Payment and an Individual PAGA Payment (if any). In exchange, you will give up your right to assert the wage claims against Defendant that are covered by this Settlement (Released Claims).
You Can Opt-out of the Class Settlement but not the PAGA Settlement The Opt-out Deadline is [date]	If you don't want to fully participate in the proposed Settlement, you can opt-out of the Class Settlement by sending the Administrator a written Request for Exclusion. Once excluded, you will be a Non-Participating Class Member and no longer eligible for an Individual Class Payment. Non-Participating Class Members cannot object to any portion of the proposed Settlement. See Section 6 of this Notice. You cannot opt-out of the PAGA portion of the proposed Settlement. Defendant must pay Individual PAGA Payments to all Aggrieved Employees and the Aggrieved Employees must give up their rights to pursue Released Claims (defined below).
Participating Class Members Can Object to the Class Settlement but not the PAGA Settlement	All Class Members who do not opt-out ("Participating Class Members") can object to any aspect of the proposed Settlement. The Court's decision whether to finally approve the Settlement will include a determination of how much will be paid to Class Counsel and Plaintiff who pursued the Action on behalf of the Class. You are

Written Objections Must be Submitted by [date]	not personally responsible for any payments to Class Counsel or Plaintiff, but every dollar paid to Class Counsel and Plaintiff reduces the overall amount paid to Participating Class Members. You can object to the amounts requested by Class Counsel or Plaintiff if you think they are unreasonable. See Section 7 of this Notice.
You Can Participate in the [date] Final Approval Hearing	The Court’s Final Approval Hearing is scheduled to take place on [date]. You don’t have to attend but you do have the right to appear (or hire an attorney to appear on your behalf at your own cost), in person, by telephone or by using the Court’s virtual appearance platform. Participating Class Members can verbally object to the Settlement at the Final Approval Hearing. See Section 8 of this Notice.
You Can Challenge the Calculation of Your Workweeks/Pay Periods Written Challenges Must be Submitted by [date]	The amount of your Individual Class Payment and PAGA Payment (if any) depend on how many workweeks you worked at least one day during the Covered Period and how many Pay Periods you worked at least one day during the PAGA Period, respectively. The number Covered Period Workweeks and number of PAGA Period Pay Periods you worked according to Defendant’s records is stated on the first page of this Notice. If you disagree with either of these numbers, you must challenge it by [date]. See Section 4 of this Notice.

1. WHAT IS THE ACTION ABOUT?

Plaintiff is a former] Speech and Language employee. The Action accuses Defendant of violating California labor laws by failing to provide rest breaks pursuant to Labor Code section 226.7; failing to reimburse business-related expenses under Labor Code section 2802; failing to provide accurate itemized wage statements pursuant to Labor Code section 226(a); waiting time penalties pursuant to Labor Code section 203; and violation of Business & Professions Code section 17200. Based on the same claims, Plaintiff has also asserted a claim for civil penalties under the California Private Attorneys General Act (Labor Code §§ 2698, et seq.) (“PAGA”). Plaintiff is represented by attorneys in the Action: Kingsley & Kingsley, APC (“Class Counsel.”)

Defendant strongly denies violating any laws or failing to pay any wages and contends it complied with all applicable laws.

2. WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT THE ACTION HAS SETTLED?

So far, the Court has made no determination whether Defendant or Plaintiff is correct on the merits. In the meantime, Plaintiff and Defendant hired an experienced, neutral mediator in an effort to resolve the Action by negotiating an to end the case by agreement (settle the case) rather than continuing the expensive and time-consuming process of litigation. The negotiations were successful. By signing a lengthy written settlement agreement (“Agreement”) and agreeing to jointly ask the Court to enter a judgment ending the Action and enforcing the Agreement, Plaintiff and Defendant have negotiated a proposed Settlement that is subject to the Court’s Final Approval.

Both sides agree the proposed Settlement is a compromise of disputed claims. By agreeing to settle, Defendant does not admit any violations or concede the merit of any claims.

Plaintiff and Class Counsel strongly believe the Settlement is a good deal for you because they believe that: (1) Defendant has agreed to pay a fair, reasonable and adequate amount considering the strength of the claims and the risks and uncertainties of continued litigation; and (2) Settlement is in the best interests of the Class Members and Aggrieved Employees. The Court preliminarily approved the proposed Settlement as fair, reasonable and adequate, authorized this Notice, and scheduled a hearing to determine Final Approval.

3. WHAT ARE THE IMPORTANT TERMS OF THE PROPOSED SETTLEMENT?

1. Defendant will pay \$565,450.00 as the Gross Settlement Amount (Gross Settlement). Defendant has agreed to deposit the Gross Settlement into an account controlled by the Administrator of the Settlement. The Administrator will use the Gross Settlement to pay the Individual Class Payments, Individual PAGA Payments, Class Representative Service Payment, Class Counsel's attorney's fees and expenses, the Administrator's expenses, and penalties to be paid to the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency ("LWDA"). Assuming the Court grants Final Approval, Defendant will fund the Gross Settlement not more than 14 days after the Judgment entered by the Court become final. The Judgment will be final on the date the Court enters Judgment, or a later date if Participating Class Members object to the proposed Settlement or the Judgment is appealed.
2. Court Approved Deductions from Gross Settlement. At the Final Approval Hearing, Plaintiff and/or Class Counsel will ask the Court to approve the following deductions from the Gross Settlement, the amounts of which will be decided by the Court at the Final Approval Hearing:
 - A. Up to \$186,598.50 (33-1/3% of the Gross Settlement] to Class Counsel for attorneys' fees and up to \$15,000.00 for their litigation expenses. To date, Class Counsel have worked and incurred expenses on the Action without payment.
 - B. Up to \$5,000.00 as a Class Representative Award for filing the Action, working with Class Counsel and representing the Class. A Class Representative Award will be the only monies Plaintiff will receive other than Plaintiff's Individual Class Payment and any Individual PAGA Payment.
 - C. Up to \$20,000.00 to the Administrator for services administering the Settlement.
 - D. Up to \$15,000.00 for PAGA Penalties, allocated 75% to the LWDA PAGA Payment and 25% in Individual PAGA Payments to the Aggrieved Employees based on their PAGA Period Pay Periods.

Participating Class Members have the right to object to any of these deductions. The Court will consider all objections.

3. Net Settlement Distributed to Class Members. After making the above deductions in amounts approved by the Court, the Administrator will distribute the rest of the Gross Settlement (the “Net Settlement”) by making Individual Class Payments to Participating Class Members based on their Covered Period Workweeks.
4. Taxes Owed on Payments to Class Members. Plaintiff and Defendant are asking the Court to approve an allocation of 20% of each Individual Class Payment to taxable wages (“Wage Portion”) and 80% to interest and penalties. (“Non-Wage Portion.”) The Wage Portion is subject to withholdings and will be reported on IRS W-2 Forms. Defendant will separately pay employer payroll taxes it owes on the Wage Portion. The Individual PAGA Payments are counted as penalties rather than wages for tax purposes. The Administrator will report the Individual PAGA Payments and the Non-Wage Portions of the Individual Class Payments on IRS 1099 Forms.

Although Plaintiff and Defendant have agreed to these allocations, neither side is giving you any advice on whether your Payments are taxable or how much you might owe in taxes. You are responsible for paying all taxes (including penalties and interest on back taxes) on any Payments received from the proposed Settlement. You should consult a tax advisor if you have any questions about the tax consequences of the proposed Settlement.

5. Need to Promptly Cash Payment Checks. The front of every check issued for Individual Class Payments and Individual PAGA Payments will show the date when the check expires (the void date). If you don’t cash it by the void date, your check will be automatically cancelled, and the monies will be deposited with the California Controller's Unclaimed Property Fund in your name. If the monies represented by your check is sent to the Controller’s Unclaimed Property, you should consult the rules of the Fund for instructions on how to retrieve your money.
6. Requests for Exclusion from the Class Settlement (Opt-Outs). You will be treated as a Participating Class Member, participating fully in the Class Settlement, unless you notify the Administrator in writing, not later than [date], that you wish to opt-out. The easiest way to notify the Administrator is to send a written and signed Request for Exclusion by the [date] Response Deadline. The Request for Exclusion should be a letter from a Class Member or his/her representative setting forth a Class Member’s name, present address, telephone number, and a simple statement electing to be excluded from the Settlement. Excluded Class Members (i.e., Non-Participating Class Members) will not receive Individual Class Payments, but will preserve their rights to personally pursue wage and hour claims against Defendant.

You cannot opt-out of the PAGA portion of the Settlement. Class Members who exclude themselves from the Class Settlement (Non-Participating Class Members) remain eligible for Individual PAGA Payments and are required to give up their right to assert PAGA claims against Defendant based on the PAGA Period facts alleged in the Action.

7. The Proposed Settlement Will be Void if the Court Denies Final Approval. It is possible the Court will decline to grant Final Approval of the Settlement or decline enter a

Judgment. It is also possible the Court will enter a Judgment that is reversed on appeal. Plaintiffs and Defendant have agreed that, in either case, the Settlement will be void: Defendant will not pay any money and Class Members will not release any claims against Defendant.

8. Administrator. The Court has appointed a neutral company, [name] (the “Administrator”) to send this Notice, calculate and make payments, and process Class Members’ Requests for Exclusion. The Administrator will also decide Class Member Challenges over Workweeks, mail and re-mail settlement checks and tax forms, and perform other tasks necessary to administer the Settlement. The Administrator’s contact information is contained in Section 9 of this Notice.
9. Participating Class Members’ Release. After the Judgment is final and Defendant has fully funded the Gross Settlement (and separately paid all employer payroll taxes), Participating Class Members will be legally barred from asserting any of the claims released under the Settlement. This means that unless you opted out by validly excluding yourself from the Class Settlement, you cannot sue, continue to sue, or be part of any other lawsuit against Defendant or related entities for wages based on the Covered Period facts and PAGA penalties based on PAGA Period facts, as alleged in the Action and resolved by this Settlement.

The Participating Class Members will be bound by the following release:

All Participating Class Members, on behalf of themselves and their respective former and present representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns, release Released Parties from (i) any and all claims, debts, liabilities, demands, obligations, penalties, guarantees, costs, expenses, attorney’s fees, damages, action or causes of action of whatever kind or nature, whether known or unknown, contingent or accrued, that are alleged, or that reasonably could have arisen out of the same facts alleged in the Action, including: (1) failure to provide rest breaks pursuant to Labor Code section 226.7; (2) failure to reimburse business-related expenses under Labor Code section 2802; (3) failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements pursuant to Labor Code section 226(a); (4) waiting time penalties pursuant to Labor Code section 203; (5) violation of Business & Professions Code section 17200; and (6) penalties pursuant to Labor Code section 2699. (collectively, the “Released Claims”). Except as set forth in Section 6.3 of the Settlement Agreement, Participating Class Members do not release any other claims, including claims for vested benefits, wrongful termination, violation of the Fair Employment and Housing Act, unemployment insurance, disability, social security, workers’ compensation, or claims based on facts occurring outside the Covered Period.^{viii}

10. Aggrieved Employees’ PAGA Release. After the Court’s judgment is final, and Defendant has paid the Gross Settlement (and separately paid the employer-side payroll taxes), all Aggrieved Employees will be barred from asserting PAGA claims against Defendant, whether or not they exclude themselves from the Settlement. This means that all Aggrieved

Employees, including those who are Participating Class Members and those who opt-out of the Class Settlement, cannot sue, continue to sue, or participate in any other PAGA claim against Defendant or its related entities based on the PAGA Period facts alleged in the Action and resolved by this Settlement.

The Aggrieved Employees' Releases for Participating and Non-Participating Class Members are as follows:

All Participating and Non-Participating Class Members who are Aggrieved Employees are deemed to release, on behalf of themselves and their respective former and present representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns, the Released Parties, from all claims for PAGA penalties that were alleged, or reasonably could have been alleged, based on the PAGA Period facts stated in the Operative Complaint, the PAGA Notice and ascertained in the course of the Action including, violations of Labor Code sections 201, 202, 203, 226(a), 226.7, and 2802.

4. HOW WILL THE ADMINISTRATOR CALCULATE MY PAYMENT?

1. Individual Class Payments. The Administrator will calculate Individual Class Payments by (a) dividing the Net Settlement Amount by the total number of Workweeks worked by all Participating Class Members, and (b) multiplying the result by the number of Workweeks worked by each individual Participating Class Member.
2. Individual PAGA Payments. The Administrator will calculate Individual PAGA Payments by (a) dividing \$3,750.00 by the total number of PAGA Pay Periods worked by all Aggrieved Employees and (b) multiplying the result by the number of PAGA Period Pay Periods worked by each individual Aggrieved Employee.
3. Workweek/Pay Period Challenges. The number of Class Workweeks you worked during the Covered Period and the number of PAGA Pay Periods you worked during the PAGA Period, as recorded in Defendant's records, are stated in the first page of this Notice. You have until [date] to challenge the number of Workweeks and/or Pay Periods credited to you. You can submit your challenge by signing and sending a letter to the Administrator via mail, email or fax. Section 9 of this Notice has the Administrator's contact information.

You need to support your challenge by sending copies of pay stubs or other records. The Administrator will accept Defendant's calculation of Workweeks and/or Pay Periods based on Defendant's records as accurate unless you send copies of records containing contrary information. You should send copies rather than originals because the documents will not be returned to you. The Administrator will resolve Workweek and/or Pay Period challenges based on your submission and on input from Class Counsel (who will advocate on behalf of Participating Class Members) and Defendant's Counsel. The Administrator's decision is final. You can't appeal or otherwise challenge its final decision.

5. HOW WILL I GET PAID?

1. Participating Class Members. The Administrator will send, by U.S. mail, a single check to every Participating Class Member (i.e., every Class Member who doesn't opt-out) including those who also qualify as Aggrieved Employees. The single check will combine the Individual Class Payment and the Individual PAGA Payment.
2. Non-Participating Class Members. The Administrator will send, by U.S. mail, a single Individual PAGA Payment check to every Aggrieved Employee who opts out of the Class Settlement (i.e., every Non-Participating Class Member).

Your check will be sent to the same address as this Notice. If you change your address, be sure to notify the Administrator as soon as possible. Section 9 of this Notice has the Administrator's contact information.

6. HOW DO I OPT-OUT OF THE CLASS SETTLEMENT?

Submit a written and signed letter with your name, present address, telephone number, and a simple statement that you do not want to participate in the Settlement. The Administrator will exclude you based on any writing communicating your request be excluded. Be sure to personally sign your request, identify the Action as Tiko Carter v. Speech and Language Pathology Associates, Inc. et al, and include your identifying information (full name, address, telephone number, approximate dates of employment, and social security number for verification purposes). You must make the request yourself. If someone else makes the request for you, it will not be valid. **The Administrator must be sent your request to be excluded by [date], or it will be invalid.** Section 9 of the Notice has the Administrator's contact information.

7. HOW DO I OBJECT TO THE SETTLEMENT?

Only Participating Class Members have the right to object to the Settlement. Before deciding whether to object, you may wish to see what Plaintiff and Defendant are asking the Court to approve. At least [insert] days before the [date] Final Approval Hearing, Class Counsel and/or Plaintiff will file in Court (1) a Motion for Final Approval that includes, among other things, the reasons why the proposed Settlement is fair, and (2) a Motion for Fees, Litigation Expenses and Service Award stating (i) the amount Class Counsel is requesting for attorneys' fees and litigation expenses; and (ii) the amount Plaintiff is requesting as a Class Representative Service Award. Upon reasonable request, Class Counsel (whose contact information is in Section 9 of this Notice) will send you copies of these documents at no cost to you. You can also view them on the Administrator's Website **[need details]** or the Court's website **[need details]**.

A Participating Class Member who disagrees with any aspect of the Agreement, the Motion for Final Approval and/or Motion for Fees, Litigation Expenses and Service Award may wish to object, for example, that the proposed Settlement is unfair, or that the amounts requested by Class Counsel or Plaintiff are too high or too low. **The deadline for sending written objections to the Administrator is [date].** Be sure to tell the Administrator what you object to, why you object, and any facts that support your objection. Make sure you identify the Action Tiko Carter v. Speech and Language Pathology Associates, Inc. et al and include your

name, current address, telephone number, and approximate dates of employment for Defendant and sign the objection. Section 9 of this Notice has the Administrator's contact information.

Alternatively, a Participating Class Member can object (or personally retain a lawyer to object at your own cost) by attending the Final Approval Hearing. You (or your attorney) should be ready to tell the Court what you object to, why you object, and any facts that support your objection. See Section 8 of this Notice (immediately below) for specifics regarding the Final Approval Hearing.

8. CAN I ATTEND THE FINAL APPROVAL HEARING?

You can, but don't have to, attend the Final Approval Hearing on [date] at [time] in Department 14 of the Los Angeles Superior Court, located at 312 North Spring Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012. At the Hearing, the judge will decide whether to grant Final Approval of the Settlement and how much of the Gross Settlement will be paid to Class Counsel, Plaintiff, and the Administrator. The Court will invite comment from objectors, Class Counsel and Defense Counsel before making a decision. You can attend (or hire a lawyer to attend) either personally or virtually via LACourtConnect (<https://www.lacourt.org/lacc/>). **[confirm]**. Check the Court's website for the most current information.

It's possible the Court will reschedule the Final Approval Hearing. You should check the Administrator's website [[www.etc.](#)] beforehand or contact Class Counsel to verify the date and time of the Final Approval Hearing.

9. HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

The Agreement sets forth everything Defendant and Plaintiff have promised to do under the proposed Settlement. The easiest way to read the Agreement, the Judgment or any other Settlement documents is to go to **[specify whose]** website at [URL of website]. You can also telephone or send an email to Class Counsel or the Administrator using the contact information listed below, or consult the Superior Court website by going to (<http://www.lacourt.org/casesummary/ui/index.aspx>) **[confirm]** and entering the Case Number for the Action, Case No. 21STCV44618. You can also make an appointment to personally review court documents in the Clerk's Office at the Stanley Mosk Courthouse by calling (213) 830-0800.

DO NOT TELEPHONE THE SUPERIOR COURT TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT THE SETTLEMENT.

Class Counsel:
Eric B. Kingsley
Kelsey M. Szamet
Shannen T. Garrett
eric@kingsleykingsley.com
kelsey@kingsleykingsley.com
shannen@kingsleykingsley.com

service@kingsleykingsley.com
Kingsley & Kingsley, APC
16133 Ventura Blvd., Suite 1200
Encino, CA 91436
(818) 990-8300

[Mailing Address]
[Telephone]
[Fax Number]

Settlement Administrator:
[Name of Company]
[Email Address]

10. WHAT IF I LOSE MY SETTLEMENT CHECK?

If you lose or misplace your settlement check before cashing it, the Administrator will replace it as long as you request a replacement before the void date on the face of the original check. If your check is already void, you should consult the Unclaimed Property Fund [website] for instructions on how to retrieve the funds.

11. WHAT IF I CHANGE MY ADDRESS?

To receive your check, you should immediately notify the Administrator if you move or otherwise change your mailing address.

ⁱ This Form Class Action and PAGA Settlement Agreement is for settlements of single plaintiff wage and hour actions asserting class claims and PAGA claims against a single employer (Defendant). The parties will need to revise this form if there are multiple plaintiffs or multiple defendants. For settlements of wage and hour class actions that do not include PAGA claims, please use the Form Class Action Settlement Agreement and Class Notice.

ⁱⁱ Whether the “date of preliminary approval” yields a fair and adequate payment to Class Members may depend on whether the Class Members, in exchange for their releases of claims, receive consideration for time worked between the date when parties reached a settlement and the date of preliminary approval. The Parties’ *Kullar* analysis must give the Court sufficient information to allow the Court to determine whether the Gross Settlement Amount “represents a reasonable compromise, given the magnitude and apparent merit of the claims being released, discounted by the risks and expenses of attempting to establish and collect on those claims by pursuing the litigation.” (*Luckey v. Superior Court* (2014) 228 Cal.App.4th 81, 94–95, internal quotation marks omitted.)

ⁱⁱⁱ See endnote ii above.

^{iv} The Parties may need to tailor this language to pay periods or shifts depending on the facts of the case.

^v The Parties are free to negotiate a payment plan structure, if appropriate, and payment deadlines may fall earlier as necessary thereto.

^{vi} Note that this is not the only possible appropriate breakdown depending on the claims at issue in the case (e.g. a settlement that is solely a Labor Code Section 226(a) claim.)

^{vii} Insert negotiated terms, if any, addressing the possibility that Defendant’s estimates of class size, Workweeks or Pay Periods turn out to be understated such as an ADR clause imposing a duty to engage in good faith negotiations or mediation or an “escalator” clause memorializing Defendant’s promise to increase the Gross Settlement Amount in an agreed upon proportion to the percentage by which the calculated class size, Workweeks, or Pay Periods exceeds Defendant’s estimates.

^{viii} Releases in Notice should track the releases in the Settlement Agreement.

EXHIBIT “B”

KINGSLEY & KINGSLEY, APC
ERIC B. KINGSLEY, Esq. (SBN 185123)
eric@kingsleykingsley.com
KELSEY M. SZAMET, Esq. (SBN 260264)
kelsey@kingsleykingsley.com
SHANNEN T. GARRETT, Esq. (SBN 316248)
shannen@kingsleykingsley.com
16133 Ventura Blvd., Suite 1200
Encino, CA 91436
Tel: (818) 990-8300, Fax (818) 990-2903

Attorneys for Plaintiff and the Proposed Class

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

TIKOA CARTER, an individual, on behalf of
herself and others similarly situated

PLAINTIFF,

v.

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY
ASSOCIATES, INC.; and DOES 1 thru 50,
inclusive,

DEFENDANTS.

CASE NO. 21STCV44618

[Case Assigned for All Purposes to Hon.
Kenneth R. Freeman, in Dept. 14]

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

Date: XX
Time: XX
Dept.: 14

Complaint Filed: December 8, 2021
FAC Filed: May 19, 2022
Trial Date: None Scheduled

1 The Motion for Preliminary Approval of the Class Action and PAGA Settlement
2 Agreement and Class Notice (“Agreement”), a copy of which is attached as to Plaintiff’s Motion
3 for Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlement as Exhibit “1”, came before this Court on
4 XXXX. The Court, having considered the papers submitted in support of the motion of the parties,

5 **HEREBY ORDERS THE FOLLOWING:**

6 1. The Court grants preliminary approval of the Agreement and the Class based upon
7 the terms set forth in the Agreement filed herewith. The Settlement is fair, adequate, and
8 reasonable to the Class. The Court finds that: (a) the Agreement resulted from extensive arm’s
9 length negotiations; and (b) the Agreement is sufficient to warrant notice of the Settlement to
10 persons in the Class and a full hearing on the final approval of the Settlement.

11 2. “Class” means all persons who are employed or have been employed as an hourly
12 employee by SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY ASSOCIATES, INC., in the State of
13 California who worked one or more pay periods from December 8, 2017 to July 31, 2022 (the
14 “Covered Period”).

15 3. “Aggrieved Employee” or “PAGA Member” means all persons who are employed
16 or have been employed as an hourly employee by SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY
17 ASSOCIATES, INC., in the State of California who worked one or more pay periods from
18 December 8, 2020 to July 31, 2022.

19 4. The Settlement falls within the range of reasonableness and appears to be
20 presumptively valid, subject only to any objections that may be raised at the final fairness hearing
21 and final approval by this Court.

22 5. The Court makes the following preliminary findings for settlement purposes
23 only:

- 24 A. The Class, which consists of approximately 622 persons, is so numerous
that joinder of all members is impracticable;
- 25 B. There appear to be questions of law or fact common to the Class for
26 purposes of determining whether this Settlement should be approved;
- 27 C. Plaintiff’s claims appear to be typical of the claims being resolved through
the proposed settlement;
- 28 D. Plaintiff appears to be capable of fairly and adequately protecting the

interests of the Class Members in connection with the proposed settlement;

E. Common questions of law and fact appear to predominate over questions affecting only individual persons in the Class. Accordingly, the Class appears to be sufficiently cohesive to warrant settlement by representation; and

F. Certification of the Class appears to be superior to other available methods for the fair and efficient resolution of the claims of the Class.

6. The Court approves, as to form and content, the Notice to Class Members in substantially the form attached to the Agreement as Exhibits A (Class Notice).

7. The Court approves the procedure for Class Members to object to the Settlement as set forth in the Class Notice to Class Members.

8. The Court approves the procedure for Class Members to become Participating Class Members as set forth in the Notice to Class Members.

9. The Court directs the mailing of the Notice to Class Members by first class mail to the Class Members in accordance with the Implementation Schedule set forth below. The Court finds that the dates selected for the mailing and distribution of the Notice, as set forth in the Implementation Schedule, meet the requirements of due process and provide the best notice practicable under the circumstances and shall constitute due and sufficient notice to all persons entitled thereto.

10. The Court confirms Kingsley & Kingsley, APC as Class Counsel.

11. The Court confirms the named Plaintiff in the operative complaint in the Action as the Class Representative.

12. The Court approves ILYM Group, Inc. as the Administrator.

13. The Court orders that pursuant to the California Private Attorneys General Act, Labor Code §§ 2698, et seq. ("PAGA"), statutory notice of this Settlement has been and will continue to be given to the Labor & Workforce Development Agency.

14. The Court orders the following Implementation Schedule for further proceedings:

a.	Preliminary Approval	XXXX
b.	Deadline for Defendant to Provide Class Data to Administrator	15 business days from Preliminary Approval

c.	Mail Notice to Class Members	14 calendar days from Administrator's receipt of Class Data
d.	Deadline for Class Members to Postmark Any Opt-Out	60 calendar days from mailing of Notice Packet (judged by postmark date)
e.	Deadline for Class Members to Postmark Any Objection	60 calendar days from mailing of Notice Packet (judged by postmark date)
f.	Deadline for Class Counsel to file Motion for Final Approval of Class Settlement	To be determined by the Court _____
g.	Deadline for Class Counsel to file Motion for Class Counsel Award	To be determined by the Court _____
h.	Final Approval Hearing	To be determined by the Court _____

15. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that if the Court does not execute and file an Order of Final Approval and Judgment, or if the Effective Date of Settlement, as defined in the Agreement, does not occur for any reason, the Agreement and the proposed Settlement that is the subject of this Order shall become null, void, unenforceable and inadmissible in any judicial, administrative or arbitral proceeding for any purpose, and all evidence, court orders and proceedings had in connection therewith, shall be without prejudice to the status quo ante rights of the Parties to the litigation, as more specifically set forth in the Agreement.

16. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, pending further Order of this Court, all proceedings in this matter except those contemplated herein and in the Agreement are hereby stayed.

17. The Court expressly reserves the right to adjourn or continue the Final Fairness Hearing from time to time without further notice to members of the Class.

DATED: _____

JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT

EXHIBIT “C”

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Attorneys for Plaintiff and the Proposed Class

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

TIKOA CARTER, an individual, on behalf of
herself and others similarly situated

PLAINTIFF,

v.

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY
ASSOCIATES, INC.; and DOES 1 thru 50,
inclusive,

DEFENDANTS.

CASE NO. 21STCV44618

[Case Assigned for All Purposes to Hon.
Kenneth R. Freeman, in Dept. 14]

**[PROPOSED] ORDER GRANTING
FINAL APPROVAL OF CLASS ACTION
SETTLEMENT AND ENTERING
JUDGMENT**

Date: XX

Time: XX

Dept.: 14

Complaint Filed: December 8, 2021

FAC Filed: May 19, 2022

Trial Date: None Scheduled

1 **TO ALL PARTIES AND TO THEIR ATTORNEYS OF RECORD:**

2 The above captioned Action is a class action lawsuit brought by Plaintiff TIKOA CARTER
3 (“Plaintiff”) against Defendant SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY ASSOCIATES,
4 INC. (“Defendant”). The Motion for Final Approval of Class Action Settlement came before this
5 Court on XXXX.

6 **WHEREAS**, Judge Kenneth R. Freeman granted preliminary approval of the Class Action
7 and PAGA Settlement Agreement and Class Notice (“Agreement”), attached to the concurrently
8 filed Declaration of Kelsey M. Szamet as Exhibit “1”, on XX.

9 **WHEREAS**, Plaintiff TIKOA CARTER has applied to the Court for an order granting
10 final approval of the Agreement.

11 **WHEREAS**, the Agreement sets forth the terms and conditions of the proposed Settlement
12 and for entry of an order of final approval and entry of final judgment thereon. The Court having
13 read and considered Plaintiff’s Motion for Final Approval of Class Action Settlement; Motion for
14 Approval of Approval of Attorneys’ Fees and Costs; the Declarations of Kelsey M. Szamet, and
15 XXXX of ILYM Group, Inc.; and the supporting documents annexed thereto, now finds:

16 **NOW THEREFORE, GOOD CAUSE APPEARING, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:**

17 1. The Court has personal jurisdiction over all Class Members and that the Court has
18 subject matter jurisdiction to approve the Settlement;

19 2. The terms of the Settlement are fair, just, reasonable, and adequate, consistent and
20 in compliance with California Code of Civil Procedure, the California and United States
21 Constitutions (including the due process clauses), the California Rules of Court and any other
22 applicable law, and in the best interest of each of the Parties and the Class Members and is hereby
23 finally approved in all respects.

24 3. The Parties are hereby directed to perform the terms of the Settlement as described
25 in the Agreement according to its terms and provisions.

26 4. The Agreement is binding on Plaintiff and all other Class Members, except those
27 timely and properly filed Requests for Exclusions, as well as their heirs, executors, and
28 administrators, successors, and assigns.

1 5. There are XX (XX) valid requests for exclusion.

2 6. It is ordered that the Class is certified for settlement purposes only. The Court finds
3 that an ascertainable class exists and a well-defined community of interest exists in the questions
4 of law and fact involved because in the context of the Settlement: (i) there are questions of law
5 and fact common to the Class Members which, as to the Settlement and all related matters,
6 predominate over any individual questions; (ii) the Claims of Plaintiff are typical of the Claims of
7 the Class Members; and (iii) in negotiating, entering into and implementing the Settlement,
8 Plaintiff and Plaintiff's Attorneys have fairly and adequately represented and protected the interest
9 of the Class Members.

10 7. The Court finds that the Notice and notice methodology implemented pursuant to
11 this Settlement (i) constituted the best practicable notice; (ii) constituted notice that was reasonably
12 calculated, under the circumstances, to apprise Class Members of the pendency of the Action, their
13 right to object to or exclude themselves from the proposed Settlement and their right to appear at
14 the Final Settlement Hearing; (iii) were reasonable and constituted due, adequate and sufficient
15 notice to all persons entitled to receive notice; and (iv) met all applicable requirements of the
16 California Code of Civil Procedure, the California and United States Constitution (including the
17 Due Process Clause), the California Rules of Court and any other applicable law.

18 8. The Class is hereby made final. The Class is defined as: "all persons who are
19 employed or have been employed as an hourly employee by SPEECH AND LANGUAGE
20 PATHOLOGY ASSOCIATES, INC., in the State of California who worked one or more pay
21 periods during the Covered Period."

22 9. "Aggrieved Employee" or "PAGA Member" is defined as: "all persons who are
23 employed or have been employed as an hourly employee by SPEECH AND LANGUAGE
24 PATHOLOGY ASSOCIATES, INC., in the State of California who worked one or more pay
25 periods from December 8, 2020 to July 31, 2022."

26 10. The "Covered Period" or "Release Period" means the period from December 8,
27 2017 to July 31, 2022.

28 11. The "PAGA Period" means the period from December 8, 2020 to July 31, 2022.

1 12. The Agreement is not an admission by Defendant, nor is this Final Order a finding
2 of the validity of any allegations or of any wrongdoing by Defendant. Neither this Final Order,
3 the Settlement, nor any document referred to herein, nor any action taken to carry out the
4 Settlement, shall be construed or deemed an admission of liability, culpability, negligence, or
5 wrongdoing on the part of Defendant.

6 13. Pursuant to the Agreement, upon entry of this Final Order, Plaintiff and each Class
7 Member shall fully release and discharge the Released Parties pursuant to the following release,
8 which provides:

9 any and all claims, debts, liabilities, demands, obligations, penalties,
10 guarantees, costs, expenses, attorney's fees, damages, action or
11 causes of action of whatever kind or nature, whether known or
12 unknown, contingent or accrued, that are alleged, or that reasonably
13 could have arisen out of the same facts alleged in the Action,
14 including: (1) failure to provide rest breaks pursuant to Labor Code
15 section 226.7; (2) failure to reimburse business-related expenses
 under Labor Code section 2802; (3) failure to provide accurate
 itemized wage statements pursuant to Labor Code section 226(a);
 (4) waiting time penalties pursuant to Labor Code section 203; (5)
 violation of Business & Professions Code section 17200; and (6)
 penalties pursuant to Labor Code section 2699.

16 14. Plaintiff and all Class Members who have not been timely and properly excluded
17 from the Class, and any person acting on their behalf, are permanently barred and enjoined from:
18 (i) filing, commencing, prosecuting, intervening in, participating in (as class members or
19 otherwise), or receiving any benefits or other relief from, any other lawsuit, in any state or federal
20 court, arbitration, or administrative, regulatory or other proceeding or order in any jurisdiction
21 based on the Released Claims; and (ii) organizing such non-excluded Class Members into a
22 separate class for purposes of pursuing as a purported class action (including by seeking to amend
23 a pending complaint to include class allegations, or by seeking class certification in a pending
24 action) any lawsuit based on or relating to the Released Claims;

25 15. The Agreement provides that the Gross Settlement Amount is five hundred sixty-
26 five thousand four hundred fifty dollars and zero cents (\$565,450.00). The Net Settlement Amount
27 shall be determined according to the terms of the Agreement.

28 16. The Court orders the calculations and the payments to be made and administered in

1 accordance with the terms of the Agreement.

2 17. The Court hereby finds that Plaintiff and Class Counsel adequately represented the
3 Class for purposes of entering into and implementing the settlement. The Court hereby confirms
4 Kingsley & Kingsley, APC as Class Counsel in the Action.

5 18. The Court hereby finds the unopposed application of Class Counsel for a costs and
6 attorneys' fees award provided for under the proposed Settlement to be fair and reasonable in light
7 of all the circumstances and is hereby granted. Of the Gross Settlement Amount, \$186,598.50
8 shall be paid for attorney fees and \$15,000.00 shall be paid for litigation costs.

9 19. The unopposed application of Class Counsel for a Class Representative Service
10 Payment is hereby granted. Of the Gross Settlement Amount, a \$5,000.00 Class Representative
11 Service Payment shall be allocated to Named Plaintiff TIKOA CARTER.

12 20. The unopposed application of Class Counsel for claims administration fees to
13 ILYM Group, Inc. is hereby granted. Of the Gross Settlement Amount, \$20,000.00 shall be paid
14 for settlement administration fees.

15 21. The Court approves the PAGA Penalties in the amount of \$15,000.00. The Court
16 approves 75% of the PAGA Penalties being allocated to the LWDA in the amount of \$11,250.00.
17 The Court further directs that the remaining 25% of the PAGA Penalties, in the amount of \$3,750.00
18 shall be allocated to the Participating Class Member.

19 22. If a Class Member does not cash his or her settlement check within 180 days, the
20 uncashed funds shall be transmitted by the Administrator to the California Controller's Unclaimed
21 Property Fund in the name of the Class Member thereby leaving no "unpaid residue" subject to the
22 requirements of California Code of Civil Procedure Section 384, subd. (b).

23 23. Defendant shall have no further liability for costs, expenses, interest, attorneys'
24 fees, or for any other charge, expense, or liability, except as provided for in the Agreement.

25 24. The Parties are authorized, without further approval from the Court, to agree to and
26 to adopt such amendments, modifications and expansions of this Stipulation and all exhibits
27 attached hereto as (i) are consistent with the Final Judgment; and (ii) do not limit the rights of
28 Class Members under the Stipulation.

1 25. Pursuant to California Rule of Court Rule 3.769(h) and C.C.P. §664.4, the Court
2 shall retain continuing jurisdiction over the Actions, the Parties, and the Class, as well as the
3 administration and enforcement of the terms of the Settlement of this action to enforce the terms
4 of the judgment. Without affecting the finality of the Final Judgment, the Court shall retain
5 continuing jurisdiction over the Actions, the Parties, and the Class, as well as the administration
6 and enforcement of the Settlement. Any disputes or controversies arising with respect to the
7 interpretation, consummation, enforcement, or implementation of the Settlement shall be
8 presented by motion to the Court; provided however, that nothing in this part shall restrict the
9 ability of the Parties to exercise their rights to terminate the Settlement pursuant to the terms of
10 the Agreement.

11 26. This Final Order shall constitute a final judgment.

12 27. The Court hereby dismisses the action (including all individual claims and Released
13 Claims presented thereby) with prejudice, without fees or costs to any party except as provided in
14 the Agreement.

15
16 **DATED:** _____

JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT

EXHIBIT "2"

	A	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1	ALM RESEARCH										
2	2007 NLJ Billing Survey										
3	Fiscal Year - 2007										
4	Billing Source-National Law Journal 12/11/2007										
5	Copyright © 2007, ALM Properties, Inc., All Rights Reserved										
6	Firm Name	Partner Billing Rate High	Partner Billing Rate Low	Associate Billing Rate High	Associate Billing Rate Low	Associate Billing Rate Average	Partner Billing Rate Average	Firmwide Billing Rate Average	Associate Billing Rate Med	Partner Billing Rate Med	Firmwide Billing Rate Med
7	Adams and Reese	\$500	\$225	\$255	\$165	\$198	\$305	\$278	\$197	\$300	\$275
8	Andrews Kurth	\$795	\$400	\$460	\$210						
9	Arent Fox	\$675	\$395	\$440	\$240						
10	Armstrong Teasdale	\$450	\$295	\$295	\$165						
11	Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz	\$525	\$230	\$315	\$160	\$205	\$325	\$280	\$200	\$320	\$270
12	Barnes & Thornburg	\$485	\$265	\$295	\$180	\$225	\$350	\$302	\$220	\$355	\$310
13	Bass, Berry & Sims PLC	\$575	\$300	\$285	\$180						
14	Best Best & Krieger	\$495	\$290	\$350	\$160	\$203	\$275	\$212	\$235	\$390	\$265
15	Bond, Schoeneck & King	\$435	\$200	\$250	\$140	\$179	\$294	\$253	\$175	\$295	\$300
16	Bradley Arant Rose & White	\$520	\$240	\$280	\$180	\$211	\$335	\$258	\$205	\$330	\$260
17	Briggs and Morgan	\$500	\$250	\$325	\$195	\$233	\$391	\$344	\$230	\$395	\$350
18	Brinks Hofer Gilson & Lione	\$650	\$300	\$410	\$180	\$273	\$479	\$365	\$250	\$485	\$350
19	Broad and Cassel	\$450	\$250	\$310	\$165	\$232	\$361	\$294	\$225	\$360	\$275
20	Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck	\$675	\$260	\$270	\$170	\$219	\$373	\$308	\$218	\$390	\$325
21	Bryan Cave	\$695	\$320	\$495	\$165	\$295	\$493	\$394	\$295	\$490	\$375
22	Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney	\$750	\$320	\$460	\$150						
23	Bullivant Houser Bailey	\$500	\$225	\$350	\$150	\$240	\$285	\$260	\$220	\$275	\$250
24	Burr & Forman	\$470	\$250	\$305	\$175	\$235	\$340				
25	Butzel Long	\$575	\$210	\$350	\$155						
26	Carlton Fields	\$600	\$280	\$375	\$190	\$243	\$406	\$312	\$245	\$405	\$300
27	Cooley Godward Kronish	\$875	\$470	\$555	\$250						
28	Covington & Burling	\$800	\$510	\$525	\$240						
29	Cozen O'Connor	\$750	\$230	\$530	\$155	\$283	\$420	\$350	\$280	\$425	\$340
30	Curtis, Mallet-Prevost, Colt & Mosle	\$735	\$635	\$560	\$280	\$361	\$666	\$396	\$360	\$685	\$480
31	Davis Wright Tremaine	\$695	\$300	\$380	\$170	\$257	\$430	\$375	\$250	\$423	\$375
32	Day Pitney	\$650	\$350	\$525	\$210	\$306	\$472	\$374	\$310	\$465	\$375
33	Dickinson Wright	\$530	\$260	\$275	\$170						
34	Dickstein Shapiro Morin & Oshinsky	\$825	\$425	\$440	\$225	\$336	\$552	\$438	\$360	\$550	\$425
35	Dinsmore & Shohl	\$475	\$235	\$285	\$155	\$199	\$342	\$275	\$190	\$340	\$250
36	Dorsey & Whitney	\$750	\$220	\$470	\$145	\$274	\$463	\$375	\$260	\$463	\$365
37	Duane Morris	\$705	\$315	\$465	\$150	\$310	\$475	\$416	\$305	\$470	\$415
38	Dykema Gosssett	\$625	\$245	\$390	\$185	\$272	\$403				
39	Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge	\$700	\$350	\$450	\$170	\$293	\$515	\$407	\$280	\$513	\$400
40	Epstein Becker & Green	\$675	\$280	\$440	\$155	\$290	\$471	\$380	\$280	\$475	\$395
41	Fenwick & West	\$775	\$500	\$500	\$245	\$360	\$590	\$395	\$370	\$600	\$410
42	Foley & Lardner	\$855			\$185	\$387	\$550	\$476	\$375	\$550	\$475
43	Ford & Harrison	\$560	\$325	\$395	\$210						
44	Fowler White Boggs Banker	\$500	\$230	\$325	\$150	\$217	\$345	\$303	\$210	\$340	\$300
45	Fox Rothschild	\$595	\$240	\$440	\$190						

	A	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
	Firm Name	Partner Billing Rate High	Partner Billing Rate Low	Associate Billing Rate High	Associate Billing Rate Low	Associate Billing Rate Average	Partner Billing Rate Average	Firmwide Billing Rate Average	Associate Billing Rate Med	Partner Billing Rate Med	Firmwide Billing Rate Med
46											
47	Frost Brown Todd	\$455	\$225	\$255	\$145	\$180	\$303	\$256	\$170	\$295	\$255
48	Gardere Wynne Sewell	\$715	\$350	\$425	\$220	\$292	\$472	\$405	\$265	\$475	\$405
49	GrayRobinson, PA	\$500	\$175	\$250	\$250	\$198	\$319	\$224			
50	Greenberg Traurig, PA	\$850	\$300	\$505	\$175	\$311	\$490	\$407	\$310	\$500	\$415
51	Harris Beach	\$475	\$250	\$275	\$140						
52	Hiscock & Barclay LLP	\$375	\$220	\$250	\$160	\$185	\$278	\$245	\$180	\$280	\$250
53	Hodgson Russ	\$645	\$215	\$395	\$155	\$219	\$337	\$254	\$205	\$350	\$250
54	Hogan & Hartson	\$850	\$300	\$525	\$150	\$385	\$600	\$490	\$370	\$590	
55	Holland & Hart	\$585	\$275	\$345	\$165	\$269	\$388	\$335	\$275	\$385	\$335
56	Holme Roberts & Owen	\$635	\$285	\$420	\$195	\$284	\$412	\$353	\$265	\$410	\$345
57	Howard, Rice, Nemerovski, Canady, Falk & Rabkin	\$775	\$495	\$485	\$275						
58	Hughes Hubbard & Reed	\$825	\$595	\$560	\$240						
59	Husch & Eppenberger	\$425	\$190	\$260	\$130	\$179	\$297	\$248	\$175	\$295	\$245
60	Jackson Lewis	\$575	\$235	\$450	\$210						
61	Jenner & Block LLP	\$900	\$450	\$425	\$275	\$327	\$562		\$325	\$525	
62	Jones, Walker, Waechter, Poitevent, Carrere & Denegre	\$600	\$210	\$225	\$150						
63	Kelley Drye & Warren	\$800	\$400	\$500	\$255						
64	Knobbe, Martens, Olson & Bear	\$645	\$340	\$420	\$215						
65	Lane Powell Moss & Miller	\$515	\$300	\$300	\$205	\$255	\$370	\$345	\$255	\$370	\$345
66	Lathrop & Gage	\$450	\$225	\$300	\$140	\$185	\$300	\$215	\$185	\$300	\$260
67	Leonard, Street and Deinard	\$500	\$300	\$300	\$185						
68	Lewis, Rice & Fingersh	\$425	\$240	\$295	\$130						
69	Lindquist & Vennum	\$500	\$260	\$260	\$165						
70	Locke, Lord, Bissell & Liddell	\$900	\$375	\$390	\$190	\$281	\$488	\$399	\$280	\$490	\$425
71	Loeb & Loeb	\$875	\$425	\$500	\$240	\$384	\$606	\$505	\$400	\$600	\$500
72	Lord, Bissell & Brook	\$690	\$335	\$410	\$200	\$299	\$473	\$410	\$300	\$475	\$415
73	Lowenstein Sandler	\$725	\$380	\$395	\$205						
74	Luce, Forward, Hamilton & Scripps	\$725	\$325	\$450	\$220	\$281	\$465	\$381	\$280	\$475	\$395
75	Manatt, Phelps & Phillips	\$785	\$520	\$480	\$265	\$395	\$600	\$518	\$415	\$590	\$550
76	Marshall, Dennehey, Warner, Coleman & Goggin	\$400	\$135	\$300	\$120						
77	McCarter & English LLP	\$650	\$325	\$395	\$205						
78	McElroy Deutsch, Mulvaney & Carpenter	\$450	\$295	\$225	\$135	\$180	\$250	\$195	\$165	\$235	\$215
79	McKee Nelson	\$920	\$635	\$595	\$375	\$446	\$760	\$489	\$455	\$755	\$475
80	Michael Best & Friedrich	\$550	\$225	\$300	\$185	\$234	\$363	\$321	\$235	\$350	\$325
81	Miles & Stockbridge	\$535	\$315	\$405	\$205	\$260	\$397				
82	Miller & Martin	\$580	\$230	\$295	\$160	\$201	\$338	\$306	\$195	\$340	\$320
83	Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, PLC	\$595	\$265	\$340	\$160	\$225	\$400	\$285	\$220	\$400	\$335
84	Montgomery, McCracken, Walker & Rhoads	\$575	\$320	\$320	\$195	\$260	\$419	\$360			
85	Moore & Van Allen	\$765	\$265	\$330	\$175						
86	Morgan, Lewis & Bockius	\$850	\$375	\$575	\$200						
87	Morris, Manning & Martin	\$625	\$350	\$400	\$180	\$285	\$436	\$380	\$310	\$395	\$440
88	Nexsen Pruet Jacobs & Pollard	\$420	\$220	\$250	\$150						
89	Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart	\$575	\$270	\$360	\$200	\$256	\$348	\$312			
90	Patton Boggs	\$920	\$320	\$520	\$205	\$375	\$536	\$456	\$385	\$525	\$455
91	Pepper Hamilton	\$750	\$335	\$425	\$200						
92	Perkins Cole	\$805	\$205	\$500	\$145						

	A	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
	Firm Name	Partner Billing Rate High	Partner Billing Rate Low	Associate Billing Rate High	Associate Billing Rate Low	Associate Billing Rate Average	Partner Billing Rate Average	Firmwide Billing Rate Average	Associate Billing Rate Med	Partner Billing Rate Med	Firmwide Billing Rate Med
93											
94	Phelps Dunbar	\$450	\$170	\$205	\$130	\$174	\$243	\$184	\$175		
95	Phillips Lytle	\$435	\$245	\$300	\$140	\$205	\$309	\$223	\$205	\$300	\$215
96	Polsinelli Shalton Welte Suelthaus	\$600	\$250	\$250	\$175						
97	Quarles & Brady	\$575	\$260	\$335	\$185	\$233	\$377	\$319	\$235	\$375	\$325
98	Reed Smith	\$825	\$350	\$510	\$200	\$374	\$558	\$395	\$350	\$525	\$385
99	Robinson & Cole	\$575	\$340	\$325	\$200	\$295	\$424	\$328	\$280	\$420	\$330
100	Roetzel & Andress	\$460	\$210	\$275	\$110	\$198	\$302	\$264	\$200	\$300	\$260
101	Rutan & Tucker	\$600	\$335	\$350	\$210						
102	Saul Ewing	\$750	\$315	\$485	\$180	\$273	\$426	\$357	\$255	\$415	\$365
103	Schnader Harrison Segal & Lewis	\$750	\$240	\$385	\$175						
104	Schulte Roth & Zabel	\$850	\$650	\$585	\$235	\$435	\$724		\$440	\$745	
105	Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton	\$795	\$425	\$550	\$260						
106	Shughart Thomson & Kilroy	\$475	\$235	\$225	\$160						
107	Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick	\$465	\$200	\$360	\$180	\$221	\$311	\$289	\$220	\$305	\$300
108	Sills Cummis Epstein & Gross	\$650	\$350	\$375	\$195						
109	Smith, Gambrell & Russell	\$575	\$250	\$345	\$175						
110	Snell & Wilmer	\$675	\$275	\$390	\$170	\$248	\$390				
111	Steptoe & Johnson PLLC	\$325	\$200	\$250	\$170						
112	Stinson Morrison Hecker	\$600	\$230	\$250	\$175	\$207	\$333	\$295	\$225	\$365	\$285
113	Stoel Rives	\$500	\$275	\$350	\$160	\$231	\$379	\$324	\$230	\$375	\$330
114	Strasburger & Price	\$560	\$225	\$395	\$200	\$234	\$367	\$326	\$223	\$363	\$322
115	Sullivan & Worcester	\$700	\$415	\$420	\$245	\$309	\$550	\$438	\$290	\$540	\$440
116	Sutherland Asbill & Brennan	\$715	\$375	\$415	\$215	\$292	\$511	\$335	\$280	\$500	\$305
117	Thacher Proffitt & Wood	\$785	\$525	\$495	\$275	\$353	\$674	\$428	\$365	\$700	\$395
118	Thompson & Knight	\$730	\$370	\$370	\$205	\$295	\$496	\$415	\$310	\$485	\$400
119	Thompson Coburn	\$580	\$265	\$370	\$170						
120	Ulmer & Berne	\$470	\$240	\$290	\$165	\$212	\$343	\$280			
121	Vedder, Price, Kaufman & Kammholz	\$650	\$335	\$410	\$205	\$281	\$430	\$372	\$370	\$425	\$365
122	Wiggin and Dana	\$590	\$295	\$350	\$195						
123	Williams Mullen	\$600	\$300	\$425	\$205						
124	Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr	\$1,000	\$475	\$495	\$215						
125	Winstead Sechrest & Minick	\$620	\$345	\$360	\$180						
126	Winston & Strawn	\$845	\$400	\$590	\$200	\$365	\$608	\$455	\$395	\$640	\$523
127	Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice	\$575	\$290	\$370	\$195	\$268	\$426	\$355	\$265	\$425	\$360

EXHIBIT "3"

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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<http://www.wsj.com/articles/legal-fees-reach-new-pinnacle-1-500-an-hour-1454960708>

BUSINESS | LAW

Legal Fees Cross New Mark: \$1,500 an Hour

Billing rates for partners at elite corporate law firms keep rising, despite low inflation, weak demand



Documents filed in chapter 11 bankruptcy cases offer a rare public glimpse at the mounting hourly fees of law partners at elite corporate law firms. Above, the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in New York. PHOTO: BRENDAN MCDERMID/REUTERS

By **SARA RANDAZZO** and **JACQUELINE PALANK**

Updated Feb. 9, 2016 10:11 a.m. ET

The day of the \$1,500-an-hour lawyer has arrived.

Partners at some of the nation's top law firms are approaching—and, in a few cases, surpassing—that watershed billing rate, making the \$1,000-an-hour legal fees that once seemed so steep look quaint by comparison.

Despite low inflation and weak demand for legal services, rates at large corporate law firms have risen by 3% to 4% a year since the economic downturn, according to Citi Private Bank's Law Firm Group.

“We just raise them every year,” said John Altorelli, a finance lawyer at DLA Piper LLP in New York, who says the firm has set his rate at more than \$1,500 an hour. Mr. Altorelli, who filed for personal bankruptcy in 2014 to halt a legal battle with the estate of his former law firm, Dewey & LeBoeuf LLP, cracked the \$1,000-an-hour mark a decade ago. His fees have risen steadily ever since.

To soften the blow to clients, Mr. Altorelli does more than half his work on some kind of fixed-fee basis. “Using hourly rates is really anachronistic, but we still do it,” he said.

Raising rates ensures that law firms keep up with the competition and helps them wrest more money from clients, who routinely demand discounts for all but the most sensitive work.

“If you think of the rules of supply and demand, how in the world can they keep raising their rates?” said Jeff Carr, a former general counsel of oil-and-gas services and equipment company FMC Technologies who for years has been an outspoken opponent of hourly legal rates.

The rate creep has boosted law firms’ revenue at a time when many of them are under pressure from lower-cost legal-service providers and corporate clients that are keeping more legal work in-house. Revenue at law firms rose 4% last year, according to Wells Fargo Private Bank’s Legal Specialty Group, though demand rose just 0.5%.

“Lots of law firms will charge whatever the market can bear,” said the head of one of the nation’s 200 largest law firms.

Documents filed in chapter 11 bankruptcy cases offer a rare public glimpse at mounting fees. These court filings show the rates of partners specializing in corporate restructuring, as well as those with specialties like tax, litigation and corporate law.

A review of filings over the past three months in about two dozen bankruptcy cases shows that senior partners routinely charge between \$1,200 and \$1,300 an hour, with top rates at several large law firms exceeding \$1,400.

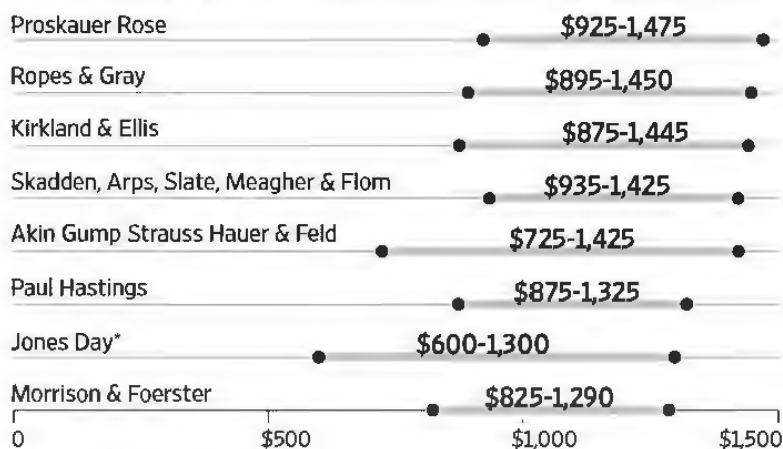
Proskauer Rose LLP’s hourly partner billing rate has climbed as high as \$1,475, while Ropes & Gray LLP’s tops out at \$1,450, court papers show.

Kirkland & Ellis LLP’s top hourly billing rate is now \$1,445. And rates at two firms—Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP and Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP—peak at \$1,425 an hour.

Representatives of the law firms declined to comment.

Top Billers

Hourly rates of partners at top U.S. law firms now approach \$1,500.



*Includes partners and of counsel

Source: Bankruptcy court filings

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Martin Bienenstock, who leads Proskauer's restructuring practice, called the \$1,225 an hour he billed clients last year "a market rate similar to my peers at other firms," and said he charges the same rate for nonbankruptcy work.

"The clients have kept coming back and growing during my 38-year career," he

said in an email, adding that clients generally prefer dealing directly with senior lawyers versus younger associates with lower rates.

In disclosing their firmwide rate increases, many firms tell the courts it is a standard way of keeping pace with "economic and other conditions." These include rising fixed costs, such as real estate and salaries.

In theory, a law-firm partner's pay rises and falls with the success of the firm. But, as competition for top talent increases, many firms feel the need to guarantee salaries or ensure a partner's pay doesn't fall, even in down years.

Still, only elite lawyers can charge \$1,400 an hour or more. Such rates are found almost exclusively in New York and other major markets, and only in the least price-sensitive fields like mergers and acquisitions, restructuring, tax, antitrust and high-stakes litigation and appeals.

For lawyers at the very top of those fields, hourly rates can hit \$1,800 or even \$1,950.

"You have a very few people at the very top where price is almost no object," said legal consultant Bruce MacEwen, who likens it to the way celebrities, sports stars and best-selling authors are paid. "It is a talent market."

Most lawyers in the U.S. fall well below those high marks. In a survey of in-house legal departments by BTI Consulting Group, the average highest rate paid for

law-firm partners was \$875 an hour in 2015, up more than 27% from three years earlier. Of the respondents, 38% had paid more than \$1,000 an hour for a lawyer, and the highest rate those in the survey paid was \$1,600 an hour.

For many firms, the stated rate is simply a starting point in discussions with corporate law departments. As a result, said legal consultant Ward Bower of Altman Weil, “sophisticated” law firms tend to implement annual rate increases to offset clients’ requests for discounts.

Such discounts are becoming more commonplace. A decade ago, law firms could typically get clients to pay around 92% of their stated rates, according to Thomson Reuters Peer Monitor. Last year, that fell to less than 83%.

Smaller companies can get squeezed the most on fees, because they don’t send enough work to any one law firm to get the best deals.

Companies with \$4 billion or more in annual revenue were twice as likely as those with less than \$100 million in revenue to use some form of alternative fee, according to a survey from industry trade group the Association of Corporate Counsel.

Some industry watchers view the raise-and-discount approach with skepticism.

“If clients are pushing back on rates, the answer isn’t to raise them” and then ask for a discount, Mr. MacEwen said. “The answer is to provide better total value.”

Write to Sara Randazzo at sara.randazzo@wsj.com and Jacqueline Palank at jacqueline.palank@wsj.com

EXHIBIT "4"

LAFFEY MATRIX

History

Basic Law

See the Matrix

Contact us

Home

			Years Out of Law School *				
Year	Adjustmt Factor**	Paralegal/ Law Clerk	1-3	4-7	8-10	11-19	20 +
6/01/23- 5/31/24	1.059295	\$239	\$437	\$538	\$777	\$878	\$1057
6/01/22- 5/31/23	1.085091	\$225	\$413	\$508	\$733	\$829	\$997
6/01/21- 5/31/22	1.006053	\$208	\$381	\$468	\$676	\$764	\$919
6/01/20- 5/31/21	1.015894	\$206	\$378	\$465	\$672	\$759	\$914
6/01/19- 5/31/20	1.0049	\$203	\$372	\$458	\$661	\$747	\$899
6/01/18- 5/31/19	1.0350	\$202	\$371	\$455	\$658	\$742	\$894
6/01/17- 5/31/18	1.0463	\$196	\$359	\$440	\$636	\$717	\$864
6/01/16- 5/31/17	1.0369	\$187	\$343	\$421	\$608	\$685	\$826
6/01/15- 5/31/16	1.0089	\$180	\$331	\$406	\$586	\$661	\$796
6/01/14- 5/31/15	1.0235	\$179	\$328	\$402	\$581	\$655	\$789
6/01/13- 5/31/14	1.0244	\$175	\$320	\$393	\$567	\$640	\$771
6/01/12- 5/31/13	1.0258	\$170	\$312	\$383	\$554	\$625	\$753
6/01/11- 5/31/12	1.0352	\$166	\$305	\$374	\$540	\$609	\$734
6/01/10- 5/31/11	1.0337	\$161	\$294	\$361	\$522	\$589	\$709
6/01/09- 5/31/10	1.0220	\$155	\$285	\$349	\$505	\$569	\$686
6/01/08- 5/31/09	1.0399	\$152	\$279	\$342	\$494	\$557	\$671
6/01/07-5/31/08	1.0516	\$146	\$268	\$329	\$475	\$536	\$645
6/01/06-5/31/07	1.0256	\$139	\$255	\$313	\$452	\$509	\$614
6/1/05-5/31/06	1.0427	\$136	\$249	\$305	\$441	\$497	\$598
6/1/04-5/31/05	1.0455	\$130	\$239	\$293	\$423	\$476	\$574
6/1/03-6/1/04	1.0507	\$124	\$228	\$280	\$405	\$456	\$549
6/1/02-5/31/03	1.0727	\$118	\$217	\$267	\$385	\$434	\$522
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6/1/00-5/31/01	1.0529	\$106	\$195	\$239	\$345	\$388	\$468
6/1/99-5/31/00	1.0491	\$101	\$185	\$227	\$328	\$369	\$444
6/1/98-5/31/99	1.0439	\$96	\$176	\$216	\$312	\$352	\$424
6/1/97-5/31/98	1.0419	\$92	\$169	\$207	\$299	\$337	\$406
6/1/96-5/31/97	1.0396	\$88	\$162	\$198	\$287	\$323	\$389
6/1/95-5/31/96	1.032	\$85	\$155	\$191	\$276	\$311	\$375

6/1/94-5/31/95	1.0237	\$82	\$151	\$185	\$267	\$301	\$363
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The methodology of calculation and benchmarking for this Updated Laffey Matrix has been approved in a number of cases. See, e.g., *DL v. District of Columbia*, 267 F.Supp.3d 55, 69 (D.D.C. 2017)

* $\frac{1}{2}$ Years Out of Law School $\frac{1}{2}$ is calculated from June 1 of each year, when most law students graduate. $\frac{1}{2}$ 1-3" includes an attorney in his 1st, 2nd and 3rd years of practice, measured from date of graduation (June 1). $\frac{1}{2}$ 4-7" applies to attorneys in their 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th years of practice. An attorney who graduated in May 1996 would be in tier $\frac{1}{2}$ 1-3" from June 1, 1996 until May 31, 1999, would move into tier $\frac{1}{2}$ 4-7" on June 1, 1999, and tier $\frac{1}{2}$ 8-10" on June 1, 2003.

** The Adjustment Factor refers to the nation-wide Legal Services Component of the Consumer Price Index produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor.

EXHIBIT "5"

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Speech and Language Pathology Associates, Inc. adv. Carter, Tikoa | Filevine

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3/28/24, 10:14 AM

Speech and Language Pathology Associates, Inc. adv. Carter, Tikoa | Filevine

Docs

Tikoa Cater et al. v. Speech and Language Pathology Associates Inc. INVO...

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Date Incurred

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Date Incurred

1/3/2022

Notes

Notice of Court's MO and ISC Order

3/28/24, 10:14 AM

Speech and Language Pathology Associates, Inc. adv. Carter, Tikoa | Filevine

Created: 1/3/2022 at 1:46 PM				\$1.40
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Created: 11/12/2021 at 11:46 AM

Trialworks TaskCode		Date Incurred	Payee
Postage Cost		11/4/2021	DocuSign

Postage Cost

Created: 2/11/2022 at 9:36 AM

Trialworks TaskCode		Date Incurred	Payee
Postage Cost		11/2/2021	DocuSign

Postage Cost

Created: 7/26/2022 at 1:23 PM

(Proof of Submission to the LWDA)

EXHIBIT "6"

(PROOF OF SERVICE)
[CCP 1013(a)(3)]
STATE OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

I am employed in the County of Los Angeles, State of California. I am over the age of 18 years and not a party to the within action. My business address is 16133 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 1200, Encino, California 91436.

On March 29, 2024, I served all interested parties in this action the following documents described as: **DECLARATION OF KELSEY M. SZAMET IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFF'S MOTION FOR FINAL APPROVAL OF CLASS SETTLEMENT and MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF ATTORNEYS' FEES AND COSTS** by placing a true copy thereof enclosed in a sealed envelope addressed as follows:

O'HAGAN MEYER

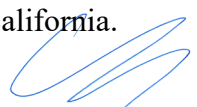
Katherina Den Bleyker, Esq.
kdenbleyker@ohaganmeyer.com
550 S Hope St., Suite 2400
Los Angeles, CA 90071

[XX] BY ELECTRONIC MAIL THROUGH CASE ANYWHERE: On interested parties set forth on the attached service list.

[XX] BY ELECTRONIC SERVICE: I caused a true and correct copy thereof to be electronically filed using the Labor and Workforce Development Agency Electronic Filing ("EF") System (<https://dir.tfaforms.net/315>) and service was completed by electronic means by transmittal of the documents referenced herein on the EF System.

[XX] (STATE) I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the above is true and correct.

Executed on March 29, 2024, at Woodland Hills, California.



Michelle Tanzer