

Arsenio Barajas v. Quanex Homeshield, LLC

Sacramento County Superior Court Case No. 34-2022-00317535

CLASS ACTION AND PAGA SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

This Class Action and PAGA Settlement Agreement is entered into by and between Plaintiff Arsenio Barajas, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated, and Defendant Quanex Homeshield, LLC, and is approved by their respective counsel of record, subject to the terms and conditions hereof and the Court's approval.

A. Definitions

1. "Action" or "Lawsuit" means and refers to the case entitled *Barajas v. Quanex Homeshield, LLC*, Case No. 34-2022-00317535, filed in the Sacramento County Superior Court.

2. "Allegedly Aggrieved Employees" means all non-exempt, hourly employees who work or worked for Defendant in California during the PAGA Period, as defined below.

3. "Agreement," "Settlement Agreement," "Settlement," or "Stipulation" shall mean this Class Action and PAGA Settlement Agreement, including any attached Exhibits.

4. "Class Claims" or "Released Class Claims" will include all claims that were pled in the First Amended Complaint based on the facts alleged therein, or that could have been alleged based upon the facts asserted therein, except the claim under the PAGA, including, claims for failure to pay minimum wages, failure to pay overtime wages and/or failure to pay such wages at the correct rate(s) of pay, failure to pay all sick time wages and/or failure to pay such wages at the correct rate(s) of pay, failure to pay all vacation wages and/or failure to pay such wages at the correct rate(s) of pay, meal and rest break violations, failure to pay meal and rest break premium pay and/or failure to pay such premium pay at the correct rate(s) of pay, failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements, failure to timely pay all wages upon separation of employment, and unfair and unlawful business practices.

5. "Class Counsel" refers to Mehrdad Bokhour of Bokhour Law Group, P.C. and Joshua Falakassa of Falakassa Law, P.C.

6. "Class Data" means a complete list that Defendant will diligently and in good faith compile from its records and provide to the Settlement Administrator and shall include: each

1 respective Settlement Class Member's full name; last known address; last known telephone
2 number; Social Security Number; and dates of employment and/or number of Workweeks worked
3 during the Class Period and the number of PAGA Periods worked during the PAGA Period, if
4 applicable. At no time during the Settlement process will any Class Member's identifying
5 information, as described in this paragraph above, be filed with the Court, except under seal and
6 only if ordered by the Court.

7 7. "Class Period" and "Class Release Period" shall mean March 29, 2018 through
8 June 6, 2023.

9 8. "Class Representative" or "Plaintiff" means and refers to Arsenio Barajas.

10 9. "Complaint" refers to the First Amended Complaint filed in Sacramento County
11 Superior Court action entitled *Barajas v. Quanex Homeshield, LLC*, Case No. 34-2022-00317535.

12 10. "Court" means the California Superior Court, County of Sacramento or any Court
13 of competent jurisdiction.

14 11. "Defendant" means and refers to Quanex Homeshield, LLC.

15 12. "Defendant's Counsel" or "Defense Counsel" mean and refer to John F. Kuenstler,
16 Esq. and Caroline C. Dickey, Esq. of Barnes & Thornburg LLP.

17 13. "Effective Date" means the latter of (a) The Court's final approval of the
18 settlement if no objection(s) by or on behalf of Class Members have been filed and not withdrawn;
19 (b) the time for appeal has expired if an objection has been filed and no appeal has been filed or
20 has been filed and withdrawn; or (c) the final resolution of any appeal that has been filed. "Final"
21 means that the Settlement has been granted "Final Approval" by the Court and the "Effective
22 Date" has occurred.

23 14. "Final Approval" refers to the order of the Court granting final approval of this
24 Settlement Agreement and entering a judgment approving this Settlement on substantially the
25 same terms provided herein or as may be modified by subsequent agreement of the Parties or
26 order of the Court.

27 15. "Final Settlement Class" means, collectively, all Participating Class Members and
28 all Allegedly Aggrieved Employees.

1 16. “First Amended Complaint” means the First Amended Complaint that Plaintiff has
2 filed in this Action.

3 17. “Individual Settlement Amount” shall have the meaning ascribed to it in Paragraph
4 49(d) below.

5 18. “Net Settlement Amount” shall have the meaning ascribed to it in Paragraph 49(c)
6 below.

7 19. “Notice” means the Notice of Proposed Class Action Settlement and Final
8 Approval Hearing that will be sent to the Settlement Class Members and Allegedly Aggrieved
9 Employees. The Notice will be substantially similar to the draft Notice that is attached to this
10 Agreement as Exhibit “A”, subject to the resolution by the Court of any and all outstanding issues
11 between the Parties as to the terms contained therein and approval by the Court.

12 20. “Notice Response Deadline” is forty-five (45) calendar days from the date the
13 Notice is mailed to the Settlement Class Members.

14 21. “Objecting Settlement Class Member” means a Settlement Class Member, other
15 than Plaintiff, who submits a valid and timely objection to the terms of this Agreement with
16 respect to the Class Claims pursuant to Paragraph 72(c) below.

17 22. “PAGA” shall refer to the California Labor Code Private Attorneys General Act
18 of 2004, California Labor Code Sections 2698–2699.5.

19 23. “PAGA Claims” or “Released PAGA Claims” shall include any and all claims for
20 civil and statutory penalties pursuant to PAGA based on the allegations stated in the PAGA Notice
21 and that were or could have been pled in the Complaint, as defined above, based on the facts
22 alleged therein, including claims for failure to pay minimum wages, failure to pay overtime wages
23 and/or failure to pay such wages at the correct rate(s) of pay, failure to pay all sick time wages
24 and/or failure to pay such wages at the correct rate(s) of pay, failure to pay all vacation wages
25 and/or failure to pay such wages at the correct rate(s) of pay, meal and rest break violations, failure
26 to pay meal and rest break premium pay and/or failure to pay such premium pay at the correct
27 rate(s) of pay, failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements, failure to timely pay all wages
28 upon separation of employment, and unfair and unlawful business practices.

24. “PAGA Notice” shall refer to the notices sent by Plaintiff, by and through counsel, on or about March 28, 2022, to the Labor and Workforce Development Agency (“LWDA”) and to Defendant, alleging that Defendant engaged in violations of the California Labor Code and California Wage Order(s).

25. “PAGA Period” and “PAGA Release Period” shall mean March 7, 2021 through June 6, 2023.

26. “Participating Class Member” means any and all Settlement Class Members who are deemed to participate and receive an Individual Settlement Amount for the Class Claims and who do not opt-out of the settlement of the Class Claims by submitting timely valid Requests for Exclusion.

27. “Parties” or “Settling Parties” mean Plaintiff, the Settlement Class Members, the Allegedly Aggrieved Employees, and Defendant, collectively.

28. “Preliminary Approval Date” means the date the Court preliminarily approves the Settlement Agreement, and the exhibits thereto, and enters the Preliminary Approval Order.

29. “Preliminary Approval Order” means the judicial Order to be entered by the Court, upon the application or motion of the Plaintiff, preliminarily approving this Settlement and providing for the issuance of the Notice to the Settlement Class Members, an opportunity to opt out of settlement of the Class Claims, an opportunity to submit timely objections to the terms of this Settlement related to the Class Claims, and setting a hearing on the fairness of the terms of Settlement, including approval of attorneys’ fees and costs.

30. “QSF” means the Qualified Settlement Fund set up by the Settlement Administrator for the benefit of the Final Settlement Class, and from which the settlement payments shall be made, and which is intended to be a fund that qualifies under Internal Revenue Code Section 468.

31. “Release” shall mean the release and discharge of the Class Claims by Plaintiff and all of the Participating Class Members and the release and discharge of the PAGA Claims by Plaintiff and all of the Allegedly Aggrieved Employees.

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32. “Released Parties” shall refer to Defendant, as well as any division thereof, any parent, subsidiary, affiliated entity, or related entity, and any predecessors, successors, and assigns of any of the foregoing, and any current or former officer or employee, director, trustee, agent, shareholder, representative, insurer, investor, or employee benefit or welfare program or plan (including administrators, trustees, fiduciaries, and insurers of such program or plan)

33. “Request for Exclusion” shall have the meaning ascribed to it in Paragraph 72(a) below.

34. “Service Payment” or “Service Award” means the amount approved by the Court to be paid to Class Representative in addition to his Individual Settlement Amount as a Participating Class Member.

35. “Settlement Administration Costs” means the costs payable from the Settlement Amount to the Settlement Administrator for administering this Settlement, including, but not limited to, printing, distributing, and tracking documents for this Settlement, tax reporting, due diligence, reporting and remittance obligations, distributing the Settlement Amount, and providing necessary reports and declarations, as requested by the Parties and the Court. The Settlement Administration Costs shall be paid from the Settlement Amount.

36. “Settlement Administrator” means and refers to CPT Group, Inc., which the Parties have mutually agreed will provide the Notice to the Class Members and distribute the settlement amounts as described in this Agreement.

37. “Settlement Amount” or “Gross Settlement Amount” shall have the meaning ascribed to it in Paragraph 49(a) below.

38. “Settlement Class Member” or “Class Member” refers to individual members of the Settlement Class.

39. “Settlement Class” and “Settlement Class Members” refers to all persons who are or were previously employed by Defendant in California classified as a non-exempt, hourly employee during the Class Period.

40. “Workweeks Worked” and “PAGA Pay Periods Worked” for each Settlement Class Member and Aggrieved Employee means any workweek during the Class Period and/or

1 pay period during the PAGA Period, as applicable, in which the Settlement Class Member and/or
2 Aggrieved Employee was employed by Defendant as a non-exempt, hourly employee in
3 California and worked at least one shift during the workweek or pay period, respectfully, for or
4 on behalf of Defendant for which a prior release of claims has not been signed. Workweeks
5 Worked and PAGA Pay Periods Worked shall not include weeks or pay periods where a
6 Settlement Class Member and/or Aggrieved Employee only had sick time, vacation time, was on
7 leave, or otherwise did not record any actual work time in Defendant's timekeeping system.
8 Workweeks Worked and PAGA Pay Periods Worked will be calculated based on Defendant's
9 business records.

10 **B. General Terms**

11 41. On or about March 29, 2022, Plaintiff filed a Class Action Complaint in the Court
12 against Defendant, including allegations of: (1) failure to pay minimum wages, (2) failure to pay
13 overtime wages, (3) failure to pay sick time wages, (4) failure to pay all vacation wages, (5) meal
14 period violations, (6) rest period violations, (7) wage statement violations, (8) waiting time
15 penalties, and (9) unfair competition. On November 2, 2022, Plaintiff filed a First Amended
16 Complaint to add a PAGA cause of action for the underlying alleged Labor Code violations.

17 42. Defendant denies Plaintiff's claims and allegations in the PAGA Notice, the
18 original Class Action Complaint and the First Amended Complaint in their entirety and contends
19 that the Action is meritless and is not suitable for class certification and/or representative
20 treatment. Nothing in this Agreement is intended or will be construed as an admission by
21 Defendant that the claims in the Action have merit or that Defendant bears any liability to
22 Plaintiff, the Settlement Class Members or the Allegedly Aggrieved Employees on those claims
23 or any other claims. Nevertheless, Defendant has taken into account the uncertainty and risks
24 inherent in any litigation and has also concluded that further defense of the Action would be
25 protracted and expensive. Defendant, therefore, has determined that it is desirable and beneficial
26 that the Action be settled in a manner and upon the terms and conditions set forth in this
27 Settlement Agreement.

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1 43. Class Representative believes he can proceed with his class and representative
2 claims, that the Action is meritorious, and that class certification is appropriate.

3 44. The Parties have conducted a thorough investigation into the facts of the Action.
4 This includes conducting extensive exchange of informal discovery, including Defendant's
5 written policies and practices and the production of all payroll and timekeeping records for
6 Settlement Class Members and Allegedly Aggrieved Employees. Class Counsel is both
7 knowledgeable about and has done extensive research with respect to the applicable law and
8 potential defenses to the claims of the Settlement Class Members and Allegedly Aggrieved
9 Employees. Class Counsel has diligently pursued an investigation of the Class Members' claims
10 against Defendant. Based on the foregoing data and on their own independent investigation and
11 evaluation, Class Counsel is of the opinion that the settlement with Defendant for the
12 consideration and on the terms set forth in this Settlement Agreement is fair, reasonable, and
13 adequate and is in the best interest of the Settlement Class Members and Allegedly Aggrieved
14 Employees in light of all known facts and circumstances, including the risk of significant delay
15 and uncertainty associated with litigation, various defenses asserted by Defendant , and numerous
16 potential appellate issues.

17 45. On April 4, 2023, the Parties participated in mediation before Lynn Frank, Esq., a
18 highly experienced class and PAGA/representative action mediator. After a full-day mediation
19 and the issuance of a mediator's proposal, the Parties reached a settlement. The Parties agree that
20 the terms and conditions of this Agreement are the result of lengthy, intensive, arms-length
21 negotiations between the Parties supervised by a highly experienced class and representative
22 action mediator. This Agreement represents a compromise and settlement of highly disputed
23 claims, and is intended to settle, compromise and discharge the Released Claims against the
24 Released Parties fully, finally, and forever.

25 46. The Parties agree that neither the Parties' Settlement, this Agreement, nor the acts
26 to be performed or judgments to be entered pursuant to the terms of the Settlement and
27 Agreement, shall be construed as an admission by Defendant of any wrongdoing or violation of
28 any statute or law or liability on the claims or allegations in the Action.

1 47. Stipulation for Class Certification and Representative Treatment. For settlement
2 purposes only, Defendant will stipulate that the Settlement Class Members described herein who
3 do not Request Exclusion from the Settlement Class may be conditionally certified as a settlement
4 class and that the Allegedly Aggrieved Employees are appropriate for representative treatment
5 for purposes of settlement. This stipulation to certification and representative treatment is in no
6 way an admission that class action certification and/or representative treatment is proper and shall
7 not be admissible in this or in any other action except for the sole purposes of enforcing this
8 Agreement. Should, for whatever reason, the Court fail to issue Final Approval, the Parties'
9 stipulation to class certification and representative treatment as part of the Settlement shall
10 become null and void *ab initio* and shall have no bearing on and shall not be admissible in
11 connection with the issue of whether or not class certification and/or representative treatment
12 would be appropriate in a non-settlement context. Defendant expressly reserves its rights and
13 declares that it will continue to oppose class certification, representative treatment, and the
14 substantive merits of the case should the Court fail to issue Final Approval. Plaintiff expressly
15 reserves his rights and declares that he will continue to pursue class certification and
16 representative treatment and a trial should the Court fail to issue Final Approval.

17 **C. Terms of Settlement**

18 48. The financial terms of the Settlement are as follows:

19 (a) Gross Settlement Amount: The Parties agree to settle this Action for One Million
20 Dollars (\$1,000,000) ("the Gross Settlement Amount"). The Gross Settlement Amount is the
21 maximum amount that will be paid by Defendant, and includes Individual Settlement Amounts,
22 attorneys' fees of Class Counsel, costs and expenses, the Service Payment to Class
23 Representative, all Settlement Administration Costs, and payment to the Labor Workforce
24 Development Agency (LWDA) for PAGA penalties. Defendant shall separately pay the
25 employers' share of applicable payroll taxes.

26 (b) The Gross Settlement Amount is based on Defendant's representation that there
27 are approximately 27,830 total workweeks. In the event that the actual number of workweeks
28 worked by all Class Members during the Class Period increases by more than 10%, then there

1 shall be a pro rata upward adjustment to the Gross Settlement Amount.

2 (c) Net Settlement Amount: The “Net Settlement Amount” is defined as the Gross
3 Settlement Amount less attorneys’ fees and litigation costs as approved and awarded by the Court,
4 the Service Payment to Class Representative as approved and awarded by the Court, the
5 Settlement Administration Costs as approved and awarded by the Court, and the Twenty-Five
6 Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) allocated to payment for PAGA penalties as described in
7 paragraph 49(d) below. In the event that the Court reduces the attorneys’ fees and litigation costs
8 or Service Awards, Settlement Administration Costs, or either increases or decreases the amount
9 allocated to PAGA penalties, the Net Settlement Sum shall be increased or decreased accordingly.

10 (d) Individual Settlement Amounts for the Settlement Class: The Settlement
11 Administrator will use the Class Data provided by Defendant to calculate each Participating Class
12 Member’s and Aggrieved Employee’s Individual Settlement Amounts based on the following
13 formula:

14 i. PAGA Amount: \$25,000 of the Gross Settlement Amount has been
15 designated to the PAGA claims. Twenty-five percent (25%), or \$6,250, shall be paid out to
16 Allegedly Aggrieved Employees, while seventy-five percent (75%), or \$18,750, will be paid to
17 the LWDA. Each Aggrieved Employee shall receive a portion of the \$6,250 proportionate to the
18 number of PAGA Pay Periods Worked by the Allegedly Aggrieved Employees during the PAGA
19 Period compared to the total number of PAGA Pay Periods Worked by all Allegedly Aggrieved
20 Employees during the PAGA Period. Allegedly Aggrieved Employees shall have their settlement
21 amount for the Released PAGA claims paid one hundred percent (100%) as civil penalties for
22 which no taxes will be withheld and for which a Form 1099 will be issued by the Settlement
23 Administrator.

24 ii. Class Amount: The Net Settlement Amount shall be allocated to each
25 Participating Class Member based on his/her/their proportionate Workweeks Worked during the
26 Class Period. This is determined by multiplying the Net Settlement Amount by a fraction, the
27 numerator of which is the Participating Class Member’s total Workweeks Worked during the
28 Class Period, and the denominator of which is the total Workweeks Worked by all Participating

1 Class Members during the Class Period. If there are any timely submitted Requests for Exclusion,
2 the Settlement Administrator shall proportionately increase the Individual Settlement Amounts
3 for each Participating Class Member so that the amount actually distributed to Participating Class
4 Members equals 100% of the Net Settlement Amount allocated toward Released Class Claims.

5 (e) Allocation of Individual Settlement Amounts: The Individual Settlement Amounts
6 will be allocated for tax purposes based on the allegations in the Action as follows: sixty percent
7 (60%) will be paid as wages subject to withholding of all applicable local, state, and federal taxes;
8 twenty percent (20%) will be paid as interest; and twenty percent (20%) will be paid as penalties.
9 Pursuant to, e.g., California Labor Code Sections 203, 226, no taxes will be withheld from the
10 forty percent (40%) that will be paid as interest and as civil penalties. The Settlement
11 Administrator will issue to each Participating Class Member an Internal Revenue Service Form
12 W-2 and comparable state forms with respect to the wage allocation, and a Form 1099 with respect
13 to the civil penalties and interest allocations.

14 (f) Service Payment to Class Representative: The amount awarded to Class
15 Representative as a Service Payment will be set by the Court in its discretion, not to exceed Ten
16 Thousand Dollars (\$10,000). Defendant agrees not to oppose this request. The Service Payment
17 to Class Representative will be paid out of the Gross Settlement Amount. Class Representative
18 will be issued IRS Form 1099 in connection with this payment. Plaintiff shall be solely and legally
19 responsible to pay any and all applicable taxes on this payment. The Parties agree that any amount
20 awarded by the Court as the Service Payment to Plaintiff less than the requested amount shall not
21 be a basis for Plaintiff or Class Counsel to void this Agreement. Should the Court approve a lesser
22 amount for the Service Payment, the difference shall be added to the Net Settlement Amount to
23 be distributed to the Participating Class Members. In the event of any appeal of the amount of the
24 service awards (if any) approved by the Court, if, after the exhaustion of any such appellate
25 review, additional amounts not awarded to Class Representative shall be added to the Net
26 Settlement Amount to be distributed to the Participating Class Members.

27 (g) Attorneys' Fees and Costs: Defendant agrees not to oppose a request by Class
28 Counsel to the Court for an award of attorneys' fees of one-third (33.33%) of the Gross Settlement

1 Amount (approximately Three Hundred Thirty-Three Thousand Dollars and Three Hundred
2 Thirty-Three Dollars and Thirty-Three Cents (\$333,333.33), plus reasonable litigation costs not
3 to exceed Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) (“Attorneys’ Fees and Cost Award”). For purposes
4 of this Settlement, Defendant agrees not to oppose any contention by Class Counsel that
5 attorneys’ fees should be based on the common fund theory. The Attorneys’ Fee and Cost Award
6 shall be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount, and except for this award, Defendant shall have
7 no further obligation to pay any attorneys’ fees, costs, or expenses to Class Counsel. Should the
8 Court approve a lesser amount than what is sought by Class Counsel, the difference shall be added
9 to the Net Settlement Amount to be distributed to the Participating Class Members. Any Court
10 order awarding less than the amount sought by Class Counsel shall not be grounds to rescind the
11 Settlement Agreement or otherwise void the Settlement. In the event of any appeal of the amount
12 of the awards of attorneys’ fees and costs (if any) approved by the Court, final funding and
13 administration of the portion of the attorneys’ fees and/or costs award in dispute will be
14 segregated and stayed pending the exhaustion of appellate review. If, after the exhaustion of any
15 such appellate review, additional amounts not awarded as attorneys’ fees and costs shall be added
16 to the Net Settlement Amount to be distributed to the Participating Class Members and/or
17 Allegedly Aggrieved Employees. The Settlement Administrator shall issue to Class Counsel an
18 IRS Form 1099 reflecting the amount of attorneys’ fees and costs awarded by the Court. Class
19 Counsel agrees that any allocation of fees between or among Class Counsel and any other attorney
20 representing or claiming to represent the Class Members shall be the sole responsibility of Class
21 Counsel.

22 (h) Settlement Administration Costs: The fees and other charges of the Settlement
23 Administrator will be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount, not to exceed \$10,000 subject to
24 Court approval, unless approved by all Parties and the Court.

25 (i) Tax Liability: Class Counsel, Defendant, and Defendant’s Counsel make no
26 representations as to the tax treatment or legal effect of Settlement Amounts called for hereunder,
27 and Plaintiff and the Settlement Class Members are not relying on any statement or representation
28 by Class Counsel, Defendant, or Defendant’s Counsel in this regard. Plaintiff and Final Settlement

1 Class Members understand and agree that they will be solely responsible for the payment of any
2 taxes and penalties assessed on their respective Settlement Amounts described herein. Income tax
3 withholding will also be made pursuant to applicable federal, state, and/or local withholding codes
4 or regulations. Forms W-2 and/or Forms 1099 will be distributed at times and in the manner
5 required by the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (the “Code”) and consistent with this Settlement
6 Agreement. If the Code, the regulations promulgated thereunder, or other applicable tax law, are
7 changed after the date of this Agreement, the processes set forth in this Section may be modified
8 in a manner to bring Defendant into compliance with any such changes.

9 (j) No Tax Advice. Neither Plaintiff, Class Counsel, Defendant, nor Defense Counsel
10 are providing any advice regarding taxes or taxability, nor shall anything in this Settlement
11 Agreement be relied upon as such within the meaning of United States Treasury Department
12 Circular 230 (31 CFR Part 10, as amended) or otherwise.

13 49. No Credit Towards Benefit Plans. The Individual Settlement Payments and
14 Individual PAGA Payments made to Participating Class Members and/or Allegedly Aggrieved
15 Employees under this Settlement Agreement, as well as any other payment made pursuant to this
16 Settlement Agreement, will not be utilized to calculate any additional benefits under any benefit
17 plans to which any Participating Class Members and/or Allegedly Aggrieved Employees may be
18 eligible, including but not limited to: profit-sharing plans, bonus plans, 401(k) plans, stock
19 purchase plans, vacation plans, sick leave plans, PTO plans, and any other benefit plan. Rather,
20 it is the Parties’ intention that this Settlement Agreement will not affect the rights, contributions,
21 or amounts to which any Participating Class Member and/or Allegedly Aggrieved Employees
22 may be entitled under benefit plans.

23 50. “Non-Reversionary” Settlement. This is a “non-reversionary” settlement. Under
24 no circumstances will any portion of the Settlement Amount revert to Defendant. Final Settlement
25 Class Members will not have to make a claim to receive an Individual Settlement Amount.
26 Distributions, in the form of Individual Settlement Amounts, will be made directly to each Final
27 Settlement Class Member. The Settlement Administrator shall be responsible for accurately and
28 timely reporting any remittance obligations with respect to unclaimed funds as a result of a Final

1 Settlement Class Member not cashing an Individual Settlement Amount by the check cashing
2 deadline, as set forth herein.

3 51. Class Counsel and Plaintiff believe that the Settlement is fair and reasonable, and
4 adequate, and will so represent same to the Court.

5 **D. Release by Plaintiff and the Final Settlement Class**

6 52. Upon the Effective Date of this Settlement, Plaintiff and each Participating Class
7 Member, for themselves and for their respective agents, spouses, domestic partners, marital
8 community, children, estates, trusts, attorneys, heirs, predecessors, successors, beneficiaries,
9 devisees, legatees, executors, administrators, trustees, conservators, guardians, assigns, and
10 representatives, will forever completely release and discharge the Released Parties from the
11 Released Class Claims for the Class Release Period.

12 53. Each Participating Class Member will be deemed to have made the foregoing
13 Release as if by manually signing it.

14 54. Upon the Effective Date of this Settlement, Plaintiff, the LWDA, and each
15 Aggrieved Employee, for themselves and for their respective agents, spouses, domestic partners,
16 marital community, children, estates, trusts, attorneys, heirs, predecessors, successors,
17 beneficiaries, devisees, legatees, executors, administrators, trustees, conservators, guardians,
18 assigns, and representatives, will forever completely release and discharge the Released Parties
19 from the Released PAGA Claims for the PAGA Release Period.

20 55. Each Aggrieved Employee and the LWDA will be deemed to have made the
21 foregoing Release as if by manually signing it.

22 56. Plaintiff and Defendant intend that the Settlement described in this Agreement will
23 release and preclude any further claim, whether by lawsuit, administrative claim or action,
24 arbitration, demand, or other action of any kind, by each and all of the Participating Class
25 Members to obtain a recovery based on, arising out of, and/or related to any and all of the Released
26 Class Claims. The Settlement Class Members shall be notified in the Notice. This paragraph does
27 not apply to any Settlement Class Member who timely and validly opts out of the Settlement for
28 purposes of Class Claims.

57. Plaintiff and Defendant intend that the Settlement described in this Agreement will release and preclude any further claim, whether by lawsuit, administrative claim or action, arbitration, demand, or other action of any kind, by each and all of the Allegedly Aggrieved Employees and the LWDA to obtain a recovery based on, arising out of, and/or related to any and all of the Released PAGA Claims. The Allegedly Aggrieved Employees and the LWDA shall be notified in the Notice.

58. Class Representative, on behalf of himself and the Participating Settlement Class Members, acknowledges and agrees that the Class Claims or Released Class Claims are disputed, and that the payments set forth herein constitute payment of all sums allegedly due to him. Class Representative, on behalf of himself and the Participating Settlement Class Members, acknowledges and agrees that California Labor Code Section 206.5 is not applicable to the Parties hereto. Section 206.5 provides in pertinent part as follows:

An employer shall not require the execution of any release of any claim or right on account of wages due, or to become due, or made as an advance on wages to be earned, unless payment of those wages has been made.

E. Release by Class Representative

59. As a material inducement to Defendant to enter into this Settlement Agreement, in addition to Class Representative's release of the Released Class Claims and Released PAGA Claims, as discussed in Paragraphs 53 and 55 above, Class Representative does hereby, for himself and for his respective agents, spouses, domestic partners, marital community, children, estates, trusts, attorneys, heirs, predecessors, successors, beneficiaries, devisees, legatees, executors, administrators, trustees, conservators, guardians, assigns, and representatives, forever completely release and discharge the Released Parties from any and all charges, complaints, claims, liabilities, obligations, promises, agreements, contracts, controversies, damages, actions, causes of action, suits, rights, demands, costs, losses, debts, and expenses (including for back wages, meal and rest break premium pay, statutory penalties, civil penalties, liquidated damages, exemplary damages, interest, attorneys' fees, and costs) of any nature whatsoever, from the beginning of time through the execution of this Settlement Agreement, whether known or

1 unknown, suspected or unsuspected, concealed or hidden, including but not limited to all claims
2 arising out of, based upon, or relating to Class Representative's employment with Defendant or
3 the remuneration for or termination of such employment (collectively, the "Class Representative's
4 Claims").

5 60. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing release, Class Representative also
6 expressly releases all claims or rights against Released Parties arising out of or relating to alleged
7 violations of any contracts, express or implied (including but not limited to any contract of
8 employment); any contract or covenant of good faith and fair dealing (express or implied); any
9 tort, including but not limited to, negligence, fraud, misrepresentation and violation of California
10 Labor Code Section 970, negligent infliction of emotional distress, intentional infliction of
11 emotional distress, defamation, "retaliation" claims and claims for violation of public policy, any
12 claim for improper or unauthorized wage deductions, failure to pay the applicable wage, unpaid
13 wages, unpaid vacation benefits, penalties, liquidated damages, other damages, overtime, and
14 alleged "off the clock" work under federal and state law, including, but not limited to, California
15 Labor Code Sections 204 and 558, waiting time penalties pursuant to California Labor Code
16 Section 203, damages, or penalties pursuant to California Labor Code Section 226, meal period
17 and rest break payments and penalties pursuant to California Labor Code Sections 226.7 and 512,
18 failure to provide itemized wage statements pursuant to California Labor Code Section 226,
19 statutory or civil penalties pursuant to California Labor Code Section 210, failure to indemnify
20 for business expenses pursuant to Labor Code Section 2802, failure to provide one day of rest in
21 seven pursuant to California Labor Code Sections 551 and 552, unfair competition and unfair
22 business practices pursuant to Business and Professions Code Section 17200, *et seq.*, interest and
23 costs pursuant to California Civil Code Section 3287 and California Labor Code Section 218.6,
24 statutory or common law rights to attorneys' fees and costs, including those pursuant to California
25 Labor Code Section 1194 *et seq.*; claims under the Private Attorneys General Act of 2004, Labor
26 Code Sections 2699, *et seq.*, and the alleged violation or breach of any other state or federal
27 statute, rule, and or regulation or local ordinance; including all applicable Industrial Welfare
28 Commission Wage Orders, and all similar causes of action, including but not limited to, any claim

1 for restitution, equitable relief, interest, penalties, costs, or attorneys' fees in connection with any
2 of the foregoing, negligent infliction of emotional distress, intentional infliction of emotional
3 distress, and defamation; any "wrongful discharge," "constructive discharge," and "retaliation"
4 claims; any claims relating to any breach of public policy; any legal restrictions on Defendant's
5 right to discharge employees; and any federal, state, or other governmental statute, regulation, or
6 ordinance, including, without limitation: (1) Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color,
7 religion, sex, and national origin discrimination or harassment, including retaliation for reporting
8 discrimination or harassment); (2) 42 U.S.C. Section 1981 (discrimination); (3) Equal Pay Act,
9 29 U.S.C. Section 209(d)(1) and California Labor Code Section 1197.5 (equal pay); (4)
10 Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. Section 12100, *et seq.* (disability discrimination); (5)
11 Family and Medical Leave Act, 29 U.S.C. Section 2601, *et seq.* (family/medical leave); (6)
12 California Fair Employment and Housing Act, Cal. Government Code Section 12900, *et seq.*
13 (discrimination or harassment in employment and/or housing, including discrimination or
14 harassment based on race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, marital
15 status, sex (including pregnancy), age, or any other protected characteristic, including retaliation
16 for reporting discrimination or harassment); (7) California Family Rights Act, Cal. Government
17 Code Section 12945.1, *et seq.* (family/medical leave); (8) California Labor Code, including but
18 not limited to, Section 1720 *et seq.*, or any Industrial Welfare Commission Wage Order; (9)
19 Executive Order 11246 (race, color, religion, sex, and national origin discrimination or
20 harassment); (10) Executive Order 11141 (age discrimination); (11) Sections 503 and 504 of the
21 Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (handicap discrimination); (12) the Fair Labor Standards Act; (13)
22 Employee Retirement Income Security Act, 29 U.S.C. § 1000 *et seq.* (employee benefits); (14)
23 the California Civil Code; (15) the California Labor Code; (16) the California Constitution; (17)
24 the National Labor Relations Act; (18) the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; (19) the
25 Occupational Safety and Health Act; (20) the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act
26 of 1985; (21) the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act ("WARN"); (22) the
27 Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974; (23) the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; (23) the
28 Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended; (24) the California Government Code; (25) the

1 California Constitution; (26) the Families First Coronavirus Response Act; (27) the California
2 Healthy Workplace Healthy Family Act; and (28) any other federal, state, or local statute or
3 legislation. Further, Class Representative agrees to the fullest extent permitted by law, that other
4 than this Action, Class Representative will not pursue any putative class action, collective action,
5 or representative action against the Released Parties, or any of them, and that if such action is
6 filed by any other person, Class Representative will withdraw as a participant.

7 61. Class Representative expressly waives and relinquishes all rights and benefits
8 afforded by Section 1542 of the Civil Code of the State of California and does so understanding
9 and acknowledging the significance of the waiver of Section 1542. Section 1542 of the Civil Code
10 of the State of California states:

11 **“A GENERAL RELEASE DOES NOT EXTEND TO CLAIMS THAT THE**
12 **CREDITOR OR RELEASING PARTY DOES NOT KNOW OR SUSPECT**
13 **TO EXIST IN HIS OR HER FAVOR AT THE TIME OF EXECUTING**
14 **THE RELEASE AND THAT, IF KNOWN BY HIM OR HER, WOULD**
15 **HAVE MATERIALLY AFFECTED HIS OR HER SETTLEMENT WITH**
16 **THE DEBTOR OR RELEASED PARTY.”**

17 Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 1542, and for the purpose of implementing a
18 full and complete release and discharge of all Released Parties, Class Representative, and Class
19 Counsel expressly acknowledge that this Settlement Agreement is intended to include in its effect,
20 without limitation, all claims that Class Representative knew of, as well as all claims that Class
21 Representative does not know or suspect to exist in Class Representative’s favor against the
22 Released Parties, or any of them, for the time period from the beginning of time to the execution
23 of this Settlement Agreement, and that this Settlement Agreement contemplates the
24 extinguishment of any and all such Class Representative’s claims.

25 **F. Interim Stay of Proceedings**

26 62. Pending completion of all of the prerequisites necessary to effectuate this
27 Settlement, the Parties agree, subject to Court approval, to a stay of all proceedings in the Action
28 except those necessary to effectuate the Settlement.

1 **G. Notice Process**

2 63. Appointment of Settlement Administrator. The Parties have agreed to the
3 appointment of the Settlement Administrator to perform the duties of a settlement administrator,
4 including mailing the Notice, using standard devices to obtain forwarding addresses,
5 independently reviewing and verifying documentation associated with any claims or opt-out
6 requests, resolving any disputes regarding the calculation or application of the formula for
7 determining the Individual Settlement Amounts, drafting and mailing the settlement checks to
8 Final Settlement Class Members and Allegedly Aggrieved Employees, issuing Forms W-2 and
9 1099, reporting to taxing authorities, due diligence, reporting and remittance obligations, and
10 performing such other tasks as set forth herein or as the Parties mutually agree or that the Court
11 orders. The Settlement Administrator shall also be responsible for issuing to Plaintiff, Final
12 Settlement Class Members, and Class Counsel any Forms W-2, Forms 1099, or other Tax Forms
13 as may be required by law for all amounts paid pursuant to this Agreement. The Settlement
14 Administrator shall also be responsible for setting up all necessary tax accounts and forwarding
15 all payroll taxes and penalties to the appropriate government authorities.

16 64. Disputes Regarding Settlement Administration. Any and all disputes relating to
17 administration of the Settlement by the Settlement Administrator (except for disputes regarding
18 Class Data) shall be referred to the Court, if necessary, which will have continuing jurisdiction
19 over the terms and conditions of this Settlement Agreement, until Plaintiff and Defendant notify
20 the Court that all payments and obligations contemplated by this Settlement Agreement have been
21 fully carried out. Prior to presenting any issue to the Court, counsel for the Parties will confer in
22 good faith to resolve the dispute without the necessity of Court intervention.

23 65. Class Data. Within twenty-one (21) calendar days after entry of the Preliminary
24 Approval Order, Defendant shall provide the Class Data to the Settlement Administrator. The
25 Settlement Administrator will run a check of the Class Members' addresses against those on file
26 with the U.S. Postal Service's National Change of Address List. The Class Data provided to the
27 Settlement Administrator will not be provided to Class Counsel and it will remain confidential, it
28 shall be used solely to administer the Settlement, and it will not be used or disclosed to anyone,

except as required by applicable tax authorities, pursuant to Defendant's express written consent, or by order of the Court.

66. Notice. The Notice, as approved by the Court, shall be sent by the Settlement Administrator to the Settlement Class Members, by first class mail, in English and Spanish, within seven (7) calendar days following the Settlement Administrator's receipt of the Class Data. The Settlement Administrator shall use standard devices, including a skip trace, to obtain forwarding addresses of Settlement Class Members if any envelopes are returned.

67. Returned Notices. The Settlement Administrator will take steps to ensure that the Notice is received by all Settlement Class Members, including utilization of the National Change of Address Database maintained by the United States Postal Service to review the accuracy of and, if possible, update a mailing address. If no forwarding address is provided, the Settlement Administrator will promptly attempt to determine the correct address using a skip-trace, or other search using the name, address, and/or Social Security number of the Class Member involved and will then perform a single re-mailing. In the event the procedures in this Paragraph are followed and the intended recipient of a Notice packet still does not receive the Notice packet, the Class Member shall be bound by all terms of the Settlement and any Judgment entered by the Court if the Settlement is approved by the Court. Notices will be re-mailed to any Settlement Class Member for whom an updated address is located within ten (10) calendar days following both the Settlement Administrator learning of the failed mailing and its receipt of the updated address. The Notice shall be identical to the original Notice, except that it shall notify the Settlement Class Member that the exclusion (opt-out) request or objection must be returned by the later of the Notice Response Deadline or fifteen (15) calendar days after the remailing of the Notice.

68. Presumption Regarding Receipt of Notice. It will be conclusively presumed that if an envelope has not been returned within thirty (30) calendar days of the mailing that the Settlement Class Member received the Notice.

69. Disputes Regarding Class Data. Settlement Class Members are deemed to participate in the Settlement unless they opt-out. The Notice will inform Settlement Class Members of his/her/their estimated Individual Settlement Amount and the number of Workweeks

1 Worked during the Class Period and PAGA Periods Worked during the PAGA Period. Settlement
2 Class Members may dispute their Workweeks Worked if they feel they were employed more
3 workweeks in the Class Period in California than Defendant's records show by timely submitting
4 evidence to the Settlement Administrator. Defendant's records will be presumed determinative
5 absent reliable evidence to rebut Defendant's records, but the Settlement Administrator will
6 evaluate the evidence submitted by the Settlement Class Member and provide the evidence
7 submitted to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel who agree to meet and confer in good faith
8 about the evidence to determine the Class Member's actual number of Workweeks Worked and
9 estimated Individual Settlement Amount. If Class Counsel and Defense Counsel are unable to
10 agree, they agree to submit the dispute to the Settlement Administrator to render a final decision.
11 All disputes will be decided within ten (10) business days of the Notice Response Deadline.
12 Settlement Class Members will have until the Notice Response Deadline to dispute Workweeks
13 Worked, object, or opt out, unless extended by the Court. In the event that the Settlement
14 Administrator increases the number of Workweeks Worked for any Settlement Class Member,
15 then the Settlement Administrator will recalculate the Participating Class Members' Individual
16 Settlement Amounts; accordingly, in no event will Defendant be required to increase the Gross
17 Settlement Amount.

18 70. Declaration of Due Diligence. The Settlement Administrator shall provide counsel
19 for the Parties, at least twenty-five (25) calendar days prior to the final approval hearing, a
20 declaration of due diligence and proof of mailing with regard to the mailing of the Notice.

21 71. Settlement Class Members' Rights. Each Settlement Class Member will be fully
22 advised of the Settlement, the ability to object to the provisions in the Settlement related to the
23 Class Claims, and the ability to opt out or request exclusion from the Class Claims provisions of
24 the Settlement. The Notice will inform the Settlement Class Members of the Court-established
25 deadlines for filing objections or requesting exclusion from the Class Claims provisions of the
26 Settlement in accordance with the following guidelines:

27 (a) Requests for Exclusion from Participating Settlement Class. Any
28 Settlement Class Member, other than Plaintiff, may request to be excluded from the Participating

1 Settlement Class by submitting a "Request for Exclusion" to the Settlement Administrator,
2 postmarked on or before the Notice Response Deadline. The Request for Exclusion should state
3 in words to this effect:

4 I WISH TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE SETTLEMENT CLASS IN
5 THE BARAJAS V. QUANEX HOMESHIELD LAWSUIT. I
6 UNDERSTAND THAT IF I ASK TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE
7 SETTLEMENT CLASS, I WILL NOT RECEIVE ANY MONEY FROM
8 THE SETTLEMENT OF THE CLASS CLAIMS IN THIS LAWSUIT.

9 Any Request for Exclusion must include the full name, address, telephone number, last
10 four digits of the social security number or date of birth, and signature of the Settlement Class
11 Member requesting exclusion. The Request for Exclusion must be returned by mail to the
12 Settlement Administrator at the specified address in the Notice. Any such Request for Exclusion
13 must be made in accordance with the terms set forth in the Notice. A Request for Exclusion will
14 be timely only if postmarked by the Notice Response Deadline, unless the Parties otherwise agree
15 in writing. Any Settlement Class Member who timely requests exclusion in compliance with these
16 requirements: (i) will not have any rights under this Agreement with respect to the Class Claims,
17 including the right to object, appeal, or comment on the Settlement; (ii) will not be entitled to
18 receive any payments under this Agreement with respect to Class Claims; and (iii) will not be
19 bound by this Agreement, or the Judgment, with respect to the Class Claims.

20 (b) Binding Effect on Final Settlement Class Members. Except for those
21 Settlement Class Members who exclude themselves in compliance with the procedures set forth
22 above, all Settlement Class Members will: (i) be deemed to be Final Settlement Class Members
23 for all purposes under this Agreement; (ii) will be bound by the terms and conditions of this
24 Agreement, the Judgment, and the releases set forth herein; and (iii) except as otherwise provided
25 herein, will be deemed to have waived all objections and oppositions to the fairness,
26 reasonableness, and adequacy of the Settlement.

27 (c) Objections to Settlement of Class Claims. Any Settlement Class Member,
28 other than Plaintiff, may object to the terms of this Agreement with respect to the Class Claims
and may appear at the Final Approval Hearing and object whether or not they have filed a written

objection as outlined herein. To object, a Settlement Class Member shall inform the Settlement Administrator, in writing, of his/her/their objection, which must be postmarked by the Notice Response Deadline at the address set forth in the Notice. Such objection shall include the full name, address, telephone number, dates of employment with Defendant of the Objecting Settlement Class Member, the case name and number, the basis for the objection, including any legal support and each specific reason in support of the objection, as well as any documentation or evidence in support thereof, and, if the Objecting Settlement Class Member is represented by counsel, the name and address of his/her/their counsel. If any Objecting Settlement Class Member wishes to speak at the Final Approval Hearing with respect to the Class Claims, that Objecting Settlement Class Member's written submission should include a request to be heard, and the Court will determine whether Objecting Settlement Class Members will be permitted to speak. The Settlement Administrator shall provide objections, if any, to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel within three (3) calendar days of receipt, and the Settlement Administrator shall attach the same to its declaration of due diligence it files with the Court prior to the Final Approval Hearing. Any Participating Class Member who files an objection remains eligible to receive monetary compensation from the Settlement and will be bound by the terms of this Agreement including all releases. Plaintiff and Defendant shall not be responsible for any fees, costs, or expenses incurred by any Settlement Class Member and/or his/her/their counsel related to any objections to the Settlement. Submitting an objection does not preserve the right to appeal a final judgment. Rather, the right to appeal is preserved by becoming a party of record by timely and properly intervening or filing a motion to vacate the judgment under Code of Civil Procedure Section 663. Settlement Class Members and Allegedly Aggrieved Employees may not object to or opt out of the Settlement with respect to the PAGA Claims. At no time will any of the Parties or their counsel seek to solicit or otherwise encourage Settlement Class Members to submit Requests for Exclusion, Notices of Objection, or disputes regarding Class Data or to appeal from the Final Approval judgment. To the extent a timely Notice of Objection is withdrawn before Final Approval, such an objection shall be treated as though no objection has been made.

1 (d) Failure to Object. Any Settlement Class Member who desires to object
2 with respect to the Class Claims but fails to timely submit a written objection waives any right to
3 object and will be foreclosed from making any objection to this Settlement. Any Settlement Class
4 Member who does not timely and properly become a party of record by intervening or filing a
5 motion to vacate the judgment waives any and all rights to appeal from the judgment, including
6 all rights to any post-judgment proceeding and appellate proceeding, such as a motion to vacate
7 judgment, motion for new trial, a motion under California Code of Civil Procedure Section 473,
8 and extraordinary writs.

9 (e) Responses to Objections. Counsel for the Parties may file a response to any
10 objections submitted by Objecting Settlement Class Members at least five (5) court days before
11 the date of the Final Approval hearing.

12 72. Settlement Class Members will have until the Notice Response Deadline to object
13 or submit a Request for Exclusion or a dispute regarding Class Data to the Settlement
14 Administrator by U.S. Mail. The Settlement Administrator shall disclose jointly to Class Counsel
15 and Defendant's Counsel what objections or Requests for Exclusion or disputes regarding Class
16 Data were timely submitted on a weekly basis, and upon the request of Class Counsel or Defense
17 Counsel.

18 73. Funding of the Settlement Amount. Defendant shall make a one-time deposit into
19 the QSF of the Gross Settlement Amount, as described in Paragraph 49(a) that is necessary to
20 make all payments required under this Settlement, within thirty (30) calendar days after the
21 Effective Date, plus Defendant shall separately pay its share of employer payroll taxes as
22 calculated and directed by the Settlement Administrator.

23 74. Distribution of Funds. Prior to the disbursement of any funds, the Settlement
24 Administrator will provide a disbursement summary of the calculations for the payments
25 described above for review and approval by Class Counsel and Defense Counsel. Following
26 approval by Class Counsel and Defense Counsel, and no later than seven (7) calendar days after
27 deposit of the Gross Settlement Payment into the QSF, the Settlement Administrator will mail the
28 payments to the Participating Class Members, Allegedly Aggrieved Employees, the payment for

1 the attorneys' fees and costs to Class Counsel, any Service Payment to the Class Representatives,
2 the payment to the LWDA for PAGA penalties, and will pay itself the Settlement Administration
3 Costs.

4 75. Deadline for Cashing Settlement Checks. Final Settlement Class Members and
5 Allegedly Aggrieved Employees shall have one hundred eighty (180) calendar days after mailing
6 by the Settlement Administrator to cash their settlement checks. If any Final Settlement Class
7 Member or Allegedly Aggrieved Employee's check is not cashed within that period, the check
8 will be void and a stop-payment will be issued. All unclaimed funds shall be sent to the California
9 Unclaimed Property Fund in the name of the Final Settlement Class Member or Allegedly
10 Aggrieved Employee. The release will be binding upon all Final Settlement Class Members who
11 do not cash their checks within the 180-day period. In the event that any settlement check is
12 returned to the Settlement Administrator within one hundred eighty (180) days of mailing, the
13 Settlement Administrator will, within five (5) business days of receipt of the returned settlement
14 check, perform a skip trace to locate the individual. If a new address is located by these means,
15 the Settlement Administrator will have ten (10) business days to re-issue the check and will notify
16 Defense Counsel and Class Counsel that a re-issued check has been sent. Neither Defendant,
17 Defense Counsel, Class Counsel, Plaintiff, nor the Settlement Administrator will have any
18 liability for lost or stolen settlement checks, forged signatures on settlement checks, or
19 unauthorized negotiation of settlement checks. Without limiting the foregoing, in the event a Final
20 Settlement Class Member notifies the Settlement Administrator that he/she/they believe that a
21 settlement check has been lost or stolen, the Settlement Administrator shall immediately stop
22 payment on such check. If the check in question has not been negotiated prior to the stop payment
23 order, the Settlement Administrator will issue a replacement check.

24 76. No person shall have any claim against Defendant, Defendant's Counsel, Plaintiff,
25 Class Counsel, or the Settlement Administrator based on mailings, distributions, payments, or
26 reports made in accordance with or pursuant to this Agreement. This provision does not, however,
27 prevent a Party from seeking enforcement of this Agreement.
28

1 77. Without prejudice to any other remedies, the Settlement Administrator shall agree
2 to be responsible for any breach of its obligations (whether committed by the Settlement
3 Administrator or its agents) and to indemnify and hold the Parties and their counsel harmless from
4 and against all liabilities, claims, causes of action, costs and expenses (including legal fees and
5 expenses) arising out of any breach committed by the Settlement Administrator or its agents.

6 **H. Duties of the Parties Prior to the Court's Approval**

7 78. Plaintiff will move the Court for Preliminary Approval of this Settlement and entry
8 of the Preliminary Approval Order accomplishing the following:

9 (a) Scheduling the Final Approval hearing on the issue of whether this
10 Settlement should be finally approved as fair, reasonable, and adequate as to the Class Members
11 and a hearing on fees, costs, and the Service Payment;

12 (b) Approving as to form and content the proposed Notice;

13 (c) Directing the mailing of the Notice by first class mail to the Settlement
14 Class Members;

15 (d) Preliminarily approving this Settlement; and

16 (e) Preliminarily certifying the class for purposes of this Settlement only.

17 79. In conjunction with the Preliminary Approval hearing, Plaintiff will submit this
18 Settlement Agreement, and will include the proposed Notice packet, which will include the Notice
19 of Class Action Settlement document and proposed Mailing Envelope.

20 80. In accordance with Section 2699(1)(2) of the California Labor Code, Plaintiff shall
21 provide a copy of this Settlement Agreement to the LWDA on the same day that Plaintiff files his
22 motion for Preliminary Approval of this Settlement with the Court.

23 81. Reallocation of Settlement Proceeds. In the event the Court fails, on its first
24 hearing, to approve this Agreement because the amount of the PAGA penalties is not adequate,
25 then the Parties shall cooperate in good faith to reallocate the total settlement proceeds, within
26 this Agreement, to try to achieve Final Approval of the Agreement upon any subsequent Court
27 hearings.

1 **I. Duties of the Parties Following Court's Final Approval**

2 82. In connection with the Final Approval hearing provided for in this Settlement
3 Agreement, Class Counsel shall submit a proposed Final Approval Order:

4 (a) Approving the Settlement, adjudging the terms thereof to be fair, reasonable, and
5 adequate, and directing consummation of its terms and provisions;

6 (b) Approving Class Counsel's application for an award of attorneys' fees and
7 reimbursement of litigation costs and expenses, the Service Payment to the Class Representative,
8 and the payment to the Settlement Administrator for costs of administering the settlement;

9 (c) Entering judgment approving settlement, thereby permanently barring all
10 Participating Class Members from prosecuting any Released Class Claims against any of the
11 Released Parties and permanently barring all Allegedly Aggrieved Employees and the LWDA
12 from prosecuting any Released PAGA Claims against any of the Released Parties; and

13 (d) Scheduling a conference or hearing to confirm all payments referenced above have
14 been made in accordance with this Agreement and to dismiss the Action.

15 **J. Voiding the Agreement**

16 83. If the Court fails or refuses to issue the Final Approval Order or fails to approve
17 any material condition of this Settlement Agreement which effects a fundamental change of the
18 Settlement, the entire Settlement Agreement shall be rendered voidable and unenforceable as to
19 all Parties herein at the option of either Party.

20 84. If seven percent (7%) or more of the Settlement Class Members timely submit a
21 Request for Exclusion, Defendant shall have the option of terminating or modifying this
22 Agreement without prejudice to its pre-settlement positions and defenses in the Action. If
23 Defendant exercises such option under this paragraph, it shall be relieved of any obligation to pay
24 the Gross Settlement Amount or any other obligations from the Settlement by giving notice to
25 Class Counsel and the Settlement Administrator within ten (10) calendar days of the Notice
26 Response Deadline and Defense Counsel's receipt of all Request for Exclusion reports from the
27 Settlement Administrator.
28

85. If the Settlement is voided or fails for any reason, Plaintiff and Defendant will have no further obligations under the Settlement, including any obligation by Defendant to pay the Gross Settlement Amount, or any amounts that otherwise would have been owed under this Settlement.

86. If the Settlement is voided or fails for any reason, any costs incurred by the Settlement Administrator shall be borne equally by Defendant and Plaintiff, unless otherwise specified in this Agreement.

K. Other Terms

87. Full and Complete Defense. This Agreement may be pleaded by any Released Party as a full and complete defense to and may be used as the basis for an injunction against, any action, suit, or other proceeding that has been or may be instituted, prosecuted, or attempted, asserting any Released Claim.

88. Waiver. The waiver by one Party of any breach of this Agreement by another Party shall not be deemed a waiver of any other prior or subsequent breach of this Agreement.

89. Parties' Authority. The signatories hereto represent that they are fully authorized to enter into this Settlement Agreement and bind the Parties hereto to the terms and conditions hereof.

90. Mutual Full Cooperation. The Parties agree to fully cooperate with each other to accomplish the terms of this Settlement Agreement, including but not limited to, execution of such documents and to take such other action as may reasonably be necessary to implement the terms of this Settlement Agreement. The Parties to this Settlement Agreement shall use their best efforts, including all efforts contemplated by this Settlement Agreement and any other efforts that may become necessary by order of the Court, or otherwise, to effectuate this Settlement Agreement and the terms set forth herein. As soon as practicable, Defense Counsel shall, with the assistance and cooperation of Defendant and Class Counsel, to the extent it may become necessary, gather Class Data from all applicable entities including any and all staffing agencies that staffed any of the Class Members and/or Allegedly Aggrieved Employees to Defendant during the respective Class and PAGA Periods. As soon as practicable after execution of this

1 Settlement Agreement, Class Counsel shall, with the assistance and cooperation of Defendant and
2 Defendant's Counsel, take all necessary steps to secure the Court's preliminary and final approval
3 of the settlement and the final entry of judgment. This shall include Class Counsel providing
4 Defense Counsel with drafts of the proposed Preliminary Approval Order and proposed Final
5 Approval Order and/or Judgment for review, comment and approval within a reasonable time
6 before the aforementioned documents are filed or submitted to the Court. Class Counsel and
7 Defense Counsel will meet and confer regarding any proposed revisions to the foregoing
8 documents in advance of the documents being submitted to the Court, and if any unresolved issue
9 remains, counsel will bring the outstanding issue or concern to the Court's attention at the
10 appropriate hearing.

11 91. No Prior Assignments. The Parties hereto represent, covenant, and warrant that
12 they have not, directly or indirectly, assigned, transferred, encumbered, or purported to assign,
13 transfer, or encumber to any person or entity any portion of any liability, claim, demand, action,
14 cause of action, or rights released and discharged by this Settlement Agreement.

15 92. No Admission. Defendant denies any and all liability to Plaintiff and/or any
16 Settlement Class Member or Aggrieved Employee in this Action, as to any and all causes of action
17 that were asserted or that might have been asserted in this Action. Nonetheless, Defendant wishes
18 to settle and compromise to avoid further substantial litigation expense and the inconvenience
19 and distraction of protracted litigation. Defendant also has taken into account the uncertainty and
20 risks inherent in litigation, and without conceding any infirmity in the defenses that it has asserted
21 or could assert against Plaintiff, has determined that it is desirable and beneficial that Plaintiff's
22 claims be settled in the manner and upon the terms and conditions set forth in this Agreement.

23 93. Inadmissibility of Agreement. Whether or not the Court issues the Final Approval
24 order, nothing contained herein, nor the consummation of this Settlement Agreement, is to be
25 construed or deemed an admission of liability, culpability, negligence, or wrongdoing on the part
26 of Defendant or any of the other Released Parties. Each of the Parties hereto has entered into this
27 Settlement Agreement with the intention of avoiding further disputes and litigation with the
28 attendant inconvenience and expenses. This Settlement Agreement is a settlement document, and

1 it, along with all related documents such as the notices, and motions for Preliminary Approval
2 and Final Approval, shall, pursuant to California Evidence Code Section 1152 and/or Federal
3 Rule of Evidence Section 408, be inadmissible in evidence in any proceeding, except an action or
4 proceeding to approve the Settlement, and/or interpret or enforce this Settlement Agreement. The
5 stipulation for class certification as part of this Settlement Agreement is for settlement purposes
6 only and if, for any reason the settlement is not approved, the stipulation will be of no force or
7 effect.

8 94. Notices. Unless otherwise specifically provided herein, all notices, demands, or
9 other communications given hereunder shall be in writing via email and United States mail and
10 shall be deemed to have been duly given as of the third business day after mailing by United
11 States registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, addressed:

12 To the Settlement Class Members and Allegedly Aggrieved Employees:

13
14 Mehrdad Bokhour
15 *mehrdad@bokhourlaw.com*
16 1901 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 450
17 Los Angeles, California 90067
18 Tel: (310) 975-1493; Fax: (310) 675-0861

19 Joshua Falakassa
20 *josh@falakassalaw.com*
21 1901 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 450
22 Los Angeles, California 90067
23 Tel: (818) 456-6168; Fax: (888) 505-0868

24 To Defendant:

25 John F. Kuentler
26 *john.kuentler@btlaw.com*
27 Caroline C. Dickey
28 *Caroline.dickey@btlaw.com*
Barnes & Thornburg LLP
2029 Century Park East, Suite 300
Los Angeles, California 90067
Tel: (310) 284-3880; Fax: (310) 284-3894

95. Construction. The Parties hereto agree that the terms and conditions of this
Settlement Agreement are the result of lengthy, intensive arms' length negotiations between the
Parties and that this Settlement Agreement shall not be construed in favor of or against any Party
by reason of the extent to which any Party or their counsel participated in the drafting of this

1 Settlement Agreement. Plaintiff and Defendant expressly waive the common-law and statutory
2 rule of construction that ambiguities should be construed against the drafter of an agreement and
3 further agree, covenant, and represent that the language in all parts of this Agreement shall be in
4 all cases construed as a whole, according to its fair meaning.

5 96. Captions and Interpretations. Paragraph titles or captions contained herein are
6 inserted as a matter of convenience and for reference, and in no way define, limit, extend, or
7 describe the scope of this Settlement Agreement or any provision hereof. Each term of this
8 Settlement Agreement is contractual and not merely a recital.

9 97. Modification. This Settlement Agreement may not be changed, altered, or
10 modified, except in writing and signed by the Parties hereto, and approved by the Court. This
11 Settlement Agreement may not be discharged except by performance in accordance with its terms
12 or by a writing signed by all of the Parties hereto.

13 98. Dispute Resolution. Prior to instituting legal action to enforce the provisions of
14 this Agreement or to declare rights and/or obligations under this Agreement, a Party shall provide
15 written notice to the other Party and allow an opportunity to cure the alleged deficiencies, and
16 Plaintiff and Defendant agree to seek the help of the mediator identified in this Agreement to
17 resolve any dispute they are unable to resolve informally. During this period, the Parties shall
18 bear their own attorneys' fees and costs. This provision shall not apply to any legal action or other
19 proceeding instituted by any person or entity other than Plaintiff or Defendant.

20 99. Court Retains Jurisdiction. The Parties agree that upon the entry of judgment of
21 dismissal pursuant to the terms of this Agreement, pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure Section
22 664.6, the Court shall retain exclusive and continuing equity jurisdiction of this Action over all
23 Parties to interpret, enforce, and effectuate the terms, conditions, intents, and obligations of this
24 Agreement.

25 100. Enforceability. Pursuant to California Evidence Code Section 1123(a) and (b), this
26 Agreement is intended by the Parties to be, and shall be, enforceable, binding and admissible in
27 a court of law.

28 101. Choice of Law. This Settlement Agreement shall be governed by and construed,

1 enforced, and administered in accordance with the laws of the State of California, without regard
2 to its conflicts-of-law rules.

3 102. Integration Clause. This Settlement Agreement contains the entire agreement
4 between the Parties relating to the settlement and transaction contemplated hereby, and all prior
5 or contemporaneous agreements, understandings, representations, and statements, whether oral
6 or written and whether by a Party or such Party's legal counsel, are merged herein. No rights
7 hereunder may be waived except in writing.

8 103. Binding On Assigns. This Settlement Agreement shall be binding upon and inure
9 to the benefit of the Parties hereto and their respective heirs, trustees, executors, administrators,
10 successors, and assigns.

11 104. Signatures of All Class Members Unnecessary to be Binding. It is agreed that,
12 because the members of the Settlement Class are numerous, it is impossible or impractical to have
13 each Final Settlement Class Member execute this Settlement Agreement. The Notice will advise
14 all Settlement Class Members of the binding nature of the releases provided herein and such shall
15 have the same force and effect as if this Settlement Agreement were executed by each Final
16 Settlement Class Member.

17 105. Counterparts. This Settlement Agreement may be executed in counterparts, and
18 when each Party has signed and delivered at least one such counterpart, each counterpart shall be
19 deemed an original, and, when taken together with other signed counterparts, shall constitute one
20 fully signed Settlement Agreement, which shall be binding upon and effective as to all Parties.
21 Electronic signatures shall have the same force and effect as an original.

22 106. Publicity. Plaintiff and Class Counsel agree that they will not issue any press
23 releases, initiate any contact with the press, respond to any press inquiry, post any new material
24 on any internet websites, or have any communication with the press about the Lawsuit, and/or the
25 fact, amount, or terms of the Settlement. Plaintiff and Class Counsel will not initiate any contact
26 with the Class Members or anyone else about the Settlement, except that: (a) Class Counsel, if
27 contacted by a Class Member, may respond that a settlement has been reached and that the details
28 will be communicated in a forthcoming Court-approved notice; and (b) Plaintiff, if contacted by

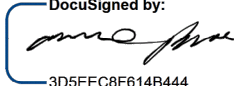
1 a Settlement Class Member or Aggrieved Employee, may respond only that the Settlement Class
2 Member or Aggrieved Employee should contact Class Counsel. Nothing in this paragraph shall
3 prevent Class Counsel and Plaintiff from undertaking all required submissions to the LWDA as
4 required by the PAGA statute in connection with this Settlement. Class Counsel and Plaintiff
5 will also provide Defendant's Counsel with a copy of the papers submitted to the LWDA, either
6 prior to or on the same day as the submission to the LWDA.

7
8 **APPROVAL AND EXECUTION BY PARTIES:**

9 5/31/2023

10 Dated: May __, 2023

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE:

11
12 
13 3D5EEC8F614B444...

14 Arsenio Barajas

15 Dated: June 9, 2023

DEFENDANT:
QUANEX HOMESHIELD, LLC

16
17 

18
19 By: Paul Cornett
20 Its: Vice President - Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

5/30/2023

Dated: May ___, 2023

CLASS COUNSEL

FALAKASSA LAW, P.C.

DocuSigned by:

Joshua Falakassa

15A628B2C5A149C...

Joshua Falakassa
Attorneys for Plaintiff,
Arsenio Barajas

5/30/2023

Dated: May ___, 2023

BOKHOUR LAW GROUP, P.C.

DocuSigned by:

Mehrdad Bokhour

D8D3643F271940F...

Mehrdad Bokhour
Attorneys for Plaintiff,
Arsenio Barajas

June 1st, 2023

Dated: May ___, 2023

DEFENDANT'S COUNSEL:

BARNES & THORNBURG LLP

Caroline Dickey

John F. Kuenstler
Caroline C. Dickey
Attorneys for Defendant,
Quanex Homeshield, LLC

