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on behalf of herself and current and former aggrieved employees

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

ERIKA E. AHRENS, on behalf of herself and
current and former aggrieved employees

Plaintiff,

vs.

AMERIT CONSULTING, INC.; and DOES 1 to
100, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No.: **CVPS2502076**

PAGA ACTION

**PLAINTIFF ERIKA E. AHRENS'
COMPLAINT FOR:**

- CIVIL PENALTIES PURSUANT
TO THE PRIVATE ATTORNEYS
GENERAL ACT OF 2004
("PAGA"), LABOR CODE
SECTIONS 2698, ET SEQ.**

COMES NOW Plaintiff ERIKA E. AHRENS ("Plaintiff"), who alleges and complains
against Defendants AMERIT CONSULTING, INC.; and DOES 1 to 100, inclusive (collectively
"Defendants") as follows:

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This is a Private Attorneys General Act of 2004, Labor Code §§ 2698, *et seq.*
("PAGA") representative action brought by Plaintiff on behalf of the State of California, herself
and other current and former aggrieved employees of Defendants who worked as hourly non-exempt
employees in California during the relevant time period seeking civil penalties associated with
Defendants' violation of the Labor Code based on Defendants' failure to pay wages for all hours
worked at minimum wage and all overtime hours worked at the overtime rate of pay; failure to pay

overtime wages at the proper overtime rate of pay; failure to authorize or permit all legally required and/or compliant meal periods or pay meal period premium wages; failure to authorize or permit all legally required and/or compliant rest periods or pay rest period premium wages; indemnification for all necessary expenditures or losses incurred by employees in direct consequence of discharging their duties; statutory penalties for failure to timely pay earned wages during employment; statutory penalties for failure to provide accurate wage statements; statutory waiting time penalties in the form of continuation wages for failure to timely pay employees all wages due upon separation of employment. Plaintiff seeks on a representative basis, following notice to the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, civil penalties, reasonable attorneys' fees pursuant to Labor Code section 2699(g)(1) and costs brought on behalf of Plaintiff, the State of California, and others aggrieved.

II. JURISDICTION AND VENUE

2. This Court has jurisdiction over the claims of Plaintiff and all other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees because Plaintiff's lawsuit seeks civil penalties on behalf of herself, all other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees, and the State of California in excess of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000); Defendants employed Plaintiff and all other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees; and the injuries to Plaintiff and all other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees occurred in locations throughout California, including but not limited to Riverside County, at Desert Hot Springs, CA 92241.

III. PARTIES

1. Plaintiff brings this action as a representative of the Labor and Workforce Development Agency on behalf of herself and other current and former employees subject to violations of the Labor Code. The named Plaintiff and the persons on whose behalf this action is filed include current, former and/or future employees of Defendants who work, worked, or will work for Defendants as direct employees as well as temporary employees employed through temp agencies as hourly non-exempt employees in California. At all times mentioned herein, the currently named Plaintiff is and was domiciled and a resident and citizen of California and was employed by Defendants in an hourly position at Defendants' location in Riverside County from in or around

June 2024, until on or about November 1, 2024.

2. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that Defendant AMERIT CONSULTING, INC. is authorized to do business within the State of California and is doing business in the State of California and/or that Defendants DOES 1-50 are, and at all times relevant hereto were persons acting on behalf of Defendant AMERIT CONSULTING, INC. in the establishment of, or ratification of, the aforementioned illegal wage and hour practices or policies. Defendant AMERIT CONSULTING, INC. operates in Riverside County and employed Plaintiff and aggrieved employees in Riverside County, including but not limited to, at Desert Hot Springs, CA 92241.

3. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that Defendants DOES 1 through 50 are corporations, or are other business entities or organizations of a nature unknown to Plaintiff that employed Plaintiff and aggrieved California non-exempt employees, permitted Plaintiff and aggrieved employees to work, and exercised control over the wages, hours and working conditions of employment of Plaintiff and aggrieved employees.

4. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that Defendants DOES 51 through 100 are individuals unknown to Plaintiff. Each of the individual defendants is sued individually and in his or her capacity as an agent, shareholder, owner, representative, manager, supervisor, independent contractor and/or employee of each defendant who violated or caused to be violated the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Labor Code and/or any provision of the Industrial Welfare Commission's wage orders regulating hours and days of work.

5. Plaintiff is unaware of the true names of Defendants DOES 1 through 100. Plaintiff sues said defendants by said fictitious names, and will amend this complaint when the true names and capacities are ascertained or when such facts pertaining to liability are ascertained, or as permitted by law or by the Court. Plaintiff is informed and believes that each of the fictitiously named defendants is in some manner responsible for the events and allegations set forth in this complaint.

6. Plaintiff makes the allegations in this complaint without any admission that, as to any particular allegation, Plaintiff bears the burden of pleading, proving, or persuading and Plaintiff

1 reserves all of Plaintiff's right to plead in the alternative.

2 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

3 **CIVIL PENALTIES PURSUANT TO THE PRIVATE ATTORNEYS GENERAL ACT OF**
4 **2004, LABOR CODE SECTIONS 2698, ET SEQ.**

5 **(Against all Defendants by Plaintiff on behalf of Themselves, the State of California, and**
6 **Other Current and Former Aggrieved Employees)**

7 7. Plaintiff incorporates all paragraphs above as though fully set forth herein.

8 8. During Plaintiff's employment and continuing through the present, Plaintiff alleges
9 Defendants violated Labor Code sections 201, 202, 203, 204, 223, 226, 226.7, 510, 512, 1194, 1197,
10 2802, and the applicable Wage Orders.

11 9. Specifically, Defendants have committed the following violations of California
12 Labor Code:

13 10. **Failure to pay wages for all hours worked at the legal minimum wage:**
14 Defendants employed many of their employees, including Plaintiff, as hourly non-exempt
15 employees. In California, an employer is required to pay hourly employees for all "hours worked,"
16 which includes all time that an employee is under control of the employer and all time the employee
17 is suffered and permitted to work. This includes the time an employee spends, either directly or
18 indirectly, performing services which inure to the benefit of the employer.

19 11. Labor Code sections 1194 and 1197 require an employer to compensate employees
20 for all "hours worked" at least at a minimum wage rate of pay as established by the IWC and the
21 Wage Orders.

22 12. In this case, Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly
23 non-exempt employees worked more minutes per shift than Defendants credited them with having
24 worked. Specifically, Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved
25 California-based hourly non-exempt employees all wages at the applicable minimum wage for all
26 hours worked due to Defendants' policies, practices, and/or procedures including, but not limited
27 to:

28 (a) Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt

1 employees who worked remotely were not paid for the time spent setting up their remote
2 workstations with computer equipment supplied by Defendants.

3 (b) Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt
4 employees who worked remotely were not paid for the time spent booting up computers and
5 remotely logging into Defendants' computer systems prior to being able to clock-in for the start of
6 their shifts, which approximately took five to ten minutes without being paid for that time.

7 (c) Defendant failed to pay Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-
8 based hourly non-exempt employees' their actual hours worked during their shift and instead paid
9 Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees by
10 scheduled hours despite that they routinely worked beyond their scheduled hours.

11 13. Therefore, Defendants suffered, permitted, and required Plaintiff and other current
12 and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees to be subject to Defendants'
13 control without paying wages for that time. This resulted in Plaintiff and other current and former
14 aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees working time for which they were not
15 compensated any wages, in violation of Labor Code sections 1194 and 1197 and the applicable
16 Wage Order.

17 14. **Failure to pay wages for overtime hours worked at the overtime rate of pay**
18 **and/or failure to pay overtime wages at the proper rate of pay:** Defendants employed many of
19 their employees, including Plaintiff, as hourly non-exempt employees. In California, an employer
20 is required to pay hourly employees for all "hours worked," which includes all time that an employee
21 is under control of the employer and all time the employee is suffered and permitted to work. This
22 includes the time an employee spends, either directly or indirectly, performing services that inure to
23 the benefit of the employer.'

24 15. Labor Code sections 510 and 1194 require an employer to compensate employees a
25 higher rate of pay for hours worked in excess of eight (8) hours in a workday, in excess of forty (40)
26 hours in a workweek, and on any seventh consecutive day of work in a workweek:

27 Any work in excess of eight (8) hours in one workday, any work in excess of forty (40) hours
28 in any one (1) workweek, and the first eight (8) hours worked on the seventh day of work in
any one (1) workweek, shall be compensated at the rate of no less than one-and-one-half
(1.5) times the regular rate of pay for an employee. Any work in excess of twelve (12) hours

1 in one (1) day shall be compensated at the rate of no less than twice the regular rate of pay
2 for an employee. In addition, any work in excess of eight (8) hours on any seventh day of a
workweek shall be compensated at the rate of no less than twice the regular rate of pay of an
employee.

3 Labor Code section 510.

4 16. In this case, Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved
5 California-based hourly non-exempt employees overtime wages for all overtime hours worked due
6 to Defendants' policies, practices, and/or procedures including, but not limited to:

7 (a) Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt
8 employees who worked remotely were not paid for the time spent setting up their remote
9 workstations with computer equipment supplied by Defendants.

10 (b) Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt
11 employees who worked remotely were not paid for the time spent booting up computers and
12 remotely logging into Defendants' computer systems prior to being able to clock-in for the start of
13 their shifts, which approximately took five to ten minutes without being paid for that time.

14 (c) Defendant failed to pay Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-
15 based hourly non-exempt employees' their actual hours worked during their shift and instead paid
16 Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees by
17 scheduled hours despite that they routinely worked beyond their scheduled hours.

18 17. Furthermore, overtime is based upon an employee's regular rate of pay. "The regular
19 rate at which an employee is employed shall be deemed to include all remuneration for employment
20 paid to, or on behalf, of the employee." See Division of Labor Standards Enforcement –
21 Enforcement Policies and Interpretations Manual, Section 49.1.2.

22 18. In this case, Plaintiff alleges that when she and other current and former aggrieved
23 California-based hourly non-exempt employees earned overtime wages, Defendants failed to pay
24 them overtime wages at the proper overtime rate of pay due to Defendants' failure to include all
25 remuneration when calculating the overtime rate of pay. Specifically, Defendants maintained a
26 policy, practice, and/or procedure of failing to include all remuneration such as bonus pay for
27 example, when calculating Plaintiff's and other current and former aggrieved California-based
28 hourly non-exempt employees' regular rate of pay for the purpose of paying overtime.

1 19. The foregoing policies, practices, and/or procedures resulted in time during each
2 workday that Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt
3 employees were under the control of Defendants but were not compensated. To the extent that the
4 foregoing uncompensated time occurred when Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved
5 California-based hourly non-exempt employees worked more than eight (8) hours in a workday,
6 more than forty (40) hours in a workweek, and/or seven (7) days in a workweek, Defendants failed
7 to pay them at their overtime rate of pay for overtime hours worked, in violation of Labor Code
8 sections 510, 1194 and 1198, and the applicable Wage Order.

9 20. **Failure to pay wages to hourly non-exempt employees for workdays that**
10 **Defendants failed to provide legally required and compliant meal periods and/or failure to**
11 **pay period premium wages:** Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based
12 hourly non-exempt employees regularly worked shifts of more than five (5) hours in length and
13 shifts of more than ten (10) hours in length.

14 21. California law requires an employer to authorize or permit an employee an
15 uninterrupted meal period of no less than thirty (30) minutes in which the employee is relieved of
16 all duties and the employer relinquishes control over the employee's activities prior to the
17 employee's sixth hour of work. Labor Code sections 226.7, 512, and 1198; Wage Order 4 at §11;
18 *Brinker Rest. Corp. v. Super Ct. (Hohnbaum)* (2012) 53 Cal.4th 1004. An employer may not employ
19 an employee for a work period of more than ten (10) hours per day without providing the employee
20 with a second such meal period of not less than thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of the eleventh
21 hour of work. *Id.* If the employee is not relieved of all duty during a meal period, the meal period
22 shall be considered an "on duty" meal period and counted as time worked. A paid "on duty" meal
23 period is only permitted when: (1) the nature of the work prevents an employee from being relieved
24 of all duty; and (2) the parties have a written agreement agreeing to on-duty meal periods.

25 22. If an employer fails to provide an employee a meal period in accordance with the
26 law, the employer must pay the employee one (1) hour of pay at the employee's regular rate of pay
27 for each workday that a legally required and compliant meal period was not provided. Labor Code
28 sections 226.7 and 1198; Wage Order 4 at §11.

1 23. In this case, Defendants failed to authorize or permit legally required and compliant
2 meal periods to Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-
3 exempt employees due to Defendants' policies, practices, and/or procedures, including but not
4 limited to:

5 (a) Failing to provide Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based
6 hourly non-exempt employees timely, uninterrupted, duty-free meal breaks of at least 30 minutes
7 for every five hours worked.

8 24. Additionally, Plaintiff alleges that Defendants maintained a policy, practice, and/or
9 procedure of failing to compensate Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based
10 hourly non-exempt employees one (1) hour of pay at their regular rate of pay for each workday that
11 Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees did
12 not receive legally required and compliant meal periods, in violation of Labor Code section 226.7.

13 25. Finally, on occasions when Defendants paid Plaintiff and other current and former
14 aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees a "premium" wage for late, missed, short,
15 on-premise, on-duty, and/or interrupted meal periods, Defendants failed to pay the one (1) additional
16 hour of pay at Plaintiff's and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-
17 exempt employees' regular rate of compensation. Specifically, Defendants maintained a policy,
18 practice, and/or procedure of failing to include all remuneration such as bonus pay, for example,
19 when calculating Plaintiff's and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-
20 exempt employees' regular rate of pay for the purpose of paying meal period premium wages.

21 26. Defendants' foregoing policies, practices, and/or procedures resulted in Plaintiff and
22 other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees not receiving
23 wages to compensate them for workdays during which Defendants did not provide them with meal
24 periods in compliance with California law.

25 27. **Failure to pay wages to hourly non-exempt employees for workdays that**
26 **Defendants failed to provide legally required and compliant rest periods and/or failure to pay**
27 **rest period premium:** Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly
28 non-exempt employees regularly worked shifts of more than three-and-a-half (3.5) hours.

28. California law requires every employer to authorize and permit an employee a rest period of ten (10) net minutes for every four (4) hours worked or major fraction thereof. Labor Code section 226.7; Wage Order 4 at §12. Under California law, “[e]mployees are entitled to 10 minutes’ rest for shifts from three and one-half to six hours in length, 20 minutes for shifts of more than six hours up to 10 hours, 30 minutes for shifts of more than 10 hours up to 14 hours, and so on.” *Brinker Restaurant Corp. v. Sup. Ct. (Hohnbaum)* (2012) 53 Cal.4th 1004, 1029; Labor Code section 226.7; Wage Order 4 at §12. Rest periods, insofar as practicable, shall be in the middle of each work period. Wage Order 4 at §12. Additionally, the rest period requirement “obligates employers to permit – and authorizes employees to take – off-duty rest periods.” *Augustus v. ABM Security Services, Inc.*, (2016) 5 Cal.5th 257, 269. That is, during rest periods employers must relieve employees of all duties and relinquish control over how employees spend their time. *Id.*

29. If the employer fails to authorize or permit a required rest period, the employer must pay the employee one (1) hour of pay at the employee’s regular rate of pay for each workday the employer did not authorize or permit a legally required rest period. Labor Code section 226.7; Wage Order 4 at § 12.

30. In this case, Defendants failed to authorize or permit all legally required and compliant rest periods to Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees due to Defendants’ policies, practices, and/or procedures including, but not limited to:

(a) Failing to provide Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees with net ten (10) minute rest breaks for every four (4) hours worked or major fraction thereof.

31. Additionally, Plaintiff alleges that Defendants maintained a policy, practice, and/or procedure of failing to compensate Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees with one (1) hour of pay at their regular rate of pay for each workday they did not receive legally required and compliant rest periods, in violation of Labor Code section 226.7.

32. Finally, on occasions when Defendants did pay Plaintiff and other current and former

1 aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees a “premium” wage for late, missed, short,
2 on-premise, on-duty, and/or interrupted rest periods, Defendants failed to pay the one (1) additional
3 hour of pay at Plaintiff’s and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-
4 exempt employees’ regular rate of compensation. Specifically, Defendants maintained a policy,
5 practice, and/or procedure of failing to include all remuneration such bonus pay for example, when
6 calculating Plaintiff’s and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt
7 employees’ regular rate of pay for the purpose of paying rest period premiums.

8 33. Defendants’ foregoing policies, practices, and/or procedures resulted in Plaintiff and
9 other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees not receiving
10 wages to compensate them for workdays in which Defendants did not provide them with rest periods
11 in compliance with California law.

12 34. **Failure to Indemnify for Losses and Expenditures Incurred as Part of**
13 **Employment:** California law requires that every employer must indemnify its employees for all
14 necessary expenditures or losses incurred by the employee in discharge of his or her duties or at the
15 obedience of the directions of the employer. Moreover, an employer is prohibited from passing the
16 ordinary business expenses and losses of the employer onto the employee. (Lab. Code, § 2802.)

17 35. Defendants have violated Labor Code Section 2802 by failing to indemnify Plaintiff
18 and other current and former aggrieved California-based non-exempt hourly employees’ necessary
19 expenditures they incurred in the discharge of their duties. Specifically, Defendants employed
20 policies, practices, and/or procedures included, but not limited to:

21 (a) Requiring Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based non-
22 exempt hourly employees to use or purchase their own tools and/or resources in order to work for
23 Defendants, including but not limited to home internet expenses, power expenses, and cellphone
24 usage for work-related purposes – without reimbursing Plaintiff and other current and former
25 aggrieved California-based non-exempt hourly employees.

26 36. Moreover, Defendants employed policies and procedures which ensured Plaintiff and
27 aggrieved employees would not receive indemnification for their employment related expenses.
28 This practice resulted in Plaintiff and aggrieved employees not receiving such indemnification in

1 compliance with California law.

2 37. Therefore, Defendants are liable to Plaintiff and aggrieved employees for their
3 employment related expenses, including but not limited to costs related to use of their personal cell
4 phones and costs associated with their uniforms pursuant to Labor Code section 2802.

5 38. **Failure to timely pay earned wages during employment:** In California, wages
6 must be paid at least twice during each calendar month on days designated in advance by the
7 employer as regular paydays, subject to some exceptions. Labor Code section 204(a). Wages earned
8 between the 1st and 15th days, inclusive, of any calendar month must be paid between the 16th and
9 the 26th day of that month and wages earned between the 16th and the last day, inclusive, of any
10 calendar month must be paid between the 1st and 10th day of the following month. *Id.* Other payroll
11 periods such as those that are weekly, biweekly, or semimonthly, must be paid within seven (7)
12 calendar days following the close of the payroll period in which wages were earned. Labor Code
13 section 204(d).

14 39. As a derivative of Plaintiff's claims above, Plaintiff alleges that Defendants failed to
15 timely pay Plaintiff's and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt
16 employees' earned wages (including minimum wages, overtime wages, meal period premium wages
17 and/or rest period premium wages), in violation of Labor Code section 204. Defendants'
18 aforementioned policies, practices, and/or procedures resulted in their failure to pay Plaintiff's and
19 other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees' their earned
20 wages within the applicable time frames outlined in Labor Code section 204.

21 40. **Secret payment of lower wages than designated by statute:** Labor Code section
22 223 provides that, where any statute or contract requires an employer to maintain the designated
23 wage scale, it shall be unlawful to secretly pay a lower wage while purporting to pay the wage
24 designated by statute or contract. By engaging in the unlawful conduct alleged herein, including by
25 failing to: pay overtime wages at the applicable legal overtime rate, meal break premiums and lawful
26 sick pay at the employees' regular rate of pay, as established by Labor Code sections 226.7, 246,
27 510, 1194 and sections 11 and 12 of the applicable IWC Wage Orders, as incorporated by Labor
28 Code section 1198, the Defendant secretly paid a lower wage than designated by statute while

1 purporting to pay the wages designated by statute, in violation of Labor Code section 223.

2 41. **Failure to provide complete and accurate wage statements:** Labor Code section
3 226, subdivision (a). Labor Code section 226(a) provides, *inter alia*, that, upon paying an employee
4 his or her wages, the employer must “furnish each of his or her employees ... an itemized statement
5 in writing showing (1) gross wages earned, (2) total hours worked by the employee, except for any
6 employee whose compensation is solely based on a salary and who is exempt from payment of
7 overtime under subdivision (a) of Section 515 or any applicable order of the Industrial Welfare
8 Commission, (3) the number of piece-rate units earned and any applicable piece rate if the employee
9 is paid on a piece-rate basis, (4) all deductions, provided, that all deductions made on written orders
10 of the employee may be aggregated and shown as one item, (5) net wages earned, (6) the inclusive
11 dates of the pay period for which the employee is paid, (7) the name of the employee and his or her
12 social security number, (8) the name and address of the legal entity that is the employer, and (9) all
13 applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the corresponding number of hours
14 worked at each hourly rate by the employee.”

15 42. As a result of Defendants’ knowing and intentional failure to pay Plaintiff and other
16 current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees all wages earned
17 (including minimum wages, overtime wages, meal period premium wages, and/or rest period
18 premium wages) Plaintiff’s and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-
19 exempt employees’ wage statements were rendered inaccurate, in violation of Labor Code section
20 226(a)(1, 2, 5 & 9). As such Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly
21 non-exempt employees were unable to promptly and easily determine the accurate information
22 required by Labor Code section 226(a).

23 43. **Failure to pay employees all wages due at time of termination/resignation:** An
24 employer is required to pay all unpaid wages timely after an employee’s employment ends. The
25 wages are due immediately upon termination (Labor Code section 201) or within seventy-two (72)
26 hours of resignation (Labor Code section 202).

27 44. As a result of the aforementioned willful violations of the Labor Code, because
28 Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly

1 non-exempt employees all their earned wages (including minimum wages, overtime wages, meal
2 period premium wages, and/or rest period premium wages), Defendants failed to pay those
3 employees timely after each employee's termination and/or resignation, in violation of Labor Code
4 sections 201, 202, and 203.

5 45. Labor Code sections 2699, subdivisions (a) and (g) authorize an aggrieved employee,
6 on behalf of himself or herself and other current or former employees, to bring a civil action to
7 recover civil penalties against all Defendants pursuant to the procedures specified in Labor Code
8 section 2699.3.

9 46. Plaintiff has complied with the procedures for bringing suit specified in Labor Code
10 section 2699.3. On January 16, 2025, Plaintiff filed a PAGA Claim Notice with the LWDA and
11 provided notice to Defendants by certified mail which provided notice of the specific provisions of
12 the Labor Code alleged to have been violated, including the facts and theories to support the
13 violations alleged.

14 47. Pursuant to Labor Code section 2699.3, the LWDA must give written notice by
15 certified mail to the parties that it intends to investigate the alleged violations of the Labor Code
16 within 60 days of the date of the complainant's written notice. The LWDA failed to provide the
17 parties notice within 60 days of the date of Plaintiff's PAGA Claim Notice that the LWDA intends
18 to investigate Plaintiff's claims.

19 48. Pursuant to Labor Code sections 2699(a) and (f), Plaintiff is entitled to recover civil
20 penalties for Defendants' violations of Labor Code sections 201, 202, 203, 204, 223, 226(a), 226.7,
21 510, 512, and 1194., During Plaintiff's employment and continuing through the present, preceding
22 Plaintiff sending the initial PAGA Claim Notice to the LWDA to the present, in the following
23 amounts:

24 a. For violations of Labor Code sections 201, 202, 203, 226(a), 226.7, and 2802;
25 one hundred dollars (\$100) for each aggrieved employee per pay period for the initial violation and
26 two hundred dollars (\$200) for each aggrieved employee per pay period for each subsequent
27 violation [penalty amounts established by Labor Code section 2699(f)(2)].

28 b. For violations of Labor Code section 226(a), alternatively, two hundred fifty

dollars (\$250) for each employee for each pay period for the initial violation, and for each subsequent violation, one thousand dollars (\$1000) for each underpaid employee for each pay period [penalty amounts established by Labor Code section 226.3].

c. For violations of Labor Code section 510 and 512, fifty dollars (\$50) for each employee for each pay period for the initial violation, and for each subsequent violation, one hundred dollars (\$100) for each underpaid employee for each pay period [penalty amounts established by Labor Code section 558].

d. For violations of Labor Code section 204, one hundred dollars (\$100) for each failure to pay each employee in any initial violation, and for each subsequent violation, or any willful or intentional violation, two hundred dollars (\$200) for each failure to pay each employee, plus 25 percent of the amount unlawfully withheld [penalty amounts established by Labor Code section 210].

e. For violations of Labor Code section 223, one hundred dollars (\$100) for each failure to pay each employee in any initial violation, and for each subsequent violation, or any willful or intentional violation, two hundred dollars (\$200) for each failure to pay each employee, plus 25 percent of the amount unlawfully withheld [penalty amounts established by Labor Code section 225.5].

49. Pursuant to Labor Code section 2699(g), Plaintiff is entitled to an award of reasonable attorneys' fees and costs in connection with her claims for civil penalties.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, PLAINTIFF, ON BEHALF OF HERSELF AND ON OTHER AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES, PRAYS AS FOLLOWS:

ON THE FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION:

1. That Defendants be found to have violated the provisions of the Labor Code and the IWC Wages Orders as to the Plaintiff and aggrieved employees;

2. For any and all legally applicable penalties during the relevant statute of limitations subject to any permissible tolling, including but not limited to those recoverable under the California Labor Code, including but not limited to sections 210, 225.5, 226.3, 558, 2699(f);

1 3. For attorneys' fees and costs of suit, including but not limited to those recoverable
2 under California Labor Code section 2699(g); and

3 4. For such and other further relief, in law and/or equity, as the Court deems just or
4 appropriate.

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6 Dated: March 24, 2025

Respectfully submitted,
LAVI & EBRAHIMIAN, LLP

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By: /s/ Matthew J. Gustin
Joseph Lavi, Esq.
Vincent C. Granberry, Esq.
Matthew J. Gustin, Esq.
Attorneys for Plaintiff
ERIKA E. AHRENS
on behalf of herself and current and former aggrieved
employees

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