

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

Rene C. Davidson Courthouse

Courtney D Pritchard
Plaintiff/Petitioner(s)
VS.
JumpstartMD, Inc.
Defendant/Respondent
(s)

No. 23CV029981

Date: 12/10/2025

Time: 1:30 PM

Dept: 18

Judge: Patrick McKinney

ORDER re: Hearing on Motion for
Order Granting Approval
of PAGA Settlement; filed
by Courtney D Pritchard
(Plaintiff) CRS#
198922446251 filed by
Courtney D Pritchard
(Plaintiff) on 08/26/2025

The Motion re: PLAINTIFFS NOTICE OF MOTION AND MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF PAGA SETTLEMENT filed by Courtney D Pritchard on 08/26/2025 is Granted.

BACKGROUND

This is a PAGA representative action based on alleged violations of the Labor Code. Plaintiff Courtney D. Pritchard, as a proxy for the LWDA, has agreed to settle with Defendant North American Security for \$225,000.00, which includes up to \$75,000.00 in attorney's fees; up to \$20,000.00 in litigation expenses incurred by counsel; a service award of \$10,000.00 for the representative plaintiff; and settlement administration costs of up to \$3,250.00. The remaining funds will constitute civil penalties under PAGA, 75% of which penalties go to California Labor and Workforce Development Agency (LWDA) and 25% of which will be distributed among approximately 112 aggrieved employees.

LEGAL STANDARD

Under the Private Attorneys General Act of 2004 (PAGA), an employee aggrieved by his or her employer's alleged Labor Code violations may be authorized to act as an agent of the Labor Workforce and Development Agency (LWDA) to bring a civil action to recover civil penalties. Once an aggrieved employee files a PAGA lawsuit, the statutory scheme recognizes that the

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Settlement; filed by Courtney D Pritchard (Plaintiff) CRS#
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employee may settle that lawsuit on behalf of the state. (See Lab. Code, § 2699, subds. (a) & (1)(2).) “The superior court shall review and approve any settlement,” and the “proposed settlement shall be submitted to the [LWDA] at the same time that it is submitted to the court.” (*Id.*, § 2699, subd. (1)(2).) A “trial court should evaluate a PAGA settlement to determine whether it is fair, reasonable, and adequate in view of PAGA’s purposes to remediate present labor law violations, deter future ones, and to maximize enforcement of state labor laws.” (*Moniz v. Adecco USA, Inc.* (2021) 72 Cal.App.5th 56, 77.) Although PAGA cases and class actions are different, the analysis for settlement approval is similar and involves many of the same factors, “including the strength of the plaintiff’s case, the risk, the stage of the proceeding, the complexity and likely duration of further litigation, and the settlement amount.” (*Ibid.*)

DISCUSSION

The parties participated in mediation with a private mediator and thereafter agreed to a settlement. (Campbell Decl., ¶¶ 7–11.) The court gives “considerable weight to the competency and integrity of counsel and the involvement of a neutral mediator in assuring itself that a settlement agreement represents an arm’s length transaction entered without self-dealing or other potential misconduct.” (*Kullar v. Foot Locker Retail, Inc.* (2008) 168 Cal.App.4th 116, 129 [class action context].) Plaintiff’s counsel cites extensive experience in wage-and-hour cases and attests to conducting a thorough investigation. (Campbell Decl., ¶¶ 18–31. 35.) Plaintiff notified the LWDA of the proposed settlement. (See *id.*, ¶¶ 12, 38, Ex. 3.) The court is satisfied that the PAGA settlement is generally “fair to those affected.” (*Williams v. Superior Court* (2017) 3 Cal.5th 531, 549.)

The court exercises its discretion to exceed its 30% benchmark and award the requested \$75,000.00 in attorney’s fees. (See *Laffitte v. Robert Half Internat. Inc.* (2016) 1 Cal.5th 480, 495 [citing Ninth Circuit approval of 25% and Eleventh Circuit approval of 20–30% range]; see also *Schulz v. Jeppesen Sanderson, Inc.* (2018) 27 Cal.App.5th 1167, 1175 [“Although the trial court would be acting within its discretion to award less than 31 percent, we note that 31 percent is not out of line with awards in class actions, which, like this case, involve attorney fees to be paid by a protected class and that require court approval.”].)

The court approved a \$7,500.00 service award for Ms. Pritchard and asked the parties to identify a cy pres beneficiary consistent with Code of Civil Procedure, section 384. Plaintiffs identified Voices for Children, a child advocacy organization, and revised the agreement and proposed order. (See Supp. Campbell Decl., filed Dec. 3, 2025.)

ORDER

Plaintiff’s motion for approval of PAGA settlement is GRANTED. The court will enter the proposed order submitted, modified only as to the compliance date. A compliance hearing for final accounting is set for November 4, 2026 at 1:30 pm in Department 18. Ten percent of the attorney’s fee award be held by the settlement administrator until completion of the distribution process and court approval of a final accounting.

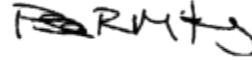
SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

Rene C. Davidson Courthouse

Compliance Hearing re final accounting is scheduled for 11/04/2026 at 01:30 PM in Department 18 at Rene C. Davidson Courthouse.

The Court orders counsel to obtain a copy of this order from the eCourt portal.

Dated : 12/10/2025

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. McKinney", is written above the printed name.

Patrick McKinney / Judge