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as an aggrieved employee, and on behalf of all other
aggrieved employees

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

CARLOS JR. MARTINEZ, as an aggrieved
employee, and on behalf of all other aggrieved
employees under the Labor Code Private
Attorneys' General Act of 2004,

Plaintiff,

v.

AMERICAN GUARD SECURITY, a
California corporation; AMERICAN GUARD
SERVICES, INC., a California Corporation;
and DOES 1 through 100, inclusive,

Defendants.

Electronically FILED by
Superior Court of California,
County of Los Angeles
4/04/2023 11:52 AM
David W. Slayton,
Executive Officer/Clerk of Court,
By G. Robinson, Deputy Clerk

CASE NO.: **23STCV07368**

REPRESENTATIVE ACTION

**COMPLAINT UNDER THE LABOR
CODE PRIVATE ATTORNEYS'
GENERAL ACT OF 2004 FOR CIVIL
PENALTIES UNDER LABOR CODE
SECTIONS 210, 226.3, 558, 1174.5, 1197.1
and 2699**

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

[Amount in Controversy Greater Than
\$25,000.00]

1 Plaintiff CARLOS JR. MARTINEZ("Plaintiff"), as an aggrieved employee, and on behalf
2 of all other aggrieved employees under the Labor Code Private Attorneys' General Act of 2004, and
3 alleges as follows:

4 **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

5 1. This is a representative action, pursuant to the Labor Code Private Attorneys General
6 Act of 2004, codified at Labor Code section 2698, *et seq.* ("PAGA"), against AMERICAN GUARD
7 SECURITY, a California corporation, and any of its respective subsidiaries or affiliated companies
8 within the State of California ("AMERICAN GUARD SECURITY"), and AMERICAN GUARD
9 SERVICES, INC., a California limited liability company, and any of its respective subsidiaries or
10 affiliated companies within the State of California ("AMERICAN GUARD SERVICES," and
11 together with "AMERICAN GUARD SECURITY" and DOES 1 through 100, as further defined
12 below, "Defendants"), as a proxy of the Labor and Workforce Development Agency of the State of
13 California ("LWDA"), on behalf of Plaintiff and all other current and former non-exempt employees
14 of Defendants working within the Civil Penalty Period, as further defined herein, and, as it pertains
15 to the alleged claims for failure to comply with Labor Code section 2810.5, Labor Code section 203,
16 Labor Code section 226, Labor Code section 246, *et seq.*, Labor Code section 432, Labor Code
17 section 1198.5, Labor Code section 2802, restraints on competition, whistleblowing and freedom
18 of speech on behalf of all employees of Defendants working within the Civil Penalty Period
19 (collectively, "Aggrieved Employees").

20 2. Jurisdiction exists in the Superior Court of the State of California pursuant to Code
21 of Civil Procedure section 410.10.

22 3. Venue is proper in Los Angeles County, California pursuant to Code of Civil
23 Procedure sections 392, *et seq.* because, among other things, Los Angeles County is where the
24 causes of action complained of herein arose; the county in which the employment relationship
25 began; the county in which performance of the employment contract, or part of it, between Plaintiffs,
26 or some of them, and Defendants was due to be performed; the county in which the employment
27 contract, or part of it, between Plaintiff and Defendants was actually performed; and the county in
28 which Defendants, or some of them, reside. Moreover, the unlawful acts alleged herein have a direct

1 effect on Plaintiffs and Aggrieved Employees in Los Angeles County, and because Defendants
2 employ numerous Aggrieved Employees in Los Angeles County.

3 4. Plaintiff is an “aggrieved employee” under PAGA, as Plaintiff was employed by
4 Defendants during the applicable statutory period and suffered one or more of the Labor Code
5 violations set forth herein. Accordingly, Plaintiff seeks to recover civil penalties, as the term “civil
6 penalty” is defined under *ZB N.A. v. Superior Court* (2019) 8 Cal.5th 175, under the Labor Code
7 Private Attorneys General Act of 2004, codified at Labor Code section 2698, *et seq.* (“PAGA”) plus
8 reasonable attorneys’ fees and costs, for Plaintiff and all other aggrieved current and former
9 employees of Defendants during the Civil Penalty Period.

10 5. Specifically, Plaintiff seeks to recover PAGA civil penalties through a representative
11 action permitted by PAGA and the California Supreme Court in, among other authorities, *Arias v.*
12 *Superior Court* (2009) 46 Cal.4th 969. According to the same authorities, class certification of the
13 PAGA allegations described herein is not required.

14 6. During the period beginning one (1) year preceding the provision of notice to the
15 LWDA regarding the herein-described Labor Code violations (the “Civil Penalty Period”),
16 Defendants violated, *inter alia*, Labor Code sections 96, 98.6, 201, 202, 203, 204, 210, 226, 226.3,
17 226.7, 227.3, 232, 232.5, 432, 510, 512, 558, 1102.5, 1174, 1174.5, 1194, 1197, 1197.1, 1197.5,
18 1198.5, 2699, 2802, and 2810.5, among others.

19 7. Labor Code section 2699, subdivisions (a) and (g), authorizes aggrieved employees
20 such as Plaintiff, on behalf of Plaintiff and all other aggrieved current and former employees within
21 the statutory period, to bring a civil action to recover civil penalties pursuant to the procedures
22 specified in Labor Code section 2699.3.

23 8. On or around January 23, 2023, Plaintiff provided written notice pursuant to Labor
24 Code section 2699.3 online and by certified mail, with return receipt requested, of Defendants’
25 violation of various, including the herein-described, provisions of the Labor Code, to the LWDA,
26 as well as by certified mail, with return receipt requested to Defendants, and each of them.

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1 9. Pursuant to Labor Code section 2699.3, subdivision (a)(2)(A), the LWDA did not
2 provide notice of its intention to investigate Defendants' alleged violations within sixty-five (65)
3 calendar days of the January 23, 2023 postmarked date of the herein-described notice sent by
4 Plaintiff to the LWDA and Defendants.

5 **PAGA REPRESENTATIVE ALLEGATIONS**

6 10. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a policy or practice
7 of failing to pay overtime wages to Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees in the State of
8 California in violation of California state wage and hour laws as a result of, without limitation,
9 Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees working over eight (8) hours per day, forty (40) hours per
10 week, and/or seven (7) straight workdays in a workweek without paying them proper overtime
11 wages, as a result of, without limitation, failing to accurately track and/or pay for all minutes actually
12 worked; engaging, suffering, or permitting employees to work off the clock, including, without
13 limitation, by requiring employees: to come early to work and leave late work without being able to
14 clock in for all that time, to complete pre-shift tasks before clocking in and post-shift tasks after
15 clocking out, to clock out for meal periods and continue working, to clock out for rest periods, to
16 attend company meetings off the clock, failing to include all forms of remuneration, including non-
17 discretionary bonuses, incentive pay, meal allowances, mask allowances, gift cards and other forms
18 of remuneration into the regular rate of pay for the pay periods where overtime was worked and the
19 additional compensation was earned for the purpose of calculating the overtime rate of pay;
20 detrimental rounding of employee time entries, editing and/or manipulation of time entries to show
21 less hours than actually worked, and for paying straight pay instead of overtime pay to the detriment
22 of Employee and other aggrieved employees.

23 11. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a practice or policy
24 of failing to compensate Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees with minimum wages for all hours
25 worked or otherwise under Defendants' control as a result of, without limitation, failing to
26 accurately track and/or pay for all minutes actually worked; by requiring employees: to come early
27 to work and leave late work without being able to clock in for all that time, to complete pre-shift
28 tasks before clocking in and post-shift tasks after clocking out, to clock out for meal periods and

1 continue working, to clock out for rest periods, to attend company meetings off the clock, failing to
2 include all forms of remuneration, including non-discretionary bonuses, incentive pay, meal
3 allowances, mask allowances, gift cards and other forms of remuneration into the regular rate of pay
4 for the pay periods where overtime was worked and the additional compensation was earned for the
5 purpose of calculating the overtime rate of pay; detrimental rounding of employee time entries,
6 editing and/or manipulation of time entries to show less hours than actually worked, and for paying
7 straight pay instead of overtime pay to the detriment of Employee and other aggrieved employees

8 12. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a policy or practice
9 of failing to provide Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees a thirty (30) minute uninterrupted,
10 timely, and complete meal period for days on which the employee worked in excess of five (5) and
11 ten (10) hours per day without being afforded uninterrupted, timely, and complete 30-minute meal
12 periods or compensation in lieu thereof including, without limitation: by interrupting meal periods;
13 not providing timely meal periods; failing to provide first and second meal periods; providing short
14 meal periods; requiring that employees carry cellular telephones or walkie-talkies during meal
15 periods; not permitting employees to leave the premises; otherwise requiring on-duty/on-call meal
16 periods; and auto-deducting meal periods that could not be auto-deducted by law or during which
17 employees worked., as required by California wage and hour laws

18 13. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a policy or practice
19 of failing to provide Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees paid, uninterrupted, timely, and
20 complete rest periods of at least ten (10) minutes per four (4) hours worked or major fractions
21 thereof, or compensation in lieu thereof, including, without limitation, by failing to provide rest
22 periods all together; requiring that they be bundled together and/or with meal periods; interrupting
23 them; requiring that employees carry cellular telephones or walkie-talkies during rest periods not
24 providing them in a timely fashion; and not permitting employees to leave the premises; or otherwise
25 requiring on-duty/on-call rest periods, as required by California wage and hour laws.

26 14. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a policy or practice
27 of failing to comply with Labor Code section 226, subdivision (a) by intentionally failing to furnish
28 Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees with itemized wage statements that accurately reflect gross

1 wages earned; total hours worked by the employee; net wages earned; all deductions; all applicable
2 hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the corresponding number of hours worked at each
3 hourly rate by the employee; the legal name of the employer and/or the name and address of the
4 legal entity securing the employer's services if the employer is a farm labor contractor; and other
5 such information as required by Labor Code section 226, subdivision (a).

6 15. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a policy or practice
7 of failing to comply with Labor Code section 226, subdivision (a) by intentionally failing to furnish
8 Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees with documents signed to obtain or hold employment
9 under Labor Code section 432, personnel records under Labor Code section 1198.5, and time records
10 under Labor Code section 1174, making it difficult for Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees to
11 calculate their unpaid wages and/or premium payments, to the detriment of Plaintiffs and other
12 Aggrieved Employees.

13 16. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a policy or practice
14 of failing to timely pay Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees, among other wages, all wages
15 owed as a result of Defendants' practice or policy of failing to pay, among other wages, overtime
16 wages, minimum wages, premium wages, paid time off and vacation time owed as required by Labor
17 Code sections 201, 202, and 203.

18 17. At all relevant times herein, Defendants had and have a policy or practice of failing
19 to pay Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees their paid time off and vacation time owed upon
20 separation of employment as wages at their final rate of pay in violation of Labor Code section 227.3
21 and applicable Wage Orders.

22 18. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants have had a policy or practice of
23 failing and refusing, and continue to fail and refuse, to reimburse employees, including, without
24 limitation, Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees, with their costs incurred in purchasing and/or
25 laundering mandatory work uniforms; and purchasing tools necessary to perform work duties, in
26 direct consequence of the discharge of their duties, or of their obedience to the directions of
27 Defendants, as required by Labor Code 2802.

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1 19. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants have had a policy or practice of
2 failing to comply with the notice requirements of Labor Code section 2810.5 (*i.e.*, the Wage Theft
3 Protection Act of 2011) by, among other things, failing to provide Plaintiff and other Aggrieved
4 Employees with the rates of pay and overtime rates of pay applicable to their employment;
5 allowances claimed as part of the minimum wage; the regular payday designated by Defendants; the
6 name, address, and telephone number of the workers' compensation insurance carrier; information
7 regarding paid sick leave; and other pertinent information required to be disclosed by Defendants
8 under Labor Code section 2810.5.

9 20. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants failed to provide Plaintiff and
10 other Aggrieved Employees with the amount of paid sick leave required to be provided pursuant to
11 California law (including, without limitation Labor Code section 245, *et seq.*), and also did not
12 permit its use upon request as contemplated under California laws, to the detriment of Plaintiff and
13 all other Aggrieved Employees.

14 21. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants have had a policy or practice of
15 failing to pay Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees their wages in accordance with Labor Code
16 Section 204, which requires that: "[l]abor performed between the 1st and 15th days, inclusive, of
17 any calendar month shall be paid for between the 16th and 26th day of the month during which the
18 labor was performed, and labor performed between the 16th and the last day, inclusive of any
19 calendar month, shall be paid for between the 1st and 10th day of the following month."

20 22. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a policy or practice
21 of preventing Plaintiff and/or Aggrieved Employees from using or disclosing the skills, knowledge
22 and experience they obtained at Defendants for purposes of competing with Defendants, including,
23 without limitation, preventing Employees from disclosing their wages in negotiating a new job with
24 a prospective employer, and from disclosing who else works at Defendants and under what
25 circumstances that they might be receptive to an offer from a rival employer. Plaintiff is informed
26 and believes that this policy and/or practice violates Business and Professions Code sections 17200,
27 16600 and 16700, and, by virtue thereof, various provisions of the Labor Code, including Labor
28 Code sections 232, 232.5, and 1197.5, subdivision (k).

23. Defendants had and have a policy or practice of preventing Plaintiff and/or other Aggrieved Employees from disclosing violations of state and federal law, either within Defendants to their managers or outside to private attorneys or government officials, among others, in violation of Business and Professions Code section 17200, and, thus, in violation of Labor Code section 1102.5. In addition, Plaintiff is informed and believes that Defendants' herein-described policies and/or practices prevent Plaintiff and/or other Aggrieved Employees from disclosing information about unsafe or discriminatory working conditions, or about wage and hour violations in violation of Labor Code section 232 and 232.5.

24. Defendants had and have a policy or practice of preventing Plaintiff and/or other Aggrieved Employees from engaging in lawful conduct during non-work hours, thus violating state statutes entitling employees to disclose wages, working conditions, and illegal conduct, including, without limitation, Labor Code sections 96, subdivision (k), 98.6, 232, 232.5, and 1197.5, subdivision (k). Plaintiff is informed and believes that this lawful conduct includes the exercise of Plaintiff's and/or other Aggrieved Employee's constitutional rights of freedom of speech and economic liberty.

25. Plaintiff, in Plaintiff's representative capacity, seeks civil penalties under Labor Code sections 210, 226.3, 558, 1174.5, 1197.1, and 2699 for the herein-described acts, which violate the California Labor Code as described above, including on behalf of Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees pursuant to PAGA.

PARTIES

A. Plaintiff

26. Plaintiff is a resident of the State of California. At all relevant times herein, Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges that Defendants employed Plaintiff as a non-exempt employee, with duties that included, but were not limited to, removing transit packages off the busses, call local police department when needed and help passengers. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that Plaintiff CARLOS MARTINEZ, JR. has worked for Defendants since approximately April of 2022.

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1 **B. Defendants**

2 27. Plaintiff is informed and believes and based thereon alleges that defendant
3 AMERICAN GUARD SECURITY is, and at all times relevant hereto was, a corporation organized
4 and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the State of California and doing business in the
5 County of Los Angeles, State of California.

6 28. Plaintiff is informed and believes and based thereon alleges that defendant
7 AMERICAN GUARD SERVICES is, and at all times relevant hereto was, a California corporation
8 organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the State of California and doing business
9 in the County of Los Angeles, State of California.

10 29. The true names and capacities, whether individual, corporate, associate, or otherwise,
11 of defendants sued herein as DOES 1 through 100, inclusive, are currently unknown to Plaintiff,
12 who therefore sues defendants by such fictitious names under Code of Civil Procedure section 474.
13 Plaintiff is informed and believes and based thereon alleges that each of the defendants designated
14 herein as DOE is legally responsible in some manner for the unlawful acts referred to herein.
15 Plaintiff will seek leave of court to amend this Complaint to reflect the true names and capacities of
16 the defendants designated hereinafter as DOES when such identities become known. Plaintiff is
17 informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that each defendant acted in all respects pertinent
18 to this action, as the agent of the other defendant(s), carried out a joint scheme, business plan or
19 policy in all respects pertinent hereto, and the acts of each defendant are legally attributable to the
20 other defendants. Whenever, heretofore or hereinafter, reference is made to “Defendants,” it shall
21 include AMERICAN GUARD SECURITY, AMERICAN GUARD SERVICES, and any of their
22 parent, subsidiary, or affiliated companies within the State of California, as well as DOES 1 through
23 100 identified herein.

24 **JOINT LIABILITY ALLEGATIONS**

25 30. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that at all times
26 mentioned herein, each of the defendants was the agent, principal, employee, employer,
27 representative, joint venture or co-conspirator of each of the other defendants, either actually or
28 ostensibly, and in doing the things alleged herein acted within the course and scope of such agency,

1 employment, joint venture, and conspiracy.

2 31. All of the acts and conduct described herein of each and every corporate defendant
3 was duly authorized, ordered, and directed by the respective and collective defendant corporate
4 employers, and the officers and management-level employees of said corporate employers. In
5 addition thereto, said corporate employers participated in the aforementioned acts and conduct of
6 their said employees, agents, and representatives, and each of them; and upon completion of the
7 aforesaid acts and conduct of said corporate employees, agents, and representatives, the defendant
8 corporation respectively and collectively ratified, accepted the benefits of, condoned, lauded,
9 acquiesced, authorized, and otherwise approved of each and all of the said acts and conduct of the
10 aforementioned corporate employees, agents and representatives.

11 32. As a result of the aforementioned facts, Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based
12 thereon alleges that Defendants, and each of them, are joint employers.

13 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

14 **(Civil Penalties Under the Private Attorneys' General Act (2004) – Against All Defendants)**

15 33. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates by reference all of the allegations set forth in the
16 preceding paragraphs as though fully set forth hereat.

17 **Civil Penalties Under Labor Code § 210**

18 34. At all relevant times herein, Labor Code section 204, requires and required that:
19 “[l]abor performed between the 1st and 15th days, inclusive, of any calendar month shall be paid for
20 between the 16th and 26th day of the month during which the labor was performed, and labor
21 performed between the 16th and the last day, inclusive, of any calendar month, shall be paid for
22 between the 1st and 10th day of the following month.”

23 35. At all relevant times herein, Labor Code section 210, subdivision (a) states and stated
24 that “[i]n addition to, and entirely independent and apart from, any other penalty provided in this
25 article, every person who fails to pay the wages of each employee as provided in Sections 201.3,
26 204, 204b, 204.1, 205, 205.5, and 1197.5, shall be subject to a civil penalty as follows: (1) For any
27 initial violation, one hundred dollars (\$100) for each failure to pay each employee” and “(2) For
28 each subsequent violation, or any willful or intentional violation, two hundred dollars (\$200) for

1 each failure to pay each employee, plus 25 percent of the amount unlawfully withheld.”

2 36. At all relevant times herein, Defendants have had a consistent policy or practice of
3 failing to pay Plaintiff and/or Aggrieved Employees during their employment on a timely basis as
4 per Labor Code section 204. Thus, pursuant to Labor Code section 210, Plaintiff and other
5 Aggrieved Employees are entitled to recover civil penalties for Defendants’ violations of Labor
6 Code section 204, in the amount of one hundred dollars (\$100) for each Aggrieved Employee for
7 each initial violation per employee, and two hundred dollars (\$200) for each Aggrieved Employee
8 for each subsequent violation in connection with each payment that was made in violation of Labor
9 Code section 204.

10 Civil Penalties Under Labor Code § 226.3

11 37. Defendants had and have a policy or practice of failing to comply with Labor Code
12 section 226, subdivision (a) by intentionally failing to furnish Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees
13 with itemized wage statements that accurately reflect gross wages earned; total hours worked; net
14 wages earned; the name and address of each employer with whom they have been placed to work;
15 all applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the corresponding number of hours
16 worked at each hourly rate; the legal name of the employer and/or the name and address of the legal
17 entity securing the employer’s services if the employer is a farm labor contractor; and other such
18 information as required by Labor Code section 226, subdivision (a).

19 38. Labor Code section 226.3 states that “[a]ny employer who violates subdivision (a)
20 of Section 226 shall be subject to a civil penalty in the amount of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250)
21 per employee per violation in an initial citation and one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per employee for
22 each violation in a subsequent citation, for which the employer fails to provide the employee a wage
23 deduction statement or fails to keep the records required in subdivision (a) of Section 226.”

24 39. Labor Code section 226.3 further provides that “[t]he civil penalties provided for in
25 this section are in addition to any other penalty provided by law.”

26 40. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that Defendants had
27 and have a policy or practice of failing to furnish non-exempt employees, including, without
28 limitation, Plaintiff, with itemized wage statements that accurately reflect gross wages earned; total

1 hours worked; net wages earned; all deductions; all applicable hourly rates in effect and the
2 corresponding number of hours worked at each hourly rate in effect during the pay period; the legal
3 name of the employer and/or the name and address of the legal entity securing the employer's
4 services if the employer is a farm labor contractor; and other such information as required by Labor
5 Code section 226, subdivision (a).

6 41. Pursuant to Labor Code section 226.3, Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees are
7 entitled to recover civil penalties for Defendants' violation of Labor Code section 226, subdivision
8 (a) in the amount of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) for each Aggrieved Employee per pay period
9 for the initial violation, and one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for each Aggrieved Employee per pay
10 period for each subsequent violation.

11 Violation of Labor Code § 558

12 42. Pursuant to Labor Code section 558, subdivision (a): "Any employer or other person
13 acting on behalf of an employer who violates, or causes to be violated . . . any provision regulating
14 hours and days of work in any of the Industrial Welfare Commission" shall be subject to a civil
15 penalty as follows:

- 16 (1) For any initial violation, fifty dollars (\$50) for each underpaid employee and
17 for each pay period for which the employee was underpaid in addition to an
18 amount sufficient to recover underpaid wages;
19 (2) For each subsequent violation, one hundred dollars (\$100) for each underpaid
20 employee for each pay period for which the employee was underpaid in
21 addition to an amount sufficient to recover underpaid wages;
22 (3) Wages recovered pursuant to this section shall be paid to the affected
23 employee."

24 43. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon allege, that Defendants, and
25 each of them, violated, or caused to be violated, the Labor Code sections described herein, including
26 causing Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees not to: be paid with the rates of pay and overtime
27 rates of pay applicable to their employment, allowances claimed as part of the minimum wage, the
28 regular payday designated by employer, the name of the employer, including any "doing business

as” names used, the name, address, and telephone number of the workers’ compensation insurance carrier, information regarding paid sick leave, and other pertinent information.

44. As a direct and proximate result of the herein-described Labor Code violations, pursuant to Labor Code section 558, Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees are entitled to recover civil penalties for Defendants’ herein-described Labor Code violations in the amount fifty dollars (\$50) for each Aggrieved Employee per pay period for the initial violation, and one hundred dollars (\$100) for each Aggrieved Employee per pay period for each subsequent violation.

Violation of Labor Code § 1174.5

45. At all times mentioned herein, Labor Code section 1174, subdivision (b) has required every person employing labor in California to “[a]llow any member of the commission or the employees of the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement free access to the place of business or employment of the person to secure any information or make any investigation that they are authorized by this chapter to ascertain or make. The commission may inspect or make excerpts, relating to the employment of employees, from the books, reports, contracts, payrolls, documents, or papers of the person.”

46. At all times mentioned herein, Labor Code section 1174, subdivision (c) has required every person employing labor in California to “[k]eep a record showing the names and addresses of all employees employed and the ages of all minors.”

47. At all times mentioned herein, Labor Code section 1174, subdivision (d) has required every person employing labor in California to “[k]eep, at a central location in the state or at the plants or establishments at which employees are employed, payroll records showing the hours worked daily by and the wages paid to, and the number of piece-rate units earned by and applicable piece rate paid to, employees employed at the respective plants or establishments. These records shall be kept in accordance with rules established for this purpose by the commission, but in any case, shall be kept on file for not less than three years. An employer shall not prohibit an employee from maintaining a personal record of hours worked, or, if paid on a piece-rate basis, piece-rate units earned.”

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48. Pursuant to Labor Code section 1174.5, “[a]ny person employing labor who willfully fails to maintain the records required by subdivision (c) of [Labor Code] Section 1174 or accurate and complete records required by subdivision (d) of [Labor Code] Section 1174, or to allow any member of the commission or employees of the division to inspect records pursuant to subdivision (b) of [Labor Code] Section 1174, shall be subject to a civil penalty of five hundred dollars (\$500).

49. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that Defendants have willfully failed to keep adequate or accurate time records including wage statements and similar payroll documents under Labor Code section 226, documents signed to obtain or hold employment under Labor Code section 432, personnel records under Labor Code section 1198.5, and time records under Labor Code section 1174.

50. As a direct and proximate result of the herein-described Labor Code violations, pursuant to Labor Code section 1174.5, Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees are entitled to recover civil penalties for Defendants' herein-described Labor Code violations in the amount of five hundred dollars (\$500) per violation per Aggrieved Employee.

Violation of Labor Code § 1197.1

51. Pursuant to Labor Code section 1197.1, subdivision (a): “Any employer or other person acting either individually or as an officer, agent, or employee of another person, who pays or causes to be paid to any employee a wage less than the minimum fixed by an applicable state or local law, or by an order of the commission shall be subject to a civil penalty, restitution of wages, liquidated damages payable to the employee, and any applicable penalties imposed pursuant to Section 203 as follows:

- (1) For any initial violation that is intentionally committed, one hundred dollars (\$100) for each underpaid employee for each pay period for which the employee is underpaid. This amount shall be in addition to an amount sufficient to recover underpaid wages, liquidated damages pursuant to Section 1194.2, and any applicable penalties imposed pursuant to Section 203.
- (2) For each subsequent violation for the same specific offense, two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) for each underpaid employee for each pay period for which the

1 employee is underpaid regardless of whether the initial violation is
2 intentionally committed. This amount shall be in addition to an amount
3 sufficient to recover underpaid wages, liquidated damages pursuant to Section
4 1194.2, and any applicable penalties imposed pursuant to Section 203.

5 (3) Wages, liquidated damages, and any applicable penalties imposed pursuant to
6 Section 203, recovered pursuant to this section shall be paid to the affected
7 employee.”

8 52. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that Defendants caused
9 Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees not to be paid minimum wages as a result of Defendants, without
10 limitation, routinely failing to pay Plaintiff or other Aggrieved Employees’ minimum wages for all
11 hours worked or otherwise under Defendants’ control due to, without limitation, routinely failing to
12 accurately track and/or pay for all hours actually worked; detrimental rounding or manipulation of
13 time entries; paying straight pay instead of overtime or otherwise failing to pay overtime hours at
14 the proper overtime rate of pay; engaging, suffering, or permitting employees to work off the clock,
15 entitling Plaintiff and other aggrieved Employees to actual and liquidated damages.

16 53. As a direct and proximate result of the herein-described Labor Code violations,
17 pursuant to Labor Code section 1197.1, Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees are entitled to
18 recover civil penalties for Defendants’ herein-described Labor Code violations in the amount one
19 hundred dollars (\$100) for each Aggrieved Employee per pay period for the initial violation, and
20 two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250) for each Aggrieved Employee per pay period for each
21 subsequent violation.

22 Civil Penalties Under Labor Code § 2699

23 54. Pursuant to Labor Code section 2699, subdivision (a), notwithstanding any other
24 provision of law, any provision of the Labor Code that provides for a civil penalty to be assessed
25 and collected by the LWDA or any of its departments, divisions, commissions, boards, agencies or
26 employees for a violation of the Labor Code may, as an alternative, be recovered through a civil
27 action brought by an aggrieved employee on behalf of himself or herself and other current or former
28 employees pursuant to the procedures specified in Labor Code section 2699.3.

55. Pursuant to Labor Code section 2699, subdivision (f), for all provisions of the Labor Code except those for which a civil penalty is specifically provided, the established civil penalty for a violation of those provisions is as follows: if, at the time of the alleged violation, the person employs one or more employees, the civil penalty is one hundred dollars (\$100) for each aggrieved employee per pay period for the initial violation and two hundred dollars (\$200) for each aggrieved employee per pay period for each subsequent violation.

56. Plaintiff is informed and believes and based thereon alleges that Defendants, and each of them, violated the Labor Code sections described herein, including, without limitation, for the failure to: pay the rates of pay and overtime rates of pay applicable to their employment, allowances claimed as part of the minimum wage, the regular payday designated by Defendants, the name of the employer, including “doing business as” names used, the name, address, and telephone number of the workers’ compensation insurance carrier, information regarding paid sick leave, and other pertinent information required to be disclosed by Defendants under Labor Code section 2810.5, failing to provide Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees with the amount of paid sick leave required to be provided pursuant to California and local laws.

57. Moreover, Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees within the State of California whom he seeks to represent are entitled to an award of reasonable attorneys' fees and costs in connection with their herein-described claims for civil penalties.

REQUEST FOR JURY TRIAL

58. Plaintiff hereby requests a trial by jury.

PRAYER

WHEREFORE, on behalf of Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees, Plaintiff prays for judgment against Defendants as follows:

- A. An award of civil penalties pursuant to Labor Code sections 210, 226.3, 558, 1174.5, 1197.1, and 2699;
- B. An award of reasonable attorneys' fees and costs pursuant to Labor Code sections 210, 226.3, 558, 1174.5, 1197.1, and 2699;
- C. Pre-judgment and post-judgment interest;

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- D. For costs of suit incurred herein; and
- E. Such other and further relief as the Court deems just and proper.

Dated: April 4, 2023

BIBIYAN LAW GROUP, P.C.

BY: /s/ Sarah H. Cohen
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aggrieved employee, and on behalf of all other
aggrieved employees