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Attorneys for Plaintiff David Williams and the Class

**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF MARIN**

DAVID WILLIAMS, individually and on
behalf of others similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

vs.

RANCHO NICASIO, LLC, a California
corporation; and DOES 1 through 25,
inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No.: CIV2203067

Honorable Andrew E. Sweet
Department E

CLASS ACTION

**DECLARATION OF PLAINTIFF DAVID
WILLIAMS IN SUPPORT OF MOTION
FOR FINAL APPROVAL OF CLASS
ACTION AND PAGA SETTLEMENT,
CLASS COUNSEL FEES PAYMENT,
CLASS COUNSEL LITIGATION
EXPENSES PAYMENT, CLASS
REPRESENTATIVE SERVICE PAYMENT,
AND ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES
PAYMENT**

Date: August 9, 2024
Time: 1:30 p.m.
Dept: E

Complaint Filed: September 26, 2022
FAC Filed: December 6, 2022
Trial Date: Not Set

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1. I am over the age of eighteen (18) and a resident of the State of California. I am the named plaintiff in the above-captioned case. I have personal knowledge of the facts and statements set forth in this declaration, and if called upon to testify, I could and would competently testify thereto.
2. I was employed by Defendant Rancho Nicasio, LLC (“Defendant”) as an hourly-paid, non-exempt Bartender from approximately February 2019 to August 2022 at its location in Nicasio, California.
3. Because I thought the practices at Defendant may not be lawful, I decided to seek legal advice about my work experiences at Defendant and about filing a lawsuit to obtain relief for my grievances. I contacted Blackstone Law, APC and spoke with their attorneys. I wanted to take steps to make sure Defendant was held accountable for not properly compensating its employees for all hours worked and for non-compliant meal and rest breaks. After speaking with the attorneys, I also investigated class and representative action lawsuits on my own. Thereafter, I further consulted with the attorneys at Blackstone Law, APC about my situation, class actions, representative action lawsuits under the Private Attorneys General Act (“PAGA”), and what it meant to bring a class and PAGA action so that I understood what I was considering doing.
4. I have regularly conferred with my attorneys regarding the case as part of my responsibilities as a class and PAGA representative. This process included searching for and providing documents concerning my employment with Defendant, answering any questions my attorneys had about the documents, providing information regarding the company’s practices and the duties of other non-exempt employees, and helping my attorneys develop a strategy as to what additional documents and information they could seek to obtain from Defendant.
5. I routinely checked in with my attorneys and their staff to make sure that they had all of my most current information and any additional information that I had obtained. I made myself available to answer any questions my attorneys had about Defendant’s practices and treatment of its employees whenever they needed me. I responded to them as quickly as possible and gave them as much information as I could. I described the policies, practices, and procedures of Defendant. I also

1 assisted my attorneys in preparing for mediation, by discussing facts as they pertained to Defendant.

2 6. I understood that in the event this matter did not settle and proceeded with trial, I would
3 need to be in court to participate in the trial. I was ready to perform that role, as well as fulfill any
4 responsibilities that are necessary for this lawsuit.

5 7. I know that I took a sizeable risk by bringing and pursuing this lawsuit for several
6 reasons. First, I understood that if I lost, I would potentially have to pay the costs in the lawsuit. I
7 also understood there was a risk of losing my current job and/or income due to the time that I would
8 have to spend fulfilling my responsibilities in this matter, including having to attend the trial, if needed.
9 Most importantly, I believe that by pursuing this case, I have taken a significant risk because future
10 employers can easily find out that I sued my prior employer, and that may negatively impact my ability
11 to find employment within this industry – and even outside of it – in the future. In contrast, the other
12 employees who will be receiving money from this lawsuit did not have to file a claim or take the risk
13 that I took in bringing this action.

14 8. I reviewed the settlement agreement, discussed the settlement agreement with my
15 attorneys, and asked them questions before signing it.

16 9. I believe that I have done everything that my attorneys have asked of me and tried, to
17 the best of my ability, to seek relief for the Class, the Aggrieved Employees, and the State of
18 California. In total, I have spent approximately 25 to 30 hours participating in this case as described
19 above. I believe my efforts helped get the result obtained in this case.

20 10. I understand that any resolution of this lawsuit on a class wide basis is subject to court
21 approval, and any settlement must be designed in the best interest of the class as a whole. At all times
22 throughout the course of this litigation I have considered the interests of the Class and put them before
23 my own personal interests.

24 11. I understand that incentive or enhancement awards are discretionary and intended to
25 compensate named plaintiffs for: the quality and quantity of the work done on behalf of the class and
26 other employees; the financial and/or reputational risk undertaken in bringing the class and/or PAGA
27 action, and an acknowledgment of the benefits resulting from the representative's actions. I believe
28 my work in this matter is meritorious on these points for the reasons set forth above.

1 12. I respectfully request that the Court approve and award me a Class Representative
2 Service Payment in the amount of \$5,000.00 for my efforts and active participation in the case and for
3 the broader, general release of all claims that I have or may have against Defendant in connection with
4 the settlement. Taking into consideration the time that I dedicated to this case, I believe that this
5 amount is reasonable.

6 13. I am not related to anyone associated with Blackstone Law, APC.

7 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing
8 is true and correct. Executed on 10/31/2023, at Nicasio, California.

9
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11 _____
David Williams