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FILED
 Superior Court of California
 County of Los Angeles

08/07/2025

David W. Slayton, Executive Officer/Clerk of Court

By: R. Lozano Deputy

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

OSCAR FRANCISCO LOPEZ
 BENAVIDEZ, individually and on behalf of
 others similarly situated, and as an aggrieved
 employee and Private Attorney General,

Plaintiff,

vs.

PANDA EXPRESS, INC., a California
 corporation; PANDA RESTAURANT
 GROUP, INC., a California corporation; and
 DOES 1 through 50, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No.: 25STCV16297

**FIRST AMENDED CLASS ACTION AND
 REPRESENTATIVE ACTION
 COMPLAINT**

DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY

- (1) Violation of Cal. Labor Code §§ 510 and 1198 (Unpaid Overtime)
- (2) Violation of Cal. Labor Code §§ 226.7 and 512(a) (Unpaid Meal Period Premiums)
- (3) Violation of Cal. Labor Code § 226.7 (Unpaid Rest Period Premiums)
- (4) Violation of Cal. Labor Code §§ 1194, 1197 and 1197.1 (Unpaid Minimum Wages)
- (5) Violation of Cal. Labor Code §§ 201, 202 and 203 (Final Wages Not Timely Paid)
- (6) Violation of Labor Code §§ 204 and 210 (Wages Not Timely Paid During Employment)
- (7) Violation of Cal. Labor Code § 226(a) (Failure to Provide Accurate Wage Statements)
- (8) Violation of Cal. Labor Code § 227.3 (Failure to Pay Accrued Vacation)
- (9) Violation of Cal. Business & Professions Code § 17200, et seq.
- (10) Violation of Cal. Labor Code § 2699, (Private Attorneys General Act)

1 Plaintiff OSCAR FRANCISCO LOPEZ BENAVIDEZ (“Plaintiff”), individually and on
2 behalf of other members of the general public similarly situated, and as Private Attorney General,
3 based upon facts that either have evidentiary support or are likely to have evidentiary support
4 after a reasonable opportunity for further investigation and discovery, alleges as follows:

5 **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

6 1. Plaintiff brings this action against Defendants PANDA EXPRESS, INC., PANDA
7 RESTAURANT GROUP, INC., and DOES 1 THROUGH 50 (hereinafter also collectively
8 referred to as “Defendants”) for California Labor Code violations, unfair business practices, and
9 civil penalties stemming from Defendants’ failure to pay overtime compensation, failure to
10 provide meal periods, failure to authorize and permit rest periods, failure to pay minimum wage,
11 failure to timely pay wages, failure to provide accurate wage statements, failure to maintain
12 accurate time and payroll records, and failure to pay accrued but unused vacation time.

13 2. Plaintiff’s First through Ninth Causes of Action are brought as a class action on
14 behalf of himself and similarly situated current and former employees of Defendants (hereinafter
15 collectively referred to as the “Class” or “Class Members,” as defined more fully in paragraph
16 14, below) pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure section 382. The monetary damages
17 and restitution sought by Plaintiff exceeds the minimal jurisdiction limits of the Superior Court
18 and will be established according to proof at trial.

19 3. Plaintiff’s Tenth Cause of Action is brought solely as a representative action, and
20 solely as a Private Attorney General, on behalf of the State of California for all aggrieved
21 employees, including himself and other aggrieved employees of Defendants against whom a
22 violation of the same provision was committed (hereinafter collectively referred to as the
23 “Aggrieved Employees”) pursuant to California Labor Code sections 2698, *et seq*; *Balderas v.*
24 *Fresh Start Harvesting, Inc.*, 101 Cal.App.5th 533 (2024), as modified (April 18, 2024); and
25 *Johnson v. Maxim Healthcare Services, Inc.*, 66 Cal.App.5th 924 (2021). Plaintiff is an aggrieved
26 employee against whom the alleged violations occurred. The civil penalties sought by Plaintiff
27 exceed the minimal jurisdiction limits of the Superior Court and will be established according to
28 proof at trial.

4. The Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to the California Constitution, Article VI, Section 10, which grants the superior court “original jurisdiction in all other causes” except those given by statute to other courts. The statutes under which this action is brought do not specify any other basis for jurisdiction.

5. This Court has jurisdiction over Defendants because, upon information and belief, Defendants are citizens of California, have sufficient minimum contacts in California, or otherwise intentionally avail themselves of the California market so as to render the exercise of jurisdiction over them by the California courts consistent with traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.

6. Venue is proper in this Court because, upon information and belief, Defendants maintain offices, have agents, and/or transact business in the State of California, County of Los Angeles.

PARTIES

7. Plaintiff OSCAR FRANCISCO LOPEZ BENAVIDEZ is an individual residing in the County of Los Angeles, State of California. Plaintiff is not suing in his individual capacity with respect to his Tenth Cause of Action. Instead, he is proceeding therein solely under the PAGA, on behalf of the State of California for all aggrieved employees. Plaintiff is an Aggrieved Employee as defined under PAGA because he was employed by Defendant and suffered the labor code violations alleged herein.

8. Defendant PANDA EXPRESS, INC., is and at all times herein mentioned was, a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of California and registered to do business in the state of California.

9. Defendant PANDA RESTAURANT GROUP, INC., is and at all times herein mentioned was, a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of California and registered to do business in the state of California.

10. Plaintiff is ignorant of the identities of defendants Does 1 through 50, inclusive, and therefore sues these defendants by such fictitious names. The Doe defendants may be individuals, partnerships, or corporations. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges,

1 that, at all times mentioned herein, each of the Doe defendants was the parent, subsidiary, agent,
2 servant, employee, co-venturer, and/or co-conspirator of each of the other defendants and was at
3 all times mentioned acting within the scope, purpose, consent, knowledge, ratification and
4 authorization of such agency, employment, joint venture and conspiracy. Plaintiff will amend this
5 Complaint to allege their true names and capacities when ascertained. Plaintiff is informed and
6 believes and thereon alleges that each of the fictitiously named Doe defendants is responsible in
7 some manner for the occurrences herein alleged, and that Plaintiff's damages as herein alleged
8 were proximately caused by its conduct. PANDA EXPRESS, INC., PANDA RESTAURANT
9 GROUP, INC., and Doe Defendants 1 through 50 are collectively referred to herein as
10 "Defendants."

11 11. Defendants are and at all times herein mentioned were, (a) conducting business in
12 the County of California, State of California, and (b) the employer of Plaintiff consistent with the
13 California Labor Code and Industrial Welfare Commission Wage Orders ("Wage Orders").

14 12. Plaintiff further alleges that Defendants, directly or indirectly controlled or
15 affected the working conditions, wages, working hours, and conditions of employment of
16 Plaintiff, the Class, so as to make each of said Defendants employers and employers jointly liable
17 under the statutory provisions set forth herein.

18 **CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS**

19 13. Plaintiff brings the First through Ninth Causes of Action as a class action on his
20 own behalf and on behalf of all other members of the general public similarly situated, and, thus,
21 seeks class certification under Code of Civil Procedure section 382.

22 14. The proposed class is defined as follows: All current and former non-exempt
23 employees of any of the Defendants within the State of California at any time commencing four
24 (4) years preceding the filing of Plaintiff's complaint up until the time that notice of the certified
25 class action is provided to the class (hereinafter referred to as the "Class" or "Class Members.").

26 15. Plaintiff reserves the right to establish other subclasses as appropriate.

27 16. The Class is ascertainable and there is a well-defined community of interest in the
28 litigation:

- 1 a. Numerosity: The Class Members are so numerous that joinder of all Class
2 Members is impracticable. The membership of the entire Class is unknown to
3 Plaintiff at this time; however, the Class is estimated to be over fifty (50)
4 individuals and the identity of such membership is readily ascertainable by
5 inspection of Defendants' employment records.
- 6 b. Typicality: Plaintiff's claims are typical of all other Class Members demonstrated
7 herein. Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the other Class
8 Members with whom he has a well-defined community of interest.
- 9 c. Adequacy: Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect the interests of each Class
10 Member, with whom he has a well-defined community of interest and typicality
11 of claims, as demonstrated herein. Plaintiff has no interest that is antagonistic to
12 the other Class Members. Plaintiff's attorneys, the proposed class counsel, are
13 versed in the rules governing class action discovery, certification, and settlement.
14 Plaintiff has incurred, and during the pendency of this action will continue to
15 incur, costs and attorneys' fees, that have been, are, and will be necessarily
16 expended for the prosecution of this action for the substantial benefit of each Class
17 Member.
- 18 d. Superiority: A class action is superior to other available methods for the fair and
19 efficient adjudication of this litigation because individual joinder of all Class
20 Members is impractical.
- 21 e. Public Policy Considerations: Certification of this lawsuit as a class action will
22 advance public policy objectives. Employers of this great state violate
23 employment and labor laws every day. Current employees are often afraid to
24 assert their rights out of fear of direct or indirect retaliation. However, class
25 actions provide the Class Members who are not named in the complaint
26 anonymity that allows for the vindication of their rights.

27 17. There are common questions of law and fact as to the Class that predominate over
28 questions affecting only individual members. The following common questions of law or fact,

1 among others, exist as to the members of the Class:

- 2 a. Whether Defendants' failure to pay wages, without abatement, or reduction, in
3 accordance with the California Labor Code was willful;
- 4 b. Whether Defendants had a corporate policy and practice of failing to pay Plaintiff
5 and the other Class Members for all hours worked, and missed, short, late or
6 interrupted meal periods and rest breaks in violation of California law;
- 7 c. Whether Defendants required Plaintiff and the other Class Members to work more
8 than eight (8) hours per day and/or more than forty (40) hours per week and failed
9 to pay the legally required overtime compensation to Plaintiff and the other Class
10 Members;
- 11 d. Whether Defendants deprived Plaintiff and the other Class Members of meal
12 and/or rest periods or required Plaintiff and the other Class Members to work
13 during meal and/or rest periods without compensation;
- 14 e. Whether Defendants failed to pay meal period premium wages to Class Members
15 when they were not provided with a legally compliant meal period;
- 16 f. Whether Defendants failed to pay rest period premium wages to Class Members
17 when they were not authorized and permitted to take legally compliant rest
18 periods;
- 19 g. Whether Defendants failed to pay minimum wages to Plaintiff and the other Class
20 Members for all hours worked;
- 21 h. Whether Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and the other Class Members the
22 required minimum wage pursuant to California law;
- 23 i. Whether Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and the other Class Members proper
24 overtime compensation pursuant to California law;
- 25 j. Whether Defendants failed to pay all wages due to Plaintiff and the other Class
26 Members within the time required upon their discharge or resignation from
27 employment;
- 28 k. Whether Defendants failed to pay accrued and unused vacation time in violation

of Labor Code section 227.3;

- l. Whether Defendants failed to timely pay all wages due to Plaintiff and the other Class Members during their employment;
- m. Whether Defendants complied with wage reporting as required by the California Labor Code, including section 226;
- n. Whether Defendants' conduct was with malice, fraud or oppression;
- o. Whether Defendants' conduct was willful or reckless;
- p. Whether Defendants engaged in unfair business practices in violation of California Business & Professions Code section 17200, *et seq.* based on their improper withholding of compensation and deduction of wages;
- q. The appropriate amount of damages, restitution, and/or monetary penalties resulting from Defendants' violation of California law; and
- r. Whether Plaintiff and the other Class Members are entitled to compensatory damages pursuant to the California Labor Code.

GENERAL ALLEGATIONS

18. Defendants are a fast-food Chinese restaurant.

19. Defendants employed Plaintiff to work as a Cook and Kitchen Help Staff from approximately December 28, 2023, to March 28, 2025.

20. At all relevant times set forth herein, Defendants employed Plaintiff and the Class as hourly-paid or non-exempt employees.

21. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants had the authority to hire and terminate Plaintiff and the Class; to directly or indirectly control work rules, working conditions, wages, working hours, and conditions of employment of Plaintiff and the Class; and to hire and terminate the employment of Plaintiff and the Class.

22. At all times herein mentioned, Defendants were subject to the Labor Code of the State of California and the applicable Industrial Welfare Commission Orders.

23. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges that Defendants engaged in an ongoing and systematic scheme of wage abuse against their hourly-paid or non-exempt

1 employees. As set forth in more detail below, this scheme involved, *inter alia*, regularly requiring
2 Plaintiff and the Class to work off the clock without compensation, thereby failing to pay them
3 for all hours worked, including minimum and overtime wages. Defendants also implemented time
4 rounding practices that resulted in the systematic underpayment of wages to Plaintiff and the
5 Class, including minimum and overtime wages. Defendants also implemented policies that
6 prohibited Plaintiff and the Class from accurately recording the actual time worked, resulting in
7 a failure to pay Plaintiff and the Class all wages owed. In addition, Defendants routinely failed to
8 permit Plaintiff and the Class to take timely and duty-free meal periods and rest periods in
9 violation of California law. Defendants also failed to pay wages owed for accrued vacation time
10 upon termination of employment.

11 24. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants have implemented
12 policies and practices which failed to provide Plaintiff and the Class with timely and duty-free
13 meal periods. Defendants routinely failed to relieve Plaintiff and the Class of all duties during
14 their meal periods, regularly failed to relinquish control over Plaintiff and the Class during their
15 meal periods, regularly failed to permit Plaintiff and the Class a reasonable opportunity to take
16 their meal periods, and regularly impeded or discouraged Plaintiff and the Class from taking thirty
17 (30) minute uninterrupted meal breaks no later than the end of their fifth hour of work and/or
18 from taking a second thirty (30) minute uninterrupted meal break no later than their tenth hour of
19 work for shifts lasting more than ten (10) hours. Defendants also failed to maintain accurate
20 records of meal periods taken by Plaintiff and the Class.

21 25. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants did not adequately
22 inform Plaintiff and the Class of their right to take meal periods under California law. Moreover,
23 Defendants systematically disregarded their own written policies regarding the provision and
24 timing of meal periods for Plaintiff and the Class. Instead, Defendants' actual policy and practice
25 was to schedule Plaintiff and the Class in a way that prohibited them from taking timely and duty-
26 free meal periods, and to require Plaintiff and the Class to work through their meal periods, for
27 which they were not compensated.

28 26. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff

1 and the Class premium wages for meal periods that were missed, late, interrupted, or shortened
2 in violation of California law. Defendants knew or should have known that Plaintiff and the Class
3 were entitled to receive all meal periods or payment of one additional hour of pay at their regular
4 rate of pay when a meal period was missed, short, late, and/or interrupted. Notwithstanding this
5 knowledge, Defendants routinely failed to provide legally compliant meal periods to Plaintiff and
6 the Class, and routinely failed to pay one additional hour of pay to Plaintiff and the Class at their
7 regular rate of pay when a meal period was missed, short, late, and/or interrupted.

8 27. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants have implemented
9 policies and practices which prohibited Plaintiff and the Class from taking timely and duty-free
10 rest periods. Defendants regularly failed to provide, authorize, and permit Plaintiff and the Class
11 to take full, uninterrupted, off-duty rest periods for every shift lasting three and one-half (3.5) to
12 six (6) hours and/or two full, uninterrupted, off-duty rest periods for every shift lasting six (6) to
13 ten (10) hours, and failed to make a good faith effort to authorize, permit, and provide such rest
14 breaks in the middle of each work period.

15 28. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants did not adequately
16 inform Plaintiff and the Class of their right to take rest periods under California law. Moreover,
17 Defendants systematically disregarded their own written policies regarding the provision and
18 timing of rest periods for Plaintiff and the Class. Instead, Defendants' actual policy and practice
19 was to schedule Plaintiff and the Class in a way that regularly prohibited them from taking timely
20 and duty free rest periods, and to regularly require Plaintiff and the Class to work through their
21 rest periods.

22 29. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff
23 and the Class premium wages for rest periods that were missed, late, interrupted, or shortened in
24 violation of California law. Defendants knew or should have known that Plaintiff and the Class
25 were entitled to receive all rest periods or payment of one additional hour of pay at their regular
26 rate of pay when a rest period was missed, short, late, and/or interrupted. Notwithstanding this
27 knowledge, Defendants routinely failed to authorize and permit Plaintiff and the Class to take
28 duty-free rest periods, and failed to pay one additional hour of pay to Plaintiff and the Class at

1 their regular rate of pay when a rest period was missed, short, late and/or interrupted.

2 30. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly required
3 Plaintiff and the Class to perform work off the clock. Although Defendants prohibited overtime,
4 Defendants still regularly required that Plaintiff and the Class complete all of their assigned duties.
5 To do so, Plaintiff and the Class were regularly required to perform work off the clock for which
6 they were not compensated.

7 31. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants employed a time
8 rounding policy that was not neutral and designed to consistently round time in Defendants' favor,
9 ensuring that Plaintiff and the Class were oftentimes not paid for all time worked.

10 32. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants implemented policies
11 that prohibited Plaintiff and the Class from accurately recording the actual time worked, resulting
12 in a failure to pay Plaintiff and the Class all wages owed.

13 33. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Plaintiff and the Class worked
14 more than eight (8) hours in a day, and/or forty (40) hours in a week.

15 34. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to
16 pay all overtime compensation owed to Plaintiff and the Class when they worked in excess of
17 eight (8) hours in a single work day and/or forty (40) hours in a single work week, or in excess of
18 twelve (12) hours in a single work day and/or eighty (80) hours in a single work week. Defendants
19 knew or should have known that Plaintiff and the Class were entitled to receive certain wages for
20 overtime compensation and that they were not receiving wages for overtime compensation.

21 35. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants failed to pay
22 overtime to Plaintiff and the Class for all overtime hours worked based on regular rates of pay
23 correctly calculated to include all applicable remuneration.

24 36. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to
25 pay Plaintiff and the Class at least minimum wages for all hours worked. Defendants knew or
26 should have known that Plaintiff and the Class were entitled to receive at least minimum wages
27 for all hours worked and that they were not receiving at least minimum wages for all hours
28 worked. Defendants' failure to pay minimum wages included, *inter alia*, failing to pay Plaintiff

1 and the Class at the required minimum wage pursuant to California law, requiring Plaintiff and
2 the Class to perform work off the clock, and implementing time rounding policies that resulted in
3 the systematic underpayment of wages to Plaintiff and the Class.

4 37. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to
5 pay Plaintiff and the Class all wages owed to them upon discharge or resignation. Defendants
6 knew or should have known that Plaintiff and the Class were entitled to receive all wages owed
7 to them upon termination within the time permissible under California Labor Code section 202.
8 Plaintiff and the Class did not receive payment of all final wages owed to them upon discharge
9 or resignation, including overtime compensation and minimum wages within any time
10 permissible under California Labor Code section 202.

11 38. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to
12 pay Plaintiff and the Class all wages within any time permissible under California law, including,
13 *inter alia*, California Labor Code section 204. Defendants knew or should have known that
14 Plaintiff and the Class were entitled to receive all wages owed to them during their employment.
15 Plaintiff and the Class did not receive payment of all wages, including overtime compensation,
16 minimum wages, meal and rest period premiums, and vested by unused vacation time.

17 39. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to
18 provide complete or accurate wage statements to Plaintiff and the Class. Defendants knew or
19 should have known that Plaintiff and the Class were entitled to receive complete and accurate
20 wage statements in accordance with California law, but, in fact, they did not receive complete and
21 accurate wage statements from Defendants. The deficiencies included, *inter alia*, the failure to
22 include the total number of hours worked, the actual gross wages earned, the correct rates of pay,
23 net wages earned, and all applicable hourly rates.

24 40. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to
25 keep complete or accurate payroll records for Plaintiff and the Class. Defendants knew or should
26 have known that Defendants were required to keep complete and accurate payroll records for
27 Plaintiff and the Class in accordance with California law, but, in fact, did not keep complete and
28 accurate payroll records.

41. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to maintain accurate records relating to Plaintiff's and the Class's work periods, meal periods, total daily hours, hours per pay period, and applicable pay rates.

42. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to pay Plaintiff and the Class for vested but unused vacation time. Defendants knew or should have known that Plaintiff, the Class, and Aggrieved Employees were entitled to receive all wages owed to them upon termination, including vested and unused vacation time. Plaintiff, the Class, and Aggrieved Employees did not receive payment of all final wages owed to them upon discharge or resignation, including vested and unused vacation time.

43. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants knew or should have known that they had a duty to compensate Plaintiff and the Class pursuant to California law. Defendants had the financial ability to pay such compensation, but willfully, knowingly, and intentionally failed to do so, and falsely represented to Plaintiff and the Class that they paid all wages owed to them, all in order to increase Defendants' profits.

44. California Labor Code section 218 states that nothing in Article 1 of the Labor Code shall limit the right of any wage claimant to “sue directly ... for any wages or penalty due to him [or her] under this article.”

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

(Violation of California Labor Code §§ 510 and 1198)

(Against All Defendants)

45. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and every allegation set forth above.

46. California Labor Code section 1198 and the applicable Industrial Welfare Commission (“IWC”) Wage Order provide that it is unlawful to employ persons without compensating them at a rate of pay either time-and-one-half or two-times that person’s regular rate of pay, depending on the number of hours worked by the person on a daily or weekly basis.

47. Specifically, the applicable IWC Wage Order provides that Defendants are and were required to pay Plaintiff and the other Class Members employed by Defendants, and working

1 more than eight (8) hours in a day or more than forty (40) hours in a workweek, at the rate of
2 time-and-one-half for all hours worked in excess of eight (8) hours in a day or more than forty
3 (40) hours in a workweek.

4 48. The applicable IWC Wage Order further provides that Defendants are and were
5 required to pay Plaintiff and the Class overtime compensation at a rate of two times their regular
6 rate of pay for all hours worked in excess of twelve (12) hours in a day and for all hours worked
7 in excess of eight (8) hours on the seventh day of work in a workweek.

8 49. California Labor Code section 510 codifies the right to overtime compensation at
9 one-and-one-half times the regular hourly rate for hours worked in excess of eight (8) hours in a
10 day or forty (40) hours in a week or for the first eight (8) hours worked on the seventh day of
11 work, and no overtime compensation at twice the regular hourly rate for hours worked in excess
12 of twelve (12) hours in a day or in excess of eight (8) hours in a day on the seventh day of work.

13 50. During the relevant time period, Plaintiff and the other Class Members regularly
14 worked in excess of eight (8) hours in a day, and/or in excess of forty (40) hours in a week.

15 51. During the relevant time period, Defendants intentionally and willfully failed to
16 pay overtime wages owed to Plaintiff and the other Class Members.

17 52. Defendants' failure to pay Plaintiff and the other Class Members the unpaid
18 balance of overtime compensation, as required by California laws, violates the provisions of
19 California Labor Code sections 510 and 1198, and is therefore unlawful.

20 53. Pursuant to California Labor Code section 1194, Plaintiff and the other Class
21 Members are entitled to recover unpaid overtime compensation, as well as interest, costs, and
22 attorneys' fees.

23 **SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION**

24 **(Violation of California Labor Code §§ 226.7 and 512(a))**

25 **(Against All Defendants)**

26 54. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and
27 every allegation set forth above.

28 55. At all relevant times, the relevant IWC Order and California Labor Code sections

226.7 and 512(a) were applicable to Plaintiff and the other Class Members' employment by Defendants.

56. At all relevant times, California Labor Code section 226.7 provides that no employer shall require an employee to work during any meal or rest period mandated by an applicable order of the California IWC.

57. At all relevant times, the applicable IWC Wage Order and California Labor Code section 512(a) provide that an employer may not require, cause or permit an employee to work for a work period of more than five (5) hours per day without providing the employee with a meal period of not less than thirty (30) minutes, except that if the total work period per day of the employee is no more than six (6) hours, the meal period may be waived by mutual consent of both the employer and employee.

58. At all relevant times, California Labor Code section 512(a) further provides that an employer may not require, cause or permit an employee to work for a work period of more than ten (10) hours per day without providing the employee with a second uninterrupted meal period of not less than thirty (30) minutes, except that if the total hours worked is no more than twelve (12) hours, the second meal period may be waived by mutual consent of the employer and the employee only if the first meal period was not waived.

59. During the relevant time period, Plaintiff and the other Class Members who were scheduled to work for a period of time longer than six (6) hours, and who did not waive their legally-mandated meal periods by mutual consent, were required to work for periods longer than five (5) hours without an uninterrupted meal period of not less than thirty (30) minutes.

60. During the relevant time period, Plaintiff and the other Class Members who were scheduled to work for a period of time in excess of ten (10) hours were required to work for periods longer than ten (10) hours without a second uninterrupted meal period of not less than thirty (30) minutes.

61. During the relevant time period, Defendants intentionally and willfully required Plaintiff and the other Class Members to miss their meal periods and to take meal periods that were late, shortened, or interrupted, and failed to compensate Plaintiff and the other Class

Members the full meal period premium for missed, shortened, late, or interrupted meal periods.

62. During the relevant time period, Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and the other Class Members the full meal period premiums due pursuant to California Labor Code section 226.7.

63. Defendants' conduct violates the applicable IWC Wage Order and California Labor Code sections 226.7 and 512(a).

64. Pursuant to the applicable IWC Wage Order and California Labor Code section 226.7(b), Plaintiff and the other Class Members are entitled to recover from Defendants one additional hour of pay at the employee's regular rate of compensation for each work day that the meal period was not provided.

THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

(Violation of California Labor Code § 226.7)

(Against All Defendants)

65. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and every allegation set forth above.

66. At all times herein set forth, the applicable IWC Wage Order and California Labor Code section 226.7 were applicable to Plaintiff and the other Class Members' employment by Defendants.

67. At all relevant times, California Labor Code section 226.7 provides that no employer shall require an employee to work during any rest period mandated by an applicable order of the California IWC.

68. At all relevant times, the applicable IWC Wage Order provides that "[e]very employer shall authorize and permit all employees to take rest periods, which insofar as practicable shall be in the middle of each work period" and that the "rest period time shall be based on the total hours worked daily at the rate of ten (10) minutes net rest time per four (4) hours or major fraction thereof unless the total daily work time is less than three and one-half (3.5) hours."

69. During the relevant time period, Defendants required Plaintiff and other Class

Members to work four (4) or more hours without authorizing or permitting a ten (10) minute rest period per each four (4) hour period worked.

70. During the relevant time period, Defendants willfully required Plaintiff and the other Class Members to work during rest periods, failed to allow Plaintiff and the other Class Member to take any rest period and/or failed to authorize and permit Plaintiff and the other Class Members to take uninterrupted, duty-free rest breaks.

71. During the relevant time period, Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and the other Class Members the full rest period premium due pursuant to California Labor Code section 226.7 for work performed during rest periods, and/or for failure to authorize and permit Plaintiff and other Class Members from taking uninterrupted rest periods.

72. Defendants' conduct violates applicable IWC Wage Orders and California Labor Code section 226.7.

73. Pursuant to the applicable IWC Wage Orders and California Labor Code section 226.7(b), Plaintiff and the other Class Members are entitled to recover from Defendants one additional hour of pay at the employees' regular hourly rate of compensation for each work day that the rest period was not provided.

FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Violation of California Labor Code §§ 1194, 1197, and 1197.1)

(Against All Defendants)

74. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and every allegation set forth above.

75. At all relevant times, California Labor Code sections 1194, 1197, and 1197.1 provide that the minimum wage to be paid to employees and the payment of a lesser wage than the minimum so fixed is unlawful.

76. During the relevant time period, Defendants regularly failed to pay minimum wage to Plaintiff and the other Class Members as required pursuant to California Labor Code sections 1194, 1197, and 1197.1.

77. Defendants' failure to pay Plaintiff and the other Class Members the minimum

1 wage as required violates California Labor Code sections 1194, 1197, and 1197.1. Pursuant to
2 those sections, Plaintiff and the other Class Members are entitled to recover the unpaid balance
3 of their minimum wage compensation as well as interest, costs, and attorneys' fees, and liquidated
4 damages in an amount equal to the wages unlawfully unpaid and interest thereon.

5 78. Pursuant to California Labor Code section 1194.2, Plaintiff and the other Class
6 Members are entitled to recover liquidated damages in an amount equal to the wages unlawfully
7 unpaid and interest thereon.

8 **FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

9 **(Violation of California Labor Code §§ 201, 202, 203)**

10 **(Against All Defendants)**

11 79. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and
12 every allegation set forth above.

13 80. At all relevant times herein set forth, California Labor Code sections 201 and 202
14 provide that if an employer discharges an employee, the wages earned and unpaid at the time of
15 discharge are due and payable immediately, and if an employee quits his or her employment, his
16 or her wages shall become due and payable not later seventy-two (72) hours thereafter, unless the
17 employee has given seventy-two (72) hours' notice of his or her intention to quit, in which case
18 the employee is entitled to his or her wages at the time of quitting.

19 81. During the relevant time period, the employment of Plaintiff and many other Class
20 Members with Defendants ended, *i.e.* was terminated by quitting or discharge. Defendants
21 intentionally and willfully failed to pay Plaintiff and other Class Members who are no longer
22 employed by Defendants all of their wages, earned and unpaid, including but not limited to
23 minimum wages, straight time wages, overtime wages, and vested but unused vacation time,
24 within seventy-two (72) hours of their leaving Defendants' employ.

25 82. Defendants' failure to pay Plaintiff and other Class Members who are no longer
26 employed by Defendants their wages, earned and unpaid, within seventy-two (72) hours of their
27 leaving Defendants' employ, is in violation of California Labor Code sections 201 and 202.

28 83. California Labor Code section 203 provides that if an employer willfully fails to

1 pay wages owed, in accordance with sections 201 and 202, then the wages of the employee shall
2 continue as a penalty from the due date thereof at the same rate until paid or until an action is
3 commenced; but the wages shall not continue for more than thirty (30) days.

4 84. Plaintiff and other Class Members who are no longer employed by Defendants are
5 entitled to recover from Defendants the statutory penalty wages for each day they were not paid,
6 up to a thirty (30) day maximum pursuant to California Labor Code section 203.

7 **SIXTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

8 **(Violation of California Labor Code §§ 204 and 210)**

9 **(Against All Defendants)**

10 85. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and
11 every allegation set forth above

12 86. At all times herein set forth, California Labor Code section 204 provides that all
13 wages earned by any person in any employment between the 1st and 15th days, inclusive, of any
14 calendar month, other than those wages due upon termination of an employee, are due and payable
15 between the 16th and 26th day of the month during which the labor was performed.

16 87. At all times herein set forth, California Labor Code section 204 provides that all
17 wages earned by any person in any employment between the 16th and the last day, inclusive, of
18 any calendar month, other than those wages due upon termination of an employee, are due and
19 payable between the 1st and the 10th day of the following month.

20 88. At all times herein set forth, California Labor Code section 204 provides that all
21 wages earned for labor in excess of the normal work period shall be paid no later than the payday
22 for the next regular payroll period.

23 89. During the relevant time period, Defendants intentionally and willfully failed to
24 pay Plaintiff and other Class Members all wages due to them, within any time period permissible
25 under California Labor Code section 204.

26 90. Plaintiff and other Class Members are entitled to recover all available remedies for
27 Defendant's violations of California Labor Code section 204, including statutory penalties
28 pursuant to Labor Code section 210(b).

1 **SEVENTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

2 **(Violation of California Labor Code § 226(a))**

3 **(Against All Defendants)**

4 91. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and
5 every allegation set forth above.

6 92. At all material times set forth herein, California Labor Code section 226(a)
7 provides that every employer shall furnish each of his or her employees an accurate itemized
8 statement in writing showing (1) gross wages earned, (2) total hours worked by the employee, (3)
9 the number of piece-rate units earned and any applicable piece rate if the employee is paid on a
10 piece-rate basis, (4) all deductions, provided that all deductions made on written orders of the
11 employee may be aggregated and shown as one item, (5) net wages earned, (6) the inclusive dates
12 of the period for which the employee is paid, (7) the name of the employee and his or her social
13 security number, (8) the name and address of the legal entity that is the employer, and (9) all
14 applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the corresponding number of hours
15 worked at each hourly rate by the employee. The deductions made from payments of wages shall
16 be recorded in ink or other indelible form, properly dated, showing the month, day, and year, and
17 a copy of the statement or a record of the deductions shall be kept on file by the employer for at
18 least three years at the place of employment or at a central location within the State of California.

19 93. Defendants have intentionally and willfully failed to provide Plaintiff and the
20 Class with complete and accurate wage statements. The deficiencies include, but are not limited
21 to the failure list the total number of hours worked, the actual gross wages earned, the correct
22 rates of pay, net wages earned, and all applicable hourly rates.

23 94. Because of Defendants' violation of California Labor Code section 226(a),
24 Plaintiff and the Class have suffered injury and damage to their statutorily-protected rights.

25 95. More specifically, Plaintiff and the Class have been injured by Defendants'
26 intentional and willful violation of California Labor Code section 226(a) because they were
27 denied both their legal right to receive, and their protected interest in receiving, accurate and
28 itemized wage statements pursuant to California Labor Code section 226(a).

96. Plaintiff and the Class are entitled to recover from Defendants the greater of their actual damages caused by Defendants' failure to comply with California Labor Code section 226(a), or an aggregate penalty not exceeding four thousand dollars per employee.

97. Plaintiff and the Class are also entitled to injunctive relief to ensure compliance with this section, pursuant to California Labor Code section 226(g).

EIGHTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Violation of California Labor Code § 227.3)

(Against All Defendants)

98. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and every allegation set forth above.

99. California Labor Code § 227.3 affirms “whenever a contract of employment or employer policy provides for paid vacations, and an employee is terminated without having taken off his vested vacation time, all vested vacation shall be paid to him as wages at his final rate in accordance with such contract of employment or employer policy respecting eligibility or time served.”

100. Defendants' failure to pay Class Members unused and accrued vested vacation time at the time of the Class Members' separation from employment with Defendants violates Labor Code § 227.3.

101. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' conduct, Plaintiff and similarly situated Class Members have suffered substantial losses according to proof, as well as pre-judgment interest, costs, and attorneys' fees pursuant to statute and applicable law.

NINTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Violation of Cal. Business & Professions Code §§ 17200, *et seq.*)

(Against All Defendants)

102. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and every allegation set forth above.

103. Defendants' conduct, as alleged herein, has been, and continues to be, unfair, unlawful and harmful to Plaintiff and the Class, to the general public, and Defendants'

competitors. Accordingly, Plaintiff seeks to enforce important rights affecting the public interest within the meaning of Code of Civil Procedure section 1021.5.

104. Defendants' activities as alleged herein are violations of California law, and constitute unlawful business acts and practices in violation of California Business & Professions Code section 17200, *et seq.*

105. A violation of California Business & Professions Code section 17200, *et seq.* may be predicated on the violation of any state or federal law. In this instant case, Defendants' policies and practices of requiring employees, including Plaintiff and the Class, to work overtime without paying them proper compensation violate California Labor Code sections 510 and 1198. Additionally, Defendants' policies and practices of requiring employees, including Plaintiff and the Class, to work through their meal and rest periods without paying them proper compensation violate California Labor Code sections 226.7 and 512(a). Moreover, Defendants' policies and practices of failing to timely pay wages to Plaintiff and the Class violate California Labor Code sections 201, 202, 203 and 204.

106. Defendants also violated California Labor Code sections 221, 226(a), 1194, 1197, 1197.1, 510, 1174(d), and 227.3.

107. As a result of the herein described violations of California law, Defendants unlawfully gained an unfair advantage over other businesses.

108. Plaintiff and the Class have been personally injured by Defendants' unlawful business acts and practices as alleged herein, including but not necessarily limited to the loss of money and/or property.

109. Pursuant to California Business & Professions Code sections 17200, *et seq.*, Plaintiff and the Class are entitled to restitution of the wages withheld and retained by Defendants during a period that commences four years prior to the filing of this Complaint; an award of attorneys' fees pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure section 1021.5 and other applicable laws; and an award of costs.

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- 1 c. Failing to provide legally required meal periods to Plaintiff and the Aggrieved
2 Employees, and failing to pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees an additional
3 hour of premium pay for meal period violations in violation of Labor Code §§
4 226.7 and 512.
- 5 d. Failing to provide authorize and permit Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees to
6 take duty-free rest periods, and failing to pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved
7 Employees an additional hour of premium pay for rest period violations in
8 violation of Labor Code §§ 226.7 and 512.
- 9 e. Failing to timely pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees all wages at the end
10 of their employment in violation of Labor Code § 203.
- 11 f. Failing to timely pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees all wages owed
12 during employment in violation of Labor Code § 204.
- 13 g. Failing to furnish Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees with complete, accurate,
14 itemized wage statements in violation of Labor Code § 226.
- 15 h. Failing to maintain accurate records relating to Plaintiff and the Aggrieved
16 Employees' work periods, meal periods, total daily hours, hours per pay period,
17 total wages and compensation, and applicable pay rates in violation of Labor Code
18 § 1174(d) and the applicable IWC Wage Order.
- 19 i. Failing to pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees for all vested but unused
20 vacation time in violation of Labor Code § 227.3.

21 115. Pursuant to California Labor Code sections 2699 and 2699.5, Plaintiff,
22 individually and on behalf of the Aggrieved Employees and the State of California, requests and
23 is entitled to recover penalties against Defendants for the Labor Code violations described above,
24 including but not limited to penalties under California Code of Regulations Title 8 section 11050,
25 penalties under California Labor Code sections 2699, 210, 226, 226.3, 558, 1174.5, and 1197.1,
26 and any and all additional penalties and sums as provided by the California Labor Code and/or
27 other statutes. The exact amount of the applicable penalties, in all, is an amount to be shown
28 according to proof at trial.

116. Plaintiff has exhausted his administrative remedies pursuant to Labor Code § 2699.3. On June 2, 2025, Plaintiff, through his counsel of record, by online filing with the Labor and Workforce Development Agency (“LWDA”) and by certified mail to the Defendants, notified Defendants and the LWDA of the specific provisions of the Labor Code and IWC Wage Orders that Defendants have violated, including the facts and theories to support the violations, and of Plaintiff’s intent to bring a claim for civil penalties under PAGA. Plaintiff also paid the filing fee required under Labor Code § 2699.3. As of the filing of this Complaint, more than sixty-five (65) days have elapsed since the mailing of Plaintiff’s June 2, 2025 notice, and the LWDA has not indicated that it intends to investigate the violations discussed in the notice. Accordingly, Plaintiff may commence a civil action to recover penalties for himself and other Aggrieved Employees pursuant to Labor Code § 2699.3.

117. Plaintiff was compelled to retain the services of counsel to file this court action to protect his interests and the Aggrieved Employees, and to assess and collect the civil penalties owed by Defendants. Plaintiff therefore seeks an award of reasonable attorneys’ fees and costs pursuant to Labor Code § 2699(g)(1), and any other applicable statute.

Plaintiff may amend this complaint as a matter of right pursuant to California Labor Code § 2699.3 as this complaint has been filed within sixty days of the time periods specified in Labor Code § 2699.3

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, individually and on behalf of all other members of the general public similarly situated, and as a private attorney general, prays for relief and judgment against Defendants, jointly and severally, as follows:

Class Certification

1. That this action be certified as a class action;
2. That Plaintiff be appointed as the representative of the Class;
3. That counsel for Plaintiff be appointed as Class Counsel; and
4. That Defendants provide to Class Counsel immediately the names and most current/last known contact information (address, e-mail and telephone numbers) of all class

members.

As to the First Cause of Action

5. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated California Labor Code sections 510 and 1198 and applicable IWC Wage Orders by willfully failing to pay all overtime wages due to Plaintiff and other Class Members;

6. For general unpaid wages at overtime wage rates and such general and special damages as may be appropriate;

7. For pre-judgment interest on any unpaid overtime compensation commencing from the date such amounts were due;

8. For reasonable attorneys' fees and costs of suit incurred herein pursuant to California Labor Code section 1194; and

9. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

As to the Second Cause of Action

10. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated California Labor Code sections 226.7 and 512 and applicable IWC Wage Orders by willfully failing to provide all meal periods (including second meal periods) to Plaintiff and the Class;

11. That the Court make an award to Plaintiff and the Class of one (1) hour of pay at each employee's regular rate of compensation for each workday that a meal period was not provided;

12. For all actual, consequential, and incidental losses and damages, according to proof;

13. For premium wages pursuant to California Labor Code section 226.7;

14. For pre-judgment interest on any unpaid wages from the date such amounts were due;

15. For reasonable attorneys' fees and costs of suit incurred herein; and

16. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

As to the Third Cause of Action

17. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated California

1 Labor Code section 226.7 and applicable IWC Wage Orders by willfully failing to provide all rest
2 periods to Plaintiff and the Class;

3 18. That the Court make an award to Plaintiff and the Class of one (1) hour of pay at
4 each employee's regular rate of compensation for each workday that a rest period was not
5 provided;

6 19. For all actual, consequential, and incidental losses and damages, according to
7 proof;

8 20. For premium wages pursuant to California Labor Code section 226.7;

9 21. For pre-judgment interest on any unpaid wages from the date such amounts were
10 due; and

11 22. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

12 **As to the Fourth Cause of Action**

13 23. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated California
14 Labor Code sections 1194, 1197, and 1197.1 by willfully failing to pay minimum wages to
15 Plaintiff and the Class;

16 24. For general unpaid wages and such general and special damages as may be
17 appropriate;

18 25. For statutory wage penalties pursuant to California Labor Code section 1197.1 for
19 Plaintiff and the Class in the amount as may be established according to proof at trial;

20 26. For pre-judgment interest on any unpaid compensation from the date such amounts
21 were due;

22 27. For reasonable attorneys' fees and costs of suit incurred herein pursuant to
23 California Labor Code section 1194(a);

24 28. For liquidated damages pursuant to California Labor Code section 1194.2; and

25 29. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

26 **As to the Fifth Cause of Action**

27 30. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated California
28 Labor Code sections 201, 202, and 203 by willfully failing to pay all compensation owed at the

time of termination of the employment of Plaintiff and other Class Members no longer employed by Defendants;

31. For all actual, consequential, and incidental losses and damages, according to proof;

32. For statutory wage penalties pursuant to California Labor Code section 203 for Plaintiff and other Class Members who have left Defendants' employ;

33. For pre-judgment interest on any unpaid compensation from the date such amounts were due; and

34. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

As to the Sixth Cause of Action

35. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated California Labor Code section 204 by willfully failing to pay all compensation owed at the time required by California Labor Code section 204 to Plaintiff and the Class;

36. For statutory penalties pursuant to California Labor Code section 210;

37. For such other and further relief as the Court deems just and proper.

As to the Seventh Cause of Action

38. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated the record keeping provisions of California Labor Code section 226(a) and applicable IWC Wage Orders as to Plaintiff and the Class, and willfully failed to provide accurate itemized wage statements thereto;

39. For actual, consequential and incidental losses and damages, according to proof;

40. For statutory penalties pursuant to California Labor Code section 226(e); and

41. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

As to the Eighth Cause of Action

42. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated California Labor Code sections 227.3, 201, 202, and 203 by failing to pay Plaintiff and the other class members for all vested and unpaid vacation wages;

43. For vested unpaid vacation wages and penalties according to proof;

1 44. For all interest on wages owed;

2 45. For all reasonably attorneys' fees and costs recoverable by law; and

3 46. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

4 **As to the Ninth Cause of Action**

5 47. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated California
6 Business and Professions Code sections 17200, *et seq.* by failing to provide Plaintiff and the Class
7 all overtime compensation due to them, failing to provide all meal and rest periods to Plaintiff
8 and the Class, failing to pay at least minimum wages to Plaintiff and the Class, failing to pay
9 Plaintiff's and other Class Members' wages timely as required by California Labor Code section
10 201, 202 and 204 and by violating California Labor Code sections 226(a), 227.3, and 1174(d);

11 48. For restitution of unpaid wages to Plaintiff and the Class and all pre-judgment
12 interest from the day such amounts were due and payable;

13 49. For the appointment of a receiver to receive, manage and distribute any and all
14 funds disgorged from Defendants and determined to have been wrongfully acquired by
15 Defendants as a result of violation of California Business and Professions Code sections 17200,
16 *et seq.*;

17 50. For reasonable attorneys' fees and costs of suit incurred herein pursuant to
18 California Code of Civil Procedure section 1021.5;

19 51. For injunctive relief to ensure compliance with this section, pursuant to California
20 Business and Professions Code sections 17200, *et seq.*; and

21 52. For such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

22 **As to the Tenth Cause of Action**

23 53. For statutory attorneys' fees and costs pursuant to section 2699(g)(1) of the
24 California Labor Code;

25 54. For the imposition of civil penalties pursuant to California Labor Code §§ 2699,
26 210, 558, 226, 226.3, 1174.5, 1197.1, and all other penalties allowed by the California Labor
27 Code and/or other applicable statutes; and

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1 55. For such other relief as the Court deems just and proper.

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3 Dated: August 6, 2025

PROTECTION LAW GROUP, LLP

4
5 By: _____



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7 Arnel O. Tan
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9 Christine V. Reyes
10 *Attorneys for Plaintiff*
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