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Attorneys for Plaintiff Kevin Hickey

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO

KEVIN HICKEY, an individual, on behalf of
himself and all others similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

vs.

TRANSFORM SEARS HOME SERVICES,
LLC, a Delaware corporation; and DOES 1
through 10, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No. 34-2022-0321759

ASSIGNED FOR ALL PURPOSES TO:

The Honorable Lauri A. Damrell

Department 22

REPRESENTATIVE ACTION

**DECLARATION OF DENISE ISLAS ON
BEHALF OF SIMPLURIS, INC. (PROPOSED
SETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATOR) IN
SUPPORT OF APPROVAL OF PRIVATE
ATTORNEYS GENERAL ACT (PAGA)
SETTLEMENT**

Date: March 28, 2025

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Dept: 22

Reservation No: A-321759-001

Complaint filed: June 14, 2022

Trial date: None Set

Declaration of Denise Islas on Behalf of Simpluris, Inc.

Case No. 34-2022-0321759

DECLARATION OF DENISE ISLAS

I, Denise Islas, declare as follows:

1. I am the Director of Client Services for Simpluris Inc. ("Simpluris"). I am over 18 years of age and authorized to make this declaration on behalf of Simpluris and myself, and make this declaration based upon my own personal knowledge.

2. Simpluris has extensive experience in class and representative action matters, having provided services in class and representative action settlements involving antitrust, securities fraud, property damage, employment discrimination, employment wage and hour, product liability, insurance and consumer issues. Simpluris specializes in pre-settlement consultation, data management, legal notification, call center support, claims processing, and tax reporting.

3. We have provided notification and/or claims administration services in more than 9,000 cases. Over the past eighteen (18) years, Simpluris has handled approximately \$8 billion in settlements. A true and correct copy of Simpluris' company resume ("Simpluris Resume") is attached as **Exhibit A**.

4. Simpluris is committed to the security of not only our data and information but the Parties' data and information as well. We have not experienced any security breaches in our company history. A true and correct copy of our SOC 2 Certification demonstrating our commitment to security is attached as **Exhibit B**. Additionally, Simpluris maintains insurance coverage in the amount of \$3,000,000 for Errors and Omissions.

5. Simpluris does not have any affiliation with counsel for this matter.

6. Simpluris has been selected by counsel to serve as the PAGA Settlement Administrator for this case. In this capacity, Simpluris will be charged with, among other responsibilities: (a) establishing a separate employer identification number and creating a Qualified Settlement Fund; (b) providing the Notice to Aggrieved Employees with Distribution of PAGA Payment ("PAGA Notice") in English; (c) calculating individual settlement Payments, distributing funds, and tax-reporting following settlement approval; (d) mailing settlement checks; (e) answering questions from Aggrieved Employees; (f) providing necessary reports and declarations, as requested by the parties.

///

8.1 For any PAGA Notice and Payments that are returned to Simpluris as undeliverable, Simpluris will perform address traces to find an updated address. The address trace will utilize the Aggrieved Employees' name, previous address and Social Security Number. In the event an updated address is obtained, the PAGA Notice documents will be promptly re-mailed to those Aggrieved Employees via First Class mail. For PAGA Notice and Payment documents that are returned by the Post Office with forwarding addresses attached, these documents will be promptly re-mailed to those Aggrieved Employees at the forwarding address via First Class mail. If the NCOA does not provide a correct address, Simpluris will attempt to determine the correct address using the Aggrieved Employees' Social Security number and any available information provided by Defendant.

8. Simpluris has agreed to administer the case for a fixed fee of \$5,800 without Spanish translation included. If the scope of work increases or decreases significantly, Simpluris will inform the parties and request approval of an adjustment, whether increased or decreased respectively, to the capped costs. A true and correct copy of Simpluris' bid for administering this matter is attached as **Exhibit C.**

9. Simpluris will distribute the funds from uncashed checks in a manner agreed by the parties, and as approved by the Court.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the above is true and correct and that this Declaration was executed this 26th day of February, 2025, in Costa Mesa, California.

Denise B Islas
Denise Islas

EXHIBIT A

Simpluris, an award winning claims administrator, has administered over 9,000 matters, managed over \$9 billion in settlement funds, and provided its services for over 15 years. Our beginning-to-end services include complete project management, mailings & notification campaigns, contact center, legal intake, data management, disbursements & tax reporting, among others.

Services

Class Action Administration

Simpluris class action and claims administration offers comprehensive settlement planning, execution, and reporting. When you bring a case to Simpluris, our team reviews each matter independently. Our subject matter experts leverage their experience to develop a settlement framework designed to meet the unique aspects of your matter. We take a consultative approach to address your challenges and support preliminary hearing preparation.

Mass Arbitration Administration

Simpluris can provide the technology and operational fulfillment resources needed to manage mass arbitrations from intake to payment in a cost-effective and efficient manner. At Simpluris, we pride ourselves on having an average of 93.5% signed releases. We have experience administering some of the largest mass arbitration cases, including Uber, Lyft, Instacart, Grubhub, Postmates, and DoorDash. Simpluris delivers solutions for matters of any size and complexity.

Regulatory Remediation

Whether internally initiated or formally required by a consent order, Simpluris aids respondents in meeting critical obligations and deadlines. Simpluris is prepared to plan and execute remediation actions tailored to your institution's size and needs. As a third-party administrator, we understand the importance of swift remediation and provide "white glove" customer service from planning, to execution, through final reporting.

Legal Corporate Services

Simpluris' services scale and adapt to meet our client's challenges. We excel at comprehensive settlement administration and remediation; however, we understand that our client's needs include a combination of many legal corporate services. No matter how simple or complex, we ask you to bring us your unique challenges so we may develop a custom solution to fit your needs.

Data Security

Simpluris is committed to the security and overall protection of its customer's data and information. We maintain SOC 1 and SOC 2 certification which requires us to adhere to strict policies and procedures surrounding information security including processing and storage of confidential customer data. Simpluris has and maintains a comprehensive, written Information Security Program that complies with all applicable laws and regulations (e.g. HIPAA, Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, MA 201 CMR 17.00).

Executive Team

Simpluris' history is rooted in class action settlement administration and our management team's experiences are vast and diverse. The Simpluris executive leadership team boasts more than 100 years of experience in corporate, financial and legal administration, including:

- Executive management of the largest legal administration operation in the world that produced 200+ million notifications, 10+ million claims and \$5+ billion funds disbursed per year on average.
- A few of the most notable matters our leadership team has presided over include the largest data breach responses, corporate restructures and antitrust settlement administrations in US history.
- Oversight of the largest consent orders handed down from OCC, DOJ, CFPB & FTC over the last decade.
- Fostering hundreds of client relationships with the premier government entities, law firms and financial institutions in the world.

The Simpluris executive team - Kevin Lee, President & CEO; Doug Norman, SVP Business Operations; Zach Hoffman, Founder, CTO; Patrick Ivie, CRO; Wes Alford, SVP; and Paul Saroj, SVP - are experienced industry experts. Leveraging our past experiences, Simpluris is prepared to handle matters of every scope and scale.

Technology

From Simpluris' inception, our founders had a vision to develop a single comprehensive platform, purpose-built to serve the legal administration industry. Today, our proprietary technology platform, named Cadence, increases data security, mitigates errors caused by siloed databases, and speeds processes by improving transparency and collaboration between departments. Cadence is an innovative and evolving administration engine that sets our case management apart from all other legal administrators. From data ingestion, noticing, and claims processing, through disbursement, taxation, and final reporting, our project management processes are conducted inside Cadence. We see the future of legal tech evolving and are continuously developing our solutions to meet the administration needs of tomorrow.

Client Service

The Simpluris administration team is best known for their dedication to delivering premium service. When you partner with Simpluris, you work alongside a dedicated client service representative. This Simpluris team member will guide you through the settlement life cycle. Your client service representative is your administration conductor, adjusting the tempo as your case progresses. With a comprehensive view of your matter, your client service representative can respond swiftly to changes in your case, proactively notify you of upcoming milestones, and most importantly, be accountable for the successful completion of your matter.

Our team is available any time of day with offices across the nation, including two corporate hubs in Costa Mesa, CA and Orlando, FL.



(800) 779-2104
3194-C Airport Loop Dr.,
Costa Mesa, CA 92626
simpluris.com



EXHIBIT B



Data Security and Technology

800-779-2104
3194-C Airport Loop Dr., Costa Mesa, CA 92626
inquiries@simpluris.com | simpluris.com



Simpluris utilizes purpose-built proprietary software as well as industry best-of-breed technologies to administer complex matters with accuracy, efficiency, security, scalability, and cost-effectiveness. Our technology stack has been built from the ground up to meet the needs of complex matters including class action and mass arbitration settlements, government regulatory orders, corporate remediations and other mass legal administration engagements.

To fulfill the needs of these matters, Simpluris must be nimble while meeting rigorous security requirements and high-quality standards. Our in-house technologies are continuously refined, tuned, and improved throughout Simpluris' tenure.

Our technology team and entire business prioritize security as one of our major tenants to ensure our client's data remains secure and protected. To protect your data, Simpluris utilizes industry best practice tools and techniques including providing an encrypted secure file transfer (i.e. SFTP) platform for exchanging sensitive documents; encrypting all data at every level possible including encryption in transit, at rest, at hard-disk/block level, database level, and client/network layer; utilization of multi-factor authentication for all employee access; and extensive, ongoing required employee training to ensure our people understand the latest security threats & prevention techniques, and general best practices.



Data Security

Certifications and Attestations

Simpluris maintains a comprehensive information security program to ensure the highest level of care and concern is taken to protect our company and customers' information assets. Simpluris is annually audited by third-party providers for security policy and procedure review to ensure compliance with all necessary controls and requirements.

- SOC 1 Type 1
- SOC 2 Type 1
- SOC 2 Type 2
- HIPAA
- Penetration Testing
- Vulnerability Management

Information Security Program

Simpluris maintains a written Information Security Program (ISP) designed to: (a) ensure the security, privacy and confidentiality of client and investor information; (b) protect against any reasonably anticipated threats or hazards to the security or integrity of client information; and (c) protect against unauthorized access to, use, deletion, or modification of investor information.





Simpluris Information Security Policy Document Index

Acceptable Use Policy

Password Policy

Patch Management / Update Policy

Privacy Policy (Internal)

Change Management Policy

Data Retention Policy

Software Development Lifecycle Policy

HIPAA Security Rule

Wireless Access Policy

Mobile Device Policy

Network Firewall Policy

Antivirus and Malware Policy

Physical Security Policy

Business Continuity Plan

Risk Assessment & Treatment

Roles & Permissions Matrix

HIPAA Oversight Policy

System & Network Configuration Policy

Internal Controls Policy

Information Classification & Handling Policy

Access Control Policy

Audit Policy

Backup Policy

Removable Media Policy

Disaster Recovery Policy

HIPAA Assigned Responsibility

Server Security Policy

Incident Response Policy

Vendor Management Policy

Risk Management Policy

Systems, Processes & Tools



Penetration testing



SIEM, firewall, VPN endpoint, data loss prevention, intrusion prevention



Cloud email security service



Endpoint security



Cloud-hosted email & security



Cloud-hosted endpoint management



IT & development ticketing & documentation



Vulnerability management



Cloud-hosted identity management, storage solutions, MFA, endpoint management



Amazon AWS (EC2, EBS, CloudWatch)
Cloud-hosted virtual servers, file storage, identity management, WAF, website hosting

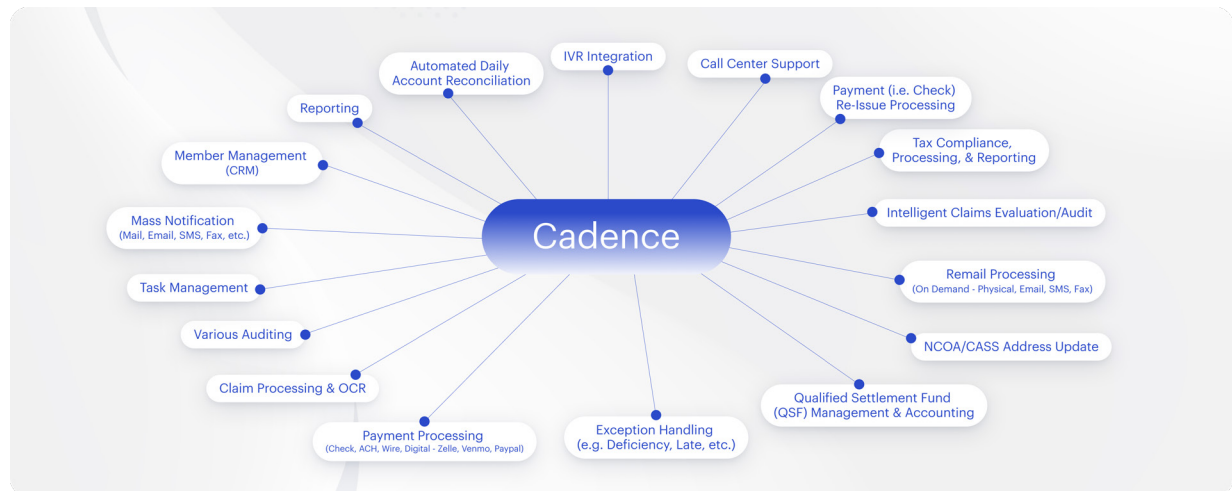


Our Technology Solutions



Cadence

Cadence™, our internally developed complex administration management tool, acts as a single centralized platform for the entire lifecycle of a project. Cadence uses security best practices including a role-based permission model, encryption at rest and in transit, and database and disk encryption. Our internal features include built-in integrated data and address augmentation (NCOA, CASS, Skip Tracing), address validation built-in, deep auditing and logging, maker/checker type validation steps and checkpoints to enforce accuracy and security, and prevent fraud and mistakes.



Case Website and Claims Portal

Cadence enables the development of claims processing websites specifically tailored for highly scalable and redundant situations using serverless, cloud-based technologies built on top of Amazon AWS. Features include login or authentication, multi-language support, milestones, document sharing, custom online claim forms, e-signature and more. Our case websites are ADA/Section 508 compliant while fully implementing security best practices. We perform encryption of all data, actively monitor and scan all incoming and outgoing data for threats both internal and external, as well as auditing and monitoring all systems for suspicious activity to ensure we are providing the highest possible protection and availability of data assets.

Malware, Fraud, & Data Protection:

Simpluris has built an extensive ecosystem using both custom in-house and off-the-shelf tools to protect our customers, class members, and business from the multitude of today's external security threats. Our highly scalable and redundant claims processing website platform has various malware and fraud prevention technologies integrated including duplicate detection and prevention, fraud prevention, and custom Real Time Claim Validation (RTCV) technology to filter prospective logins/claims based on customer-defined rules. This, in conjunction with our plethora of Gartner magic quadrant best-of-breed malware and ransomware prevention tools, ensures that data is protected whether it's processed through case websites, documents, emails, or any other transmission method. Our security specialists are trained and staffed to monitor our systems, applications, and networks 24/7 for any threats and are ready to respond at a moment's notice.





* Our Team

Simpluris technology professionals include information technology administrators, security specialists, data analysts, database administrators, data engineers, developers, and web designers. They continually monitor and adapt our systems and processes according to business needs and ensure our systems are secure and stabilized against the ever-changing threat landscape, and remain current with the latest in industry best practices. In addition, we provide ongoing employee education and training to inform, test, and verify their knowledge of the latest security threats and mitigation strategies.

Simpluris' history is rooted in class action settlement administration and our management team's experiences are vast and diverse. The Simpluris executive leadership team boasts more than 100 years of experience in corporate, financial and legal administration, including:

- Executive management of the largest legal administration operation in the world that produced 200+ million notifications, 10+ million claims and \$5+ billion funds disbursed per year on average.
- A few of the most notable matters our leadership team has presided over include the largest data breach responses, corporate restructures and antitrust settlement administrations in US history.
- Oversight of the largest consent orders handed down from OCC, DOJ, CFPB & FTC over the last decade.
- Fostering hundreds of client relationships with the premier government entities, law firms and financial institutions in the world.

The Executive Team



Kevin Lee

Chief Executive Officer & President
klee@simpluris.com



Zach Hoffman

Co-Founder, Chief Technology Officer
zhoffman@simpluris.com



Doug Norman

Senior Vice President, Business Operations
dnorman@simpluris.com



Patrick Ivie

Chief Revenue Officer
pivie@simpluris.com



Wes Alford

Senior Vice President, Client Services
walford@simpluris.com



Paul Saroj

Senior Vice President, Strategic Partnerships
psaroj@simpluris.com



Let's discuss how Simpluris can solve your administration challenges.

Our focus on providing superior customer service, coupled with our experience and ability to create innovative solutions, has given Simpluris a reputation for exceptional settlement administration.

Class Action Administration

Regulatory Remediation

Mass Arbitration Administration

800-779-2104
3194-C Airport Loop Dr., Costa Mesa, CA 92626
inquiries@simpluris.com | simpluris.com

EXHIBIT C

Estimate Number:	20241113-PJI-02	Prepared By:	Patrick J. Ivie
Estimate Date:	11/13/2024	Telephone Number (mobile):	310.995.6455
Estimate Expiration Date:	2/11/2025	Email:	pjvie@simpluris.com

Primary Contact
Attorney: **Matthew Atlas**
Firm: COHELAN KHOURY & SINGER
Email: matlas@ckslaw.com

Opposing Counsel Contact
Attorney:
Firm:
Email:

**Case Name: Transform Sears
PAGA Settlement
Scenario 1: Without Spanish Translations**

Assumptions

In addition to the assumptions enumerated below, this estimate assumes that

- (1) Simpluris will receive data in a single, complete file; (2) there will be no substantial change to class size or in response rate;
- (3) administration costs will be paid from the QSF, and (4) Simpluris will submit revisions to this estimate to account for any material changes to scope.

Class/Aggrieved Employees:	850	Undeliverable Rate:	10%
Claims Rate:	n/a	Call Rate:	4%
Opt-out Rate:	n/a	Average Call Length:	3 Minutes
Language(s) for Communication	EN	Fund Distribution:	Simpluris
Reminder Mailing:	n/a	Number of Distributions:	1
Unclaimed Funds:	Escheat	State(s):	CA
Length of Administration:	6 Months	Tax Year(s):	1

Case Setup

- Class website: Static website with FAQs, court documents, etc.
- Data compilation: develop case-specific response tracking

Category	Unit Value	# of Units	Total
Project Manager - Case Setup	\$110.00	2	\$220.00
Static Class Website	\$450.00	1	\$450.00
Website Hosting and Security Monitoring and Tracking	\$90.00	6 Months	\$540.00
Database Manager - Initial Data Analysis	\$125.00	2	\$250.00
Total:			\$1,460.00

Contact Center

- Establish case-specific toll-free number and 24/7 IVR
- Assuming -minute calls

Category	Unit Value	# of Units	Total
Call Center Set Up	\$350.00	1	\$350.00
Toll Free Monthly Maintenance	\$95.00	6 Months	\$570.00
IVR (includes toll-free number charges)	\$15.00	2	\$30.00
Subtotal			\$950.00

Award Disbursement

- Establish 26 CFR § 1.468B-1 compliant Qualified Settlement Fund ("QSF")
- Disburse Notice with award payments and tax documents
- Uncashed funds will be sent to the California Controller's Unclaimed Property Fund
- Conduct regular and annual IRS-mandated QSF reporting and reconciliation (one per calendar year)
- Complete all required filings with state and federal tax authorities

Category	Unit Value	# of Units	Total
Disbursement Data Preparation	\$125.00	3	\$375.00
Disbursement Manager - Data Validation	\$90.00	3	\$270.00
Setup Banking Account/QSF	\$675.00	1	\$675.00
QSF Monthly Reconciliation and Maintenance	\$125.00	6	\$750.00
NCOA/CASS/LACS	\$0.14	850	\$119.00
Print & Mail Distribution Check and Tax Docs	\$1.00	850	\$850.00
Postage	\$0.72	850	\$612.00

Process Returned Checks	\$0.20	85	\$17.00
Skip Trace Search Undeliverable Checks	\$0.12	85	\$10.20
Remail Checks (includes postage)	\$2.20	85	\$187.00
Escheat Uncashed Checks	\$500.00	1	\$500.00
QSF Reporting and Final Declaration	\$500.00	1	\$500.00
Reissue Checks / Mailing	\$2.50	5	\$12.50
Reissue 1099s	\$2.50	3	\$7.50
Responding to IRS/State/Agency Inquiries	\$75.00	2	\$150.00
QSF Annual Tax Reporting and Reconciliation	\$850.00	1	\$850.00
Distribution Manager	\$90.00	2	\$180.00
Total:			\$6,065.20

Case Completion

- Final audit and review
- Send final declaration and reporting to counsel

Category	Unit Value	# of Units	Total
Data Manager-Final Reporting	\$125.00	1	\$125.00
Clerical-Clean Up Any Misc.	\$45.00	2	\$90.00
Project Manager-Wrap-up Final Issues	\$110.00	1	\$110.00
Total:			\$325.00

Total Estimated Cost of Administration:	\$8,800
Less Client Courtesy Discount:	- \$3,000
Discounted Total:	\$5,800

Estimate Number:	20241113-PJI-02	Prepared By:	Patrick J. Ivie
Estimate Date:	11/13/2024	Telephone Number (mobile):	310.995.6455
Estimate Expiration Date:	2/11/2025	Email:	pjvie@simpluris.com

Primary Contact
Attorney: **Matthew Atlas**
Firm: COHELAN KHOURY & SINGER
Email: matlas@ckslaw.com

Opposing Counsel Contact
Attorney:
Firm:
Email:

**Case Name: Transform Sears
PAGA Settlement
Scenario 2: With Spanish Translations**

Assumptions

In addition to the assumptions enumerated below, this estimate assumes that

- (1) Simpluris will receive data in a single, complete file; (2) there will be no substantial change to class size or in response rate;
- (3) administration costs will be paid from the QSF, and (4) Simpluris will submit revisions to this estimate to account for any material changes to scope.

Class/Aggrieved Employees:	850	Undeliverable Rate:	10%
Claims Rate:	n/a	Call Rate:	4%
Opt-out Rate:	n/a	Average Call Length:	3 Minutes
Language(s) for Communication	EN/SP	Fund Distribution:	Simpluris
Reminder Mailing:	n/a	Number of Distributions:	1
Unclaimed Funds:	Escheat	State(s):	CA
Length of Administration:	6 Months	Tax Year(s):	1

Case Setup

- Class website: Static website with FAQs, court documents, etc.
- Data compilation: develop case-specific response tracking

Category	Unit Value	# of Units	Total
Project Manager - Case Setup	\$110.00	2	\$220.00
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Website Hosting and Security Monitoring and Tracking	\$90.00	6 Months	\$540.00
Database Manager - Initial Data Analysis	\$125.00	2	\$250.00
Total:			\$1,460.00

Contact Center

- Establish case-specific toll-free number and 24/7 IVR
- Assuming -minute calls

Category	Unit Value	# of Units	Total
Call Center Set Up	\$350.00	1	\$350.00
Toll Free Monthly Maintenance	\$95.00	6 Months	\$570.00
IVR (includes toll-free number charges)	\$15.00	2	\$30.00
Subtotal			\$950.00

Award Disbursement

- Establish 26 CFR § 1.468B-1 compliant Qualified Settlement Fund ("QSF")
- Spanish translation of the notice
- Disburse Notice with award payments and tax documents
- Uncashed funds will be sent to the California Controller's Unclaimed Property Fund
- Conduct regular and annual IRS-mandated QSF reporting and reconciliation (one per calendar year)
- Complete all required filings with state and federal tax authorities

Category	Unit Value	# of Units	Total
Disbursement Data Preparation	\$125.00	3	\$375.00
Disbursement Manager - Data Validation	\$90.00	3	\$270.00
Setup Banking Account/QSF	\$675.00	1	\$675.00
QSF Monthly Reconciliation and Maintenance	\$125.00	6	\$750.00
Spanish Translation (assuming 450 words)	\$0.25	450	\$112.50
NCOA/CASS/LACS	\$0.14	850	\$119.00
Print & Mail Distribution Check and Tax Docs	\$1.25	850	\$1,062.50
Postage	\$0.72	850	\$612.00

Process Returned Checks	\$0.20	85	\$17.00
Skip Trace Search Undeliverable Checks	\$0.12	85	\$10.20
Remail Checks (includes postage)	\$2.40	85	\$204.00
Escheat Uncashed Checks	\$500.00	1	\$500.00
QSF Reporting and Final Declaration	\$500.00	1	\$500.00
Reissue Checks / Mailing	\$2.50	5	\$12.50
Reissue 1099s	\$2.50	3	\$7.50
Responding to IRS/State/Agency Inquiries	\$75.00	2	\$150.00
QSF Annual Tax Reporting and Reconciliation	\$850.00	1	\$850.00
Distribution Manager	\$90.00	2	\$180.00
Total:			\$6,407.20

Case Completion

- Final audit and review
- Send final declaration and reporting to counsel

Category	Unit Value	# of Units	Total
Data Manager-Final Reporting	\$125.00	1	\$125.00
Clerical-Clean Up Any Misc.	\$45.00	2	\$90.00
Project Manager-Wrap-up Final Issues	\$110.00	1	\$110.00
Total:			\$325.00

Total Estimated Cost of Administration:	\$9,142
Less Client Courtesy Discount:	- \$3,000
Discounted Total:	\$6,142