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

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

20 4. By bringing this lawsuit, and throughout its course, I have put the interests
21 of the class ahead of my own. I recognize that I could possibly earn a small
22 enhancement payment if this case resolved itself favorably, but always knew that I could
23 also be responsible for paying Defendant’s attorneys’ fees and costs if it did not. My
24 objective 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.
27
28

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

10 7. While I have not preserved detailed time records of my activities in
11 connection with this litigation, I believe to have spent a total of approximately 18 hours
12 aiding my attorneys with the composing of this case and doing work and analysis
13 independent from my attorneys both before and during this case, including conducting
14 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 damage to me.
24 There 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.

Kayla Salas

KAYLA SALAS

Title	Signature for Declaration
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