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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

STEVEN TASSIN, individually, on a
representative basis, and on behalf of all
others similarly situated;

Plaintiff,

vs.

SOUTH STAR LOGISTICS, INC., a
California Corporation; and DOES 1 through
20, inclusive;

Defendants.

Case No.: CIVSB2301755
*[Assigned to Hon. Jessica Morgan, Dept S26,
for all purposes]*

**DECLARATION OF BRIAN J. MANKIN
IN SUPPORT OF MOTION FOR
PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF CLASS
ACTION SETTLEMENT**

Hearing

Date: August 8, 2024

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Dept.: S26

I, Brian J. Mankin, state and declare:

1. I am an attorney licensed to practice before all of the courts of the State of California. I manage the employment department within my firm where I am also a Partner. I represent Plaintiff in this action and I am thoroughly familiar with and have personal knowledge of all of the facts set forth herein. I submit this declaration in support of Plaintiff's Motion for Preliminary Approval of this Class Action Settlement. If called as a witness, I could and would competently testify thereto.

1 **COUNSEL’S EXPERIENCE**

2 2. I have been a member, in good standing, of the State Bar of California since 2001.
3 I am admitted to practice in the United States District Courts for the Central and Southern
4 District of California and the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeal and have tried cases in various
5 courts in California.

6 3. I have handled well over 500 employee vs. employer litigation matters during my
7 23 years in practice. Over the last 17 years, my practice has almost entirely consisted of
8 representing employees, the majority of which has included class action and representative
9 action wage and hour matters. In total, I have handled well over 300 class action and
10 representative action wage/hour cases, and have been appointed by the court as class counsel and
11 have received final court approval and judgment in over half of those actions to date, and
12 anticipate receiving final approval in many more of those in the future.

13 4. As part of these settlements and judgments, I have recovered well in excess of
14 \$250 million in damages for my clients and the class members (who often work as nurses,
15 ambulance drivers, technicians, warehouse workers, truck drivers, sales, professional
16 occupations and countless other trades). My team and I once held the record for the largest
17 PAGA-only case in California’s history - a \$12.5 million-dollar court approved settlement,
18 which followed extensive litigation, summary adjudication and writs to the CA Supreme Court
19 against a Fortune 50 company (*Garcia v. Macy’s*, San Bernardino Superior Court).

20 5. I have tried two major class and PAGA cases against Fortune 100 companies over
21 the last few years. I was lead counsel in a PAGA case that my firm tried in the Orange County
22 Superior Court and received a \$425,000 judgment. I was co-counsel in a class action case
23 against Walmart that was tried to the jury in District Court, wherein the jury awarded Plaintiffs
24 over \$6 million. Both cases were appealed, and ultimately the jury trial verdict was affirmed and
25 the PAGA case was reversed and remanded.

26 6. I was named by the LA Times as one “Southern California Leading Lawyers” in
27 the May 2023 issue of Consumer Attorney’s of Southern California (a recognition given to 17
28 employment/labor law attorneys in 2023). Additionally, over the last 5+ consecutive years, I

have been selected by my peers as a “Super Lawyer” in Employment Litigation, a distinction that only 5% of lawyers receive.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE SETTLEMENT

7. Following a contested mediation, Plaintiff and Defendants (collectively, the “Parties”) reached a global settlement and eventually entered into a Class Action and PAGA Settlement Agreement and Release of Claims resolving the wage and hour claims of the putative class (the “Settlement Agreement” or “S.A”), which is attached hereto as **Exhibit A**. The Settlement Agreement seeks to release and discharge Defendants from the claims brought against it in exchange for Defendants’ agreement to pay \$300,000 on a non-reversionary, non-claims made basis (each Class Member will receive his/her share of the Net Settlement Amount without having to submit a claim form or take any action, except for those who opt-out). Plaintiff seeks to represent a class of all current and former California Resident Truck Drivers employed by Defendants in California at any time during the Class Period (which is February 9, 2019, through May 5, 2024).

8. Under the terms of the Settlement Agreement, Defendants will not oppose Class Counsel’s application for a reasonable award of attorneys’ fees not to exceed one-third of the Settlement Amount, Class Counsel’s litigation expenses up to \$25,000, settlement administrator costs of \$7,000, PAGA Penalties of \$30,000 of which \$22,500 will be paid to the LWDA and the remaining \$7,500 will be paid to the Aggrieved Employees, and a service award not to exceed \$10,000 to Plaintiff. After subtracting these deductions from the Settlement Amount, approximately \$128,000 will be available to pay individual settlement amounts to approximately 152 Class Members who do not opt-out of the settlement, as follows:

<i>Settlement Amount</i>	\$ 300,000.00
Attorneys’ Fees (1/3)	\$ 100,000.00
Litigation Costs	\$ 25,000.00
Administrator Costs	\$ 7,000.00
PAGA Penalties	\$ 30,000.00
Class Representative Service Award	\$ 10,000.00
<i>Net Settlement Amount</i>	\$ 128,000.00

9. Assuming 152 Class Members, the average payment to each Class Member will be approximately \$842.11 ($\$128,000 / 152$). However, the actual payment will be calculated on a pro-rata basis according to the number of Weeks Worked by each Class Member during the Class Period and the total number of Share Points credited to each Class Member, with each Work Week having a value of approximately \$18.68 ($\$128,000 / 6,851$ estimated Work Weeks). In addition, the Aggrieved Employees will receive a share of the \$7,500 PAGA Penalties (25% of the total \$30,000 allocation), calculated pro-rata based on Work Weeks worked during the PAGA Period.

10. Each Class Member will receive the Class Notice, explaining the nature of the case, and the process for participating, objecting and opting-out, and advising of his/her estimated settlement payment and the number of Work Weeks that he/she is credited with working during the Class Period.

PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

11. My office has performed considerable work and diligently investigated and prosecuted this case to a successful conclusion. Our work has resulted in the creation of a significant settlement fund for the benefit of the Class. We efficiently communicated and exchanged information informally with Defense counsel which enabled the parties to successfully settle the case. Because of the risks involved in litigating the case and the contested legal and factual issues, my office believes this settlement to be fair, reasonable, and adequate.

12. After being retained by Plaintiff, on February 9, 2023, we submitted a letter to the California Labor Workforce Development Agency (the “LWDA”) for civil penalties under the Private Attorney General Act of 2004 (the “PAGA”), and simultaneously sent a letter to Defendants requesting the production of Plaintiff’s personnel and timekeeping records to further evaluate the wage and hour claims. The LWDA ultimately declined to assert jurisdiction over the PAGA, thereby giving Plaintiff the right to bring PAGA claims.

13. On February 9, 2023, we filed a putative class action complaint against Defendant South Star Logistics, Inc., in San Bernardino County Superior Court. After the LWDA declined to assert jurisdiction over the PAGA claims, Plaintiff filed the operative First Amended

1 Complaint, alleging putative class and representative PAGA claims, including: (a) failure to pay
2 minimum wages, (b) failure to for rest and recovery periods, (c) failure to reimburse business
3 expenses, (d) failure to pay all wages due and owing each pay period and upon separation of
4 employment, (e) failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements, (f) unfair and unlawful
5 competition, and (g) related claims under PAGA. Plaintiff later filed a DOE amendment as to
6 Defendant Aman Singh Brar.

7 14. Defendants retained counsel and immediately began to defend the case. After
8 some initial written discovery and early depositions, there were discussions among counsel, and
9 the Parties agreed to attend private mediation.

10 15. In preparation for the mediation, the Parties informally exchanged documents and
11 information that allowed both sides to calculate the potential damages and evaluate potential risk,
12 including policies and procedures pertaining to each claim alleged, and statistics relating to the
13 number of current and former employees, number of shifts /Work Weeks completed, pay periods
14 worked and other things. Defendants also provided their written policies and practices and a
15 robust sampling of payroll and timekeeping records for Class Members. This information
16 enabled both parties to take a deep dive into the claims. During this process, Plaintiff and his
17 counsel analyzed, researched, and investigated the potential issues, including matters related to
18 the calculation of damages, trial, and appellate issues and risks.

19 16. On March 6, 2024, Plaintiff and Defendants participated in mediation before
20 Steven Serratore, Esq., a well-respected wage-and-hour mediator. At the conclusion of
21 mediation and after extensive arms-length negotiations, the Parties reached a global settlement
22 and entered into the Settlement Agreement submitted herewith. The Parties now seek the Court's
23 preliminary approval of the Settlement.

24 **THE WAGE AND HOUR CLAIMS, CLASS COUNSEL'S INVESTIGATION, AND**
25 **EVALUATION OF THE SETTLEMENT**

26 17. The putative Class in this case consists of approximately 152 similarly situated
27 current and former California Resident Truck Drivers that performed services for Defendant
28 South Star Logistics, Inc. in California at any time during the Class Period. Plaintiff alleged

1 numerous wage and hour violations on behalf of the Class Members. However, Defendants
2 vigorously contested and denied each of Plaintiff's material allegations on the merits and as to
3 the propriety of a class action or PAGA representative action, as discussed herein.

4 18. In preparation for mediation, Kristina Bui Carlson, an associate within my firm,
5 and I formulated a damages model and risk analysis based upon detailed data obtained through
6 informal discovery and information exchanges. The summary of the claims below is based on
7 calculations by our expert and us, and the risks that we potentially faced, giving significant credit
8 to the defenses that Defendants raised or would like raise in further proceedings. Following the
9 informal exchange and other information provided by Defendants, we estimated the following
10 data points *through the date of mediation*: (1) 142 Class Members, (2) approximately 101 *former*
11 Class Members for purposes of Labor Code § 203, (3) 6,676 Work Weeks, and (4)
12 approximately 2,849 wage statements during the PAGA Period. From these metrics, and when
13 factoring in claim certification probabilities and liability probabilities, we formulated detailed
14 damages models to value the claims in preparation for mediation and to reach a realistic and
15 reasonable resolution.

16 19. Here, there were three categories of claims alleged by Plaintiff: (1) unpaid wage
17 claims under various theories and (2) derivative claims for waiting time and wage statement
18 penalties due to the other alleged violations.

19 20. As to the unpaid wage claims, Plaintiff alleged that Defendants paid Class
20 Members on a "per-mile" driven basis. Therefore, Plaintiff alleged that Defendants failed to pay
21 all required minimum and overtime wages due to a practice that required Class Members to
22 complete non-driving tasks (*e.g.*, pre-trip and post-trip inspections, fueling, going through truck
23 scales, detention time) without any compensation for these tasks. In total, Plaintiff's counsel
24 estimated the maximum value of these unpaid wages to be \$612,208.

25 21. However, Defendants vehemently opposed these unpaid wage claims on the
26 merits and as to the propriety of class certification. For example, Defendants argued that only
27 some of the Truck Drivers were paid per-mile, while its other employees were paid hourly.
28 Moreover, in addition to its other defenses on the merits, Defendants argued that Plaintiff would

1 be unable to meet its evidentiary burden at summary judgment and/or trial because Plaintiff and
2 the Class would be unable to introduce evidence as to the amount of unpaid wages (since the
3 claims are not apparent from the timekeeping records alone), thus defeating liability.

4 22. Due to the defenses and arguments raised, Plaintiff assigned a 30% risk for the
5 unpaid wage claim at the class certification stage and an additional 30% risk on the merits. In
6 sum, Plaintiff's counsel calculated the risk-adjusted value of the unpaid wage claims as
7 \$299,982.

8 23. Plaintiff alleged claims for waiting time penalties and wage statement violations.
9 But these claims were entirely derivative of the claims above, meaning that they only had merit
10 if the claims for unpaid wages were successful. The maximum values for these claims were as
11 follows: (1) \$856,066 for waiting time penalties [101 former employees x \$282 average daily
12 pay x 30 days], and (2) \$279,850 for wage statement violations [2,849 wage statements at the
13 \$50/\$100 formula under § 226(e)].

14 24. But Defendants raised a variety of defenses to these derivative claims that
15 impacted the valuation. Namely, Defendants argued that the wage statements did not violate
16 Labor Code § 226 and, even if there was a "technical" violation, Plaintiff would be unable to
17 prove the required "knowing and intentional" and "injury" elements. Based on these facts and
18 defenses, Plaintiff placed a 30% risk at class certification (mirroring the claims on which the
19 wage statement claim was based) and estimated another 30% risk the merits, leading to a risk-
20 adjusted value of \$137,127 for the wage statement claims.

21 25. Then, as to the waiting time penalty claim, Plaintiff's valuation had to account for
22 the fact that this claim was derivative of the unpaid wage claims and, if those claims failed at
23 certification or on the merits, there would be no waiting time penalties owed, so the same risks
24 for those claims applied to this claim. Furthermore, even if the unpaid wage and/or meal/rest
25 claims succeeded at certification and on the merits, Plaintiff would have to prove that the
26 violations (if any existed) were "willful" under the meaning of Labor Code § 203. And, here,
27 Defendants argued there was no "willful" violation as they were inadvertent and unintentional.
28 As a result of this analysis, Plaintiff's counsel applied a 30% risk at class certification and a 30%

1 risk on the merits, leading to a risk-adjusted value of \$419,472.

2 26. In sum, when factoring in the defenses and risks of ongoing litigation, Plaintiff
3 estimate the risk-adjusted class recovery as follows:

- | | | |
|---|--|-------------------|
| 4 | • Unpaid Wage Claims | \$ 299,982 |
| 5 | • Wage Statement Claims | \$ 137,127 |
| 6 | • Waiting Time Penalty Claims | <u>\$ 419,472</u> |
| 7 | • Total Risk Adjusted Penalties and Damages | \$ 856,581 |

8 **THE SETTLEMENT IS FAIR, JUST, AND REASONABLE**

9 27. The settlement was the product of extensive arm's length negotiations, facilitated
10 by an experienced mediator. Though cordial and professional, the settlement negotiations were
11 adversarial and non-collusive in nature. The settlement reached is the product of substantial
12 effort by the parties and their counsel. Although we believed that there was a possibility of
13 certifying the claims, we recognized the potential risk, expense, and complexity posed by
14 litigation, such as unfavorable decisions on class certification, summary judgment, at trial and/or
15 on the damages awarded, and/or on an appeal that can take several more years to litigate.

16 28. The settlement will result in a fair payment to each class member based on the
17 number of Weeks Worked during the Class Period. As set forth hereinabove, Plaintiff and his
18 counsel have diligently investigated the claims and defenses on behalf of the Class Members and
19 worked to achieve a resolution of the claims to maximize the recovery by avoiding further
20 expenditure of attorneys' fees and costs. After evaluating the significant risks attendant with
21 further litigation described above and weighing them against the benefits of a known
22 compromise and settlement as set forth in the Settlement Agreement, settlement on the terms
23 agreed to is believed to be in the best interest of Plaintiff and the Class, and is a fair and
24 reasonable resolution of the claims alleged.

25 29. Plaintiff's counsel brought to bear a great deal of experience in negotiating the
26 settlement of this case. As detailed herein, Plaintiff's counsel engaged in the necessary discovery
27 and investigation, making it possible to exercise informed judgment throughout the settlement
28 process, including significant document review (*e.g.*, documents pertaining to Defendants'

1 policies and procedures, personnel documents, among others), and conducted an extensive
2 analysis of the detailed class-wide data provided by Defendants.

3 30. Based on my experience in other cases, including wage and hour matters, I
4 believe I am qualified to evaluate the class claims and viability of defenses in this class action.
5 In this case, the recovery for each class member is reasonable, fair, and adequate, and a
6 settlement at this time is in the best interests of the class. The settlement provides each class
7 member with compensation for the alleged violations when viewed in relation to the costs and
8 risks inherent in obtaining class certification and proceeding to trial.

9 31. Plaintiff's counsel, as well as Defense counsel, fully endorse the terms and
10 conditions of the settlement as set forth in the abovementioned Settlement Agreement.

11 32. Of course, the settlement amount represents a compromise figure, taking into
12 account the various risks surrounding class certification and the merits of Defendants' asserted
13 defense. Nevertheless, the settlement provides for fair and adequate payments to the class
14 members, with no reversion to Defendants.

15 **PLAINTIFFS' REQUESTED ENHANCEMENT PAYMENT**

16 33. Plaintiff seeks an enhancement payment of \$10,000 for his services to the Class,
17 which I believe is fair and warranted. Mr. Tassin came forward in an effort to effectuate a policy
18 and practice change that benefitted all other Class Members, and to recover unpaid wages. They
19 assumed significant risk in bringing this litigation—namely, had he lost, he would have been
20 ordered to pay Defendants' costs.

21 34. Plaintiff provided invaluable assistance to my office and the Class in this case,
22 including providing factual background for the Class Complaint; reviewing the litigation
23 documents; providing information and documents about Defendants' policies and practices;
24 participating in phone calls to discuss litigation and settlement strategy; and reviewing the
25 settlement documents. Plaintiff agreed to participate in this case with no guarantee of personal
26 benefit. At final approval, Plaintiff will submit a comprehensive declaration setting forth all of
27 the reasons why he believes that the service award should be approved.

28 ///

1 **ADEQUACY OF COUNSEL AND THE PROVISIONAL REASONABLENESS OF THE**
2 **REQUESTED FEES AND COSTS**

3 35. As set forth above, I have handled well over 250 class and representative actions,
4 have been appointed as class counsel and have successfully resolved over half of those cases, and
5 many others remain pending and will successfully resolve in the future.

6 36. When this case was taken on a contingency fee basis, with my firm agreeing to
7 assume responsibility for all litigation costs, the ultimate result was far from certain. In the
8 course of this litigation, my firm paid all costs including filing fees, court costs, research fees,
9 and mediation costs. There was never a guarantee that we would recoup those expenditures.

10 37. It is my experience that attorney fee awards of one-third of a common fund
11 settlement is the standard in California. In this case, Plaintiff's counsel agreed to seek one-third
12 of the Settlement Amount for attorneys' fees. Defendants do not oppose this fee request. The fee
13 is further warranted because it is within the range of reasonableness typically awarded in class
14 actions. The litigation costs are reasonably capped at \$25,000 and will be based on the actual
15 amount of costs incurred at the time of final approval.

16 **SETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATOR**

17 38. The parties request that the Court appoint Phoenix Settlement Administrators
18 ("Phoenix") to serve as the Settlement Administrator. Phoenix is experienced in administering
19 class action settlements, and has provided a proposal to administer this settlement for a total of
20 \$7,000, which is attached hereto as **Exhibit D**.

21 **SUBMISSION TO THE LWDA**

22 39. Plaintiff has concurrently submitted the settlement to the LWDA in accordance
23 with Labor Code § 2699(1)(2). The proof of submission is attached hereto as **Exhibit E**.

24 **EXHIBITS AND CONCLUSION**

25 40. A true and correct copy of the signed Settlement Agreement is attached as
26 **Exhibit A**.

27 41. The proposed Class Notice is attached as **Exhibit B**.

42. A true and correct copy of the notice letter we submitted to the LWDA is attached as **Exhibit C**.

43. Phoenix's proposal to administer the Settlement is attached hereto as **Exhibit D**.

44. The LWDA's confirmation of receipt of this Motion and Declarations is attached hereto as **Exhibit E**.

45. For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully requested that the Court grant preliminary approval of the settlement as being fair, reasonable, and in the best interests of the class, as well as preliminarily approve the requested attorneys' fees, costs, and enhancement payment to the Class Representative.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on July 15, 2024, at Riverside, California.

By: Brian J. Mankin
Brian J. Mankin, Esq.

EXHIBIT “A”

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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

STEVEN TASSIN, individually, on a
representative basis, and on behalf of all
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SOUTH STAR LOGISTICS, INC., a
California Corporation; and DOES 1 through
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Defendants.

Case No.: CIVSB2301755
*[Assigned to Hon. Jessica Morgan, Dept S26,
for all purposes]*

**CLASS ACTION AND PAGA
SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT AND
RELEASE OF CLAIMS**

1 This Class Action and PAGA Settlement Agreement and Release of Claims is entered
2 into by and between Plaintiff Steven Tassin, individually and on behalf of all others similarly
3 situated, and on behalf of the State of California, and Defendants South Star Logistics, Inc. and
4 Aman Singh Brar, and is approved by their respective counsel of record, subject to the terms and
5 conditions hereof and the Court's approval.

6 **A. Definitions**

7 1. "Action" or "Lawsuit" means and refers to the case entitled *Tassin v. South Star*
8 *Logistics, Inc.*, San Bernardino County Superior Court, Case No. CIVSB2301755.

9 2. "Administrator" means and refers to Phoenix Class Action Administration
10 Solutions, the third-party class action settlement administrator agreed to by the Parties, that will
11 provide the Notice to the Class Members and distribute the settlement amounts as described in
12 this Agreement.

13 3. "Administration Costs" means the costs payable from the Settlement Amount to
14 the Administrator for administering this Settlement, including, but not limited to, printing,
15 distributing, and tracking documents for this Settlement, tax reporting, and deposit of the
16 employee and employer share of payroll taxes, unclaimed property due diligence, reporting and
17 remittance obligations, distributing the Settlement Amount, and providing necessary reports and
18 declarations, as requested by the Parties. The Administration Costs shall be paid from the
19 Settlement Amount, including, if necessary, any such costs in excess of the amount represented
20 by the Administrator as being the maximum costs necessary to administer the Settlement.

21 4. "Aggrieved Employee(s)" means all current and former nonexempt employees
22 employed by Defendants in California at any time during the PAGA Period.

23 5. "Agreement" or "Settlement Agreement" or "Settlement" shall mean this Class
24 Action and PAGA Settlement Agreement and Release of Claims.

25 6. "Class" is defined as all current and former California Resident Truck Drivers
26 employed by Defendants in California at any time during the Class Period.

27 7. "Class Member(s)" refers to individual members of the Class.
28

1 8. “Class Counsel” refers to Brian Mankin and Kristina Bui Carlson of Lauby,
2 Mankin & Lauby LLP.

3 9. “Class Data” means a complete list that Defendants will diligently and in good
4 faith compile from their records and provide to the Administrator on one spreadsheet which shall
5 include, for each Class Member, the individual’s full name, last known address, Social Security
6 Number, total Weeks Worked during the PAGA Period and the Class Period, and total Weeks
7 Worked as a Piece-Rate Driver for Defendant South Star Logistics, Inc. in California during the
8 Class Period.

9 10. “Class Period” is deemed to be any time during the period of February 9, 2019,
10 through May 5, 2024, or an earlier period termination date if Defendants exercise their option to
11 shorten the Class Period pursuant to the escalator clause in Paragraph 17, below.

12 11. “Class Representative” or “Plaintiff” means and refers to Plaintiff Steven Tassin.

13 12. “Complaint” refers to the operative first amended class and PAGA representative
14 action complaint filed in the Action, along with the Doe amendments thereto.

15 13. “Court” (or “Judge”) means the California Superior Court, County of San
16 Bernardino.

17 14. “Defendants” means and refers to South Star Logistics, Inc. and Aman Singh
18 Brar.

19 15. “Defendants’ Counsel” or “Defense Counsel” means and refers to Larson &
20 Gaston LLP.

21 16. “Effective Date” means the latest of the following dates: (i) if no Class Member
22 timely and properly intervenes, or files a motion to vacate the judgment approving the Settlement
23 Agreement under Code of Civil Procedure § 663, then the date of the Court’s Notice of Entry of
24 Order regarding Final Approval of the Settlement; (ii) if a Class Member intervenes, or files a
25 motion to vacate the judgment approving the Settlement Agreement, then sixty-one (61) calendar
26 days following the date the Court enters an order granting Final Approval, assuming no appeal is
27 filed; or (iii) if a timely appeal is filed, then the date of final resolution of that appeal or other
28

collateral attack (including any requests for rehearing and/or petitions for *certiorari*), resulting in final judicial approval of the Settlement.

17. “Escalator Clause:” Defendants represent that there are approximately 142 Class Members, who collectively worked a total of 6,700 Workweeks during the Class Period. Should the number of Workweeks exceed 7,538 (which is 12.5% more than Defendants’ representation), then the Settlement Amount shall increase by \$44.78 for each additional Workweek above 7,538. In the alternative, Defendants shall have the exclusive option to modify the applicable Class Period to a date prior to May 5, 2024 (but no earlier than March 6, 2024 – the date of mediation) to avoid incurring the pro rata increase.

18. “Final Approval” refers to the order of the Court granting final approval of this Settlement Agreement and entering a judgment approving this Agreement on substantially the terms provided herein or as may be modified by subsequent agreement of the Parties.

19. “Individual Class Payment” refers to each Participating Class Member’s share of the Net Settlement Amount, as further discussed in Paragraph 47 (c) below.

20. “Individual PAGA Payment” refers to each Aggrieved Employee’s share of the PAGA Penalties, as further discussed in Paragraph 47(c) below.

21. “Net Settlement Amount” is the Settlement Amount less the Attorneys’ Fees and Costs Award, the Service Payment to the Class Representative as awarded by the Court, the Administration Costs, and PAGA Penalties, as further discussed in Paragraph 47(b) below.

22. “Notice” means the notice of proposed class settlement that will be sent to the Class Members and which will advise each Class Member of the settlement and his or her estimated Individual Class Payment and Individual PAGA Payment and will further advise of the setting of a Final Approval Hearing.

23. “Response Deadline” is 45 calendar days from the date the Notice is mailed to the Class Members.

24. “Objecting Class Member” means a Class Member, other than Plaintiff, who submits a valid and timely objection to the terms of this Agreement, pursuant to Paragraph 68(c) below.

1 25. “PAGA Penalties” means the amount that the Parties have agreed to pay to the
2 Labor and Workforce Development Agency (“LWDA”) in connection with the California Labor
3 Code Private Attorneys General Act of 2004 (Cal. Lab. Code §§ 2698, *et seq.*, “PAGA”), as well
4 as the Individual PAGA payment allocated to each Aggrieved Employee.

5 26. “PAGA Period” is deemed to be any time during the period of February 9, 2022,
6 through May 5, 2024, or an earlier period termination date if Defendants exercise their option to
7 shorten the Class Period pursuant to the escalator clause in Paragraph 17, above.

8 27. “Participating Class Member” means any and all Class Members who are deemed
9 to participate and receive an Individual Class Payment and do not opt-out by submitting a timely
10 and valid Request for Exclusion.

11 28. “Parties” means Plaintiff and Defendants, collectively.

12 29. “Preliminary Approval Date” means the date the Court approves the Settlement
13 Agreement and enters the Preliminary Approval Order.

14 30. “Preliminary Approval Order” means the judicial Order to be entered by the
15 Court, upon the application or motion of the Plaintiff, preliminarily approving this Settlement
16 and providing for the issuance of the Notice Packet to the Class, an opportunity to opt out of the
17 Settlement, an opportunity to submit timely objections to the Settlement, and setting a final
18 approval hearing on the fairness of the terms of Settlement, including approval of attorneys’ fees
19 and costs. Provided that the motion is consistent with the terms herein, Defendants will not
20 object to Plaintiff’s motion for preliminary approval but will be provided with an opportunity to
21 review and comment upon the motion before it is filed.

22 31. “QSF” means the Qualified Settlement Fund set up by the Administrator for the
23 benefit of the Participating Class Members and Aggrieved Employees, and from which the
24 settlement payments shall be made.

25 32. “Released Class Claims” or “Class Claims” includes all claims alleged in the
26 Complaint or which could have reasonably be alleged based solely upon the facts in the
27 Complaint, including: (a) failure to pay minimum wages, (b) failure to pay for rest and recovery
28 periods, (c) failure to reimburse business expenses, (d) failure to failure to timely pay wages upon

1 separation of employment, (e) failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements, (f) unfair and
2 unlawful competition, and (g) all other claims for statutory penalties based on the facts or claims
3 alleged in the operative complaint. The time period governing the Released Class Claims shall be
4 the Class Period.

5 33. “Released PAGA Claims” or “PAGA Claims” means any and all PAGA claims
6 that Plaintiff alleged against the Released Parties, on behalf of the Aggrieved Employees and the
7 State of California, based on the facts stated in the Complaint and in the relevant LWDA notice
8 letters, including all PAGA claims seeking civil penalties premised upon: (a) failure to pay
9 minimum wages, (b) failure to pay for rest and recovery periods, (c) failure to reimburse business
10 expenses, (d) failure to failure to timely pay wages each period and upon separation of
11 employment, (e) failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements, (f) failure to maintain
12 employment records, and (g) all other claims for civil penalties recoverable under the Private
13 Attorneys General Act, Labor Code §§ 2698 *et seq.* based on the facts or claims alleged in the
14 operative complaint. The time period governing the Released PAGA Claims shall be any time
15 during the PAGA Period.

16 34. “Released Parties” means Defendants and their parents, subsidiaries, directors,
17 owners, shareholders, officers, agents, managing agents, spouses, attorneys, servants, joint
18 employers and employees, past and present, and each of them and anyone acting in concert with
19 foregoing.

20 35. “Request for Exclusion” shall have the meaning ascribed to it in Paragraph 68(a)
21 below.

22 36. “Service Payment” or “Service Award” means an amount up to \$10,000.00
23 approved by the Court to be paid to Class Representative Steven Tassin in addition to his
24 Individual Class Payment as a Participating Class Member and Individual PAGA Payment as an
25 Aggrieved Employee.

26 37. “Settlement Amount” is \$300,000.00, subject to the Escalator Clause and
27 exclusive of Defendants’ obligation to fund their share of payroll taxes, as further discussed in
28 Paragraph 47(c) below.

38. “Work Weeks” or “Weeks Worked” in the context of a Class Member means any and all work weeks during the Class Period during which the Class Member worked at least one day in California for Defendants. Likewise, in the context of Aggrieved Employees, it means any and all weeks worked during the PAGA Period during which the Aggrieved Employee worked at least one day in California for Defendants.

B. General Terms

39. Pursuant to Labor Code section 2699.3, subdivision (a), Plaintiff gave timely written notice to Defendants and the LWDA by sending the PAGA notice letter. The LWDA did not assert jurisdiction over the PAGA Claims.

40. On February 9, 2023, Plaintiff filed a putative class action complaint against Defendants in San Bernardino County Superior Court. Plaintiff later filed the operative First Amended Complaint, alleging putative class and representative PAGA claims, including: (a) failure to pay minimum wages, (b) failure to pay for rest and recovery periods, (c) failure to reimburse business expenses, (d) failure to failure to timely pay wages upon separation of employment, (e) failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements, (f) unfair and unlawful competition, and (g) related claims under PAGA.

41. Defendants deny Plaintiff’s claims and allegations and contend that the Action is not suitable for class certification.

42. The Class Representative believes he can proceed with the representative and class claims, that the Action is meritorious, and that class certification is appropriate.

43. The Parties have conducted a thorough investigation into the facts of the Action. This includes conducting an extensive exchange of informal discovery, including a sampling of payroll and timekeeping records for Class Members. Class Counsel is both knowledgeable about and has done extensive research with respect to the applicable law and potential defenses to the claims of the Class. Class Counsel has diligently pursued an investigation of the Class Members’ claims against Defendants. Based on the foregoing data and on their own independent investigation and evaluation, Class Counsel is of the opinion that the settlement with Defendants for the consideration and on the terms set forth in this Settlement Agreement is fair, reasonable,

1 and adequate and is in the best interest of the Class Members in light of all known facts and
2 circumstances, including the risk of significant delay and uncertainty associated with litigation,
3 various defenses asserted by Defendants, and numerous potential appellate issues.

4 44. On March 6, 2024, Plaintiff and Defendants participated in a full-day mediation
5 with Steven Serratore, Esq., a well-respected wage-and-hour mediator. At the conclusion of
6 mediation, extensive arm's-length negotiations, and after issuance of a mediator's proposal, the
7 Parties reached a global settlement and entered into this Agreement.

8 45. The Parties agree that neither the Parties' Settlement, this Agreement, nor the acts
9 to be performed or judgment to be entered pursuant to the terms of the Settlement and
10 Agreement, shall be construed as an admission by Defendants of any wrongdoing or violation of
11 any statute or law or liability on the claims or allegations in the Action.

12 46. Stipulation for Class Certification. For settlement purposes only, Defendants will
13 stipulate that the Participating Class Members may be conditionally certified as a Class. This
14 stipulation to certification is in no way an admission that class action certification is proper and
15 shall not be admissible in this or in any other action except for the sole purposes of enforcing this
16 Agreement. Should, for whatever reason, the Court fail to issue Final Approval, the Parties'
17 stipulation to class certification as part of the Settlement shall become null and void ab initio and
18 shall have no bearing on, and shall not be admissible in connection with, the issue of whether
19 certification would be appropriate in a non-settlement context. Defendants expressly reserve
20 their rights and declare that they would continue to oppose class certification and the substantive
21 merits of the case should the Court fail to issue Final Approval. Plaintiff expressly reserves his
22 rights and declares that he will continue to pursue class certification and a trial should the Court
23 fail to issue Final Approval.

24 **C. Terms of Settlement**

25 47. The financial terms of the Settlement are as follows:

26 (a) Settlement Amount: The Parties agree to settle this Action for the
27 Settlement Amount, subject to the Escalator Clause and Defendants' obligation to separately pay
28 the share of payroll taxes owed on the wage portion of the Individual Class Payments, which is

the maximum amount that will be paid by Defendants and includes Individual Class Payments, Class Counsel's Attorneys' Fees and Costs Award, the Service Payment to the Class Representative, Administration Costs, and PAGA Penalties.

(b) Net Settlement Amount: The "Net Settlement Amount" is defined as the Settlement Amount less the Attorneys' Fees and Costs Award, the Service Payment to the Class Representative as awarded by the Court, the Administration Costs, and PAGA Penalties. If the Court reduces the Attorneys' Fees and Costs Award, Service Award, or Administrator Costs, or either increases or decreases the amount allocated to the PAGA Penalties, the difference shall be placed in the Net Settlement Amount and allocated to the Class.

(c) The Individual Class Payment for each Class Member will be calculated by the Administrator using the Class Data provided by Defendants on a "Share Point" basis as follows:

- i. Each Class Member will be credited one (1) Share Point for each Week Worked during the Class Period.
- ii. Class Members will be credited three (3) additional Share Points for each Week Worked as a Piece-Rate Driver (e.g., paid per mile driven) for Defendant South Star Logistics, Inc. in California during the Class Period.
- iii. The Administrator shall divide the Net Settlement Amount by the total number of Share Points to arrive at the "Share Point Rate," which is the value of each Individual Share Point.
- iv. The Individual Class Payment for each Class Member will then be determined by multiplying the Class Member's Share Points by the Share Point Rate.
- v. If there are any timely submitted Requests for Exclusion, the Administrator shall proportionately increase the Individual Class Payments for each Participating Class Member so that the amount

1 actually distributed to Participating Class Members equals 100% of
2 the Net Settlement Amount.

3 (d) Allocation of Individual Class Payments: The Individual Class Payments
4 to Participating Class Members will be allocated as follows: 10% will be allocated as wages
5 subject to withholding of all applicable local, state, and federal taxes; and 90% will be allocated
6 for interest and statutory penalties (pursuant to, *e.g.*, California Labor Code sections 203, 210,
7 226) from which no taxes will be withheld. The Administrator will issue to each Participating
8 Class Member an Internal Revenue Service Form W-2 and comparable state forms with respect
9 to the wage allocation and a Form 1099 with respect to the penalties and interest allocations.

10 (e) Service Payment to Class Representative: The amount, if any, awarded to
11 the Class Representative as a Service Payment will be set by the Court in its discretion, not to
12 exceed \$10,000, in exchange for the service that Plaintiff performed on behalf of the Class.
13 Defendants agree not to oppose this request. The Service Payment to the Class Representative
14 will be paid out of the Settlement Amount. The Class Representative will be issued an IRS Form
15 1099 in connection with this payment and shall be solely and legally responsible to pay all
16 applicable taxes on this payment. The Parties agree that any amount awarded as the Service
17 Payment to the Class Representative less than the requested amount shall not be a basis for Class
18 Counsel to void this Settlement Agreement. Should the Court approve a lesser amount for the
19 Service Payment, the difference shall be added to the Net Settlement Amount to be distributed to
20 the Participating Class Members.

21 (f) Attorneys' Fees and Costs Award: Defendants agree to not oppose a
22 request by Class Counsel to the Court for an award of attorneys' fees of one-third of the
23 Settlement Amount, plus reasonable litigation costs not to exceed \$25,000 ("Attorney's Fees and
24 Cost Award"). Defendants agree not to oppose any contention by Class Counsel that attorneys'
25 fees should be based on the common fund theory. The Attorney's Fee and Cost Award shall be
26 paid from the Settlement Amount, and, except for this award, Defendants shall have no further
27 obligation to pay any attorneys' fees, costs, or expenses to Class Counsel. Should the Court
28 approve a lesser amount than what is sought by Class Counsel, the difference shall be added to

1 the Net Settlement Amount to be distributed to the Participating Class Members. Any Court
2 order awarding less than the amount sought by Class Counsel shall not be grounds to rescind the
3 Settlement Agreement or otherwise void the Settlement. The Administrator shall issue to Class
4 Counsel an IRS Form 1099 reflecting the amount of attorneys' fees and costs awarded by the
5 Court.

6 (g) Administration Costs: The fees and other charges of the Administrator
7 will be paid from the Settlement Amount, not to exceed \$7,000, unless (1) the Escalator Clause
8 is triggered (whereby any reasonable increase in Administration Costs shall be paid from the
9 increased Settlement Amount, subject to Court approval), or (2) as otherwise approved by all
10 Parties and the Court.

11 (h) PAGA Penalties: The Parties agree that \$30,000 is allocated to PAGA
12 Penalties, and is to be paid from the Settlement Amount, subject to Court approval. Of this
13 amount, \$22,500 (75%) shall be paid to the LWDA in satisfaction of civil penalties under the
14 Private Attorney General Act of 2004 ("PAGA") and \$7,500 (25%) will form the Individual
15 PAGA Payments to the Aggrieved Employees, which shall be calculated and allocated pro-rata
16 on a Work Week basis, which will be treated entirely as civil penalties and shall be reported as
17 required on an IRS Form 1099. Class Counsel shall give proper notice to the LWDA of the
18 Settlement.

19 (i) Tax Liability: Class Counsel and Defendants make no representations as
20 to the tax treatment or legal effect of settlement amounts called for hereunder, and Plaintiff and
21 the Class Members are not relying on any statement or representation by Class Counsel or
22 Defendants in this regard. Plaintiff, Participating Class Members, and Aggrieved Employees
23 understand and agree that they will be solely responsible for the payment of any taxes and
24 penalties assessed on their respective Individual Class Payments and Individual PAGA
25 Payments, described herein. Forms 1099 will be distributed in the manner required by the
26 Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (the "Code") and consistent with this Agreement. If the Code,
27 the regulations promulgated thereunder, or other applicable tax law, is changed after the date of
28 this Agreement, the processes set forth in this Section may be modified in a manner to bring

1 Defendants into compliance with any such changes. Plaintiff, Participating Class Members, and
2 Aggrieved Employees understand and agree that they will be solely responsible for the payment
3 of any taxes and penalties assessed on their respective payments described herein.

4 (j) CIRCULAR 230 DISCLAIMER. EACH PARTY TO THIS
5 AGREEMENT (FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, THE “ACKNOWLEDGING PARTY”
6 AND EACH PARTY TO THIS AGREEMENT OTHER THAN THE ACKNOWLEDGING
7 PARTY, AN “OTHER PARTY”) ACKNOWLEDGES AND AGREES THAT (1) NO
8 PROVISION OF THIS AGREEMENT, AND NO WRITTEN COMMUNICATION OR
9 DISCLOSURE BETWEEN OR AMONG THE PARTIES OR THEIR ATTORNEYS AND
10 OTHER ADVISERS, IS OR WAS INTENDED TO BE, NOR SHALL ANY SUCH
11 COMMUNICATION OR DISCLOSURE CONSTITUTE OR BE CONSTRUED OR BE
12 RELIED UPON AS, TAX ADVICE WITHIN THE MEANING OF UNITED STATES
13 TREASURY DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR 230 (31 CFR PART 10, AS AMENDED); (2) THE
14 ACKNOWLEDGING PARTY (A) HAS RELIED EXCLUSIVELY UPON HIS, HER, OR ITS
15 OWN, INDEPENDENT LEGAL AND TAX COUNSEL FOR ADVICE (INCLUDING TAX
16 ADVICE) IN CONNECTION WITH THIS AGREEMENT, (B) HAS NOT ENTERED INTO
17 THIS AGREEMENT BASED UPON THE RECOMMENDATION OF ANY OTHER PARTY
18 OR ANY ATTORNEY OR ADVISOR TO ANY OTHER PARTY, AND (C) IS NOT
19 ENTITLED TO RELY UPON ANY COMMUNICATION OR DISCLOSURE BY ANY
20 ATTORNEY OR ADVISOR TO ANY OTHER PARTY TO AVOID ANY TAX PENALTY
21 THAT MAY BE IMPOSED ON THE ACKNOWLEDGING PARTY; AND (3) NO
22 ATTORNEY OR ADVISOR TO ANY OTHER PARTY HAS IMPOSED ANY LIMITATION
23 THAT PROTECTS THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF ANY SUCH ATTORNEY’S OR
24 ADVISER’S TAX STRATEGIES (REGARDLESS OF WHETHER SUCH LIMITATION IS
25 LEGALLY BINDING) UPON DISCLOSURE BY THE ACKNOWLEDGING PARTY OF
26 THE TAX TREATMENT OR TAX STRUCTURE OF ANY TRANSACTION, INCLUDING
27 ANY TRANSACTION CONTEMPLATED BY THIS AGREEMENT.
28

(k) “Non-Reversionary” Settlement. This is a “non-reversionary” settlement. Under no circumstances will any portion of the Settlement Amount revert to Defendants. Participating Class Members and Aggrieved Employees will not have to make a claim in order to receive an Individual Class Payment or Individual PAGA Payment. Distributions, in the form of Individual Class Payment or Individual PAGA Payments will be made directly to each Participating Class Member and Aggrieved Employee. The Administrator shall be responsible for accurately and timely reporting and remittance obligations with respect to unclaimed funds as a result of a Participating Class Member and/or Aggrieved Employee not cashing any checks delivered pursuant to the Settlement by the check cashing deadline, as set forth herein.

(l) Class Counsel and Plaintiff believe that the Settlement is fair and reasonable and will so represent same to the Court.

D. Release by the Participating Class Members

48. Upon entry of the Final Approval Order and Defendants’ funding of the Settlement Amount and the required employer-side payroll taxes, and except as to such rights or claims as may be created by this Agreement, Plaintiff and the Participating Class Members will forever completely release and discharge the Released Parties from the Released Class Claims for the Class Period.

49. Each Participating Class Member will be deemed to have made the foregoing Release as if by manually signing it.

50. Class Representative, on behalf of himself and the Class, acknowledges and agrees that the claims for unpaid wages and untimely payment of wages in the Action are disputed, and that the payments set forth herein constitute payment of all sums allegedly due to them. Class Representative, on behalf of himself and the Class, acknowledges and agrees that Labor Code § 206.5 is not applicable to the Parties or Settlement. Labor Code § 206.5 provides in pertinent part as follows: “An employer shall not require the execution of any release of any claim or right on account of wages due, or to become due, or made as an advance on wages to be earned, unless payment of those wages has been made.”

E. Release of PAGA Claims

1 51. Upon entry of the Final Approval Order and Defendants’ funding of the
2 Settlement Amount and the required employer-side payroll taxes, Plaintiff – in his individual
3 capacity and on behalf of the State of California and LWDA – shall completely release and
4 discharge the Released Parties from the Released PAGA Claims for the PAGA Period.

5 52. Regardless of submitting a valid Request for Exclusion, neither Plaintiff nor any
6 Aggrieved Employee shall have the right to opt-out or otherwise exclude themselves from
7 releasing the Released PAGA Claims.

8 **F. Release by Plaintiff and Class Representative**

9 53. Class Representative does hereby, for himself and his spouses, heirs, successors,
10 beneficiaries, devisees, legatees, executors, administrators, trustees, conservators, guardians,
11 personal representatives, and assigns forever and completely release and discharge the Released
12 Parties from any and all charges, complaints, claims, liabilities, obligations, promises,
13 agreements, controversies, damages, actions, causes of action, suits, rights, demands, costs,
14 losses, debts, and expenses (including back wages, statutory penalties, civil penalties, liquidated
15 damages, exemplary damages, interest, attorneys’ fees, and costs) of any nature whatsoever,
16 from the beginning of time through the execution of this Agreement, whether known or
17 unknown, suspected or unsuspected, including but not limited to all claims arising out of, based
18 upon, or relating to Class Representative’s employment with Defendants or the remuneration for
19 or termination of such employment (the “Class Representative’s Claims”).

20 54. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, this general release by Plaintiff
21 includes all federal, state, and local statutory claims, federal and state common law claims
22 (including but not limited to those for contract, tort and equity), including without limitation the
23 Americans with Disabilities Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Title VII of the Civil
24 Rights Act of 1964 (as amended), 42 USC sec. 1981, 42 USC sec. 1983, the Fair Labor
25 Standards Act, the Employment Retirement Security Income Act of 1974, the California
26 Constitution, the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, the California Unfair
27 Competition Act (California Business and Professions Code section 17200 et seq.), and the
28 California Labor Code.

1 55. Plaintiff agrees that there is a risk that any injury that he may have suffered by
2 reason of the Released Parties' relationship with him might not now be known, and there is a
3 further risk that said injuries, whether known or unknown at the date of this Settlement
4 Agreement, might possibly become progressively worse, and that as a result thereof further
5 damages may be sustained. Nevertheless, Plaintiff agrees to forever and fully release and
6 discharge the Released Parties and understands that by the execution of this Settlement
7 Agreement no further claims for any such injuries that existed at the time of the execution of this
8 Settlement Agreement may ever be asserted by Plaintiff with respect to claims arising in the time
9 period from the beginning of time to the execution of this Settlement Agreement.

10 56. Plaintiff expressly waives and relinquishes all rights and benefits afforded by
11 Section 1542 of the Civil Code of the State of California and does so understanding and
12 acknowledging the significance of the waiver of Section 1542. Section 1542 of the Civil Code
13 of the State of California states:

14 A GENERAL RELEASE DOES NOT EXTEND TO CLAIMS
15 THAT THE CREDITOR OR RELEASING PARTY DOES NOT
16 KNOW OR SUSPECT TO EXIST IN HIS OR HER FAVOR AT
17 THE TIME OF EXECUTING THE RELEASE AND THAT, IF
18 KNOWN BY HIM OR HER, WOULD HAVE MATERIALLY
19 AFFECTED HIS OR HER SETTLEMENT WITH THE DEBTOR
20 OR RELEASED PARTY.

21 Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 1542, and for the purpose of implementing a
22 full and complete release and discharge of all parties, Class Representative expressly
23 acknowledges that this Settlement Agreement is intended to include in its effect, without
24 limitation, all claims that Class Representative knew of, as well as all claims that he does not
25 know or suspect to exist in his favor against the Released Parties, or any of them, for the time
26 period from the beginning of time to the execution of this Settlement Agreement, and that this
27 Settlement Agreement contemplates the extinguishment of any such Class Representative's
28 Claims. Notwithstanding the above, the general release by Class Representative shall not extend
to claims for workers' compensation benefits, claims for unemployment benefits, claims for state
disability benefits, or other claims that may not be released by law.

1 57. It is the intent of the Parties that the Final Approval Order shall have full
2 equitable and collateral estoppel and res judicata effect to the fullest extent permitted by law with
3 regard to the Release by Participating Class Members, the Release of PAGA Claims and the
4 Release by Plaintiff and Class Representative.

5 **G. Interim Stay of Proceedings**

6 58. Pending completion of all of the prerequisites necessary to effectuate this
7 Settlement, the Parties agree, subject to Court approval, to a stay of all proceedings in the Action
8 except such as is necessary to effectuate the Settlement.

9 **H. Notice Process**

10 59. Appointment of Administrator. The Parties have agreed to the appointment of the
11 Administrator to perform the duties of a settlement administrator, including mailing the Notice,
12 using standard devices to obtain forwarding addresses, independently reviewing and verifying
13 documentation associated with any claims or opt-out requests, resolving any disputes regarding
14 the calculation or application of the formula for determining the Individual Class Payment and
15 Individual PAGA Payments, drafting and mailing the settlement checks to Participating Class
16 Members and Aggrieved Employees, issuing all necessary tax forms, and performing such other
17 tasks as set forth herein or as the Parties mutually agree or that the Court orders.

18 60. Disputes Regarding Administration. Any and all disputes relating to
19 administration of the Settlement by the Administrator (except for disputes regarding Class Data)
20 shall be referred to the Court, if necessary, which will have continuing jurisdiction over the terms
21 and conditions of this Agreement, until Plaintiff and Defendants notify the Court that all
22 payments and obligations contemplated by this Agreement have been fully carried out. Prior to
23 presenting any issue to the Court, counsel for the Parties will confer in good faith to resolve the
24 dispute without the necessity of Court intervention. The Administrator shall also be responsible
25 for issuing to Plaintiff, Participating Class Members, and Aggrieved Employees, and Class
26 Counsel any Tax Forms as may be required by law for all amounts paid pursuant to this
27 Agreement.
28

1 61. Class Data. Within fourteen (14) days after entry of the Preliminary Approval
2 Order, Defendants shall provide the Class Data to the Administrator. The Administrator will run
3 a check of the Class Members' addresses against those on file with the U.S. Postal Service's
4 National Change of Address List. The Class Data provided to the Administrator will remain
5 confidential and will not be used or disclosed to anyone, except as required by applicable tax
6 authorities, pursuant to Defendants' express written consent, or by order of the Court. Although
7 Class Counsel will not be provided with the list of Class Data, nothing herein shall prevent Class
8 Counsel from communicating with Class Members regarding the Action and Settlement.

9 62. Total Workweeks. At least 5 days prior to mailing the Notice, the Administrator
10 shall provide a spreadsheet to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel containing a preliminary
11 calculation of all payments to be paid from the Settlement Amount, including the estimated
12 Individual Class Payments to each Class Member and Individual PAGA Payments to each
13 Aggrieved Employee (a person's name shall be redacted and a control number used in place of
14 the name). In the event that the total Workweeks worked by all Class Members triggers the
15 Escalator Clause, the Administrator shall notify the Parties of the increased Settlement Amount,
16 and related increased payments from the Settlement Amount, including increased Attorneys'
17 Fees and Costs and any increased Administration Costs, all of which shall be subject to Court
18 approval. Pursuant to the terms of the Escalator Clause, Defendants may exercise its option to
19 modify the applicable Class Period to a date no earlier than March 6, 2024 to avoid the pro rata
20 increase.

21 63. Notice. The Notice, as approved by the Court, shall be sent by the Administrator
22 to the Class Members, by first class mail, in English and Spanish, within ten (10) calendar days
23 following the Administrator's receipt of the Class Data. The Administrator shall use standard
24 devices, including a skip trace, to obtain forwarding addresses of Class Members if any
25 envelopes are returned.

26 64. Returned Notice Packets. The Administrator will take steps to ensure that the
27 Notice is received by all Class Members, including utilization of the National Change of Address
28 Database maintained by the United States Postal Service to review the accuracy of and, if

possible, update a mailing address. Notices will be re-mailed to any Class Member for whom an updated address is located within ten (10) calendar days following both the Administrator learning of the failed mailing and its receipt of the updated address. The Notice shall be identical to the original Notice, except that it shall notify the Class Member that the exclusion (opt-out) request or objection must be returned by the later of the Response Deadline or fifteen (15) days after the remailing of the Notice.

65. Presumption Regarding Receipt of Notice. It will be conclusively presumed that if an envelope has not been returned to the Administrator by the Response Deadline that the Class Member received the Notice.

66. Disputes Regarding Class Data. Class Members are deemed to participate in the Settlement unless they opt out, and Aggrieved Employees may not opt out of the Released PAGA Claims. The Notice will inform Class Members of his/her estimated Individual Class Payment and Individual PAGA Payment, as well as the number of weeks he/she worked during the Class Period and the PAGA Period and the Share Points he/she is being credited with. Class Members may dispute their Weeks Worked and Share Points if they feel they should be credited with more Weeks Worked and/or Share Points in the Class Period and/or PAGA Period in California than Defendants' records show by timely submitting evidence to the Administrator. Defendants' records will be presumed determinative absent reliable evidence to rebut Defendants' records, but the Administrator will evaluate the evidence submitted by the Class Member and provide the evidence submitted to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel who agree to meet and confer in good faith about the evidence to determine the Class Member's actual number of Work Weeks and estimated Individual Class Payment and Individual PAGA Payment. If Class Counsel and Defense Counsel are unable to agree, they agree to submit the dispute to the Court to render a final decision. Class Members and Aggrieved Employees will have until the Response Deadline to dispute Weeks Worked and Share Points, object or opt out, unless extended by the Court.

1 67. Declaration of Due Diligence. The Administrator shall provide counsel for the
2 Parties, at least twenty-five (25) days prior to the final approval hearing, a declaration of due
3 diligence and proof of mailing with regard to the mailing of the Notice.

4 68. Class Members' Rights. Each Class Member will be fully advised of the
5 Settlement, the ability to object to the settlement, and the ability to opt out or request exclusion
6 from the Class Claims portion of the Settlement. The Notice will inform the Class Members of
7 the Court-established deadlines for filing objections or requesting exclusion from the Settlement
8 in accordance with the following guidelines:

9 (a) Requests for Exclusion from Class. Any Class Member, other than
10 Plaintiff, may request to be excluded from the Class by submitting a "Request for Exclusion" to
11 the Administrator, postmarked on or before the Response Deadline. The Request for Exclusion
12 should state:

13 "I WISH TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE CLASS IN THE
14 SOUTH STAR LAWSUIT. I UNDERSTAND THAT IF I ASK TO
15 BE EXCLUDED FROM THE SETTLEMENT CLASS, I WILL
16 NOT RECEIVE MY INDIVIDUAL CLASS PAYMENT FROM
17 THIS LAWSUIT."

18 To be valid, any Request for Exclusion must include the full name, address, telephone
19 number, last four digits of the social security number or date of birth, and signature of the Class
20 Member requesting exclusion. The Request for Exclusion must be returned by mail to the
21 Administrator at the specified address set forth in the Notice. Any such Request must be made in
22 accordance with the terms set forth in the Notice. A Request for Exclusion will be timely only if
23 postmarked by the Response Deadline, unless the Parties otherwise agree in writing. Any Class
24 Member who timely requests exclusion in compliance with these requirements: (i) will not have
25 any rights under this Agreement, including the right to object, appeal, or comment on the
26 Settlement; (ii) will not be entitled to receive the Individual Class Payment under this
27 Agreement; and (iii) will not be bound by this Agreement, or the Judgment. Any Class Member
28 who is an Aggrieved Employee who requests timely exclusion will still be subject to the

Released PAGA Claims to the fullest extent permitted by law and receive an Individual PAGA Payment. All Parties and their counsel, including Defendants' respective members, member managers, owners, officers, and directors, shall not encourage or solicit opt-outs or objections, directly or indirectly, through any means.

(b) Binding Effect on Participating Class Members. All Participating Class Members will: (i) be bound by the terms and conditions of this Agreement, the Judgment, and the releases set forth herein; and (ii) except as otherwise provided herein, will be deemed to have waived all objections and oppositions to the fairness, reasonableness, and adequacy of the Settlement.

(c) Objections to Settlement. Any Class Member, other than Plaintiff, who does not submit a valid and timely Request for Exclusion may object to the terms of this Agreement. To object, a Class Member shall inform the Administrator, in writing, of his or her objection which must be postmarked by the Response Deadline at the address set forth in the Notice. Such objection shall include the Objecting Class Member's full name, address, telephone number, last four digits of the social security number or date of birth, signature, and dates of employment with Defendants, in addition to the case name and number, the basis for the objection, including any legal support and each specific reason in support of the objection, as well as any documentation or evidence in support thereof, and, if the Objecting Class Member is represented by counsel, the name and address of his or her counsel. The Administrator shall provide objections, if any, to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel within three (3) calendar days of receipt, and the Administrator shall attach the same to its declaration of due diligence and file with the Court prior to the Final Approval Hearing. An Objecting Class Member remains eligible to receive monetary compensation from the Settlement. Plaintiff and Defendants shall not be responsible for any fees, costs, or expenses incurred by an Objecting Class Member and/or his or her counsel related to any objections to the Settlement. Submitting an objection does not preserve the right to appeal a final judgment. Rather, the right to appeal is preserved by becoming a party of record by timely and properly intervening or filing a motion to vacate the judgment under Code of Civil Procedure § 663.

1 (d) Failure to Object. Any Class Member who does not timely and properly
2 become a party of record by intervening or filing a motion to vacate the judgment waives any
3 and all rights to appeal from the Judgment, including all rights to any post-judgment proceeding
4 and appellate proceeding, such as a motion to vacate judgment, motion for new trial, a motion
5 under California Code of Civil Procedure section 473, and extraordinary writs.

6 (e) Responses to Objections. Counsel for the Parties may file a response to
7 any objections submitted by an Objecting Class Member at least five (5) court days before the
8 date of the Final Approval Hearing.

9 (f) Class Members will have until the Response Deadline to object or submit
10 a Request for Exclusion to the Administrator by U.S. Mail. The Administrator shall disclose
11 jointly to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel what objections or Requests for Exclusion were
12 timely submitted on a weekly basis, and upon the request of Class Counsel or Defense Counsel.

13 69. Calculation of Employer's Share of Payroll Taxes. Within five (5) calendar days
14 of Final Approval, the Administrator shall provide Defense Counsel with the calculation of the
15 employer's share of payroll taxes to be paid by Defendant in addition to the Settlement Amount.

16 70. Funding of the Settlement Amount. Defendants shall, jointly and severally,
17 deposit the Settlement Amount, plus Defendants' share of payroll taxes owed on Individual Class
18 Payments, with the Administrator within sixty (60) days after the Effective Date or May 1, 2025,
19 whichever is later.

20 71. Distribution of Funds. No later than ten (10) calendar days after the deposit of the
21 Settlement Amount by Defendants, the Administrator shall mail the Individual Class Payments
22 to the Participating Class Members, the Individual PAGA Payments to the Aggrieved
23 Employees, the payment to Class Counsel for the Attorneys' Fees and Costs Award, any Service
24 Payment to the Class Representative, the payment to the LWDA for PAGA Penalties, and will
25 pay itself the Administration Costs.

26 72. Deadline for Cashing Settlement Checks. Participating Class Members and
27 Aggrieved Employees shall have 180 calendar days after mailing by the Administrator to cash
28 their settlement checks. The release will be binding even upon Participating Class Members who

do not cash their checks within the 180-day period. In the event that any settlement check is returned to the Administrator within 180 days of mailing, the Administrator will, within five (5) business days of receipt of the returned settlement check, perform a skip trace to locate the individual, and notify Defense Counsel and Class Counsel of the results. If a new address is located by these means, the Administrator will have ten (10) business days to re-issue the check. Neither Defendants, Defense Counsel, Class Counsel, Plaintiff, nor the Administrator will have any liability for lost or stolen settlement checks, forged signatures on settlement checks, or unauthorized negotiation of settlement checks. Without limiting the foregoing, in the event a Participating Class Member and/or Aggrieved Employee notifies the Administrator that he or she believes that a settlement check has been lost or stolen, the Administrator shall immediately stop payment on such check. If the check in question has not been negotiated prior to the stop payment order, the Administrator will issue a replacement check.

(a) If any Participating Class Member's check is not cashed within the time periods noted above, the check will be void and a stop-payment will be issued, and the Administrator shall issue the unclaimed funds to the California State Controller's Office in the name of the Class Member.

(b) If any Aggrieved Employee's check is not cashed within the time periods noted above, the check will be void and a stop-payment will be issued, and the Administrator shall issue the unclaimed funds to the California State Controller's Office in the name of the Aggrieved Employee.

I. Duties of the Parties Prior to the Court's Approval

73. Promptly after execution of this Agreement, Plaintiff will move the Court for Preliminary Approval of this Settlement and entry of the Preliminary Approval Order accomplishing the following:

- (a) Approving as to form and content the proposed Notice;
- (b) Directing the mailing of the Notice by first class mail to the Class Members;
- (c) Preliminarily approving this Settlement;

- 1 (d) Preliminarily certifying the class for purposes of this Settlement;
2 (e) Advising the LWDA of the proposed Settlement; and
3 (f) Scheduling the Final Approval Hearing on the issue of whether this
4 Settlement should be finally approved as fair, reasonable, and adequate.

5 **J. Duties of the Parties Following Court's Final Approval**

6 74. In connection with the Final Approval Hearing provided for in this Agreement,
7 Class Counsel shall submit a proposed Final Approval Order:

- 8 (a) Approving the Settlement, adjudging the terms thereof to be fair,
9 reasonable and adequate, and directing consummation of its terms and provisions;
10 (b) Approving Class Counsel's application for an award of attorneys' fees and
11 reimbursement of litigation costs and expenses, the Service Payment to the Class Representative,
12 and the payment to the Administrator for costs of administering the settlement; and
13 (c) Entering judgment approving Settlement.

14 **K. Defendants' Right to Withdraw.**

15 75. If the number of valid Requests for Exclusion received by the Administrator
16 exceeds ten percent (10%) of the total of all Class Members, Defendants may, but are not
17 obligated to, elect to withdraw from the Settlement. The Parties agree that if Defendants
18 withdraw, the Settlement shall be void ab initio, and subject to the provision of Section L, below.
19 Defendants must notify Class Counsel and the Court of their election to withdraw not later than
20 seven (7) calendar days after the Administrator sends the final list of Requests for Exclusion
21 received before Response Deadline to Defense Counsel; late elections will have no effect.

22 **L. Voiding the Agreement**

23 76. If the Court fails or refuses to issue the Final Approval Order or fails to approve
24 any material condition of this Agreement which effects a fundamental change of the Settlement,
25 the entire Agreement shall be rendered voidable and unenforceable as to all Parties herein at the
26 option of either Party.

27 77. If the Settlement is voided or fails for any reason, Plaintiff and Defendants will
28 have no further obligations under the Settlement, including any obligation by Defendants to pay

1 the Settlement Amount, or any amounts that otherwise would have been owed under this
2 Settlement.

3 78. If the Settlement is voided or fails for any reason, any costs incurred by the
4 Administrator shall be borne equally by Defendants and Plaintiff, unless otherwise specified in
5 this Agreement.

6 **M. Other Terms**

7 79. Waiver. The waiver by one Party of any breach of this Agreement by another
8 Party shall not be deemed a waiver of any other prior or subsequent breach of this Agreement.

9 80. Parties' Authority. The signatories hereto represent that they are fully authorized
10 to enter into this Agreement and bind the Parties hereto to the terms and conditions hereof.

11 81. Mutual Full Cooperation. The Parties agree to fully cooperate with each other to
12 accomplish the terms of this Agreement, including but not limited to, execution of such
13 documents and to take such other action as may reasonably be necessary to implement the terms
14 of this Agreement. The Parties to this Agreement shall use their best efforts, including all efforts
15 contemplated by this Agreement and any other efforts that may become necessary by order of the
16 Court, or otherwise, to effectuate this Agreement and the terms set forth herein. As soon as
17 practicable after execution of this Agreement, Class Counsel shall, with the assistance and
18 cooperation of Defendants and Defense Counsel, take all necessary steps to secure the Court's
19 preliminary and final approval of the settlement, and the final entry of judgment.

20 82. No Prior Assignments. The Parties hereto represent, covenant, and warrant that
21 they have not, directly or indirectly, assigned, transferred, encumbered, or purported to assign,
22 transfer, or encumber to any person or entity any portion of any liability, claim, demand, action,
23 cause of action or rights released and discharged by this Agreement.

24 83. No Admission. Defendants deny any and all liability to Plaintiff and/or any Class
25 Member and/or Aggrieved Employee in this Action, as to any and all causes of action that were
26 asserted or that might have been asserted in this Action. Nonetheless, Defendants wish to settle
27 and compromise the matters at issue in the Complaint to avoid further substantial expense and
28 the inconvenience and distraction of protracted and burdensome litigation. Defendants have

1 taken into account the uncertainty and risks inherent in litigation, and without conceding any
2 infirmity in the defenses that they have asserted or could assert against Plaintiff, have determined
3 that it is desirable and beneficial that Plaintiff's claims be settled in the manner and upon the
4 terms and conditions set forth in this Agreement.

5 84. Inadmissibility of Agreement. Whether or not the Court issues the Final Approval
6 Order, nothing contained herein, nor the consummation of this Agreement, is to be construed or
7 deemed an admission of liability, culpability, negligence, or wrongdoing on the part of
8 Defendants or any of the other Released Parties. Each of the Parties hereto has entered into this
9 Agreement with the intention of avoiding further disputes and litigation with the attendant
10 inconvenience and expenses. This Agreement is a settlement document, and it, along with all
11 related documents such as the notices, and motions for preliminary and final approval, shall,
12 pursuant to California Evidence Code section 1152 and/or Federal Rule of Evidence 408, be
13 inadmissible in evidence in any proceeding, except an action or proceeding to approve the
14 settlement, and/or interpret or enforce this Agreement. The stipulation for class certification as
15 part of this Agreement is for settlement purposes only and if, for any reason the settlement is not
16 approved, the stipulation will be of no force or effect.

17 85. No Publicity. The Parties will not publicize the Settlement or disclose it to third
18 parties prior to the Court granting Preliminary Approval, except as required or necessary to
19 effectuate its terms and comply with law. After the Final Approval Date, Class Counsel and
20 Class Representative agree that they will not discuss the Settlement with the media, any
21 settlement and verdict reporting service, any social media postings, or other Internet postings.
22 Nothing herein shall be construed to prevent Class Counsel from the public filing of motions or
23 other case materials in the Action related to seeking and obtaining Court approval of this
24 Settlement and the related awards of attorneys' fees and costs, or to communications with Class
25 Members or their representatives about this Settlement, including through the posting of Court-
26 filed documents on Class Counsel's websites for access solely by the Class Members, or to
27 prevent the Parties or their representatives from communicating with financial or legal advisors
28

1 regarding the Settlement. In response to any media inquiry, Class Counsel may state only that
2 the Action has been settled on terms mutually agreeable to the Parties.

3 86. Notices. Unless otherwise specifically provided herein, all notices, demands or
4 other communications given hereunder shall be in writing and shall be deemed to have been duly
5 given as of the third business day after mailing by United States registered or certified mail,
6 return receipt requested, addressed:

7 *To the Class:*

8 Brian J. Mankin
9 *brian@lmlfirm.com*
10 Lauby, Mankin & Lauby LLP
11 5198 Arlington Ave, PMB 513
12 Riverside, CA 92504
13 Tel: (951) 320-1444 | Fax: (951) 320-1445

14 *To Defendant:*

15 Victor J. Cosentino
16 *victor.cosentino@larsongaston.com*
17 LARSON & GASTON, LLP
18 200 S. Los Robles Ave, Suite 530
19 Pasadena, CA 91101
20 Tel: (626) 795-6001 | Fax: (626) 795-0016

21 87. Construction. The Parties hereto agree that the terms and conditions of this
22 Agreement are the result of lengthy, intensive arm's-length negotiations between the Parties and
23 that this Agreement shall not be construed in favor of or against any Party by reason of the extent
24 to which any Party or his or its counsel participated in the drafting of this Agreement. Plaintiff
25 and Defendants expressly waive the common-law and statutory rule of construction that
26 ambiguities should be construed against the drafter of an agreement and further agree, covenant,
27 and represent that the language in all parts of this Agreement shall be in all cases construed as a
28 whole, according to its fair meaning.

88. Captions and Interpretations. Paragraph titles or captions contained herein are
inserted as a matter of convenience and for reference, and in no way define, limit, extend, or
describe the scope of this Agreement or any provision hereof. Each term of this Agreement is
contractual and not merely a recital.

1 89. Modification. This Agreement may not be changed, altered, or modified, except
2 in writing and signed by the Parties hereto, and approved by the Court. This Settlement
3 Agreement may not be discharged except by performance in accordance with its terms or by a
4 writing signed by all of the Parties hereto.

5 90. Dispute Resolution. Prior to instituting legal action to enforce the provisions of
6 this Agreement or to declare rights and/or obligations under this Agreement, a Party shall
7 provide written notice to the other Party and allow an opportunity to cure the alleged
8 deficiencies, and Plaintiff and Defendants may agree to seek the help of the Mediator to resolve
9 any dispute they are unable to resolve informally. During this period, the Parties shall bear their
10 own attorneys' fees and costs. This provision shall not apply to any legal action or other
11 proceeding instituted by any person or entity other than Plaintiff or Defendants.

12 91. Choice of Law. This Settlement Agreement shall be governed by and construed,
13 enforced, and administered in accordance with the laws of the State of California, without regard
14 to its conflicts-of-law rules.

15 92. Integration Clause. This Settlement Agreement contains the entire agreement
16 between the Parties relating to the settlement and transaction contemplated hereby, and all prior
17 or contemporaneous agreements, understandings, representations, and statements, whether oral
18 or written and whether by a Party or such Party's legal counsel, are merged herein. No rights
19 hereunder may be waived except in writing.

20 93. Binding On Assigns. This Agreement shall be binding upon and inure to the
21 benefit of the Parties hereto and their respective heirs, trustees, executors, administrators,
22 successors, and assigns.

23 94. Signatures of All Class Members Unnecessary to be Binding. It is agreed that,
24 because the members of the Class are numerous, it is impossible or impractical to have each
25 Class Member execute this Agreement. The Notice will advise all Class Members of the binding
26 nature of the release provided herein and such shall have the same force and effect as if this
27 Agreement were executed by each Class Member.
28

95. Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in counterparts, and when each Party has signed and delivered at least one such counterpart, each counterpart shall be deemed an original, and, when taken together with other signed counterparts, shall constitute one fully signed Agreement, which shall be binding upon and effective as to all Parties. Electronic signatures shall have the same force and effect as an original.

Dated: Jun 13, 2024

PLAINTIFF AND CLASS REPRESENTATIVE


Steven Tassin (Jun 13, 2024 17:17 CDT)

Steven Tassin

Dated: 06 / 18 / 2024

DEFENDANT SOUTH STAR LOGISTICS, INC.

aman brar

By: Aman Brar (name)

president (title)

Dated: 06 / 18 / 2024

DEFENDANT AMAN SINGH BRAR

aman brar

Aman Singh Brar

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Dated: June 13, 2024

CLASS COUNSEL
LAUBY, MANKIN & LAUBY LLP


Brian J. Mankin
Attorneys for Plaintiff

Dated: June 17, 2024

DEFENSE COUNSEL
LARSON & GASTON, LLP


Victor J. Cosentino, Esq.
Attorneys for Defendants

EXHIBIT “B”

COURT-APPROVED NOTICE OF CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT

Steven Tassin v. South Star Logistics, Inc., et al.

(San Bernardino County Superior Court Case No. CIVSB2301755)

***The San Bernardino County Superior Court authorized this Notice. Read it carefully!
It's not junk mail, spam, an advertisement, or solicitation by a lawyer. You are not being sued.***

You may be eligible to receive money from an employee class action lawsuit (“Action”) against Defendant South Star Logistics, Inc. (“South Star”) and its Owner (Aman Singh Brar) (collectively “Defendants”) for alleged violations of the California Labor Code.

The Action was filed by Steven Tassin (“Plaintiff” or “Class Representative”) and seeks payment of (1) unpaid wages and unreimbursed business expenses, statutory damages and penalties, interest and attorneys’ fees on behalf of a class of nonexempt employees employed by Defendant South Star in California (“Class Members”) at any time during the Class Period (which is February 9, 2019, through May 5, 2024); and (2) penalties under the California Private Attorneys General Act (“PAGA”) for all nonexempt employees employed by Defendant South Star in California at any time during the PAGA Period (which is February 9, 2022, to May 5, 2024) (“Aggrieved Employees”). (Plaintiff and Defendants shall be collectively referred to as the “Parties.”)

The proposed Settlement has two main parts: (1) a Class Settlement requiring Defendants to fund Individual Class Payments to Class Members, and (2) a PAGA Settlement requiring Defendant to fund Individual PAGA Payments to Aggrieved Employees and pay penalties to the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency (“LWDA”). Based on Defendants’ records, and the Parties’ current assumptions, your Individual Class and PAGA Payments are shown in the charts below, along with the applicable data points from which these estimates are derived.

[*CLASS MEMBER NAME*] [*ID/CONTROL NUMBER*]

Calculations and Data Points for Estimated Individual Class Payment			
Weeks Worked during Class Period <i>1 Share Point per Week</i>	Weeks Worked during Class Period as Piece-Rate Driver <i>3 Additional Share Point per Week</i>	Share Points	<i>Estimated</i> Individual Class Payment
INSERT	INSERT	INSERT	\$INSERT

Calculations and Data Points for Estimated Individual PAGA Payment	
Total Weeks Worked during PAGA Period	Estimated Individual PAGA Payment
INSERT	\$INSERT

Please note that the actual amount you receive may be different from the above and will depend on several factors. (If no amount is stated for your Individual PAGA Payment, then according to Defendants’ records you are not eligible for an Individual PAGA Payment under the Settlement because you didn’t work during the PAGA Period.) If you believe that you worked more weeks during the periods discussed above, you can submit a challenge by **DATE, 2024** (“**Response Deadline**”). See **Section 4** of this Notice.

The Court has already preliminarily approved the proposed Settlement and approved this Notice. The Court has not yet decided whether to grant final approval. Your legal rights are affected whether you act or do not act. Read this Notice carefully. You will be deemed to have carefully read and understood it. At the Final Approval Hearing, the Court will decide whether to finally approve the Settlement and how much of the Settlement will be paid to Plaintiff and Plaintiff's attorneys ("Class Counsel"). The Court will also decide whether to enter a judgment that requires Defendant to make payments under the Settlement and requires Class Members and Aggrieved Employees to give up their rights to assert certain claims against Defendants.

If you worked for Defendant South Star during the Class Period and/or the PAGA Period, you have a few options as shown in the Chart below:

YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS AND OPTIONS IN THIS SETTLEMENT	
DO NOTHING AND RECEIVE A SETTLEMENT PAYMENT	If you want to receive your full settlement payment, then no further action is required on your part. You will automatically receive a settlement payment if the Settlement receives final approval by the Court. You will be bound by the terms of the Settlement Agreement and will give up your right to sue on the Released Class Claims described in Section 3 .
EXCLUDE YOURSELF	If you do not wish to participate in the settlement of the Class Claims, you may “optout” of the settlement of the Class Claims. If you choose to opt-out, you must submit a Request for Exclusion by [REDACTED], 2024 (see Section 6 for more details on how to opt-out). If you opt-out, you will no longer be a Class Member, and you will (1) <u>not</u> receive an Individual Class Payment, but you will preserve your right to pursue the Released Class Claims described below subject to applicable statutes of limitations, and (2) be barred from filing an objection to the settlement. You cannot opt-out of the PAGA portion of the proposed Settlement. Defendant must pay Individual PAGA Payments to all Aggrieved Employees and the Aggrieved Employees must give up their rights to pursue Released PAGA Claims. See Section 6 of this Notice.
OBJECT	If you decide to object to the settlement with respect to the Class Claims because you find it unfair or unreasonable, you must submit an Objection stating why you object to the settlement by [REDACTED], 2024 (see Section 7 for more details on how to object).
DISPUTE THE NUMBER OF WEEKS WORKED	If you believe the number of workweeks that you were credited with working in the chart above is incorrect, you may submit a written dispute to the Administrator (see Section 4 for more details on how to submit a Dispute). South Star’s records will be presumed correct, but you may provide evidence to the Administrator showing how many Work Weeks you believe you should be credited.

YOU MAY ATTEND THE FINAL APPROVAL HEARING, BUT IT’S NOT REQUIRED	
DATE: [REDACTED], 2024 TIME: 8:30 A.M.	At the Final Approval Hearing, the Court will decide whether to finally approve the Settlement. You don’t have to attend but you do have the right to appear (or hire an attorney to appear on your behalf at your own cost), in person, by telephone or by using the Court’s virtual appearance platform. See Section 8 of this Notice.

1. WHAT IS THE ACTION ABOUT?

Plaintiff is a former employee of South Star. The Action accuses Defendants of violating California labor laws by failing to pay minimum and overtime wages, failure to provide meal and rest breaks, failure to reimburse business expenses, failure to timely pay wages each period and upon separation of employment, failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements, and practicing unfair and unlawful competition. Based on the same claims, Plaintiff has also asserted a claim for civil penalties under PAGA.

Defendants strongly deny violating any laws or failing to pay any wages and contend they complied with all applicable laws.

Both Parties are represented by attorneys in the Action. See Section 9 below for Class Counsel’s contact information.

2. WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT THE ACTION HAS SETTLED?

So far, the Court has made no determination whether Defendants or Plaintiff is correct on the merits. In the meantime, Plaintiff and Defendants hired an experienced, neutral mediator in an effort to resolve the Action by negotiating to end the case by agreement (settle the case) rather than continuing the expensive and time-consuming process of litigation. The negotiations were successful. By signing a lengthy written settlement agreement (“Agreement”), Plaintiff and Defendants have negotiated a proposed Settlement that is subject to the Court’s Final Approval. Both sides agree the proposed Settlement is a compromise of disputed claims. By agreeing to settle, Defendants do not admit any violations or concede the merit of any claims.

Plaintiff and Class Counsel strongly believe the Settlement is a good deal for you because they believe that: (1) Defendants have agreed to pay a fair, reasonable, and adequate amount considering the strength of the claims and the risks and uncertainties of continued litigation; and (2) Settlement is in the best interests of the Class Members and Aggrieved Employees. The Court preliminarily approved the proposed Settlement as fair, reasonable and adequate, authorized this Notice, and scheduled a hearing to determine Final Approval.

3. WHAT ARE THE IMPORTANT TERMS OF THE PROPOSED SETTLEMENT?

1. Defendants Will Pay \$300,000 as the “Settlement Amount.” Defendants have agreed to pay a total Settlement Amount of \$300,000 and will deposit the Settlement Amount into an account controlled by the Administrator. The Administrator will use the Settlement Amount to pay the Individual Class Payments, Individual PAGA Payments, Class Representative Service Payment, Class Counsel’s attorneys’ fees and expenses, the Administrator’s Costs, and PAGA Penalties to be paid to the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency (“LWDA”). Assuming the Court grants Final Approval, Defendants will fund the Settlement within 60 days after the Judgment entered by the Court becomes final or by or by March 1, 2025, whichever is later. The Judgment will be final on the date the Court enters Judgment, or a later date if Participating Class Members object to the proposed Settlement or the Judgment is appealed.

2. Court-Approved Deductions from Gross Settlement. At the Final Approval Hearing, Plaintiff and/or Class Counsel will ask the Court to approve the following deductions from the Settlement Amount, the amounts of which will be decided by the Court at the Final Approval Hearing:

A. Up to one-third of the Settlement Amount (\$100,000.00) to Class Counsel for attorneys' fees and up to \$25,000 for their litigation expenses. To date, Class Counsel have worked and incurred expenses on the Action without payment.

B. Up to \$10,000 to the Class Representative as a Service Payment for litigating the Action, working with Class Counsel and representing the Class. The Class Representative's Service Payment will be the only monies Plaintiff will receive other than Plaintiff's Individual Class Payment and any Individual PAGA Payment.

C. \$7,000 to the Settlement Administrator for services administering the Settlement.

D. Up to \$30,000 for PAGA Penalties, allocated 75% to the LWDA PAGA Payment and 25% in Individual PAGA Payments to the Aggrieved Employees based on their share of Weeks Worked during the PAGA Period.

3. Net Settlement Distributed to Class Members. After making the above deductions in amounts approved by the Court, the Administrator will distribute the rest of the remainder (the “Net Settlement Amount”) by making Individual Class Payments to Participating Class Members based on their pro rata share of Share Points during the Class Period. The Parties have agreed that each Class Member shall receive one (1) Share Point for every Week Worked during the Class Period, along with an additional three (3) Share Points for every Week Worked as a Piece-Rate Driver during the Class Period.

4. Taxes Owed on Payments to Class Members. Plaintiff and Defendants are asking the Court to approve an allocation of 10% of each Individual Class Payment to taxable wages (“Wage Portion”) and 90% to penalties and interest (“Non-Wage Portion”). The Wage Portion is subject to withholdings and will be reported on IRS W-2 Forms. Defendants will separately pay employer payroll taxes they owe on the Wage Portion. The Individual PAGA Payments are counted as penalties rather than wages for tax purposes. The Administrator will report the Individual PAGA Payments and the Non-Wage Portions of the Individual Class Payments on IRS 1099 Forms.

Although Plaintiff and Defendants have agreed to these allocations, neither side is giving you any advice on whether your Payments are taxable or how much you might owe in taxes. You are responsible for paying all taxes (including penalties and interest on back taxes) on any Payments received from the proposed Settlement. You should consult a tax advisor if you have any questions about the tax consequences of the proposed Settlement.

5. Need to Promptly Cash Payment Checks. The front of every check issued for Individual Class Payments and Individual PAGA Payments will show the date when the check expires (the void date). If you don't cash it by the void date, your check will be automatically cancelled, and the monies will be deposited with the California Controller's Unclaimed Property Fund in your name. If the monies represented by your check are sent to the Controller's Unclaimed Property Fund, you should consult the rules of the Fund for instructions on how to retrieve your money.

6. Requests for Exclusion from the Class Settlement (Opt-Outs). You will be treated as a Participating Class Member, participating fully in the Settlement, unless you opt-out of the Settlement, not later than the Response Deadline. See Section 6 of this Notice for details on how to Opt-Out.

7. The Proposed Settlement Will be Void If the Court Denies Final Approval. It is possible the Court will decline to grant Final Approval of the Settlement or decline to enter a Judgment. It is also possible the Court will enter a Judgment that is reversed on appeal. Plaintiff and Defendants have agreed that, in either case, the Settlement will be void: Defendants will not pay any money and Class Members will not release any claims against Defendants.

8. Settlement Administrator. The Court has appointed a neutral company, Phoenix Class Action Administration Solutions (the “Administrator”) to send this Notice, calculate and make payments, and process Class Members’ Requests for Exclusion. The Settlement Administrator will also decide any Disputes over weeks worked, mail and re-mail settlement checks and tax forms, and perform other tasks necessary to administer the Settlement. The Settlement Administrator’s contact information is contained in Section 9 of this Notice.

9. Participating Class Members' Release. After the Judgment is final and Defendants have fully funded the Settlement Amount and separately paid all employer payroll taxes, Participating Class Members will be legally barred from asserting any of the claims released under the Settlement. This means that unless you opted out by validly excluding yourself from the Class Settlement, you cannot sue, continue to sue, or be part of any other lawsuit against Defendants or related entities for wages based on the facts alleged in the Action for the duration of the Class Period and PAGA Period, which are resolved by this Settlement.

The Participating Class Members will be bound by the following release:

All Participating Class Members, on behalf of themselves and their respective representatives, agents, heirs, and assigns, release the Released Parties (which includes Defendants and their parents, subsidiaries, directors, owners, shareholders, officers, agents, managing agents, spouses, attorneys, servants, joint employers and employees, past and present, and each of them and anyone acting in concert with foregoing) from all claims stated in the operative complaint and those claims that reasonably could have been brought based upon the facts in the complaint, including but not limited to: (a) failure to pay minimum wages, (b) failure to pay for rest and recovery periods, (c) failure to reimburse business expenses, (d) failure to failure to timely pay wages upon separation of employment, (e) failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements, (f) unfair and unlawful competition, and (g) all other claims for statutory penalties based on the facts or claims alleged in the operative complaint (“Released Class Claims”). The time period governing the Released Class Claims shall be the Class Period.

10. Release of Released PAGA Claims. After the Court's judgment is final, and Defendants have paid the Settlement Amount (and separately paid the employer-side payroll taxes), Plaintiff on behalf of himself, the State of California and the LWDA shall release the Released Parties (which includes Defendants and their parents, subsidiaries, directors, owners, shareholders, officers, agents, managing agents, spouses, attorneys, servants, joint employers and employees, past and present, and each of them and anyone acting in concert with foregoing) of all PAGA claims that Plaintiff alleged against the Released Parties, on behalf of the Aggrieved Employees and the State of California, based on the facts

stated in the Complaint and in the relevant LWDA notice letters, including all PAGA claims seeking civil penalties premised upon: (a) failure to pay minimum wages, (b) failure to pay for rest and recovery periods, (c) failure to reimburse business expenses, (d) failure to timely pay wages each period and upon separation of employment, (e) failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements, (f) failure to maintain employment records, and (g) all other claims for civil penalties recoverable under the Private Attorneys General Act, Labor Code §§ 2698 *et seq.* based on the facts or claims alleged in the operative complaint (“Released PAGA Claims”). The PAGA Released Claims do not release any Aggrieved Employees’ claims for wages or statutory penalties. The time period governing the Released PAGA Claims shall be any time during the PAGA Period.

4. WHAT ARE THE IMPORTANT TERMS OF THE PROPOSED SETTLEMENT?

1. Individual Class Payments. The Administrator will calculate Individual Class Payments by (a) dividing the Net Settlement Amount by the total number of Share Points for all Participating Class Members during the Class Period, and (b) multiplying the result by the number of Share Points credited to each individual Participating Class Member during the Class Period.

2. Individual PAGA Payments. The Settlement Administrator will calculate Individual PAGA Payments by (a) dividing \$7,500 by the total number of Weeks Worked by all Aggrieved Employees during the PAGA Period and (b) multiplying the result by the number of Weeks Worked by each individual Aggrieved Employee during the PAGA Period.

3. Disputing Weeks Worked and/or Share Points. The number of weeks you worked during the Class Period and PAGA Period, as recorded in Defendants’ records, are stated in the tables on page 2 of this Notice. You have until **DATE** (“Response Deadline”) to dispute the number of Workweeks and Share Points credited to you by submitting evidence to the Settlement Administrator on or before **[INSERT DATE 45 Days After Mailing]**. Section 9 of this Notice has the Administrator’s contact information.

You need to support your dispute by sending copies of pay stubs or other records. The Administrator will accept Defendants’ calculation of weeks worked and Share Points based on Defendants’ records as accurate unless you send copies of records containing contrary information. You should send copies rather than originals because the documents will not be returned to you. The Administrator will resolve challenges based on your submission and on input from Class Counsel and Defendants’ Counsel. The Administrator’s decision is final. You can’t appeal or otherwise challenge its final decision.

5. HOW WILL I GET PAID?

1. Participating Class Members and Aggrieved Employees. The Administrator will send, by U.S. mail, a single check to every Participating Class Member (which includes every Class Member who doesn’t opt-out) and Aggrieved Employee. The single check will combine the Individual Class Payment and the Individual PAGA Payment.

2. Aggrieved Employees Only. If you opted out of the Class settlement, but qualify as an Aggrieved Employee, then the Administrator will send, by U.S. mail, a single Individual PAGA Payment check to every Aggrieved Employee, including those who opt out of the Class Settlement.

Your check will be sent to the same address as this Notice. If you change your address, be sure to notify the Administrator as soon as possible. Section 9 of this Notice has the Settlement Administrator’s contact information.

6. HOW DO I OPT-OUT OF THE CLASS SETTLEMENT?

You will be treated as a Participating Class Member, participating fully in the Settlement, unless you opt-out of the Settlement, not later than the Response Deadline.

If you **do not** wish to take part in the release of the Class Claims in the Settlement, you may exclude yourself by sending to the Administrator a “Request for Exclusion” letter/card postmarked no later than **DATE**, 2024 with your full name, address, telephone number, last four digits of your social security number or your date of birth, and signature. The Request for Exclusion should state:

“I WISH TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE CLASS IN THE SOUTH STAR LAWSUIT. I UNDERSTAND THAT IF I ASK TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE SETTLEMENT CLASS, I WILL NOT RECEIVE MY INDIVIDUAL CLASS PAYMENT FROM THIS LAWSUIT.”

Any person who submits a timely Request for Exclusion from the Class Claims (1) will not have any rights under this Settlement, including the right to object, appeal, or comment on the Settlement; (2) will not be entitled to receive an Individual Class Payment; (3) will preserve the right to pursue the Released Class Claims, and (4) will not be bound by this Settlement, or the Judgment. You must make the request yourself. If someone else makes the request for you, it will not be valid. **Send your request to be excluded to the Administrator by [REDACTED], 2024 (the “Response Deadline”), or it will be invalid.** Section 9 of the Notice has the Administrator’s contact information.

You cannot opt-out of the PAGA portion of the Settlement. Class Members who exclude themselves from the Class Claims remain eligible to receive an Individual PAGA Payment.

7. HOW DO I OBJECT TO THE SETTLEMENT?

Only Participating Class Members have the right to object to the Settlement. A Participating Class Member who disagrees with any aspect of the Settlement may wish to object. **The deadline for sending written objections to the Administrator is [REDACTED], 2024 (the “Response Deadline”).**

If you wish to object to the proposed Settlement, you or your own attorney must submit a written objection, and the objection must include your full name, address, telephone number, last four digits of the social security number or date of birth, signature, and dates of employment with Defendant South Star, in addition to the case name and number (*Tassin v. South Star Logistics, Inc.*, Case No. CIVSB2301755), the basis for the objection, including any legal support and each specific reason in support of the objection, as well as any documentation or evidence in support thereof. Additionally, if you are represented by an attorney, the objection must include the name and address of your attorney. This objection and all supporting information must be sent to the Administrator at the address listed in Section 9, **postmarked** on or before [REDACTED], 2024. Class Members who object in writing to the proposed Settlement are not required to attend the Final Approval Hearing.

Alternatively, a Participating Class Member can object (or personally retain a lawyer to object at your own cost) by attending the Final Approval Hearing. You (or your attorney) should be ready to tell the Court what you object to, why you object, and any facts that support your objection. See Section 8 of this Notice (immediately below) for specifics regarding the Final Approval Hearing. If you do not comply with these procedures and the deadline for objections, the Court may not consider your objection at the Final Approval Hearing, and you may lose the right to contest the approval of the Settlement. You are still eligible to receive a settlement payment should the settlement become Final even if you object to the settlement. Submitting an objection does not preserve the right to appeal a final judgment. Rather, the right to appeal is preserved by becoming a party of record by timely and properly intervening or filing a motion to vacate the judgment before entry of judgment.

8. WHEN IS THE FINAL APPROVAL HEARING?

On [REDACTED], 2024, the Court will hold a public hearing in Department S26 of the Superior Court for the State of California, County of San Bernardino, 247 West 3rd Street, San Bernardino, CA 92415, for the purposes of determining whether the proposed Settlement is fair, adequate and reasonable and should be approved, whether to approve Class Counsel’s applications for attorneys’ fees and costs, whether to approve the payments to the LWDA, and whether to approve Plaintiff’s request for the service award. This hearing may be continued or rescheduled by the Court. Objectors to the proposed settlement will be provided notice in the event that the Final Approval Hearing is continued to a later date. Class Members who support the proposed Settlement do not need to appear at the hearing and do not need to take any other action to indicate their approval.

9. HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

If you have questions about this Notice, the process to Opt-Out or Object, or the Settlement, or if you did not receive this Notice in the mail and you believe that you are or may be a member of the Class, you may contact the Administrator for more information or to request that a copy of this Notice be sent to you in the mail. And you may also contact Class Counsel. Contact information for both the Administrator and Class Counsel is provided here:

Settlement Administrator	Class Counsel
Name Mailing Address Telephone Number	Brian Mankin, Esq. <i>brian@LMLfirm.com</i> Kristina Bui Carlson, Esq. <i>kristina@LMLfirm.com</i> Lauby Mankin Lauby LLP 5198 Arlington Ave, PMB 513 Riverside, CA 92504 Tel: (951) 320-1444

You may also seek advice and guidance from your own private attorney at your own expense, if you so desire.

This Notice is only a summary. For more detailed information, you may review the Settlement Agreement, containing the complete terms of the proposed Settlement, which is on file with the Court and attached to the Declaration of Brian J. Mankin in Support of Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlement filed on DATE, 2024 and available to be inspected at any time during regular business hours at the Office of the Clerk, San Bernardino County Superior Court, located at 247 West Third Street, San Bernardino, CA 92415.

DO NOT TELEPHONE THE COURT TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT THE SETTLEMENT

10. WHAT IF I LOSE MY SETTLEMENT CHECK?

If you lose or misplace your settlement check before cashing it, the Administrator will replace it as long as you request a replacement before the void date on the face of the original check. If your check is already void, you should consult the Unclaimed Property Fund for instructions on how to retrieve the funds.

11. WHAT IF I CHANGE MY ADDRESS?

To receive your check, you should immediately notify the Administrator if you move or otherwise change your mailing address. Section 9 of the Notice has the Administrator's contact information.

EXHIBIT “C”



February 8, 2023

Sent Via Online Filing to the LWDA

California LWDA
Attn: PAGA Administrator
455 Golden Gate Ave., 9th Fl.
San Francisco, CA 94102

Sent Via U.S. Mail and Certified Mail

South Star Logistics, Inc.
9668 Milliken Ave., Ste. 104-339
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730

South Star Logistics, Inc.
C/O Manminder Singh Gill
337 N. Vineyard Ave., Suite 303B
Ontario, CA 91764

Aman Singh Brar
9668 Milliken Ave., Ste. 104-339
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730

Jasleen Sidhu
9668 Milliken Ave., Ste. 104-339
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730

Re: PAGA Civil Penalty Claim
Steven Tassin v. South Star Logistics, Inc., et al.

To the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, South Star Logistics, Inc., Aman Singh Brar, Jasleen Sidhu, and all affiliated entities:

Pursuant to the Private Attorneys General Act of 2004 (“PAGA”), Labor Code §§ 2699, *et seq.*, this letter shall serve as notification of the PAGA civil penalty claim of aggrieved employee Steven Tassin (“Claimant”), on behalf of the State of California and all Aggrieved Employees, against his employer(s), South Star Logistics, Inc. (“South Star”) and/or any affiliated entities, as well as its owners/officers Aman Singh Brar, Jasleen Sidhu, and others (the “Owners”) (collectively, the “Company”), for violations of Labor Code §§ 201, 202, 203, 204, 208, 210, 218.6, 226, 226.2, 226.3, 256, 558, 1174(d), 1194, 1194.2, 1197, 1197.1, 1198, 1199, 2802, among other sections inadvertently omitted, and/or sections of the applicable Industrial Welfare Commission Wage Order(s).

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Claimant was employed by the Company in October 2021 through October 2022 as a truck driver. Claimant alleges that he and all nonexempt employees that were employed by the Company (the “Aggrieved

Employees”) were subjected to the same policies, working conditions, and corresponding wage and hour violations to Claimant was subjected during his employment.

Notably, at all relevant times, Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees were only paid on a piece-rate (per-mile) basis but did not receive separate hourly compensation at no less than the minimum wage for unpaid, on-duty, time including tasks such as pre-trip and post-trip inspections, detention time, loading and unloading time, completing paperwork, refueling or repair, and downtime between runs. Also, the piece-rate compensation paid to Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees often resulted in a payment of wages at less than the required California minimum wages for all hours worked.

Furthermore, Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees were not provided proper minimum and regular wages due to Company’s failure to accurately record and compensate for all hours worked. For example, Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees were often required to clock out for meal periods and/or rest breaks, yet were under the Company’s control and required to perform duties for the Company while off the clock. As a result of this policy and practice, Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees were required to perform off-the-clock work that the Company either knew or should have known they were performing.

Additionally, at all relevant times, Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees were denied paid rest breaks by virtue of the Company’s policy that only paid its truck drivers for miles driven. As Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees could not accrue miles during a rest break, Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees were illegally denied paid rest breaks. Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees were also not provided mandated 30-minute off-duty meal periods. Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees were not paid the mandatory one-hour wage premium for each such meal period or rest break denied. Also, the Company failed to pay Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees for rest and recovery periods and other nonproductive time as required by Labor Code § 226.2.

Also, the Company required Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees to incur necessary business-related expenses and costs without reimbursement, including, but not limited to, acquiring and maintaining a smart phone and related monthly data plan to communicate with the Company.

The Company also failed to comply with the mandates of Labor Code § 204 regarding the timing of the payment of wages to its employees each period, including meal and rest period premiums, and failed to comply with the mandates of Labor Code §§ 201 – 203 regarding payment of final wages upon separation of employment. Moreover, at all relevant times, the Company provided inaccurate and incomplete wage statements that failed to accurately state all necessary items required under Labor Code § 226(a).

Claimant alleges that he worked under the joint direction and control of South Star Logistics, Inc., and the Owners and is informed and believes that each of them acted in all respects pertinent to this action as the agent of the others, carried out a joint scheme, business plan or policy in all respect pertinent hereto, and the acts of each are legally attributable to the others. On information and belief, a unity of interest and ownership between each exists such that South Star Logistics, Inc., and the Owners acted as a single employer of Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees. Furthermore, on information and belief, South Star Logistics, Inc., and the Owners are an integrated enterprise and should be treated as a single employer because South Star Logistics, Inc., and the Owners share an interrelation of operations, with common human resources and personnel policies and shared common offices and facilities. Upon information and belief,

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South Star Logistics, Inc., and the Owners share common management, a centralized control of labor operations, and common ownership or financial control.

Furthermore, Claimant alleges that the Owners are now and at all material times herein mentioned was the owners/officers of South Star Logistics, Inc., and Claimant's and the Aggrieved Employees' actual employer or, in the alternative, was an individual employed by the Company as a managerial and/or supervisory employee and/or agent. In addition, Claimant alleges that at all relevant times herein the Owners had the authority, in the interest of the South Star Logistics, Inc., to exercise independent judgment to hire, transfer, promote, discharge, assign, discipline, or take other similar actions against Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees, and were in Claimant's chain of command at the time of and direct participants in the wrongful conduct which constitutes the basis of Claimant's complaint herein. Claimant also alleges that South Star Logistics, Inc. and the Owners are the agents, servants, employees, partners, affiliates, and/or representatives of each other, and were, at all times herein mentioned, acting within the course, scope, and purpose of such relationship(s) and with the knowledge, consent and/or ratification of each other. Furthermore, in conducting themselves in the manner described herein, South Star Logistics, Inc., and the Owners were acting in active concert with on another such that the acts of each were fully attributable to the other in all material respects.

Claimant also alleges that South Star Logistics, Inc., was merely the alter ego of the Owners in that there existed a unity of interest and ownership such that any separateness between them ceased to exist and the Owners exercised undue dominance, control, influence, and management over South Star Logistics, Inc. Claimant further alleges that, at all relevant times South Star Logistics, Inc., has been inadequately capitalized to conduct its business, has failed to follow appropriate corporate formalities, and has simply been a shell and instrumentality through which the Owners have conducted their personal affairs. Accordingly, the corporate veil should be pierced, and any liability attached to South Star Logistics, Inc. should be imposed jointly and severally against the Owners. Adherence to the fiction of the separate existence of the corporate entity of South Star Logistics, Inc. would permit abuse of the corporate privilege, thereby sanctioning fraud and promoting injustice.

Also, in a separate, but not necessarily mutually exclusive, alternative theory of liability, Owners are liable for PAGA civil penalties under Labor Code § 558 as "other person(s)" who caused the violations regarding minimum wage among other claims. *See Atempa v. Pedrazzani* (2018) 27 Cal.App.5th 809, 820 ("if there is evidence and a finding that a party other than the employer 'violates, or causes to be violated' the overtime laws (§ 558(a)) or 'pays or causes to be paid to any employee' less than minimum wage (§ 1197.1(a)), then that party is liable for certain civil penalties regardless of the identity or business structure of the employer"); *Moua v. IBM* (N.D. Cal. 2019) 2019 U.S.Dist.LEXIS 40851 (holding the same)

Based on Claimant's own personal observations, all Aggrieved Employees employed or formerly employed by the Company are entitled to similar wage and hour claims, as further set forth below.

PAGA ASSESSMENT FOR FAILURE TO PAY WAGES

(Labor Code §§ 204, 221-223, 510, 558, 1194, 1194.2, 1197, 1197.1, 1198; IWC Wage Order §§ 3, 4(B))

During their employment, Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees were paid on a piece-rate basis and did not receive separate hourly compensation at no less than the minimum wage for unpaid, on-duty, time including tasks such as mandatory paid rest breaks, pre-trip and post-trip inspections, detention time,

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loading and unloading time, completing paperwork, refueling or repair, and downtime between runs. Additionally, the piece-rate compensation paid to Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees often resulted in a payment of wages at less than the required California minimum wages for all hours worked. Therefore, this resulted in earned, but unpaid, minimum and regular wages due and owing to Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees. Accordingly, Labor Code §§ 210, 558, 1194.2, 1197.1, and 2699, among possibly others, impose various penalties upon the Company for each employee and each pay period in which it failed to pay all wages including, but not limited to, minimum and regular wages in violation of the Labor Code and/or the IWC Wage Orders.

PAGA ASSESSMENT FOR FAILURE TO PROVIDE SEPARATE PAYMENT FOR REST AND RECOVERY PERIODS AND OTHER NONPRODUCTIVE TIME

(Labor Code § 226.2)

Labor Code § 226.2 requires employers that pay their employees on a piece-rate basis to provide separate payment for rest and recovery periods and other nonproductive time. Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees are and/or were employees of the Company who were paid on a piece-rate basis, yet the Company did not comply with the requirements of Labor Code § 226.2 for its piece-rate employees. As a result of these violations, penalties may be assessed pursuant to Labor Code § 2699, among possibly other sections.

PAGA ASSESSMENT FOR DENIAL OF MEAL PERIODS, REST BREAKS, AND WAGE PREMIUMS

(Labor Code §§ 226.7(b) & (c), 512, 558; Cal. Admin. Code, Title 8, § 11090)

Labor Code § 226.7(b) states that “[a]n employer shall not require an employee to work during a meal or rest or recovery period mandated pursuant to an applicable statute, or applicable regulation, standard, or order of the Industrial Welfare Commission ...” Labor Code § 512(a) states in pertinent part: “[A]n employer may not employ an employee for a work period of more than 5 hours per day without providing the employee with an uninterrupted meal period of not less than 30 minutes [...] [a]n employer may not employ an employee for a work period of more than 10 hours per day without providing the employee with a second meal period of not less than 30 minutes.”

Section 12 of applicable IWC Wage Order states in pertinent part: “Every employer shall authorize and permit all employees to take rest periods, which insofar as practicable shall be in the middle of each work period. The authorized 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.”

Here, Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees were not provided with paid rest periods by virtue of the Company’s policy that only paid on a piece-rate basis. As the Aggrieved Employees could not generate compensation during rest breaks, Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees were denied paid rest breaks. Furthermore, Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees were regularly not provided compliant meal periods and paid rest breaks because the Company did not have any policy which provided compliant meal periods and paid rest breaks to the Aggrieved Employees. Although the Company was required to pay Claimant and all Aggrieved Employees premium wages equal to an additional hour of pay at the employee’s regular rate of pay for each violation under Labor Code § 226.7(c), the Company did not pay the mandatory one-hour wage premiums. Labor Code § 558 imposes a penalty for each violation, plus an amount sufficient to recover the

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underpaid wages. Additionally, the civil assessment set forth in Labor Code § 2699 applies to these violations.

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PAGA ASSESSMENT FOR UNLAWFUL DEDUCTION OF WAGES

(Labor Code §§ 200, 221, 223)

California Labor Code § 200 defines wages to include “all amounts for labor performed by employees of every description, whether the amount is fixed or ascertained by the standard of time, task, piece, commission basis, or other method of calculation.” California Labor Code § 221 states that “[i]t shall be unlawful for any employer to collect or receive from an employee any part of wages theretofore paid by said employer to said employee.” Labor Code § 221 reflects “‘California’s strong public policy favoring the protection of employees’ wages.’” *Sciborski v. Pacific Bell Directory* (2012) 205 Cal.App.4th 1152, 1166, quoting *Harris v. Investor’s Business Daily, Inc.* (2006) 138 Cal.App.4th 28, 40–41. Furthermore, Labor Code § 219 states that the protections of Labor Code § 221 cannot “be contravened or set aside by a private agreement.” Therefore, the rights under Labor Code § 221 are nonnegotiable and cannot be waived by the parties. See *Sciborski, supra* at 1166. Also, under Labor Code §§ 219 and 221, an employer may not “require its employees to consent to unlawful deductions from their wages.” *Hudgins v. Neiman Marcus Group, Inc.* (1995) 34 Cal.App.4th 1109, 1124.

Here, the Company had a policy of unlawfully deducting amounts from the wages of the Aggrieved Employees, including Claimant. Accordingly, Labor Code §§ 210, 225.5, 558, and 2699, among possibly others, impose various penalties upon the Company for each employee and each pay period in which it engaged in the unlawful deduction of wages.

PAGA ASSESSMENT FOR FAILURE TO REIMBURSE BUSINESS EXPENSES

(Labor Code § 2802; IWC Wage Order § 9(b))

Labor Code § 2802(a) states “An employer shall indemnify his or her employee for all necessary expenditures or losses incurred by the employee in direct consequence of the discharge of his or her duties.” IWC Wage Order § 9(b) states “[w]hen tools or equipment are required by the employer or are necessary to the performance of a job, such tools and equipment shall be provided and maintained by the employer.”

Here, the Company required Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees to incur expenses in direct consequence of the discharge of their duties. For example, the Company required Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees to acquire and maintain a smart phone and related monthly data plan in order to log into an application that tracks mileage and GPS during the routes assigned to them by the Company. Accordingly, Labor Code § 2699 imposes a penalty upon the Company for each such violation of Labor Code § 2802. Furthermore, Labor Code § 2802(b) states that “[a]ll awards made by a Court for reimbursement of necessary expenditures” shall carry interest, at the same rate as judgments in civil actions, and said interest will accrue from the date on which the employee incurred the necessary expenditure or loss including, but not limited to, reasonable costs and attorney’s fees incurred by the employee enforcing her rights granted pursuant to Labor Code § 2802.

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**PAGA ASSESSMENT FOR FAILURE TO PAY ALL WAGES DUE AND OWING
EACH PAYROLL PERIOD WITHIN THE TIME REQUIRED BY LAW**

(Labor Code §§ 204, 204.1, 208, 256 and 2699)

Labor Code § 204(a) states that all wages earned by a person are due and payable twice during each calendar month, and further states that wages earned during the first through fifteenth days of the month must be paid no later than the twenty-sixth day of the month, and that wages earned between the sixteenth and last day of the month must be paid by the tenth day of the following month. Labor Code § 204(d) states “[t]he requirements of this section shall be deemed satisfied by the payment of wages for weekly, biweekly, or semimonthly payroll if the wages are paid not more than seven calendar days following the close of the payroll period.”

Here, the Company failed to timely pay all wages due and owing each period, including, but not limited to, all wages and wage premiums. As a result, penalties may be assessed pursuant to Labor Code §§ 203, 210, 256, and/or 2699.

PAGA ASSESSMENT FOR FAILURE TO TIMELY PAY FINAL WAGES

(Labor Code §§ 201, 202, 203, 256 and 2699)

Labor Code § 201(a) provides in pertinent part: “If an employer discharges an employee, the wages earned and unpaid at the time of discharge are due and payable immediately.” Labor Code § 202(a) states in pertinent part “If an employee not having a written contract for a definite period quits his or her employment, his or her wages shall become due and payable not later than 72 hours thereafter, unless the employee has given 72 hours’ previous notice of his or her intention to quit, in which case the employee is entitled to his or her wages at the time of quitting.” Labor Code § 203(a) states “If an employer willfully fails to pay, without abatement or reduction, in accordance with Sections 201, 201.3, 201.5, 201.9, 202, and 205.5, any wages of an employee who is discharged or who quits, the wages of the employee shall continue as a penalty from the due date thereof at the same rate until paid or until an action therefor is commenced; but the wages shall not continue for more than 30 days.”

As discussed above, the Company did not pay the Aggrieved Employees all wages that were due and owing within the required time following the end of their employment due to the violations discussed above. Furthermore, Claimant did not receive his final pay within the time required by Labor Code §§ 201 – 202. As a result, all such Aggrieved Employees are entitled to the “waiting time penalty.” (Labor Code §§ 203, 256.) Labor Code § 2699 also imposes a penalty.

**PAGA ASSESSMENT FOR
FAILURE TO PROVIDE ACCURATE, ITEMIZED WAGE STATEMENTS**

(Labor Code §§ 226, 226.3, and 1174)

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Labor Code § 226(a) requires an employer to provide its employees with itemized wage statements accurately stating gross wages earned, total hours worked, the number of piece-rate units earned and any applicable piece rate if the employee is paid on a piece-rate basis, all deductions, net wages earned, the inclusive dates of the pay period, the employee's name and the last four digits of his or her Social Security number (or employee identification number), the name and address of the legal entity that is the employer, and all applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the corresponding number of hours worked at each hourly rate by the employee.

Furthermore, Labor Code § 226.2(a) states “[f]or employees compensated on a piece-rate basis during a pay period, the following shall apply for that pay period: [...] (2) the itemized statement required by subdivision (a) of Section 226 shall, in addition to the other items specified in that subdivision, separately state the following, to which the provisions of Section 226 shall also be applicable: (A) the total hours of compensable rest and recovery periods, the rate of compensation, and the gross wages paid for those periods during the pay period [and] (B) [...] the total hours of other nonproductive time, [...] the rate of compensation, and the gross wages paid for that time during the pay period.”

Here, the Company failed to provide accurate itemized wage statements due to violations including: failure to accurately state total hours worked on the Aggrieved Employees' wage statements; name and address of the legal entity that is the employer; failure to accurately state the number of piece-rate units earned by the Aggrieved Employees and any applicable piece-rate; failure to accurately state gross wages earned; failure to accurately state all deductions; failure to accurately state net wages earned; failure to state all applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the corresponding number of hours worked at each hourly rate by the employee; failure to state the total hours of compensable rest and recovery periods, the rate of compensation, and the gross wages paid for those periods during the pay period; and failure to state the total hours of other nonproductive time, [...] the rate of compensation, and the gross wages paid for that time during the pay period. Accordingly, Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees are entitled to damages under Labor Code § 226(e), including reasonable attorneys' fees. Labor Code §§ 226.3 and 2699 also impose a civil penalty and/or assessment for these violations.

PAGA ASSESSMENT FOR VIOLATIONS OF LABOR CODE § 1199

(Labor Code § 1199)

An employer violates Labor Code § 1199 if said employer: (a) requires or causes an employee to work for longer hours than those fixed, or under conditions of labor prohibited by an order of the commission; (b) pays or causes to be paid to any employee a wage less than the minimum fixed by an order of the commission; or, (c) violates or refuses or neglects to comply with any provision of this chapter or any order or ruling of the commission. Labor Code § 2699.5 specifically enumerates Labor Code § 1199 as a section to which the civil penalties under the PAGA apply. Therefore, as a result of the Company's violations described herein, the Company is subject to the civil penalties in accordance with Labor Code § 2699.

ATTORNEYS' FEES, INTEREST, AND PENALTIES

(Labor Code §§ 2699(f)(2), 2699(g)(1), 2699.5)

Labor Code § 2699(g)(1), give employees the right to recover in a civil action the unpaid balance of the full amount of wages, including interest thereon, penalties and other damages, as applicable, reasonable

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attorneys' fees, and costs of suit. Additionally, Claimant seeks the assessment of penalties, including civil penalties, under Labor Code §§ 203, 210, 225.5, 226.3, 1174.5, 1197.1, 2699, among possibly other provisions inadvertently omitted herein. Furthermore, Claimant is entitled to bring a wage/hour claim on behalf of all current and former similarly situated employees of the Company. Thus, the Company is exposed to these same penalties for violations involving all Aggrieved Employees.

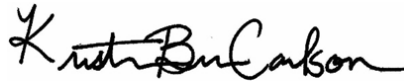
Additionally, Claimant seeks attorney's fees pursuant to *C.C.P.* § 1021.5. Please construe this correspondence as Claimants' notification of alleged wrongdoing and attempted resolution in accordance with *C.C.P.* § 1021.5 and *Graham v. DaimlerChrysler Corp.* (2004) 34 Cal.4th 553.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, the Company may be liable for penalties, including unpaid wages under Labor Code § 558, related to the foregoing claims and remedies. If Claimant becomes aware of any additional claims for Labor Code violations related to his employment and/or other employees of the Company, she reserves the right to add new claims by amending this claim letter.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to give me a call. In the meantime, I look forward to your response.

Very Truly Yours,



By: Kristina Bui Carlson, Esq.

E-mail: kristina@lmlfirm.com

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EXHIBIT “D”



CASE ASSUMPTIONS

Class Members	175
Opt Out Rate	1%
Opt Outs Received	4
Total Class Claimants	171
Subtotal Admin Only	\$7,565.14

Flat Fee Total \$7,000.00

For 175 Class Members

Pricing Good for Scope of Estimate Only

All Aspects of Escheating to the State of CA Included

Language Translation, Printing & Mailing Included

April 23, 2024

Case: Tassin vs. South Star Logistics, Opt-Out & PAGA Administration

Phoenix Contact: Michael E. Moore

Contact Number: 949.331.0131

Email: mike@phoenixclassaction.com

Requesting Attorney: Brian J. Mankin

Firm: Lauby, Mankin & Lauby, LLP

Contact Number: (951) 320-1444

Email: brian@lmfirm.com

Assumptions and Estimate are based on information provided by counsel. If class size changes, PHX will need to adjust this Estimate accordingly.

Estimate is based on **175** Class Members. Class data **Must** be sent in Microsoft Excel or uploaded in the same format. Class Data Must be sent in one spreadsheet, with no additional programming needed. A rate of \$150 per hour will be charged for any additional analysis or programming. Pricing good for 90 day

Case & Database Setup / Toll Free Setup & Call Center / NCOA (USPS)

Administrative Tasks:	Rate	Hours/Units	Line Item	Estimate
Programming Manager	\$100.00	2		\$200.00
Programming Database & Setup	\$100.00	2		\$200.00
Toll Free Setup*	\$100.00	1		\$100.00
Call Center & Long Distance	\$2.00	29		\$58.00
NCOA (USPS)	\$35.00	1		\$35.00
Total				\$593.00

* Up to 120 days after disbursement

Data Merger & Scrub / Notice Packet, Opt-Out Form & Postage / Language Translation / Website

Project Action	Rate	Hours/Units	Line Item	Estimate
Notice Packet Formatting	\$100.00	2		\$200.00
Language Translation	\$1,000.00	1		\$1,000.00
Data Merge & Duplication Scrub	\$0.10	175		\$17.50
Notice Packet & Opt-Out Form	\$1.30	175		\$227.50
Estimated Postage (up to 2 oz.)*	\$0.87	175		\$152.25
Static Website	\$200.00	1		\$200.00
Total				\$1,797.25

* Prices good for 90 days. Subject to change with the USPS Rate or change in Notice pages or Translation, if any.



PHOENIX

CLASS ACTION ADMINISTRATION SOLUTIONS

Skip Tracing & Remailing Notice Packets / Tracking & Programming Undeliverables

Project Action:	Rate	Hours/Units	Line Item	Estimate
Case Associate	\$55.00	2		\$110.00
Skip Tracing Undeliverables	\$1.00	26		\$26.25
Remail Notice Packets	\$1.00	23		\$23.25
Estimated Postage	\$0.87	23		\$20.23
Programming Undeliverables	\$50.00	2		\$100.00
			Total	\$279.73

Database Programming / Processing Opt-Outs, Deficiencies or Disputes

Project Action:	Rate	Hours/Units	Line Item	Estimate
Programming Database	\$150.00	1		\$150.00
Non Opt-Out Processing	\$200.00	1		\$200.00
Case Associate	\$55.00	4		\$220.00
Deficiency & Dispute Letters	\$10.00	9		\$90.00
Case Manager	\$85.00	2		\$170.00
			Total	\$830.00

Calculation & Disbursement Programming/ Create & Manage QSF/ Mail Checks

Project Action:	Rate	Hours/Units	Line Item	Estimate
Programming Calculations	\$135.00	1		\$135.00
Disbursement Review	\$135.00	1		\$135.00
Programming Manager	\$95.00	2		\$190.00
QSF Bank Account & EIN	\$135.00	1		\$135.00
Check Run Setup & Printing	\$135.00	2		\$270.00
Mail Class Checks *	\$0.90	171		\$153.90
Estimated Postage	\$0.64	171		\$109.44
			Total	\$1,128.34

* Checks are printed on 8.5 x 11 in. sheets with W2/1099 Tax Filing & Instructions for downloading tax forms from PHX secure portal



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CLASS ACTION ADMINISTRATION SOLUTIONS

Tax Reporting & Reconciliation / Re-Issuance of Checks / Conclusion Reports and Declarations				
Project Action:	Rate	Hours/Units	Line Item	Estimate
Case Supervisor	\$115.00	2		\$230.00
Remail Checks (Postage Included)	\$2.00	36		\$71.82
Case Associate	\$55.00	3		\$165.00
Reconcile Uncashed Checks	\$85.00	4		\$340.00
Conclusion Reports	\$115.00	2		\$230.00
Case Manager Conclusion	\$85.00	3		\$255.00
Final Reporting & Declarations	\$115.00	3		\$345.00
IRS & QSF Annual Tax Reporting * (1 State Tax Reporting & Escheating to the State of CA Included)	\$1,300.00	1		\$1,300.00
Total				\$2,936.82

* All applicable California State & Federal taxes, which include SUI, ETT, and SDI, and FUTA filings. Additional taxes are Defendant's responsibility.

Estimate Total: \$7,565.14



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CLASS ACTION ADMINISTRATION SOLUTIONS

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Provisions: The case estimate is in good faith and does not cover any applicable taxes and fees. The estimate does not make any provision for any services or class size not delineated in the request for proposal or stipulations. Proposal rates and amounts are subject to change upon further review, with Counsel/Client, of the Settlement Agreement. Only pre-approved changes will be charged when applicable. No modifications may be made to this estimate without the approval of PSA (Phoenix Settlement Administrators). All notifications are mailed in English language only unless otherwise specified. Additional costs will apply if translation into other language(s) is required. Rates to prepare and file taxes are for Federal and California State taxes only. Additional charges will apply if multiple state tax filing(s) is required. **Pricing is good for ninety (90) days.**

Data Conversion and Mailing: The proposal assumes that data provided will be in ready-to-use condition and that all data is provided in a single, comprehensive Excel spreadsheet. PSA cannot be liable for any errors or omissions arising due to additional work required for analyzing and processing the original database. A minimum of two (2) business days is required for processing prior to the anticipated mailing date with an additional two (2) business days for a National Change of Address (NCOA) update. Additional time may be required depending on the class size, necessary translation of the documents, or other factors. PSA will keep counsel apprised of the estimated mailing date.

Claims: PSA's general policy is to not accept claims via facsimile. However, in the event that facsimile filing of claims must be accepted, PSA will not be held responsible for any issues and/or errors arising out of said filing. Furthermore, PSA will require disclaimer language regarding facsimile transmissions. PSA will not be responsible for any acts or omissions caused by the USPS. PSA shall not make payments to any claimants without verified, valid Social Security Numbers. All responses and class member information are held in strict confidentiality. Additional class members are \$10.00 per opt-out.

Payment Terms: All postage charges and 50% of the final administration charges are due at the commencement of the case and will be billed immediately upon receipt of the data and/or notice documents. PSA bills are due upon receipt unless otherwise negotiated and agreed to with PSA by Counsel/Client. In the event the settlement terms provide that PSA is to be paid out of the settlement fund, PSA will request that Counsel/Client endeavor to make alternate payment arrangements for PSA charges that are due at the onset of the case. The entire remaining balance is due and payable at the time the settlement account is funded by Defendant, or no later than the time of disbursement. Amounts not paid within thirty (30) days are subject to a service charge of 1.5% per month or the highest rate permitted by law.

Tax Reporting Requirements

PSA will file the necessary tax returns under the EIN of the QSF, including federal and state returns. Payroll tax returns will be filed if necessary. Under the California Employment Development Department, all taxes are to be reported under the EIN of the QSF with the exception of the following taxes: Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Employment Training Tax (ETT), employer-side taxes, and State Disability Insurance (SDI), an employee-side tax. These are reported under Defendant's EIN. Therefore, to comply with the EDD payroll tax filing requirements we will need the following information:

1. Defendant's California State ID and Federal EIN.
2. Defendant's current State Unemployment Insurance (UI) rate and Employment Training Tax (ETT) rate. This information can be found in the current year DE 2088, Notice of Contribution Rates, issued by the EDD.
3. Termination dates of the class members, or identification of current employee class members, so we can account for the periods that the wages relate to for each class member.
4. An executed Power of Attorney (Form DE 48) from Defendant. This form is needed so that we may report the UI, SDI, and ETT taxes under Defendant's EIN on their behalf. If this form is not provided we will work with the EDD auditors to transfer the tax payments to Defendant's EIN.
5. Defendant is responsible for reporting the SDI portion of the settlement payments on the class member's W-2. PSA will file these forms on Defendant's behalf for an additional fee and will issue an additional W-2 for each class member under Defendant's EIN, as SDI is reported under Defendant's EIN rather than the EIN of the QSF. The Power of Attorney (Form DE 48) will be needed in order for PSA to report SDI payments.

EXHIBIT “E”