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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

BEVERLY FITZGERALD and MINDI MONROE, on behalf of other similarly situated employees of Defendants and the State of California under the Private Attorneys General Act,

Plaintiffs,

vs.

SAN DIEGO HUMANE SOCIETY AND S.P.C.A. and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No. 25CU053429C

Judge: James Mangione
Department: C-75

CLASS ACTION

FIRST AMENDED CLASS AND REPRESENTATIVE ACTION COMPLAINT

1. Failure to Pay All Wages Owed
2. Failure to Pay All Overtime Wages
3. Meal Period Violations
4. Rest Period Violations
5. Paid Sick Leave Violations
6. Untimely Payment of Wages
7. Wage Statement Violations
8. Waiting Time Penalties
9. Failure to Reimburse Business Expenses
10. Unfair Competition
11. Civil Penalties under the Private Attorneys General Act (Labor Code §§ 2698 *et seq.*)

Action Filed: October 3, 2025

Plaintiffs BEVERLY FITZGERALD and MINDI MONROE, on behalf of all other similarly situated employees and the State of California under the Private Attorneys General Act ("Plaintiffs") brings this FIRST AMENDED CLASS AND REPRESENTATIVE ACTION COMPLAINT against Defendants SAN DIEGO HUMANE SOCIETY AND S.P.C.A. and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive (collectively "Defendants"), alleging as follows:

INTRODUCTION

1. Plaintiffs bring this instant class action on behalf of themselves and similarly situated current and former employees of Defendants for a series of systemic violations of the California Labor Code and IWC Wage Orders.

2. Defendants failed to pay Plaintiffs and the putative class members for all regular and overtime hours due to their unlawful on-call policies.

3. Plaintiffs and the putative class members were not always given adequate opportunities to take compliant meal and rest breaks, yet Defendants did not pay Plaintiffs and the putative class members all meal and rest premiums owed.

4. Defendants failed to reimburse Plaintiffs and class members for necessary expenses incurred in furtherance of class members' job duties.

5. Defendants' employment policies, practices, and payroll administration systems enabled and facilitated these violations on a company-wide basis with respect to the putative class members.

6. Defendants are further liable for derivative claims for wage statements, untimely payment, and other associated violations.

7. Plaintiffs seek to recover the underpaid damages, plus associated penalties, interests, attorney's fees and costs.

JURISDICTION & VENUE

8. Jurisdiction of this action is proper in this Court under Article VI, Section 10 of the California Constitution as the causes of action are premised upon violations of California law.

9. The monetary damages and restitution sought exceed the minimal jurisdiction limits of the Superior Court.

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

11. Venue is proper in this Court under Code of Civil Procedure sections 393(a), 395, and/or 395.5 because, upon information and belief, Defendants conducted business and committed some of the alleged violations in this County.

PARTIES

A. Plaintiffs

12. Plaintiff Fitzgerald is an individual over 18 years of age who worked for Defendants in California as a non-exempt employee from about September 2018 to the present. Plaintiff worked as a Humane Law Enforcement Officer.

13. Plaintiff Monroe is an individual over 18 years of age who worked for Defendants in California as a non-exempt employee from about January 2025 to the present. Plaintiff worked as a Humane Law Enforcement Officer

14. The State of California, via the Labor and Workforce Development Agency ("<u>LWDA</u>"), is the real party in interest in this action. (*Kim v. Reins Int'l California, Inc.* (2020) 9 Cal. 5th 73, 81 [The "government entity on whose behalf the plaintiff files suit is always the real party in interest."]). To the extent permitted by law, including pursuant *Balderas v. Fresh Start Harvesting,*

Inc. (2024) 101 Cal. App. 5th 533 and *Rodriguez v. Packers Sanitation Services Ltd., LLC* (2025) 109 Cal.App.5th 69, the PAGA claim is brought exclusively as a representative action and does not include arbitrable claims.

B. Defendants

15. Defendant San Diego Humane Society And S.P.C.A. is a non-profit California corporation that maintains operations and conducts business throughout the State of California, including in this county. Defendant is dedicated to animal welfare provides adoption & veterinarian services plus training

16. The true names and capacities, whether individual, corporate, or otherwise, of the parties sued as DOES 1 through 50, are presently unknown, unascertainable, or uncertain, and are sued by such fictitious names under Code of Civil Procedure section 474. Upon information and belief, each of DOES 1 through 50 constitutes a legal employer or is otherwise legally responsible in some manner for the acts and omissions alleged herein. This Complaint may be amended to reflect their true names and capacities once ascertained.

17. Upon information and belief, Defendants in this action are employers, co-employers, joint employers, and/or part of an integrated employer enterprise, as each of the Defendants exercised control over the wages, hours, and working conditions of the employees, suffered and permitted them to work, and otherwise engaged them as employees under California law.

18. Upon information and belief, at least some of the Defendants have common ownership, common management, interrelationship of operations, and centralized control over labor relations and are therefore part of an integrated enterprise and thus jointly and severally responsible for the acts and omissions alleged herein, including pursuant to Labor Code sections 558, 558.1, and 1197.1.

19. Upon information and belief, Defendants acted in all respects pertinent to this action as an alter-ego, agent, servant, joint employer, joint venturer, co-conspirator, partner, in an integrated

enterprise, or in some other capacity on behalf of all other co-defendants, such that the acts and omissions of each defendant may be legally attributable to all others.

CLASS ALLEGATIONS

20. This action is brought individually and on behalf of the following class pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure section 382:

a. All current and former non-exempt employees who worked for Defendants in California at any time from four years prior to the filing of this action through date of class certification.

21. Plaintiffs reserve the right to establish various subclass definitions as appropriate at the class certification stage, according to proof.

22. The class is ascertainable and shares a well-defined community of interest in this litigation:

a. Numerosity: The class is estimated to exceed 50 individuals, although the precise membership of the entire class is unknown at this time. The class is so numerous that joinder of all class members is impracticable. The identities of class members are ascertainable by inspection of Defendants' employment and payroll records.

b. Typicality: Plaintiffs' claims are typical of the claims of the other class members. They were subject to the same policies and practices of Defendants, which resulted in losses to the class. Proof of common unlawful business practices, which Plaintiffs experienced, will establish the right of the class to recover on the causes of action alleged herein.

c. Adequacy: Plaintiffs are adequate class representatives; will take all necessary steps to protect the class members' interests adequately and fairly; have no interest antagonistic to other class members; and are represented by attorneys who have substantial experience prosecuting, defending, resolving, and litigating wage and hour class, collective, and representative actions in California state and federal courts.

d. Superiority: A class action is superior to other means for adjudicating this dispute. Individual joinder is impractical. Class treatment will allow for common issues to be resolved in a single forum, simultaneously, and without duplication of effort and expense.

e. Public Policy Considerations: Certification of this lawsuit as a class action advances the State of California's strong public interest in ensuring its approximately millions of employed residents are properly paid the wages they earned for the hours they worked. Class actions provide a mechanism for the enforcement of labor laws and allow for the vindication of employee rights by unnamed class members.

23. Common questions of law and fact as to the class members predominate over questions affecting only individual members. The common questions of law and fact exist as to whether the employment policies and practices formulated by Defendants and applied to the class members constitute violations of California law.

GENERAL ALLEGATIONS

24. Plaintiffs and putative class members worked for Defendants as non-exempt employees and were compensated on an hourly basis.

25. Defendants failed to pay Plaintiffs and the putative class members at the lawful minimum wage rate for all hours worked, resulting in unpaid minimum wages.

26. Plaintiffs and putative class members were required to work on-call shifts approximately three to four times per month. These shifts typically lasted from 9:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. During these shifts, any incoming calls were treated as high priority, requiring Plaintiffs and putative class members to respond within thirty (30) minutes. As a result, Plaintiffs and the putative class members should have been compensated on an hourly basis for the entirety of each on-call shift.

27. However, Defendants instead compensated Plaintiffs and putative class members with a flat rate for each on-call shift, regardless of the number of hours actually worked or the level of restriction placed on their time. This unlawful practice resulted in unpaid wages for all hours worked.

28. Additionally, on days when they were scheduled for on-call shifts, Plaintiffs and putative class members would travel from their regular work assignments to their homes in work trucks provided by Defendants. Although they were considered "off the clock" during this travel time, Plaintiffs and putative class members remained under the control of their employer, as they were responsible for the custody and security of the work trucks. These vehicles contained sensitive and essential equipment, including veterinary supplies, pet carriers, traps, muzzles, leashes, and other tools necessary for their duties. As such, Plaintiffs and the putative class members should have been compensated for this time spent under the employer's control.

29. Defendants routinely scheduled Plaintiffs and putative class members for regular shifts and on-call shifts within a short time frame of one another—often just hours apart. Due to this close scheduling and the requirement that on-call shifts be performed using the employer's work truck, Plaintiffs and putative class members were unable to fully disengage from work duties or leave the work vehicle in between shifts. As a result, they remained under the employer's control during these periods, despite not being clocked in.

30. This scheduling practice caused Plaintiffs and putative class members to perform several hours of off-the-clock work each time they were assigned both a regular and an on-call shift

on the same day. Consequently, this resulted in unpaid wages for compensable time worked under the control and direction of the employer.

31. Defendants failed to pay Plaintiffs and the putative class members overtime wages at the lawful rate for hours worked in excess of eight (8) hours in a day or forty (40) hours in a week, resulting in unpaid overtime compensation.

32. Plaintiffs and the putative class members should have been compensated on an hourly basis for all time spent on on-call shifts. When the total hours worked—including on-call and off-the-clock time—exceeded eight (8) hours in a single day or forty (40) hours in a workweek, Defendants were obligated to pay overtime wages at one and one-half times the regular rate of pay.

33. However, due to Defendants' flat-rate compensation policy for on-call shifts and the failure to compensate for off-the-clock work, Plaintiffs and the putative class members were routinely underpaid for overtime hours worked.

34. Defendants failed to comply with California's paid sick leave laws with respect to the putative class members.

35. As a result of Defendants' policy of failing to account for all on-call hours worked and all off-the-clock hours, Plaintiffs did not always accrue the accurate amount of paid sick leave earned.

36. This practice often resulted in unpaid sick leave.

37. Plaintiffs and the putative class members often experienced non-compliant meal periods to keep up with the high demands of the job. Plaintiffs worked as Humane Law Enforcement Officers.

38. Plaintiffs' job duties included moving from one emergency call to another. As such, Plaintiffs and the putative class members were sometimes prevented from taking meal periods. Further, when Plaintiffs and the putative class members were allowed to take meal periods, they were

sometimes interrupted for emergency calls for animal seizures, welfare checks, or other urgent happenings. These interruptions often also resulted in short meal periods.

39. As a result, Defendants should have paid meal period premiums for each non-compliant meal period. However, as a matter of policy and practice, Defendants failed to pay all meal period premiums owed.

40. Plaintiffs and the putative class members often experienced non-compliant rest periods to keep up with the high demands of the job. Plaintiffs worked as a Humane Law Enforcement Officers.

41. Plaintiffs' job duties included moving from one emergency call to another. As such, Plaintiffs and the putative class members were sometimes prevented from taking rest periods. Further, when Plaintiffs and the putative class members were allowed to take rest periods, they were sometimes interrupted for emergency calls for animal seizures, welfare checks, or other urgent happenings. These interruptions often also resulted in short rest periods.

42. As a result, Defendants should have paid rest period premiums for each non-compliant rest period. However, as a matter of policy and practice, Defendants failed to pay all rest period premiums owed.

43. Defendants required Plaintiffs and the putative class members to incur costs for work-related purposes without full reimbursement.

44. As a direct consequence of their job duties, Plaintiffs and the putative class members unavoidably and necessarily incurred losses, expenditures, and costs. These expenses arose as a result of Defendants' policies and practices.

45. Specifically, Defendants required Plaintiffs and the putative class members to purchase certain items of their uniform out of pocket. For example, instead of providing the required covers for

Kevlar vests—costing approximately $150 to $175—Defendants placed the burden of purchasing these items on Plaintiffs and the putative class members.

46. Additionally, Defendants required Plaintiffs and the putative class members to incur mileage and gas expenses without reimbursement.

47. Specifically, Defendants required the putative class members to travel from the North County campus to downtown San Diego for training. Defendants did not provide transportation and instead required Plaintiffs and the putative class members to use their personal vehicles for these trips.

48. However, Defendants did not always pay mileage or gas expenses.

49. Occasionally, Defendants expected Plaintiffs and the putative class members to incur these costs without reimbursement.

50. These violations create derivative liability for failure to timely pay all wages owed each payday or upon separation of employment.

51. Defendants failed to pay Plaintiffs and the class members all wages owed for regular, overtime, and sick pay. Therefore, Defendants failed to pay all wages owed no later than seven (7) calendar days following the close of the payroll period in violation of Labor Code section 204(a).

52. Defendants failed to provide accurate itemized wage statements to the class members each pay period as a result of the policies and practices set forth in this notice. Defendants violated Labor Code section 226(a)(1) and (5) by not listing the correct “gross wages earned” or “net wages earned,” as the employees earned wages and premiums that were not paid, resulting in an inaccurate reflection and recording of “gross wages earned” on those wage statements.

53. Likewise, in violation of Labor Code section 226(a)(9), Defendants failed to state on employee wage statements each pay period the applicable hourly rates in effect and the number of hours worked at that rate, as Defendants failed to pay all wages and premiums owed to employees.

The amounts stated are instead depreciated and underpaid, resulting in an inaccurate reflection on the pay stub.

54. Plaintiffs and other putative class members cannot promptly and easily determine from the wage statement alone the wages paid or earned without reference to other documents or information. Indeed, these wage statement violations are significant because they sow confusion among Plaintiffs and other putative class members with respect to what amounts were owed and paid, at what rates, the number of hours worked, and how those amounts were or should be calculated. The wage statements reflect a false statement of earnings and conceal the underlying problems and underpayments of employee wages.

55. Because of these policies and practices set forth above, Defendants failed to accurately maintain records in accordance with Labor Code section 1174 and the IWC Wage Orders.

1 CAUSE OF ACTION

FAILURE TO PAY ALL WAGES OWED

Violation of Labor Code §§ 200, 218, 1194, 1194.2, and 1197

(All Claims Alleged by Plaintiffs and Class Members Against All Defendants)

56. All outside paragraphs of this Complaint are incorporated into this section.

57. This cause of action is brought pursuant to the IWC Wage Orders and Labor Code §§ 200, 218, 1182.12, 1194, 1194.2, 1197, 1197.1 and 1198 and the IWC Wage Orders (the “Hours and Days of Work” and “Minimum Wages” sections of the applicable orders), which require non-exempt employees be timely paid at least the state or local minimum wage (if higher) for each hour of work, and further provide a private right of action for an employer’s failure to pay all minimum wages (plus liquidated damages). In addition to minimum wages, Labor Code § 200 states that “wages’ includes 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."

58. Defendants willfully failed in their affirmative obligation to pay Plaintiffs and the putative class members at least the lawful minimum wage for each hour worked in violation of Labor Code sections 1182.12, 1194, 1194.2, 1197, 1197.1 and 1198 and the IWC Wage Orders (the "Hours and Days of Work" and "Minimum Wages" sections of the applicable orders), including payment at the lawful local and county minimum wage ordinances in effect. As a result, Defendants are liable for all associated damages, including liquidated damages for the minimum wage violations pursuant to Labor Code § 1194.2.

59. Defendants' unlawful acts and omissions deprived Plaintiffs and class members of minimum, regular, and overtime wages in amounts to be determined at trial. Plaintiffs and class members are entitled to recover the full amount of the unpaid wages, plus liquidated damages in an amount equal to the wages unlawfully unpaid (and interest thereon), in addition to interest, attorneys' fees, and costs to the extent permitted by law, including under Labor Code sections 1194 and 1194.2, 218.6, and any other applicable statutes.

2 CAUSE OF ACTION

FAILURE TO PAY ALL OVERTIME WAGES

Violation of Labor Code §§ 510 and 1194

60. All outside paragraphs of this Complaint are incorporated into this section.

61. This cause of action is brought pursuant to the IWC Wage Orders and Labor Code §§ 204, 510, 558, 1194, and 1198, which require non-exempt employees to be timely paid overtime wages for all overtime hours worked, and which further provide a private right of action for an employer's failure to pay all overtime compensation for overtime hours worked.

62. Defendants failed in their affirmative obligation to pay Plaintiffs and the putative class members no less than one and one-half times their respective "regular rate of pay" for all hours worked in excess of eight hours in one day, 40 hours in one week, or the first eight hours worked on the seventh day of work in any one workweek, and no less than twice their respective "regular rate of pay" for all hours over 12 hours in one day and any work in excess of eight hours on any seventh day of a workweek for such hours worked, in violation of Labor Code sections 204, 510, 558, 1194, and 1198 and the IWC Wage Orders (the "Hours and Days of Work" sections of the applicable orders).

63. Plaintiffs and class members are entitled to recover the full amount of the unpaid overtime, in addition to interest, statutory and civil penalties, and attorneys' fees, and costs to the extent permitted by law.

3 CAUSE OF ACTION

MEAL PERIOD VIOLATIONS

Violation of Labor Code §§ 226.7 and 512

64. All outside paragraphs of this Complaint are incorporated into this section.

65. This cause of action is brought pursuant to the IWC Wage Orders and Labor Code §§ 226.7, 558 and 512, which require non-exempt employees be provided complaint meal periods (or meal period premiums in lieu thereof), and which further provide a private right of action for an employer's failure to lawfully provide all meal periods and/or pay meal period premiums at the lawful regular rate of compensation.

66. Defendants willfully failed in their affirmative obligation to consistently provide Plaintiffs and class members compliant, duty-free meal periods of not less than 30 minutes beginning before the fifth hour of hour for each work period of more than five hours per day and a second duty-free meal period of not less than 30 minutes beginning before the tenth hour of hour of work in

violation of Labor Code sections 226.7, 512, 558, 1198 and the IWC Wage Orders (the "Meal Periods" sections of the applicable orders).

67. Further, Defendants willfully failed in their affirmative obligation to consistently pay Plaintiffs and the putative class members one additional hour of pay at the respective regular rate of compensation for each workday that a fully compliant meal period was not provided, in violation of Labor Code sections 226.7, 512, 558, and 1198 and the IWC Wage Orders (the "Meal Periods" sections of the applicable orders).

68. Plaintiffs and the putative class members are entitled to recover the full amount of the meal period premiums owed, in addition to interest, statutory and civil penalties, and attorneys' fees, and costs to the extent permitted by law.

4 CAUSE OF ACTION

REST PERIOD VIOLATIONS

Violation of Labor Code §§ 226.7 and 516

69. All outside paragraphs of this Complaint are incorporated into this section.

70. This cause of action is brought pursuant to the IWC Wage Orders and Labor Code §§ 226.7 and 516, which require non-exempt employees be authorized to take complaint rest periods (or rest period premiums in lieu thereof), and which further provide a private right of action for an employer's failure to lawfully provide all rest periods and/or pay rest period premiums at the lawful regular rate of compensation.

71. Defendants willfully failed in their affirmative obligation to consistently authorize and permit Plaintiffs and the putative class members to receive compliant, duty-free rest periods of not less than ten (10) minutes for every four hours worked (or major fraction thereof) in violation of Labor Code sections 226.7, 516, 558, and 1198 and the IWC Wage Orders (the "Rest Periods" sections of the applicable orders).

72. Further, Defendants willfully failed in their affirmative obligation to consistently pay Plaintiffs and class members one additional hour of pay at the respective regular rate of compensation for each workday that a fully compliant rest period was not provided, in violation of Labor Code sections 226.7, 516, 558, and 1198 and the IWC Wage Orders.

5 CAUSE OF ACTION

FAILURE TO PAY ALL PAID SICK LEAVE WAGES

Violation of Labor Code §§ 200, 218, 246 *et seq.*

73. All outside paragraphs of this Complaint are incorporated into this section.

74. Defendants knowingly and intentionally failed in their affirmative obligation to pay sick leave wages to Plaintiffs and a paid sick leave subclass in violation of Labor Code section 246 *et seq.* Paid sick leave earnings constitute wages for purposes of California wage and hour law. (*Murphy v. Kenneth Cole Productions, Inc.* (2007) 40 Cal.4th 1094, 1103 ["Courts have recognized that 'wages' also include those benefits to which an employee is entitled as a part of his or her compensation, including money, room, board, clothing, vacation pay, and sick pay"].)

75. Labor Code section 246(l), in conjunction with Labor Code section 248 *et seq.*, 248.1, 248.2, and 248.6, in addition to the applicable County sick pay ordinances in locales worked by class members, govern how Defendants were required to calculate paid sick leave.

76. Defendants failed to pay Plaintiffs and the putative class members their paid sick leave wages at one of the lawful rates set forth in the statute or ordinance because Defendants failed to include in their sick leave calculation the additional remuneration received by Plaintiff and class members (i.e., at the regular rate of pay and/or calculated based on total wages earned).

77. As a result, Defendants violated the Labor Code and are liable to Plaintiff and class members for underpaid sick leave wages, in addition to interest, attorneys' fees, and costs.

6 CAUSE OF ACTION

UNTIMELY PAYMENT OF WAGES

Violation of Labor Code §§ 204, 210, 218

78. All outside paragraphs of this Complaint are incorporated into this section.

79. This cause of action is brought pursuant to the IWC Wage Orders and Labor Code §§ 204, 204b, and 210, which require non-exempt employees to be timely paid all wages owed each pay period, and which further provide a private right of action for an employer's failure to comply with this obligation. Labor Code § 218 authorizes individuals to sue directly for wages and penalties due under these sections, including Labor Code § 210(c)'s statutory late payment penalties.

80. Defendants willfully failed in their affirmative obligation to timely pay all wages, including paid sick leave and meal and rest premiums, earned by Plaintiffs and the putative class members twice during each calendar month on days designated in advance by the employer as regular paydays (for employees paid on a non-weekly basis) and on the regularly-scheduled weekly payday for weekly employees, if any, in violation of Labor Code sections 204 and 204b and the IWC Wage Orders (the "Minimum Wages" sections of the applicable orders).

81. Plaintiffs and class members are entitled to recover the full amount of the unpaid wages, in addition to a statutory penalty in the amount of $100 for the initial violation for each failure to pay each employee and $200 for all subsequent violations and for all willful or intentional violations for each failure to pay each employee, plus 25 percent of the amount unlawfully withheld under provided in Labor Code § 210, in addition to interest, attorneys' fees, and costs to the extent permitted by law.

7 CAUSE OF ACTION

WAGE STATEMENT VIOLATIONS

Violation of Labor Code § 226

82. All outside paragraphs of this Complaint are incorporated into this section.

83. This cause of action is brought by a wage statement subclass pursuant to Labor Code § 226(a), which requires non-exempt employees to be provided accurate itemized wage statements each pay period, and which further provides a private right of action for an employer's failure to comply with this obligation.

84. Defendants knowingly and intentionally failed in their affirmative obligation to provide accurate itemized wage statements to Plaintiffs and class members, resulting in injury to Plaintiffs and class members. Specifically, the wage statements issued to Plaintiffs and class members did not accurately state each pay period all of the information required by Labor Code § 226(a)(1)-(9).

85. Defendants' unlawful acts and omissions deprived Plaintiff and class members of accurate itemized wage statements, causing confusion and concealing wage and premium underpayments.

86. As a result, Plaintiffs and the putative class members are entitled to recover the statutory penalty of $50 per employee for the initial pay period in which a violation occurred and $100 per employee for each violation in a subsequent pay period, up to an aggregate penalty of $4,000 per employee, in addition to interest, attorneys' fees, and costs to the extent permitted by law, including under Labor Code section 226(e).

8 CAUSE OF ACTION

WAITING TIME PENALTIES

Violation of Labor Code §§ 201 *et seq*.

87. All outside paragraphs of this Complaint are incorporated into this section.

88. This cause of action is brought by a waiting time subclass pursuant to Labor Code §§ 201 through 203, which require an employer to timely pay all wages earned upon termination of employment, and which further provide a private right of action to recover statutory waiting time

penalties each day an employer fails to comply with this obligation, up to a maximum of 30 days wages.

89. Defendants willfully failed and continue to fail in their affirmative obligation to pay all wages earned and unpaid to Plaintiffs and the putative class members immediately upon termination of employment or within 72 hours thereafter for employees who did not provide at least 72 hours prior notice of his or her intention to quit, and further failed to pay those sums for 30 days thereafter in violation of Labor Code sections 201 through 203 and the IWC Wage Orders.

90. Plaintiffs and class members are entitled to recover a waiting time penalty for a period of up to 30 days, in addition to interest, attorneys' fees, and costs to the extent permitted by law.

9 CAUSE OF ACTION

FAILURE TO REIMBURSE BUSINESS EXPENSES

Violation of Labor Code § 2802

91. All outside paragraphs of this Complaint are incorporated into this section.

92. Defendants willfully failed in their affirmative obligation to reimburse Plaintiffs and the putative class members for all necessary expenditures, losses, expenses, and costs incurred by them in direct discharge of the duties of their employment, in violation of Labor Code section 2802.

93. Defendants' unlawful acts and omissions deprived Plaintiffs and class members of lawful reimbursements for business expenses in amounts to be determined at trial. Plaintiffs and class members are entitled to recover the amount of unreimbursed expenses of Plaintiffs and class members in addition to interest, attorneys' fees, and costs to the extent permitted by law, including under Labor Code section 2802.

10 CAUSE OF ACTION

UNFAIR COMPETITION

Violation of Business and Professions Code §§ 17200 *et seq.*

94. All outside paragraphs of this Complaint are incorporated into this section.

95. Defendants have engaged and continue to engage in unfair and/or unlawful business practices in the State of California in violation of California Business and Professions Code § 17200 by committing the foregoing wage and hour violations alleged throughout this Complaint.

96. Defendants' dependence on these unfair and/or unlawful business practices deprived and continue to deprive Plaintiffs and other putative class members of compensation to which they are legally entitled, constitutes unfair and/or unlawful competition, and provides an unfair advantage to Defendants over competitors who have been and/or are currently employing workers in compliance with California's wage and hour laws. These failures constitute unlawful, deceptive, and unfair business acts and practices in violation of Business and Professions Code section 17200 *et seq.*

97. Plaintiffs are a victim of Defendants' unfair and/or unlawful conduct alleged in this Complaint, and Plaintiffs, as an individual and on behalf of other similarly situated employees, seeks full restitution of the moneys as necessary and according to proof to restore all monies withheld, acquired, and/or converted by Defendants pursuant to Business and Professions Code §§ 17203 and 17208.

98. Plaintiffs do not have an adequate remedy at law for past or future violations, to the extent the statute of limitations on each of the alleged causes of action does not extend to the four-year limitation provided under the UCL or to the extent the underlying Labor Code and IWC Wage Order violations do not provide a private right of action.

99. Plaintiffs and the putative class members are entitled to injunctive relief against Defendants, restitution, and other equitable relief to return all funds over which Plaintiffs and class

members have an ownership interest and to prevent future damage and the public interest under Business and Professions Code § 17200 *et seq.* Plaintiffs and the putative class members are further entitled to recover interest, attorneys' fees, and costs to the extent permitted by law, including under Code of Civil Procedure § 1021.5.

11 CAUSE OF ACTION

CIVIL PENALTIES UNDER THE PRIVATE ATTORNEYS GENERAL ACT

Violation of Labor Code §§ 2698 *et seq.*

(By Plaintiffs on Behalf of the State and the Aggrieved Employees Against All Defendants)

100. All outside paragraphs of this Complaint are incorporated into this section.

101. Plaintiffs bring this cause of action as a proxy for the State of California on behalf of the following "aggrieved employees" pursuant to the Private Attorneys General Act ("PAGA"), codified as Labor Code section 2698 *et seq.*:

a. All current and former non-exempt employees who worked for Defendants in California at any time from one year prior to the postmark date of the initial PAGA notice through the date of trial.

102. Plaintiffs reserve the right to amend, supplement, or add to this description of the aggrieved employees, according to proof.

103. The State of California, via the Labor and Workforce Development Agency ("LWDA"), is the real party in interest in this action with respect to this cause of action. (*Kim v. Reins Int'l California, Inc.* (2020) 9 Cal. 5th 73, 81 [The "government entity on whose behalf the plaintiff files suit is always the real party in interest."])

104. Labor Code section 2699(a) provides: "Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any provision of this code that provides for a civil penalty to be assessed and collected by the Labor and Workforce Development Agency or any of its departments, divisions, commissions, boards, agencies,

or employees, for a violation of this code, may, as an alternative, be recovered through a civil action brought by an aggrieved employee on behalf of the employee and other current or former employees against whom a violation of the same provision was committed pursuant to the procedures specified in Section 2699.3. "

105. Any allegations regarding violations of the IWC Wage Orders are enforceable as violations of Labor Code section 1198, which states: "[t]he employment of any employee for longer hours than those fixed by the order or under conditions of labor prohibited by the order is unlawful."

106. Labor Code section 2699.3 sets forth the procedure for commencing an action for civil penalties under the PAGA.

107. On or about **September 8, 2025**, Plaintiff Fitzgerald paid the requisite PAGA filing fee and provided written notice (by online electronic filing with the LWDA and by certified mail to Defendants) of Defendants' alleged Labor Code violations, including the facts and theories to support the alleged violations.

108. On or about **September 11, 2025**, Plaintiff Monroe paid the requisite PAGA filing fee and provided written notice (by online electronic filing with the LWDA and by certified mail to Defendants) of Defendants' alleged Labor Code violations, including the facts and theories to support the alleged violations.

109. A true and correct copy of Plaintiffs' written PAGA notices, entitled "Notice of Labor Code Violations," is attached hereto as <u>Exhibit 1</u> and <u>Exhibit 2</u> and incorporated by reference as though fully set forth herein (the "<u>PAGA notice</u>").

110. To date, neither Plaintiffs nor Plaintiffs' counsel has received a response to Plaintiffs' written PAGA notice from the LWDA.

111. Within 33 calendar days of the postmark date of the notice sent by Plaintiffs, neither Plaintiffs nor Plaintiffs' counsel has received written notice by certified mail from any defendant providing a description of any actions taken to cure the alleged violations.

112. Now that at least 65 days have passed from Plaintiffs notifying Defendants of these violations, without notice of cure from Defendants or notice from the LWDA of its intent to investigate the alleged violations and issue the appropriate citations to Defendants, Plaintiff exhausted all prerequisites and commenced this civil action under Labor Code section 2699 *et seq.*

113. As set forth in the PAGA notice attached as Exhibit 1 and Exhibit 2 and incorporated into this Complaint, Defendants committed the following violations and are liable for all corresponding civil penalties:

a. ***Unpaid Hours Worked/Minimum Wage.*** Violation of Labor Code §§ 1194, 1197, 1198; IWC Wage Orders.

b. ***Unpaid Overtime***. Violation of Labor Code §§ 510, 1194, 1198; IWC Wage Orders.

c. ***Unpaid Paid Sick Leave.*** Violation of Labor Code §§ 246 through 248.7.

d. ***Unpaid Meal Period Premium Wages.*** Violation of Labor Code §§ 226.7, 512, 1198; IWC Wage Orders.

e. ***Unpaid Rest Period Premium Wages.*** Violation of Labor Code §§ 226.7, 516, 1198; IWC Wage Orders.

f. ***Untimely Payment of Wages During Employment.*** Violation of Labor Code §§ 204, 204b, 210.

g. ***Non-Compliant Wage Statements.*** Violation of Labor Code §§ 226, 226.3.

h. ***Unreimbursed Employee Expenses.*** Violation of Labor Code §§ 2802, 2804.

i. ***Failure to Maintain Accurate Records.*** Violation of Labor Code § 1174; IWC Wage Orders.

114. Plaintiffs seek to collect all recoverable civil penalties for the Labor Code violations alleged in this Complaint and the PAGA notice (including amendments thereto) against Defendants pursuant to Labor Code section 2699(a) and (f), in addition to attorneys' fees, costs, and interest to the extent permitted by law, including under Labor Code section 2699(k).

PRAYER

Plaintiffs pray for judgment as follows:

a. For certification of this action as a class action;

b. For appointment of Plaintiffs as the class representatives;

c. For appointment of above-captioned counsel for Plaintiffs as Class Counsel;

d. For division of class members into appropriate classes and/or subclasses according to proof;

e. For recovery of all statutory penalties and liquidated damages;

f. For disgorgement of all amounts wrongfully obtained to the extent permitted by law;

g. For restitution and injunctive relief;

h. For attorneys' fees and costs of suit, including expert fees, to the extent permitted by law, including (without limitation) under Labor Code §§ 218.5, 226, 1194, 2802 and Code of Civil Procedure § 1021.5.;

i. For recovery of damages in the amount according to proof;

j. For all recoverable pre- and post-judgment interest;

k. For this action to be maintained as a representative action under the PAGA;

l. For Plaintiffs and counsel of record to be provided with all enforcement capabilities as if the action were brought by the State of California or the California Division of Labor Enforcement;

m. For recovery of all civil penalties and other recoverable amounts under the PAGA;

n. For reasonable attorneys' fees and costs of suit, including expert fees, to the extent permitted by law, associated with the PAGA claims pursuant to Labor Code § 2699, and Code of Civil Procedure section 1021.5 and any other applicable sections; and

o. For such other relief, the Court deems just and proper.

Dated: December 5, 2025

Ferraro Vega Employment Lawyers, Inc.

Nicholas J. Ferraro

Nicholas J. Ferraro
Dorota A. James
Attorneys for Plaintiffs
Beverly Fitzgerald and Mindi Monroe

<u>EXHIBIT 1</u>

Plaintiff Fitzgerald's Notice of Labor Code Violations

FERRARO VEGA
SAN DIEGO EMPLOYMENT LAWYERS

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September 18, 2025

NOTICE OF LABOR CODE VIOLATIONS
CALIFORNIA LABOR CODE SECTIONS 2698 *et seq.*

VIA CERTIFIED U.S. MAIL
- Electronic Return Receipt -

San Diego Humane Society & SPCA
5500 Gaines St.
San Diego, CA 92110

- PAGA Notice & Filing Fee -
Submitted electronically to the Labor and Workforce Development Agency

Dear LWDA Officer and Company Representatives:

This letter serves as written notice under Labor Code section 2699.3 on behalf of **BEVERLY FITZGERALD** ("Plaintiff(s)") and all other "aggrieved employees" of the following "Defendant(s)":

SAN DIEGO HUMANE SOCIETY & SPCA

Defendant(s) shall mean and include the foregoing in addition to any other related employer entities, individuals under Labor Code sections 558 and 558.1, and all others who may be later added upon further investigation and discovery as liable employers.

This office serves as legal counsel for Plaintiff. If the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency ("LWDA") does not investigate the facts, allegations, and violations set forth in this notice within the statutorily prescribed 65-day period under Labor Code section 2699.3, Plaintiff intends to commence a civil action against Defendants as a proxy and agent of the State of California under the Private Attorneys General Act ("PAGA"). "PAGA allows an 'aggrieved employee'—a person affected by at least one Labor Code violation committed by an employer—to pursue penalties for all the Labor Code violations committed by that employer." *Huff v. Securitas Security Services USA, Inc.* (2018) 23 Cal.App.5th 745, 751; *Kim v. Reins International California, Inc.* (2020) 9 Cal.5th 73, 79. Plaintiff maintains standing to pursue these claims against Defendants as an aggrieved employee.

Through this notice, Plaintiff requests that Defendants complete an internal investigation and audit of the wage and hour and employment practices at issue and make a good faith effort to correct any violations. Plaintiff attempts to identify the non-compliant policies and practices affecting the aggrieved employees so that the parties may resolve the underlying damages and penalties in judgment or settlement approved by the Superior Court of California under Labor Code section 2699(s). Defendants are notified that any attempt to resolve this case should be conducted in coordination with Plaintiff's counsel to protect the interests of Plaintiff, the aggrieved employees, and the State of California via the LWDA. Plaintiff advises Defendants this letter should be also considered a reasonable attempt at settlement of this matter, subject to an exchange of additional documents and information. *Graham v. Daimler Chrysler Corp.* (2004) 24 Cal.4th 553, 561.

- BACKGROUND -

Defendants employed Plaintiff during the PAGA Period in the position of Humane Law Enforcement Officer from about September 2018 to Present. During their employment Plaintiff and the other aggrieved employees were subject to the wage and hour and employment protections set forth in the California Labor Code and IWC Wage Orders.

Through this notice, Plaintiff informs the LWDA of the Labor Code violations set forth herein. The "aggrieved employees" include Plaintiff and the following individuals:

> All current and former non-exempt employees who worked for Defendants in the State of California during one-year period preceding the date of this notice through the current date and the date of trial in any pending action (the "<u>aggrieved employees</u>" and the "<u>PAGA Period</u>").

Plaintiff reserves the right to expand or narrow the definition of the "aggrieved employees" in the forthcoming civil action. Furthermore, Plaintiff seeks all recoverable civil penalties for Defendants' violations and reserves the right to supplement this notice as further investigation is completed and further facts, witnesses, and violations are uncovered.

- PAGA CLAIMS -

<u>Unpaid Hours Worked/Minimum Wage</u>
Violation of Labor Code §§ 1194, 1197, 1198; IWC Wage Orders

Defendants violated Labor Code sections 1194, 1197, and 1198, along with the California Minimum Wage Order, the applicable local minimum wage ordinances, and the "Hours and Days of Work" and "Minimum Wages" sections of the applicable IWC Wage Orders with respect to the aggrieved employees.

<u>Labor Code section 1194</u> renders it unlawful for an employee to receive less than the legal minimum wage for hours worked in California. <u>Labor Code section 1197</u> further mandates

that "[t]he minimum wage for employees fixed by the commission is the minimum wage to be paid to employees, and the payment of a lower wage than the minimum so fixed is unlawful." Labor Code section 1198 renders "employment of any employee for longer hours than those fixed by the order or under conditions of labor prohibited by the [IWC Wage Orders]" unlawful. The California Minimum Wage Order and the applicable sections of the IWC Wage Orders further require payment of minimum wages for all hours worked. The "Minimum Wages" sections of the applicable IWC Wage Order provide that "[e]very employer shall pay to each employee, on the established payday for the period involved, not less than the applicable minimum wage for all hours worked in the payroll period, whether the remuneration is measured by time, piece, commission, or otherwise." The foregoing California wage laws require payment of "not less than the applicable minimum wage *for all hours worked* in the payroll period" and California law does not allow averaging of pay over the hours worked in the pay period, even if the total pay results in an average above the minimum wage. *Armenta v. Osmose, Inc.* (2005) 135 Cal.App.3d 314, 324.

Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees at the lawful minimum wage rate for all hours worked, resulting in unpaid minimum wages. Plaintiff and aggrieved employees were required to work on-call shifts three to four times per month. These shifts would span from 9:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. All calls received were considered top priority, and therefore, Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees were required to respond within thirty minutes. Consequently, Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees should have been paid hourly for each hour of their on-call shift. Instead, Defendant paid a flat rate for these shifts regardless of the numbers of hours Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees worked. This unlawful practice resulted in unpaid hours worked.

Additionally, Plaintiff and aggrieved employees would travel from work to home, in a work truck, when they were scheduled for an on-call shift later that day. Plaintiff and aggrieved employees were off the clock during this time, but were subject to the control of their employer due to being responsible for the work truck, which contains veterinary supplies, pet carriers, traps, muzzles, leashes, and more. Defendant would schedule Plaintiff's and aggrieved employees' regular and on-call shifts just hours apart. Plaintiff and aggrieved employees were unable to leave the truck and be fully relieved from their work duties due to the close scheduling of the shifts and the on-call shift requiring use of the work truck. This practice resulted in several hours of off-the-clock work each time Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees were scheduled to work on-call shifts on the same day as a regular shift, resulting in unpaid hours of work.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

Unpaid Overtime
Violation of Labor Code §§ 510, 1194, 1198; IWC Wage Orders

Defendants violated Labor Code sections 510, 1194, and 1198, along with the "Hours and Days of Work" sections of the applicable IWC Wage Orders with respect to the aggrieved employees.

Labor Code section 510 requires "[a]ny work in excess of eight hours in one workday and any work in excess of 40 hours in any one workweek and the first eight hours worked on the seventh day of work in any one workweek shall be compensated at the rate of no less than one and one-half times the regular rate of pay for an employee;" and "any work in excess of 12 hours in one day shall be compensated at the rate of no less than twice the regular rate of pay for an employee;" and "any work in excess of eight hours on any seventh day of a workweek shall be compensated at the rate of no less than twice the regular rate of pay of an employee." Labor Code section 1194 renders it unlawful for an employee to receive less than the legal overtime rate for overtime hours worked in California. Labor Code section 1198 renders "employment of any employee for longer hours than those fixed by the order or under conditions of labor prohibited by the [IWC Wage Orders]" unlawful. The IWC Wage Orders further require payment of overtime wages for all overtime hours worked, including the "Hours and Days of Work" sections.

Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees overtime wages and the lawful rate of pay for overtime hours worked, resulting in unpaid overtime wages. As discussed in the Unpaid Hours Worked section above, Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees should have been paid hourly for on-call shifts. On the days when these on-call shifts resulted in more than eight hours worked in a day or forty hours worked in a week, Defendants should have paid these additional hourly wages at 1.5x the straight rate. However, as a result of the flat rate policy and the off-the-clock work outlined in the Unpaid Minimum Wages section above, Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees sometimes experienced underpayments of overtime hours worked.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

Unpaid Paid Sick Leave
Violation of Labor Code §§ 246 through 248.7

Defendants violated Labor Code sections 246 through 248.7 with respect to the aggrieved employees.

Labor Code section 246 requires employers to provide paid sick leave to its workforce on the terms set forth in the statute. Employers must comply with the accrual, use, and notice provisions of Labor Code sections 246, 246.5, 247, and must further ensure that they maintain the paid sick leave records required by Labor Code section 247.5. Employers have the option of providing 40 hours of paid sick leave to employees or to allow employees to accrue paid sick leave each pay period. If an employer chooses the accrual method, employees must accrue sick leave at a rate of one hour for every thirty hours worked in a given pay period as set forth in Labor Code section 246(b)(1). Under the accrual method, employees must begin accruing paid sick leave at the commencement of employment.

Employers must pay sick leave in accordance with one of the three permissible methods provided in Labor Code section 246(l): (1) "the same manner as the regular rate of pay for the workweek;" (2) "by dividing the employee's total wages, not including overtime premium pay, by the employee's total hours worked in the full pay periods of the prior 90 days;" or (3) "for exempt employee … in the same manner as the employer calculates wages for other forms of paid leave time." Labor Code sections 248.6 and 248.7 similarly require paid sick leave to be paid at a regular rate-based calculation in excess of the base hourly rate and at the lawful accrual rate.

Under Labor Code section 246(i), employers must provide employees "with written notice of the amount of paid sick leave available … for use on either the employee's itemized wage statement … or in a separate writing provided on the designated pay date with the employee's payment of wages."

Defendants failed to comply with California's paid sick leave laws with respect to the aggrieved employees. As a result of Defendants' policy of failing to account for all on-call hours worked and all off-the-clock, Plaintiff did not always accrue the accurate amount of paid sick leave earned. This practice often resulted in unpaid paid sick leave.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

Unpaid Meal Period Premium Wages
Violation of Labor Code §§ 226.7, 512, 1198; IWC Wage Orders

Defendants violated Labor Code sections 226.7, 512, and 1198, along with the related sections of the IWC Wage Orders with respect to the aggrieved employees.

Labor Code section 512 and the IWC Wage Orders require that employers provide an uninterrupted 30-minute meal period after no more than five hours of work and a second meal period after no more than 10 hours of work. *See Brinker Restaurant Corp. v. Superior Court* (2012) 53 Cal.4th 1004, 1049. Labor Code section 226.7 requires that if a meal period is late, missed, short, or interrupted, the employer must pay one additional hour of pay at the employee's "regular rate" of compensation. *Ferra v. Loews Hollywood Hotel, LLC* (2021) 11 Cal.5th 858, 862 ("We hold that the terms are synonymous: "regular rate of compensation" under section 226.7(c), like "regular rate of pay" under section 510(a), encompasses all nondiscretionary payments, not just hourly wages"). "[T]ime records showing noncompliant meal periods raise a rebuttable presumption of meal period violations, including at the summary judgment stage." *Donohue v. AMN Services, LLC* (2021) 11 Cal.5th 58, 61. Labor Code section 1198 renders "employment of any employee for longer hours than those fixed by the order or under conditions of labor prohibited by the [IWC Wage Orders]" unlawful. The IWC Wage Orders, including Section 11 (Meal Periods), further require one uninterrupted 30-minute meal period after no more than five hours of work and a second meal period after no more than 10 hours of work and an additional hour of pay at the employee's regular rate of compensation for each workday that a compliant meal period is not provided. Pursuant to Section 11(A) of the IWC Wage Orders, the California Supreme Court has held that the on-duty meal period exception is "exceedingly narrow" and applies only when (1) "the nature of the work prevents the employee from being relieved of all duty" and (2) *both* "the employer and employee have agreed, in writing, to the on-duty meal period." *Augustus v. AMB Security Services, Inc.* (2016) 2 Cal.5th 257, 266-276 (emphasis added). If these two requirements are not met, then the employer owes the employee one hour of premium pay for each non-compliant meal period taken under the purported on-duty meal arrangement. *Naranjo v. Spectrum Security Services, Inc.* (2019) 40 Cal.5th 444, 459.

Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees often experienced non-compliant meal periods to keep up with the high demands of the job. Plaintiff worked as a Humane Law Enforcement officer. Plaintiff's job duties included moving from one emergency call to another. As such, Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees were sometimes prevented from taking meal periods. Further, when Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees were allowed to take meal periods, they were sometimes interrupted for emergency calls for animal seizures, welfare checks, or other urgent happenings. These interruptions often also resulted in short meal periods. As a result, Defendants should have paid meal period premiums for each non-compliant meal period. However, as a matter of policy and practice, Defendants failed to pay all meal period premiums owed.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

Unpaid Rest Period Premium Wages
Violation of Labor Code §§ 226.7, 516, 1198; IWC Wage Orders

Defendants violated Labor Code sections 226.7, 516, and 1198, and the related sections of the IWC Wage Orders with respect to Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees.

Labor Code sections 226.7 and 516 and the IWC Wage Orders require that employers authorize and permit an uninterrupted 10-minute rest period for each four-hour period (or major fraction thereof) that an employee works. Labor Code section 226.7 requires that if a rest period is non-compliant, the employer must pay one additional hour of pay at the employee's "regular rate" of compensation. *Ferra v. Loews Hollywood Hotel, LLC* (2021) 11

Cal.5th 858, 862 ("We hold that the terms are synonymous: "regular rate of compensation" under section 226.7(c), like "regular rate of pay" under section 510(a), encompasses all nondiscretionary payments, not just hourly wages"). Labor Code section 1198 renders "employment of any employee for longer hours than those fixed by the order or under conditions of labor prohibited by the [IWC Wage Orders]" unlawful. The IWC Wage Orders, including Section 12 (Rest Periods), further require one uninterrupted 10-minute rest period for each four-hour period (or major faction thereof) worked and an additional hour of pay at the employee's regular rate of compensation for each workday that a compliant rest period is not authorized or permitted.

Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees often experienced non-compliant rest periods to keep up with the high demands of the job. Plaintiff worked as a Humane Law Enforcement officer. Plaintiff's job duties included moving from one emergency call to another. As such, Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees were sometimes prevented from taking rest periods. Further, when Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees were allowed to take rest periods, they were sometimes interrupted for emergency calls for animal seizures, welfare checks, or other urgent happenings. These interruptions often also resulted in short rest periods. As a result, Defendants should have paid rest period premiums for each non-compliant rest period. However, as a matter of policy and practice, Defendants failed to pay all rest period premiums owed.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

Untimely Payment of Wages During Employment
Violation of Labor Code §§ 204, 204b, 210

Defendants violated Labor Code sections 204 and/or 204b and 210, as applicable, with respect to Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees.

Labor Code section 204(a) requires payment of "all wages" for non-exempt employees at least twice each calendar month. Labor Code section 204(d) states all wages due must be paid "not more than seven calendar days following the close of the payroll period." Labor Code section 204b applies to employees paid on a weekly basis and also requires the payment for all labor within the required pay periods. Labor Code section 210 provides "every person who fails to pay the wages of an employee as provided in Section … 204 … shall be subject to a civil penalty" of $100 for an initial violation and $200 plus 25% of the amount unlawfully withheld for a subsequent violation.

Because Defendants failed to pay all wages and premiums in each pay period in which such wages were earned at the lawful rate, Defendants violated Labor Code section 204 and/or 204b (for weekly employees, as applicable). Defendants violated Labor Code sections 204 and

204b by failing to pay all wages and premiums owed on the regular pay days scheduled each pay period within seven calendar days of the close of the payroll period, as a result of the policies and practices set forth in this notice.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

Non-Compliant Wage Statements
Violation of Labor Code §§ 226, 226.3

Defendants violated Labor Code sections 226(a) and 226.3 with respect to the aggrieved employees by failing to furnish itemized wage statements each pay period that accurately list all information required by Labor Code section 226(a)(1) through (9).

Labor Code section 226(a) requires an employer to furnish wage statements to employees semimonthly or at the time of each payment of wages, "an accurate itemized statement in writing showing:" (1) gross wages earned, (2) total hours worked, (3) the number of piece rate units earned and applicable piece-rate in effect, (4) all deductions, (5) net wages earned, (6) the inclusive dates of the pay period, (7) the name of the employee and last four digits of SSN or an EIN, (8) the name and address of the legal name of the employer, and (9) all applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the number of hours worked at each hourly rate by the employee.

Defendants failed to provide accurate itemized wage statements to the aggrieved employees each pay period as a result of the policies and practices set forth in this notice. Defendants violated Labor Code section 226(a)(1) and (5) by not listing the correct "gross wages earned" or "net wages earned," as the employees earned wages and premiums that were not paid, resulting in an inaccurate reflection, and recording of "gross wages earned" on those wage statements. Likewise, in violation of Labor Code section 226(a)(9), Defendants failed to state on employee wage statements each pay period the applicable hourly rates in effect and the number of hours worked at that rate, as Defendants failed to pay all wages and premiums owed to employees. The amounts stated are instead depreciated and underpaid, resulting in an inaccurate reflection on the pay stub.

Additionally, Defendants violated Labor Code section 226(a)(2) by failing to accurately list employees' "total hours worked," as the wage statements did not accurately include the uncompensated time plaintiff and other aggrieved employees worked due to Defendants' policy and practice of requiring off-the-clock work.

Plaintiff and other aggrieved employees cannot promptly and easily determine from the wage statement alone the wages paid or earned without reference to other documents or information. Indeed, these wage statement violations are significant because they sow confusion among Plaintiff and other aggrieved employees with respect to what amounts were owed and paid, at what rates, the number of hours worked, and how those amounts were or should be calculated. The wage statements reflect a false statement of earnings and concealed the underlying problems and underpayments of employee wages.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

Unreimbursed Employee Expenses
Violation of Labor Code §§ 2802, 2804

Defendants violated Labor Code section 2802 with respect to the aggrieved employees by failing to reimburse the aggrieved employees for all necessary expenditures or losses incurred as part of their job duties.

Labor Code section 2802 requires an employer to "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, or of his or her obedience to the directions of the employer, even though unlawful, unless the employee, at the time of obeying the directions, believed them to be unlawful." *See, e.g., Espinoza v. West Coast Tomato Growers, LLC*, 2016 WL 4468175 at *4, n.2 (S.D. Cal. Aug. 24, 2016, No. 14-CV-2984 W (KSC)).

Labor Code section 2804 affirms that "[a]ny contract or agreement, express or implied, made by any employee to waive the benefits of this article or any part thereof, is null and void, and this article shall not deprive any employee or his personal representative of any right or remedy to which he is entitled under the laws of this State."

Defendants required Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees to incur costs for work-related purposes without full reimbursement. In direct consequence of their job duties, Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees unavoidably and necessarily incurred these losses, expenditures, costs, and as a matter of policy and practice. Specifically, Defendant required Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees to purchase parts of their uniform. Instead of providing the required covers for their Kevlar vests ranging from $150-$175, Defendant required Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees to buy this item. Further, Defendants failed to provide reimbursement for these cover vests, resulting in unreimbursed employee expenses.

Additionally, Defendants required Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees to incur mileage and gas expenses without reimbursement. Specifically, Defendants required the aggrieved employees to travel from the North County campus to downtown San Diego for trainings. Defendants did not provide transportation and instead, required Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees to use their personal vehicles for these trips. However, Defendants did not always pay mileage or gas expenses. Occasionally, Defendnats expected Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees to incur these costs without reimbursement.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

<u>Failure to Maintain Accurate Records</u>
Violation of Labor Code § 1174; IWC Wage Orders

Defendants violated Labor Code sections 1174 and the IWC Wage Orders by failing to maintain accurate employee payroll records with respect to Plaintiff and other aggrieved employees.

<u>Labor Code section 1174</u> requires that employers maintain accurate "payroll records showing the hours worked daily by and the wages paid to, and the number of piece-rate units earned by and any applicable piece rate paid to, employees employed at the respective plants or establishments." <u>Section 7(A)</u> of the <u>IWC Wage Orders</u>, which may be enforced through Labor Code section 1198, mandates similar recordkeeping obligations.

Because of the policies and practices set forth in this notice, including the failure to accurately account for wages earned or hours worked, Defendants failed to accurately maintain records in accordance with Labor Code section 1174 and the IWC Wage Orders.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

<u>Attorneys' Fees and Costs</u>
Labor Code § 2699(k)(1)

Plaintiff has been compelled to retain the services of counsel to protect the interests of other aggrieved employees and the State of California. Plaintiff continues to incur attorneys' fees and costs, which are recoverable under California law, including Labor Code section 2699(k)(1).

- LITIGATION HOLD NOTICE –

This letter imposes a duty upon all defendants and their respective employees, officers, directors, executives, attorneys, human resource and payroll personnel, accountants, and other agents to preserve all physical and electronic evidence, including electronically stored information and emails, which relate to the employment of Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees specified in this notice. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, Defendants' written employment and payroll policies and handbooks; the aggrieved employees' personnel files and payroll records, such as paystubs, time records, wage statements, compensation reports, as well as the underlying electronically data in Excel or similar format. Memoranda and internal and external correspondence relating to the subject matter of this notice shall also be maintained. Failure to preserve and retain relevant evidence may constitute spoliation of evidence and result in an adverse inference or sanctions.

If you have any questions regarding the scope of your obligations to preserve evidence, please consult your legal counsel and always err on the side of caution. Periodic or regularly scheduled purges or deletions of information covered by this hold <u>must be suspended immediately</u>.

- CONCLUSION -

If the LWDA does not pursue enforcement, Plaintiff intends to bring representative claims on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees seeking civil penalties for violations of the Labor Code and the IWC Wage Orders, along with attorneys' fees, costs, interest, and other appropriate relief.

Please advise if the LWDA intends to investigate any of the factual or legal allegations set forth in this notice. Defendants may contact Plaintiff's counsel with any questions regarding this letter or the forthcoming lawsuit.

Sincerely,

Dorota James

Dorota James

Cc Plaintiff Beverly Fitzgerald
HR Representative, Keith Bergland - KBerglund@sdhumane.org

<u>**EXHIBIT 2**</u>

Plaintiff Monroe's Notice of Labor Code Violations

FERRARO VEGA
SAN DIEGO EMPLOYMENT LAWYERS

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September 11, 2025

NOTICE OF LABOR CODE VIOLATIONS
CALIFORNIA LABOR CODE SECTIONS 2698 *et seq.*

VIA CERTIFIED U.S. MAIL
- Electronic Return Receipt -

San Diego Humane Society & SPCA
5500 Gaines St.
San Diego, CA 92110

- PAGA Notice & Filing Fee -
Submitted electronically to the Labor and Workforce Development Agency

Dear LWDA Officer and Company Representatives:

This letter serves as written notice under Labor Code section 2699.3 on behalf of **MINDI MONROE** ("Plaintiff(s)") and all other "aggrieved employees" of the following "Defendant(s)":

SAN DIEGO HUMANE SOCIETY & SPCA

Defendant(s) shall mean and include the foregoing in addition to any other related employer entities, individuals under Labor Code sections 558 and 558.1, and all others who may be later added upon further investigation and discovery as liable employers.

This office serves as legal counsel for Plaintiff. If the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency ("LWDA") does not investigate the facts, allegations, and violations set forth in this notice within the statutorily prescribed 65-day period under Labor Code section 2699.3, Plaintiff intends to commence a civil action against Defendants as a proxy and agent of the State of California under the Private Attorneys General Act ("PAGA"). "PAGA allows an 'aggrieved employee'—a person affected by at least one Labor Code violation committed by an employer—to pursue penalties for all the Labor Code violations committed by that employer." *Huff v. Securitas Security Services USA, Inc.* (2018) 23 Cal.App.5th 745, 751; *Kim v. Reins International California, Inc.* (2020) 9 Cal.5th 73, 79. Plaintiff maintains standing to pursue these claims against Defendants as an aggrieved employee.

Through this notice, Plaintiff requests that Defendants complete an internal investigation and audit of the wage and hour and employment practices at issue and make a good faith effort to correct any violations. Plaintiff attempts to identify the non-compliant policies and practices affecting the aggrieved employees so that the parties may resolve the underlying damages and penalties in judgment or settlement approved by the Superior Court of California under Labor Code section 2699(s). Defendants are notified that any attempt to resolve this case should be conducted in coordination with Plaintiff's counsel to protect the interests of Plaintiff, the aggrieved employees, and the State of California via the LWDA. Plaintiff advises Defendants this letter should be also considered a reasonable attempt at settlement of this matter, subject to an exchange of additional documents and information. *Graham v. Daimler Chrysler Corp.* (2004) 24 Cal.4th 553, 561.

- BACKGROUND -

Defendants employed Plaintiff during the PAGA Period in the position of Humane Law Enforcement from about January 2025 to Present. During their employment Plaintiff and the other aggrieved employees were subject to the wage and hour and employment protections set forth in the California Labor Code and IWC Wage Orders.

Through this notice, Plaintiff informs the LWDA of the Labor Code violations set forth herein. The "aggrieved employees" include Plaintiff and the following individuals:

> All current and former non-exempt employees who worked for Defendants in the State of California during one-year period preceding the date of this notice through the current date and the date of trial in any pending action (the "<u>aggrieved employees</u>" and the "<u>PAGA Period</u>").

Plaintiff reserves the right to expand or narrow the definition of the "aggrieved employees" in the forthcoming civil action. Furthermore, Plaintiff seeks all recoverable civil penalties for Defendants' violations and reserves the right to supplement this notice as further investigation is completed and further facts, witnesses, and violations are uncovered.

- PAGA CLAIMS -

<u>Unpaid Hours Worked/Minimum Wage</u>
Violation of Labor Code §§ 1194, 1197, 1198; IWC Wage Orders

Defendants violated Labor Code sections 1194, 1197, and 1198, along with the California Minimum Wage Order, the applicable local minimum wage ordinances, and the "Hours and Days of Work" and "Minimum Wages" sections of the applicable IWC Wage Orders with respect to the aggrieved employees.

<u>Labor Code section 1194</u> renders it unlawful for an employee to receive less than the legal minimum wage for hours worked in California. <u>Labor Code section 1197</u> further mandates

that "[t]he minimum wage for employees fixed by the commission is the minimum wage to be paid to employees, and the payment of a lower wage than the minimum so fixed is unlawful." Labor Code section 1198 renders "employment of any employee for longer hours than those fixed by the order or under conditions of labor prohibited by the [IWC Wage Orders]" unlawful. The California Minimum Wage Order and the applicable sections of the IWC Wage Orders further require payment of minimum wages for all hours worked. The "Minimum Wages" sections of the applicable IWC Wage Order provide that "[e]very employer shall pay to each employee, on the established payday for the period involved, not less than the applicable minimum wage for all hours worked in the payroll period, whether the remuneration is measured by time, piece, commission, or otherwise." The foregoing California wage laws require payment of "not less than the applicable minimum wage *for all hours worked* in the payroll period" and California law does not allow averaging of pay over the hours worked in the pay period, even if the total pay results in an average above the minimum wage. *Armenta v. Osmose, Inc.* (2005) 135 Cal.App.3d 314, 324.

Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees at the lawful minimum wage rate for all hours worked, resulting in unpaid minimum wages. Plaintiff and aggrieved employees were required to work on-call shifts three to four times per month. These shifts would span from 9:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. All calls received were considered top priority, and therefore, Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees were required to respond within thirty minutes. Consequently, Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees should have been paid hourly for each hour of their on-call shift. Instead, Defendant paid a flat rate for these shifts regardless of the numbers of hours Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees worked. This unlawful practice resulted in unpaid hours worked.

Additionally, Plaintiff and aggrieved employees would travel from work to home, in a work truck, when they were scheduled for an on-call shift later that day. Plaintiff and aggrieved employees were off the clock during this time, but were subject to the control of their employer due to being responsible for the work truck, which contains veterinary supplies, pet carriers, traps, muzzles, leashes, and more. Defendant would schedule Plaintiff's and aggrieved employees' regular and on-call shifts just hours apart. Plaintiff and aggrieved employees were unable to leave the truck and be fully relieved from their work duties due to the close scheduling of the shifts and the on-call shift requiring use of the work truck. This practice resulted in several hours of off-the-clock work each time Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees were scheduled to work on-call shifts on the same day as a regular shift, resulting in unpaid hours of work.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

Unpaid Overtime
Violation of Labor Code §§ 510, 1194, 1198; IWC Wage Orders

Defendants violated Labor Code sections 510, 1194, and 1198, along with the "Hours and Days of Work" sections of the applicable IWC Wage Orders with respect to the aggrieved employees.

Labor Code section 510 requires "[a]ny work in excess of eight hours in one workday and any work in excess of 40 hours in any one workweek and the first eight hours worked on the seventh day of work in any one workweek shall be compensated at the rate of no less than one and one-half times the regular rate of pay for an employee;" and "any work in excess of 12 hours in one day shall be compensated at the rate of no less than twice the regular rate of pay for an employee;" and "any work in excess of eight hours on any seventh day of a workweek shall be compensated at the rate of no less than twice the regular rate of pay of an employee." Labor Code section 1194 renders it unlawful for an employee to receive less than the legal overtime rate for overtime hours worked in California. Labor Code section 1198 renders "employment of any employee for longer hours than those fixed by the order or under conditions of labor prohibited by the [IWC Wage Orders]" unlawful. The IWC Wage Orders further require payment of overtime wages for all overtime hours worked, including the "Hours and Days of Work" sections.

Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees overtime wages and the lawful rate of pay for overtime hours worked, resulting in unpaid overtime wages. As discussed in the Unpaid Hours Worked section above, Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees should have been paid hourly for on-call shifts. On the days when these on-call shifts resulted in more than eight hours worked in a day or forty hours worked in a week, Defendants should have paid these additional hourly wages at 1.5x the straight rate. However, as a result of the flat rate policy and the off-the-clock work outlined in the Unpaid Minimum Wages section above, Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees sometimes experienced underpayments of overtime hours worked.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

Unpaid Paid Sick Leave
Violation of Labor Code §§ 246 through 248.7

Defendants violated Labor Code sections 246 through 248.7 with respect to the aggrieved employees.

Labor Code section 246 requires employers to provide paid sick leave to its workforce on the terms set forth in the statute. Employers must comply with the accrual, use, and notice provisions of Labor Code sections 246, 246.5, 247, and must further ensure that they maintain the paid sick leave records required by Labor Code section 247.5. Employers have the option of providing 40 hours of paid sick leave to employees or to allow employees to accrue paid sick leave each pay period. If an employer chooses the accrual method, employees must accrue sick leave at a rate of one hour for every thirty hours worked in a given pay period as set forth in Labor Code section 246(b)(1). Under the accrual method, employees must begin accruing paid sick leave at the commencement of employment.

Employers must pay sick leave in accordance with one of the three permissible methods provided in Labor Code section 246(l): (1) "the same manner as the regular rate of pay for the workweek;" (2) "by dividing the employee's total wages, not including overtime premium pay, by the employee's total hours worked in the full pay periods of the prior 90 days;" or (3) "for exempt employee … in the same manner as the employer calculates wages for other forms of paid leave time." Labor Code sections 248.6 and 248.7 similarly require paid sick leave to be paid at a regular rate-based calculation in excess of the base hourly rate and at the lawful accrual rate.

Under Labor Code section 246(i), employers must provide employees "with written notice of the amount of paid sick leave available … for use on either the employee's itemized wage statement … or in a separate writing provided on the designated pay date with the employee's payment of wages."

Defendants failed to comply with California's paid sick leave laws with respect to the aggrieved employees. As a result of Defendants' policy of failing to account for all on-call hours worked and all off-the-clock, Plaintiff did not always accrue the accurate amount of paid sick leave earned. This practice often resulted in unpaid paid sick leave.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

Unpaid Meal Period Premium Wages
Violation of Labor Code §§ 226.7, 512, 1198; IWC Wage Orders

Defendants violated Labor Code sections 226.7, 512, and 1198, along with the related sections of the IWC Wage Orders with respect to the aggrieved employees.

Labor Code section 512 and the IWC Wage Orders require that employers provide an uninterrupted 30-minute meal period after no more than five hours of work and a second meal period after no more than 10 hours of work. *See Brinker Restaurant Corp. v. Superior Court* (2012) 53 Cal.4th 1004, 1049. Labor Code section 226.7 requires that if a meal period is late, missed, short, or interrupted, the employer must pay one additional hour of pay at the employee's "regular rate" of compensation. *Ferra v. Loews Hollywood Hotel, LLC* (2021) 11 Cal.5th 858, 862 ("We hold that the terms are synonymous: "regular rate of compensation" under section 226.7(c), like "regular rate of pay" under section 510(a), encompasses all nondiscretionary payments, not just hourly wages"). "[T]ime records showing noncompliant meal periods raise a rebuttable presumption of meal period violations, including at the summary judgment stage." *Donohue v. AMN Services, LLC* (2021) 11 Cal.5th 58, 61. Labor Code section 1198 renders "employment of any employee for longer hours than those fixed by the order or under conditions of labor prohibited by the [IWC Wage Orders]" unlawful. The IWC Wage Orders, including Section 11 (Meal Periods), further require one uninterrupted 30-minute meal period after no more than five hours of work and a second meal period after no more than 10 hours of work and an additional hour of pay at the employee's regular rate of compensation for each workday that a compliant meal period is not provided. Pursuant to Section 11(A) of the IWC Wage Orders, the California Supreme Court has held that the on-duty meal period exception is "exceedingly narrow" and applies only when (1) "the nature of the work prevents the employee from being relieved of all duty" and (2) *both* "the employer and employee have agreed, in writing, to the on-duty meal period." *Augustus v. AMB Security Services, Inc.* (2016) 2 Cal.5th 257, 266-276 (emphasis added). If these two requirements are not met, then the employer owes the employee one hour of premium pay for each non-compliant meal period taken under the purported on-duty meal arrangement. *Naranjo v. Spectrum Security Services, Inc.* (2019) 40 Cal.5th 444, 459.

Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees often experienced non-compliant meal periods to keep up with the high demands of the job. Plaintiff worked as a Humane Law Enforcement officer. Plaintiff's job duties included moving from one emergency call to another. As such, Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees were sometimes prevented from taking meal periods. Further, when Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees were allowed to take meal periods, they were sometimes interrupted for emergency calls for animal seizures, welfare checks, or other urgent happenings. These interruptions often also resulted in short meal periods. As a result, Defendants should have paid meal period premiums for each non-compliant meal period. However, as a matter of policy and practice, Defendants failed to pay all meal period premiums owed.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

Unpaid Rest Period Premium Wages
Violation of Labor Code §§ 226.7, 516, 1198; IWC Wage Orders

Defendants violated Labor Code sections 226.7, 516, and 1198, and the related sections of the IWC Wage Orders with respect to Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees.

Labor Code sections 226.7 and 516 and the IWC Wage Orders require that employers authorize and permit an uninterrupted 10-minute rest period for each four-hour period (or major fraction thereof) that an employee works. Labor Code section 226.7 requires that if a rest period is non-compliant, the employer must pay one additional hour of pay at the employee's "regular rate" of compensation. *Ferra v. Loews Hollywood Hotel, LLC* (2021) 11 Cal.5th 858, 862 ("We hold that the terms are synonymous: "regular rate of compensation" under section 226.7(c), like "regular rate of pay" under section 510(a), encompasses all nondiscretionary payments, not just hourly wages"). Labor Code section 1198 renders "employment of any employee for longer hours than those fixed by the order or under conditions of labor prohibited by the [IWC Wage Orders]" unlawful. The IWC Wage Orders, including Section 12 (Rest Periods), further require one uninterrupted 10-minute rest period for each four-hour period (or major faction thereof) worked and an additional hour of pay at the employee's regular rate of compensation for each workday that a compliant rest period is not authorized or permitted.

Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees often experienced non-compliant rest periods to keep up with the high demands of the job. Plaintiff worked as a Humane Law Enforcement officer. Plaintiff's job duties included moving from one emergency call to another. As such, Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees were sometimes prevented from taking rest periods. Further, when Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees were allowed to take rest periods, they were sometimes interrupted for emergency calls for animal seizures, welfare checks, or other urgent happenings. These interruptions often also resulted in short rest periods. As a result, Defendants should have paid rest period premiums for each non-compliant rest period. However, as a matter of policy and practice, Defendants failed to pay all rest period premiums owed.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

Untimely Payment of Wages During Employment
Violation of Labor Code §§ 204, 204b, 210

Defendants violated Labor Code sections 204 and/or 204b and 210, as applicable, with respect to Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees.

Labor Code section 204(a) requires payment of "all wages" for non-exempt employees at least twice each calendar month. Labor Code section 204(d) states all wages due must be paid "not more than seven calendar days following the close of the payroll period." Labor Code section 204b applies to employees paid on a weekly basis and also requires the payment for all labor within the required pay periods. Labor Code section 210 provides "every person who fails to pay the wages of an employee as provided in Section … 204 … shall be subject to a civil penalty" of $100 for an initial violation and $200 plus 25% of the amount unlawfully withheld for a subsequent violation.

Because Defendants failed to pay all wages and premiums in each pay period in which such wages were earned at the lawful rate, Defendants violated Labor Code section 204 and/or 204b (for weekly employees, as applicable). Defendants violated Labor Code sections 204 and 204b by failing to pay all wages and premiums owed on the regular pay days scheduled each pay period within seven calendar days of the close of the payroll period, as a result of the policies and practices set forth in this notice.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

Non-Compliant Wage Statements
Violation of Labor Code §§ 226, 226.3

Defendants violated Labor Code sections 226(a) and 226.3 with respect to the aggrieved employees by failing to furnish itemized wage statements each pay period that accurately list all information required by Labor Code section 226(a)(1) through (9).

Labor Code section 226(a) requires an employer to furnish wage statements to employees semimonthly or at the time of each payment of wages, "an accurate itemized statement in writing showing:" (1) gross wages earned, (2) total hours worked, (3) the number of piece rate units earned and applicable piece-rate in effect, (4) all deductions, (5) net wages earned, (6) the inclusive dates of the pay period, (7) the name of the employee and last four digits of SSN or an EIN, (8) the name and address of the legal name of the employer, and (9) all applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the number of hours worked at each hourly rate by the employee.

Defendants failed to provide accurate itemized wage statements to the aggrieved employees each pay period as a result of the policies and practices set forth in this notice. Defendants violated Labor Code section 226(a)(1) and (5) by not listing the correct "gross wages earned" or "net wages earned," as the employees earned wages and premiums that were not paid, resulting in an inaccurate reflection, and recording of "gross wages earned" on those wage statements. Likewise, in violation of Labor Code section 226(a)(9), Defendants failed to state on employee wage statements each pay period the applicable hourly rates in effect and the number of hours worked at that rate, as Defendants failed to pay all wages and premiums owed to employees. The amounts stated are instead depreciated and underpaid, resulting in an inaccurate reflection on the pay stub.

Additionally, Defendants violated Labor Code section 226(a)(2) by failing to accurately list employees' "total hours worked," as the wage statements did not accurately include the uncompensated time plaintiff and other aggrieved employees worked due to Defendants' policy and practice of requiring off-the-clock work.

Plaintiff and other aggrieved employees cannot promptly and easily determine from the wage statement alone the wages paid or earned without reference to other documents or information. Indeed, these wage statement violations are significant because they sow confusion among Plaintiff and other aggrieved employees with respect to what amounts were owed and paid, at what rates, the number of hours worked, and how those amounts were or should be calculated. The wage statements reflect a false statement of earnings and concealed the underlying problems and underpayments of employee wages.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

Unreimbursed Employee Expenses
Violation of Labor Code §§ 2802, 2804

Defendants violated Labor Code section 2802 with respect to the aggrieved employees by failing to reimburse the aggrieved employees for all necessary expenditures or losses incurred as part of their job duties.

Labor Code section 2802 requires an employer to "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, or of his or her obedience to the directions of the employer, even though unlawful, unless the employee, at the time of obeying the directions, believed them to be unlawful." *See, e.g., Espinoza v. West Coast Tomato Growers, LLC*, 2016 WL 4468175 at *4, n.2 (S.D. Cal. Aug. 24, 2016, No. 14-CV-2984 W (KSC)).

Labor Code section 2804 affirms that "[a]ny contract or agreement, express or implied, made by any employee to waive the benefits of this article or any part thereof, is null and void, and this article shall not deprive any employee or his personal representative of any right or remedy to which he is entitled under the laws of this State."

Defendants required Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees to incur costs for work-related purposes without full reimbursement. In direct consequence of their job duties, Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees unavoidably and necessarily incurred these losses, expenditures, costs, and as a matter of policy and practice. Specifically, Defendant required Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees to purchase parts of their uniform. Instead of providing the required covers for their Kevlar vests ranging from $150-$175, Defendant required Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees to buy this item. Further, Defendants failed to provide reimbursement for these cover vests, resulting in unreimbursed employee expenses.

Additionally, Defendants required Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees to incur mileage and gas expenses without reimbursement. Specifically, Defendants required the aggrieved employees to travel from the North County campus to downtown San Diego for trainings. Defendants did not provide transportation and instead, required Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees to use their personal vehicles for these trips. However, Defendants did not always pay mileage or gas expenses. Occasionally, Defendnats expected Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees to incur these costs without reimbursement.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

Failure to Maintain Accurate Records
Violation of Labor Code § 1174; IWC Wage Orders

Defendants violated Labor Code sections 1174 and the IWC Wage Orders by failing to maintain accurate employee payroll records with respect to Plaintiff and other aggrieved employees.

Labor Code section 1174 requires that employers maintain accurate "payroll records showing the hours worked daily by and the wages paid to, and the number of piece-rate units earned by and any applicable piece rate paid to, employees employed at the respective plants or establishments." Section 7(A) of the IWC Wage Orders, which may be enforced through Labor Code section 1198, mandates similar recordkeeping obligations.

Because of the policies and practices set forth in this notice, including the failure to accurately account for wages earned or hours worked, Defendants failed to accurately maintain records in accordance with Labor Code section 1174 and the IWC Wage Orders.

As a result, Plaintiff may recover civil penalties as an individual and on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees, up to the maximum amount allowed as set forth under the Labor Code.

Attorneys' Fees and Costs
Labor Code § 2699(k)(1)

Plaintiff has been compelled to retain the services of counsel to protect the interests of other aggrieved employees and the State of California. Plaintiff continues to incur attorneys' fees and costs, which are recoverable under California law, including Labor Code section 2699(k)(1).

- LITIGATION HOLD NOTICE –

This letter imposes a duty upon all defendants and their respective employees, officers, directors, executives, attorneys, human resource and payroll personnel, accountants, and other agents to preserve all physical and electronic evidence, including electronically stored information and emails, which relate to the employment of Plaintiff and the aggrieved employees specified in this notice. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, Defendants' written employment and payroll policies and handbooks; the aggrieved employees' personnel files and payroll records, such as paystubs, time records, wage statements, compensation reports, as well as the underlying electronically data in Excel or similar format. Memoranda and internal and external correspondence relating to the subject matter of this notice shall also be maintained. Failure to preserve and retain relevant evidence may constitute spoliation of evidence and result in an adverse inference or sanctions.

If you have any questions regarding the scope of your obligations to preserve evidence, please consult your legal counsel and always err on the side of caution. Periodic or regularly scheduled purges or deletions of information covered by this hold must be suspended immediately.

- CONCLUSION -

If the LWDA does not pursue enforcement, Plaintiff intends to bring representative claims on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees seeking civil penalties for violations of the Labor Code and the IWC Wage Orders, along with attorneys' fees, costs, interest, and other appropriate relief.

Please advise if the LWDA intends to investigate any of the factual or legal allegations set forth in this notice. Defendants may contact Plaintiff's counsel with any questions regarding this letter or the forthcoming lawsuit.

Sincerely,

Dorota James

Dorota James

Cc Plaintiff Mindi Monroe
HR Representative, Keith Bergland - KBerglund@sdhumane.org