

DANIEL F. GAINES, ESQ. SBN 251488
daniel@gaineslawfirm.com
ALEX P. KATOFISKY, ESQ. SBN 202754
alex@gaineslawfirm.com
EVAN S. GAINES, ESQ. SBN 287668
evan@gaineslawfirm.com
GAINES & GAINES, APLC
4550 East Thousand Oaks Boulevard, Suite 100
Westlake Village, CA 91362
Telephone: (818) 703-8985
Facsimile: (818) 703-8984

Attorneys for Plaintiffs Jessica Vargas Zaragoza, Sean
Richardson, Kayla Salas, Selina Taing, Alizae Vargas,
and Ricki Freitas and Proposed Class Counsel

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – SPRING STREET COURTHOUSE

JESSICA VARGAS ZARAGOZA, on behalf
of herself and on behalf of all similarly
situated individuals,

Plaintiffs,

v.

AMERICAN TAX SOLUTIONS, a California
corporation, and DOES 1 through 10,
inclusive,

Defendants.

CASE NO: 22STCV09469

*Assigned to the Hon. Carolyn B. Kuhl, Dept.
12*

CLASS ACTION

**DECLARATION OF RICKI FREITAS IN
SUPPORT OF UNOPPOSED MOTION
FOR PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF
CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT**

DATE: September 5, 2023

TIME: 11:00 a.m.

DEPT.: SS-12

Complaint Filed: March 17, 2022

1 I, RICKI FREITAS, hereby declare and state as follows:

2 1. I am a named Plaintiff in this lawsuit against Defendant American Tax
3 Solutions (“Defendant”) and I submit this declaration in support of Plaintiffs’
4 Unopposed Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlement. I am a
5 competent adult and worked for Defendant as a non-exempt employee in Los Angeles
6 County during the relevant time period. I have personal knowledge of the facts set forth
7 herein, and if called as a witness to testify to them, I could and would do so competently.

8 2. I initiated contact with my current attorneys when I questioned the
9 employment practices of Defendant prior to the commencement of this lawsuit. I
10 accepted the opportunity to act as a Class Representative in a class action on behalf of
11 other employees of Defendant who I believed were being put through to labor law
12 violations. Although presented with the opportunity, I did not pursue this case on an
13 individual basis and instead did so as a class action so that I could help other employees
14 recover for what I believed were Defendant’s illegal practices.

15 3. More distinctly, I questioned Defendant’s policies of failing to pay all
16 wages, failing to provide all meal and rest periods, failing to reimburse expenses, failing
17 to timely compensate employees upon separation, and issuing its employees deficient
18 wage statements. Through constant contact with my lawyers, I learned these may be
19 illegal practices and Defendant’s employees might have recourse for them.

20 4. By initiating this lawsuit, and throughout its course, I have put the
21 interests of the class ahead of my own. I acknowledge that I could possibly earn a small
22 enhancement payment if this case resolved itself favorably, but always kept in mind that
23 I could also be responsible for paying Defendant’s attorneys’ fees and costs if it did not.
24 My purpose in bringing this lawsuit was to obtain a recovery on behalf of the class, and
25 even more importantly, to put an end to what I believed were illegal practices on the part
26 of Defendant. I believe I have achieved both through this lawsuit and settlement.

1 5. I am very pleased about the results of this litigation. I am happy that
2 Defendant is compensating class members for unpaid wages, premium wages for missed
3 meal and rest periods, expenses, penalties, and interest that I believe we are owed.

4 6. At the beginning of this case, I spent time through various phone calls
5 with several of my attorneys explaining what I understood to be the policies and
6 procedures of Defendant and how they were applied to me and others I worked with.
7 During the course of this litigation, up through and following the settlement process, I
8 kept diligently involved with its status, tracking the status of the case, and participating
9 as actively as possible.

10 7. While I have not maintained detailed time records of my activities in
11 connection with this litigation, I believe to have spent a total of approximately 16.5
12 hours helping my attorneys with the preparation of this case and doing work and
13 analysis independent from my attorneys both before and during this case, including
14 conducting an independent investigation of the facts and attending a full-day mediation.

15 8. In the early stages of this litigation, and throughout its course, I have spent
16 approximately 7.5 or more hours gathering, organizing, and reviewing documents and
17 information for this lawsuit. I sifted through many of my own documents and reviewed
18 information produced by Defendant as part of this case.

19 9. I have kept in constant contact with my attorneys several times per month
20 to track my case's status. I have taken an active involvement in this matter throughout
21 its course, including assisting my attorneys at the mandatory settlement conferences and
22 at my deposition.

23 10. This lawsuit will almost certainly result in reputational harm to me. There
24 is a stigma associated with suing anyone, let alone your former employer. I will
25 probably be adversely affected when it comes to obtaining future employment –
26 employers who learn that I sued Defendant in a class action will likely avoid hiring me.

11. I do not believe that I have any conflicts with other members of the class. My interests in bringing this lawsuit – for Defendant to change its labor practices going forward and to recompense current and former employees – are the same as those of all other class members.

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

Executed on this 31st day of July, 2023 at Anaheim, California.

Prima

RICKI FREITAS

Title	Signature for Declaration
File name	Freitas Decl v1.doc
Document ID	2ab3f7e73f0005d31c589710af9b9be27ac4e799
Audit trail date format	MM / DD / YYYY
Status	Signed

Document history

 SENT	07 / 31 / 2023 22:10:23 UTC	Sent for signature to Ricki Freitas from office@gaineslawfirm.com
 VIEWED	07 / 31 / 2023 22:16:05 UTC	Viewed by Ricki Freitas
 SIGNED	07 / 31 / 2023 22:16:45 UTC	Signed by Ricki Freitas
 COMPLETED	07 / 31 / 2023 22:16:45 UTC	The document has been completed.