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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

DUSTIN REISCHMAN, individually, on a
representative basis, and on behalf of all
others similarly situated;

Plaintiff,

vs.

MERCHANTS METALS LLC, a
Delaware Limited Liability Company; and
DOES 1 through 20, inclusive;

Defendants.

Case No.: CVRI2301910
*[Assigned to Hon. Harold Hopp, Dept 1, for all
purposes]*

**DECLARATION OF BRIAN J. MANKIN,
ESQ., IN SUPPORT OF MOTION FOR
FINAL APPROVAL OF CLASS ACTION
SETTLEMENT**

Hearing

Date: April 9, 2025

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Dept.: 1

I, Brian J. Mankin, state and declare:

1. I am an attorney licensed to practice before all of the courts of the State of California. I manage the employment law department and am a partner with the law firm of Lauby, Mankin & Lauby LLP, which has offices in Orange County and Riverside County. I am thoroughly familiar with and have personal knowledge of all of the facts set forth herein. I submit this declaration in support of Plaintiff's Motion for Final Approval of this Class Action Settlement. If called as a witness, I could and would competently testify thereto.

1 **COUNSEL’S EXPERIENCE**

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

6 3. I have handled well over 500 employee vs. employer litigation matters during my
7 23 years in practice. Over the last 18 years, my practice has almost entirely consisted of
8 representing employees, the majority of which has included class action and representative
9 action wage and hour matters. In total, I have handled over 300 class action and representative
10 action wage/hour cases, and have been appointed by the court as class counsel and have received
11 final court approval and judgment in over half of those actions to date, and anticipate receiving
12 final approval in many more of those in the future.

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

20 5. I have tried two major class and PAGA cases against Fortune 100 companies. In
21 2018, I was lead counsel in a PAGA case that my firm tried in the Orange County Superior Court
22 and received a \$425,000 judgment. In 2019, I was co-counsel in a class action case against
23 Walmart in District Court, wherein the jury awarded Plaintiffs and the class over \$6 million.
24 Both cases were appealed.

25 6. I was named by the LA Times as one “Southern California Leading Lawyers” in
26 the May 2023 issue of Consumer Attorney’s of Southern California (a recognition given to 17
27 employment/labor law attorneys in 2023). Additionally, over the last five consecutive years, I
28 have been selected by my peers as a “Super Lawyer” in Employment Litigation, a distinction that

only 5% of lawyers receive.

ADEQUACY OF THE SETTLEMENT

7. The Class, as conditionally certified by this Court, consists of all current and former nonexempt (hourly paid) employees employed by Defendant in California at any time during the Class Period (which is April 13, 2019, through June 2, 2024).

8. The Gross Settlement Amount is \$295,000 and, as set forth in the in the Declaration of Taylor Mitzner on behalf of the Settlement Administrator, Phoenix Settlement Administrators, the Net Settlement Amount is \$110,758.22, as detailed here:

<i>Gross Settlement Amount</i>	\$ 295,000.00
Attorneys' Fees (1/3)	\$ 98,333.33
Litigation Costs	\$ 13,845.94
Administrator Costs	\$ 6,500.00
PAGA Penalties	\$ 25,000.00
Credit for Prior Payments made by Defendant	\$ 44,470.00
Class Representative Service Award	\$ 10,000.00
<i>Net Settlement Amount</i>	\$ 96,850.73

9. The process of mailing the Notice Packets, consisting of a Class Notice, Objection Form, Dispute Form and Exclusion Form, was completely successful, as 100% of the Notice Packets were successfully delivered by the Settlement Administrator.

10. The response from the Class Members was overwhelmingly positive, as 100% of the Class participated in the Settlement and there were no objections. (The "Response Deadline" is March 31, 2025, which is after the filing deadline for this motion. Thus, my office will file a supplemental declaration from the administrator before the hearing confirming the final number of opt-outs, objections, and/or disputes).

11. As discussed at length in Plaintiff's motion for preliminary approval, as well as in the Motion for Final Approval, this Settlement is very favorable to the Class and the release is narrowly limited to the claims alleged.

12. Sufficient information existed to allow Class Counsel to intelligently value this case. Given the parties' arms' length bargaining facilitated by an experienced wage and hour mediator, the extensive exchange of informal discovery, the experience of Class Counsel, the

fact that all Class Members elected to participate (and no objections were submitted), the presumption of fairness is justified.

13. I believe that the settlement is fair, reasonable, adequate, and in the best interests of the Class, given the litigation risks and delay inherent in further litigation and possible appeals. As set forth in Plaintiff's motion for preliminary approval and the declarations submitted in support thereof, Defendant vigorously challenged Plaintiff's claims, and Plaintiff faced real challenges in certifying the Class and obtaining a recovery on the claims in this matter. Nonetheless, the Parties concluded that further litigation would be protracted and expensive, and that it is desirable that the action be fully and finally settled in the manner and upon the terms and conditions set forth in the Settlement Agreement in order to limit further expense, inconvenience and distraction, to dispose of burdensome and protracted litigation, and to permit the operation of Defendant's business without further expensive litigation and the distraction and diversion of its personnel with respect to matters at issue. All parties took into account the uncertainty of risks inherent in any litigation, especially in complex cases such as this case. The parties determined that it is desirable and beneficial to both the Class and Defendant that this case be settled. Risks on both sides were considered in reaching the Settlement Agreement. The recoveries contemplated by the Settlement represent a good result for the Class, fairly proportioned to the likely risk-adjusted recovery in litigation.

ADEQUACY OF COUNSEL AND
REASONABLENESS OF REQUEST FEE AND COST AWARDS

14. As set forth above, I have handled over 250 class and representative actions. I have been appointed as class counsel and have successfully resolved approximately half of those cases (while many are ongoing and will successfully resolve in the future) while recovering hundreds of millions of dollars for my clients and Class Members. This is substantially better than average according to Mayer Brown LLP's study entitled, *An Empirical Analysis of Class Actions*, cited in *Laguna v. Coverall North America, Inc.*, No. 12-55479 (9th Cir. 2014), which found that only one-third of class actions are successful, compared to two-thirds that are defeated

1 and result in no payment to the class members.¹

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

6 16. It has been my experience that the benchmark for attorney fee awards in
7 California state cases is one-third of a common settlement fund, which the CA Supreme Court
8 upheld in the *Laffitte v. Robert Half*, 1 Cal.5th 480 case. Here, in accordance with the Settlement
9 Agreement, Class Counsel is seeking a fee of \$83,333.33, which is one-third of the Settlement
10 Amount.

11 17. There are several additional factors why I believe that the Court should award
12 one-third of the common fund as reasonable attorneys' fees. First, Class Counsel's efforts
13 resulted in a very good result for the Class, especially in light of the disputed nature of the claims
14 alleged. This result was achieved by the work and success of my office, who negotiated the
15 settlement after extensive preparation, investigation, mediation, and substantial work thereafter.

16 18. Second, Plaintiff faced significant risks going forward with the litigation. As
17 discussed in the motion for preliminary approval, Defendant raised various defenses throughout
18 this litigation, any one of which, if successful, could have decimated Plaintiff's case. And
19 Defendant vowed to raise all these defenses at trial. Accordingly, Plaintiff faced risky issues
20 going forward with this litigation, and it would have taken several more years to realize any
21 recovery in this action along with the possibility of post-trial appeals.

22 19. Third, Class Counsel are experienced class action litigators. This experience and
23 expertise, combined with the high quality of work performed in this case, resulted in the
24 settlement achieved in this case.

25 20. Fourth, Class Counsel has been representing Plaintiff strictly on a contingency fee
26 basis. To that end, we have incurred the risk of non-recovery after investing a substantial
27

28

¹ www.mayerbrown.com/files/uploads/Documents/PDFs/2013/December/DoClassActionsBenefitClassMembers.pdf

1 amount of time, money, and resources, and have done so since the inception of this case without
2 any payment or compensation. If Plaintiff had lost this case, we would have recovered nothing,
3 and would have lost our out-of-pocket costs. This is not an easy burden for my office, which is a
4 small firm. While some cases result in a positive lodestar and some in a negative lodestar like
5 this case, if, despite these hardships and risks, the best my office could hope for is merely to be
6 paid our hourly rate, then Class Counsel would not be compensated for the hardships and serious
7 risks we face when litigating contingency fee cases, and would not be incentivized to take on
8 similar cases in the future. Indeed, not all class/PAGA cases are successful. Many cases end
9 with no fees or a greatly reduced fee that is far less than lodestar like this one, often due to no
10 fault of counsel (*i.e.*, bankruptcy, change in the law, consolidation- coordination-preemption,
11 being top filed, etc.). As noted in the Mayer Brown LLP's study discussed above, only one-third
12 of class actions are successful, compared to two-thirds that are defeated and result in no payment
13 to the class members.

14 21. Fifth, the request for attorney's fees in the amount of one-third of the common
15 fund falls well within the norms accepted by state and federal courts in California in comparable
16 wage and hour actions actually handled by my office. Moreover, the award of a one-third fee
17 recovery under the common fund doctrine was approved by the California Supreme Court in
18 *Laffitte, supra*, 1 Cal.5th 480, 503.

19 22. For these reasons, a common fund fee award here in the amount of one-third of
20 the common fund created by Plaintiff and Class Counsel is fair and reasonable, especially where
21 the actual lodestar for my firm far surpasses the amount requested (as discussed below).

22 23. At my office, this case was handled by Peter Carlson while I performed the role of
23 the supervising attorney. Peter Carlson's experience is set forth in his declarations, but in sum,
24 he works exclusively with me on employment law matters and has been in practice for 11 years.
25 Peter bills at the hourly rate of \$650/hour. I have been in practice for over 23 years, with most of
26 those years handling complex litigation and for over the last 18 years, my practice has almost
27 entirely consisted of handling class action wage and hour matters. My billing rate is \$775/hour.
28

24. I believe these rates are comparable to those of other attorneys with equal or similar experience, if not somewhat lower (*i.e.*, the Laffey Matrix at www.laffeymatrix.com indicates that the benchmark rates are: \$777/hour for an 8–10-year attorney, \$878/hour for a 11–19-year attorney, and \$1,057/hour for a 20+ year attorney). Moreover, the Wolters Kluwer 2023 Real Rate Report (“Real Rate Report”) provides directly applicable information in this regard. The Real Rate Report is based on an enormous and statistically significant compilation of data, comprising millions billing entries from a hundred thousand individual timekeepers who worked at thousands of law firms. The Real Rate Report then compiles and analyzes this data to provide the hourly rates for partners and associates in major metropolitan areas. For the southern California area: (a) the rate for partners in Los Angeles is between \$840 and \$1,159 per hour for the middle and upper quartiles, and (b) the rates for associates with seven or more years of experience, the median rate is \$674 per hour, and the upper quartile rate is \$888 per hour. And, perhaps most importantly, the information provided in the Real Rate Report is not based on self-reported numbers, surveys, sampling, or reviews or other publications – instead, the Real Rate Report is based on the actual hours and fees billed by law firms, which makes it “a much better reflection of true market rates than self-reported rates in all practice areas.” *Brown v. CVS Pharmacy, Inc.* (C.D. Cal. Apr. 24, 2017) 2017 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 182309, at *21.

25. The table below includes a summary of the hours worked, plus additional hours that I will bill in finalizing and filing the motion, preparing for and attending the approval hearing, and working with the administrator and defense counsel to issue checks, respond to class members and finalize this matter. The actual aggregated lodestar between the attorneys that worked on this case is approximately \$114,060, which reflects the fact that we are seeking a ***negative multiplier*** – further reinforcing the reasonableness of the requested fees.

Attorney/Timekeeper	Rate	Hours	Fee
Brian J. Mankin <i>Trial Counsel / Partner</i> (23 Years)	\$775	42	\$32,550
Peter Carlson <i>Handling Attorney / Sr. Associate</i> (11 Years)	\$650	125.4	\$81,510
Grand Total for All Attorneys			\$114,060

1 26. Thus, the requested fee is warranted and appropriate because of the results
2 achieved for the Class Members, both in terms of the immediate cash settlement, as well as the
3 fact that the Class Members resoundingly supported the Settlement. Defendant does not oppose
4 this fee request.

5 27. In the course of prosecuting this action, my office has incurred expenses
6 necessary to the effective representation of the Class. These expenses included but were not
7 limited to: court filings, copying and management of documents, messenger services, postage,
8 fax transmission expenses, transportation, mediation fees, expert fees, and other incidental
9 expenses directly related to this action. My firm's expenses through the final approval hearing
10 are estimated to be \$13,845.94, which includes filing this motion, process/server costs, and
11 service expenses (see the itemized statement of these costs attached hereto as Exhibit C). Since
12 the Settlement Agreement provided for capped costs up to \$25,000, the savings of over \$10,000
13 will be placed in the Net Settlement Amount for distribution to the Participating Class Members.
14 Defendant does not oppose this request for costs.

15 **REASONABLENESS OF REQUESTED SERVICE AWARD**

16 28. I also believe that the service award of \$10,000 to Plaintiff and Class
17 Representative Dustin Reischman is fair and warranted. He came forward and worked directly
18 with my office in analyzing the claims and documents, providing valuable information. (See his
19 declaration for supporting information.) Indeed, his participation was an essential element of
20 Defendant's desire to mediate and of the pre- and post-mediation analysis that allowed Class
21 Counsel to settle the case. Of course, Plaintiff also took on various risks, including the risk that
22 he could have been ordered to pay Defendant's costs if she lost and the risk of retaliation and
23 being black-balled in the industry. Defendant does not oppose the requested service awards.

24 **SUBMISSION TO THE LWDA**

25 29. The Motion and declarations, including the Settlement Agreement, have
26 concurrently been submitted to the LWDA. (*See* Exhibit E hereto).

27 ///

28 ///

30. A true and correct copy of the Class and PAGA Settlement Agreement and Release of Claims (the “Settlement Agreement”) is attached hereto as **Exhibit A**.

31. A true and correct copy of the Order granting preliminary approval is attached hereto as **Exhibit B**.

32. A true and correct copy of an itemized statement of my firm’s litigation costs is attached hereto as **Exhibit C**.

33. A true and correct copy of the LWDA’s confirmation of receipt of this Motion and Declaration is attached hereto as **Exhibit D**.

34. For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully requested that the Court grant final approval of the settlement as being fair, reasonable, and in the best interest of the class, and approve the requested attorneys’ fees, costs, and enhancements.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on March 17, 2025, at Riverside, California.


Brian J. Mankin, Esq.

EXHIBIT “A”

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Attorneys for Defendant, Merchants Metals LLC

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

DUSTIN REISCHMAN, individually, on a
representative basis, and on behalf of all
others similarly situated;

Plaintiff,

vs.

MERCHANTS METALS LLC, a Delaware
Limited Liability Company; and DOES 1
through 20, inclusive;

Defendants.

Case No.: CVRI2301910
*[Assigned to Hon. Harold Hopp, Dept 10, for
all purposes]*

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

1 This Class Action and PAGA Settlement Agreement and Release of Claims is entered
2 into by and between Plaintiff Dustin Reischman, individually and on behalf of all others
3 similarly situated, and on behalf of the State of California, and Defendant Merchants Metals
4 LLC, and is approved by their respective counsel of record, subject to the terms and conditions
5 hereof and the Court's approval.

6 **A. Definitions**

7 1. "Action" or "Lawsuit" means and refers to the case entitled *Reischman v.*
8 *Merchants Metals LLC*, Riverside County Superior Court, Case No. CVRI2301910.

9 2. "Aggrieved Employee(s)" means all current and former nonexempt (hourly paid)
10 employees employed by Defendant in California during the PAGA Period.

11 3. "Agreement" or "Settlement Agreement" or "Settlement" shall mean this Class
12 Action and PAGA Settlement Agreement and Release of Claims.

13 4. "Class" is defined all current and former nonexempt (hourly paid) employees
14 employed by Defendant in California at any time during the Class Period.

15 5. "Class Member(s)" refers to individual members of the Class.

16 6. "Class Counsel" refers to Brian Mankin and Peter Carlson of Lauby, Mankin &
17 Lauby LLP.

18 7. "Class Data" means a complete list that Defendant will diligently and in good
19 faith compile from their records and provide to the Settlement Administrator on one spreadsheet
20 which shall include, for each Class Member: the individual's full name; last known address;
21 Social Security Number; total Weeks Worked during the PAGA Period and the Class Period,
22 and; if applicable, the amount of Prior Payment made to the Class Member.

23 8. "Class Period" is deemed to be any time during the period of April 13, 2019,
24 through June 2, 2024.

25 9. "Class Representative" or "Plaintiff" means and refers to Plaintiff Dustin
26 Reischman.

27 10. "Complaint" refers to the operative second amended complaint, which pleads
28 class action and PAGA representative claims.

1 11. “Court” (or “Judge”) means the California Superior Court, County of Riverside.

2 12. “Defendant” means and refers to Defendant Merchants Metals LLC.

3 13. “Defendant’s Counsel” or “Defense Counsel” means and refers to Ogletree,
4 Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, P.C.

5 14. “Effective Date” means the latest of the following dates: (i) if no Class Member
6 timely and properly intervenes, or files a motion to vacate the judgment approving the Settlement
7 Agreement under Code of Civil Procedure § 663, then the date the Court enters an order granting
8 Final Approval; (ii) if a Class Member intervenes, or files a motion to vacate the judgment
9 approving the Settlement Agreement, then sixty-one (61) calendar days following the date the
10 Court enters an order granting Final Approval, assuming no appeal is filed; or (iii) if a timely
11 appeal is filed, the date of final resolution of that appeal (including any requests for rehearing
12 and/or petitions for *certiorari*), resulting in final judicial approval of the Settlement.

13 15. “Escalator Clause:” Defendant represents that there are approximately 80 Class
14 Members, who collectively worked a total of approximately 8,000 Workweeks during the Class
15 Period. If the total count of Workweeks (as contained in the Class Data) exceeds 8,800 (10%
16 more than Defendant’s representation), then the Settlement Amount shall increase by \$36.875
17 (Settlement Amount divided by 8,000) for each additional Workweek above 8,800.

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

21 17. “Individual Class Payment” refers to each Participating Class Members share of
22 the Net Settlement Amount, as further discussed in Paragraph 49(c) below.

23 18. “Individual PAGA Payment” refers to each Aggrieved Employees share of the
24 PAGA Penalties, as further discussed in Paragraph 49(c) below.

25 19. “Net Settlement Amount” shall have the meaning ascribed to it in Paragraph 49(b)
26 below.

27 20. “Notice” means the notice of proposed class settlement that will be sent to the
28 Class Members, and which will advise each Class Member of the settlement and his or her

1 estimated Individual Class Payment and Individual PAGA Payment, total Weeks Worked, and
2 will further advise of the setting of a Final Approval Hearing.

3 21. “Notice Packet” means the Notice, Request for Exclusion Form, the Objection
4 Form, and the Dispute Form to be sent to all Class Members.

5 22. “Objecting Class Member” means a Class Member, other than Plaintiff, who
6 submits a valid and timely objection to the terms of this Agreement, pursuant to Paragraph 71(c)
7 below.

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

12 24. “PAGA Period” is deemed to be any time during the period of April 13, 2022,
13 through June 2, 2024.

14 25. “Participating Class Member” means any and all Class Members who are deemed
15 to participate and receive an Individual Class Payment and do not opt-out by submitting timely
16 valid Requests for Exclusion.

17 26. “Parties” or “Settling Parties” mean Plaintiff and Defendant, collectively.

18 27. “Preliminary Approval Date” means the date the Court approves the Settlement
19 Agreement and enters the Preliminary Approval Order.

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

28 29. “Prior Payment(s)” refers to the amount paid by Defendant to Class Members as

1 part of a *Pick-Up Stix* campaign and through which Defendant obtained settlement agreements
2 and releases from certain Class Members relating to claims alleged in this Action.

3 30. “QSF” means the Qualified Settlement Fund set up by the Settlement
4 Administrator for the benefit of the Participating Class Members and Aggrieved Employees, and
5 from which the settlement payments shall be made.

6 31. “Released Class Claims” or “Class Claims” by the Participating Class Members
7 upon Final Approval of the Settlement will include all claims stated in the Complaint and those
8 based solely upon the facts in the Complaint, including: (1) failure to pay minimum wages, (2)
9 failure to pay overtime wages, (3) failure to pay vested vacation, (4) failure to provide meal
10 periods, (5) failure to provide rest breaks, (6) failure to timely pay final wages, (7) failure to
11 provide accurate itemized wage statements, and (8) unfair and unlawful competition. The time
12 period governing the Released Class Claims shall be the Class Period.

13 32. “Released PAGA Claims” means any and all PAGA claims that Plaintiff alleged
14 against the Released Parties on behalf of himself and the State of California and LWDA, based
15 on the facts stated in the relevant LWDA notice letters and only to the extent that they are
16 alleged in the Complaint, including all PAGA claims seeking civil penalties premised upon: (1)
17 failure to pay minimum wages, (2) failure to pay overtime wages, (3) failure to pay vested
18 vacation, (4) failure to provide meal periods, (5) failure to provide rest breaks, (6) failure to
19 timely pay wages each period, (7) failure to timely pay wages upon separation of employment,
20 (8) failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements, and (9) all other claims for civil
21 penalties recoverable under the Private Attorneys General Act, Labor Code §§ 2698 et seq. based
22 on the facts or claims alleged in the LWDA notice letters and Complaint. The time period
23 governing the Released PAGA Claims shall be any time during the PAGA Period.

24 33. “Released Parties” means Defendant, together with its officers, directors,
25 employees, and agents.

26 34. “Release” shall mean the release and discharge of the Released Class Claims by
27 Plaintiff and all Participating Class Members and their assignees.

28 35. “Response Deadline” is 45 calendar days from the date the Notice is mailed to the

1 Class Members.

2 36. “Request for Exclusion” shall have the meaning ascribed to it in Paragraph 71(a)
3 below.

4 37. “Settlement Amount” is \$295,000, subject to the Escalator Clause, a credit for
5 \$44,420 for Prior Payments made, and exclusive of Defendant’s obligation to fund its share of
6 payroll taxes, as further discussed in Paragraph 49(c) below.

7 38. “Service Payment” or “Service Award” means the amount approved by the Court
8 to be paid to Class Representative Dustin Reischman in addition to his Individual Class Payment
9 as a Participating Class Member and Individual PAGA payment as an Aggrieved Employee.

10 39. “Settlement Administrator” means and refers to Phoenix Settlement
11 Administrators, the third-party class action settlement administrator agreed to by the Parties, that
12 will provide the Notice Packet to the Class Members and distribute the settlement amounts as
13 described in this Agreement.

14 40. “Settlement Administration Costs” means the costs payable from the Settlement
15 Amount to the Settlement Administrator for administering this Settlement, including, but not
16 limited to, printing, distributing, and tracking documents for this Settlement, tax reporting, and
17 deposit of the employee and employer share of payroll taxes, unclaimed property due diligence,
18 reporting and remittance obligations, distributing the Settlement Amount, and providing
19 necessary reports and declarations, as requested by the Parties. The Settlement Administration
20 Costs shall be paid from the Settlement Amount, and shall not exceed the amount approved by
21 the Court, regardless of any additional costs that the Settlement Administrator may request or
22 feel is necessary to administer the Settlement.

23 41. “Work Weeks” or “Weeks Worked” in the context of a Class Members means any
24 and all work weeks during the Class Period during which the Class Member worked at least one
25 day for Defendant in California. Likewise, in the context of Aggrieved Employees, it means any
26 and all weeks worked during the PAGA Period during which the Aggrieved Employee worked at
27 least one day for Defendant in California.
28

1 **B. General Terms**

2 42. On April 13, 2023, Plaintiff filed the instant class action, alleging that Defendant
3 violated various sections of the Labor Code. On the same day, Plaintiff gave written notice by
4 online filing to the Labor and Workforce Development Agency (“LWDA”) and by certified mail
5 to Defendant of the specific provisions of the Labor Code alleged to have been violated,
6 including the facts and theories to support the alleged violations. Then, on about June 28, 2023,
7 Plaintiff filed a First Amended Complaint adding causes of action under PAGA. Defendant filed
8 its Answer to the First Amended Complaint on August 15, 2023. Then, on about XX, the Parties
9 stipulated to allow Plaintiff to file the operative second amended complaint to add a claim for
10 failure to pay vested vacation under Labor Code § 227.3 (a claim which Plaintiff discovered as
11 part of the pre-mediation investigation).

12 43. Defendant denies Plaintiff’s claims and allegations, and contends that the Action
13 is not suitable for class certification.

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

16 45. The Parties have conducted a thorough investigation into the facts of the Action.
17 This includes conducting initial formal discovery and a draft Belaire Notice, as well as an
18 extensive exchange of informal discovery, including a sampling of payroll and timekeeping
19 records for Class Members. Class Counsel is both knowledgeable about and has done extensive
20 research with respect to the applicable law and potential defenses to the claims of the Class.
21 Class Counsel has diligently pursued an investigation of the Class Members’ claims against
22 Defendant. Based on the foregoing data and on their own independent investigation and
23 evaluation, Class Counsel is of the opinion that the settlement with Defendant for the
24 consideration and on the terms set forth in this Settlement Agreement is fair, reasonable, and
25 adequate and is in the best interest of the Class Members in light of all known facts and
26 circumstances, including the risk of significant delay and uncertainty associated with litigation,
27 various defenses asserted by Defendant, and numerous potential appellate issues.

28 46. On April 3, 2024, Plaintiff and Defendant participated in a full-day mediation

1 with Todd Smith, a well-respected wage-and-hour mediator. At the conclusion of mediation and
2 extensive arms-length negotiations, the Parties ultimately accepted a mediator's proposal and
3 entered into this Settlement.

4 47. The Parties agree that neither the Parties' Settlement, this Agreement, nor the acts
5 to be performed or judgment to be entered pursuant to the terms of the Settlement and
6 Agreement, shall be construed as an admission by Defendant of any wrongdoing or violation of
7 any statute or law or liability on the claims or allegations in the Action.

8 48. Stipulation for Class Certification. For settlement purposes only, Defendant will
9 stipulate that the Class Members described herein who do not Request Exclusion from the Class
10 may be conditionally certified as a Class. This stipulation to certification is in no way an
11 admission that class action certification is proper and shall not be admissible in this action except
12 for the sole purposes of enforcing this Agreement. Should, for whatever reason, the Court fail to
13 issue Final Approval, the Parties' stipulation to class certification as part of the Settlement shall
14 become null and void ab initio and shall have no bearing on, and shall not be admissible in this
15 Action in connection with, the issue of whether certification would be appropriate in a non-
16 settlement context. Defendant expressly reserve its rights and declare that it would continue to
17 oppose class certification and the substantive merits of the case should the Court fail to issue
18 Final Approval. Plaintiff expressly reserves his rights and declares that he will continue to
19 pursue class certification and a trial should the Court fail to issue Final Approval.

20 **C. Terms of Settlement**

21 49. The financial terms of the Settlement are as follows:

22 (a) Settlement Amount: The Parties agree to settle this Action for the
23 Settlement Amount, which is the maximum amount that will be paid by Defendant (except for
24 the employer's share of payroll taxes). Defendant shall receive a credit of \$44,420 toward the
25 Settlement Amount for Prior Payments made to the Class Members. The Settlement Amount
26 includes payments to the Participating Class Members, PAGA Penalties (to the Aggrieved
27 Employees and LWDA), Attorneys' Fees and Costs Award, the Service Payment to the Class
28 Representative, and Settlement Administration Costs. Defendant shall separately pay the

1 employer's share of its payroll tax obligations, which shall be reported through the Settlement
2 Administrator.

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

10 (c) Individual Class Payments for the Class will be calculated and apportioned
11 from the Net Settlement Amount based on the number of Weeks Worked by a Class Member
12 during the Class Period. And the Individual Class Payment will then be reduced by any Prior
13 Payment received by the Class Member (but in no instance shall the offset from the Prior
14 Payment cause an Individual Class Payment to drop below \$50.00). Thus, each specific
15 Individual Class Payment will be calculated by: (a) dividing the Net Settlement Amount by the
16 total number of Weeks Worked by all Participating Class Members during the Class Period, (b)
17 multiplying the result by each Participating Class Members' Weeks Worked, and (c) if
18 applicable, reducing the Individual Class Payment by any Prior Payment received by the Class
19 Member. The entire Net Settlement Amount will be disbursed to all Participating Class
20 Members. If there are any valid and timely Requests for Exclusion, the Settlement Administrator
21 shall proportionally increase the Individual Class Payment for each Participating Class Member
22 according to the number of Weeks Worked, so that the amount actually distributed to
23 Participating Class Members equals one hundred percent (100%) of the Net Settlement Amount.

24 (d) Allocation of Individual Class Payments: The Individual Class Payments
25 to Participating Class Members will be allocated as follows: one-third (33.33%) will be
26 allocated as wages subject to withholding of all applicable local, state and federal taxes; and two-
27 thirds (66.67%) will be allocated for interest and statutory penalties (pursuant to, e.g., California
28 Labor Code sections 203, 210, 226) from which no taxes will be withheld. The Settlement

1 Administrator will issue to each Participating Class Member an Internal Revenue Service Form
2 W-2 and comparable state forms with respect to the wage allocation and a Form 1099 with
3 respect to the penalties and interest allocations.

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

15 (f) Attorneys' Fees and Costs Award: Defendant agrees to not oppose a
16 request by Class Counsel to the Court for an award of attorneys' fees of one-third of the
17 Settlement Amount, plus reasonable litigation costs not to exceed \$25,000 ("Attorney's Fees and
18 Cost Award"). Defendant agrees not to oppose any contention by Class Counsel that attorneys'
19 fees should be based on the common fund theory. The Attorney's Fee and Cost Award shall be
20 paid from the Settlement Amount, and, except for this award, Defendant shall have no further
21 obligation to pay any attorneys' fees, costs or expenses to Class Counsel. Should the Court
22 approve a lesser amount than what is sought by Class Counsel, the difference shall be added to
23 the Net Settlement Amount to be distributed to the Participating Class Members. Any Court
24 order awarding less than the amount sought by Class Counsel shall not be grounds to rescind the
25 Settlement Agreement or otherwise void the Settlement. The Settlement Administrator shall
26 issue to Class Counsel an IRS Form 1099 reflecting the amount of attorneys' fees and costs
27 awarded by the Court.

28 (g) Settlement Administration Costs: The fees and other charges of the

1 Settlement Administrator will be paid from the Settlement Amount, not to exceed \$6,500, unless
2 (1) the Escalator Clause is triggered (whereby any reasonable increase in Settlement
3 Administration Costs shall be paid from the increased Settlement Amount, subject to Court
4 approval), or (2) as otherwise approved by all Parties and the Court.

5 (h) PAGA Penalties: The Parties agree that \$25,000 is allocated to PAGA
6 Penalties, and is to be paid from the Settlement Amount, subject to Court approval. Of this
7 amount, \$18,750 (75%) shall be paid to the LWDA in satisfaction of civil penalties under the
8 Private Attorney General Act of 2004 (“PAGA”) and \$6,250 (25%) will form the Individual
9 PAGA Payments to the Aggrieved Employees, which shall be calculated and allocated pro-rata
10 on a Work Week basis, which will be treated entirely as civil penalties and shall be reported as
11 required on an IRS Form 1099. Class Counsel shall give proper notice to the LWDA of the
12 Settlement.

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

26 (j) CIRCULAR 230 DISCLAIMER. EACH PARTY TO THIS
27 AGREEMENT (FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, THE “ACKNOWLEDGING PARTY”
28 AND EACH PARTY TO THIS AGREEMENT OTHER THAN THE ACKNOWLEDGING

PARTY, AN “OTHER PARTY”) ACKNOWLEDGES AND AGREES THAT (1) NO PROVISION OF THIS AGREEMENT, AND NO WRITTEN COMMUNICATION OR DISCLOSURE BETWEEN OR AMONG THE PARTIES OR THEIR ATTORNEYS AND OTHER ADVISERS, IS OR WAS INTENDED TO BE, NOR SHALL ANY SUCH COMMUNICATION OR DISCLOSURE CONSTITUTE OR BE CONSTRUED OR BE RELIED UPON AS, TAX ADVICE WITHIN THE MEANING OF UNITED STATES TREASURY DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR 230 (31 CFR PART 10, AS AMENDED); (2) THE ACKNOWLEDGING PARTY (A) HAS RELIED EXCLUSIVELY UPON HIS, HER OR ITS OWN, INDEPENDENT LEGAL AND TAX COUNSEL FOR ADVICE (INCLUDING TAX ADVICE) IN CONNECTION WITH THIS AGREEMENT, (B) HAS NOT ENTERED INTO THIS AGREEMENT BASED UPON THE RECOMMENDATION OF ANY OTHER PARTY OR ANY ATTORNEY OR ADVISOR TO ANY OTHER PARTY, AND (C) IS NOT ENTITLED TO RELY UPON ANY COMMUNICATION OR DISCLOSURE BY ANY ATTORNEY OR ADVISER TO ANY OTHER PARTY TO AVOID ANY TAX PENALTY THAT MAY BE IMPOSED ON THE ACKNOWLEDGING PARTY; AND (3) NO ATTORNEY OR ADVISER TO ANY OTHER PARTY HAS IMPOSED ANY LIMITATION THAT PROTECTS THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF ANY SUCH ATTORNEY’S OR ADVISER’S TAX STRATEGIES (REGARDLESS OF WHETHER SUCH LIMITATION IS LEGALLY BINDING) UPON DISCLOSURE BY THE ACKNOWLEDGING PARTY OF THE TAX TREATMENT OR TAX STRUCTURE OF ANY TRANSACTION, INCLUDING ANY TRANSACTION CONTEMPLATED BY THIS AGREEMENT.

(k) “Non-Reversionary” Settlement. This is a “non-reversionary” settlement. Under no circumstances will any portion of the Settlement Amount revert to Defendant. Participating Class Members and Aggrieved Employees will not have to make a claim to receive an Individual Class Payment or Individual PAGA Payment. Distributions, in the form of Individual Class Payment or Individual PAGA Payments will be made directly to each Participating Class Member and Aggrieved Employee. The Settlement Administrator shall be responsible for accurately and timely reporting and remittance obligations with respect to

1 unclaimed funds as a result of a Participating Class Member and/or Aggrieved Employee not
2 cashing any checks delivered pursuant to the Settlement by the check cashing deadline, as set
3 forth herein.

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

6 **D. Release by the Participating Class Members**

7 50. Upon entry of the Final Approval Order and Defendant's funding of the
8 Settlement Amount, and except as to such rights or claims as may be created by this Agreement,
9 Plaintiff and the Participating Class Members will forever completely release and discharge the
10 Released Parties from the Released Class Claims for the Class Period.

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

13 52. Class Representative, on behalf of himself and the Class, acknowledges and
14 agrees that the claims for unpaid wages and untimely payment of wages in the Action are
15 disputed, and that the payments set forth herein constitute payment of all sums allegedly due to
16 them. Class Representative, on behalf of himself and the Class, acknowledges and agrees that
17 California Labor Code Section 206.5 is not applicable to the Parties or Settlement. Labor Code §
18 206.5 provides in pertinent part as follows: "An employer shall not require the execution of any
19 release of any claim or right on account of wages due, or to become due, or made as an advance
20 on wages to be earned, unless payment of those wages has been made."

21 **E. Release of PAGA Claims**

22 53. Upon entry of the Final Approval Order and Defendant's funding of the
23 Settlement Amount, Plaintiff – in his individual capacity and on behalf of the State of California
24 and LWDA – shall completely release and discharge the Released Parties from the Released
25 PAGA Claims for the PAGA Period.

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

1 55. It is the intent of the Parties that the Final Approval Order shall have full
2 equitable and collateral estoppel and res judicata effect to the fullest extent permitted by law.

3 **F. Mutual General Release by Plaintiff and Defendant**

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

15 57. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, this general release by Plaintiff
16 includes all federal, state and local statutory claims, federal and state common law claims
17 (including but not limited to those for contract, tort and equity), including without limitation any
18 claims for breach of any implied or express contract or covenant; claims for promissory estoppel;
19 claims of entitlement to any pay; claims of wrongful denial of insurance and employee benefits
20 (except workers' compensation benefits); claims for failure to hire, public policy violations,
21 defamation, invasion of privacy, fraud, misrepresentation, emotional distress, assault/battery, or
22 other common law or tort matters; claims of harassment, retaliation or discrimination based on
23 age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, protected
24 activity, medical condition, marital status, sexual preference, union activity, or veteran status;
25 claims under the Americans with Disabilities Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Title
26 VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended), the Civil Rights Act of 1991; 42 USC sec.
27 1981, 42 USC sec. 1983, the Older Workers Benefit Protection Act, the Family and Medical
28 Leave Act; claims for unfair competition; claims based on legal restrictions on Defendant's right

1 to terminate, not to hire or promote employees, or to change an employee's compensation; and
2 claims based on any federal, state or other governmental statute, regulation or ordinance, all
3 statutory, constitutional, contractual or common law claims for wages, damages, unpaid costs or
4 expenses, penalties, liquidated damages, punitive damages, interest, attorneys' fees, litigation
5 costs, restitution, or equitable relief, or any other claims arising under the Fair Labor Standards
6 Act, the Employment Retirement Security Income Act of 1974, the California Constitution, the
7 California Fair Employment and Housing Act, the California Unfair Competition Act (California
8 Business and Professions Code section 17200 et seq.), the California Labor Code, or Industrial
9 Welfare Commission Wage Orders, or arising out of or based upon the following categories of
10 allegations regardless of the forum in which they may be brought, to the fullest extent such
11 claims are releasable by law: (i) all claims for unpaid overtime; (ii) all claims for unpaid wages;
12 (iii) all claims for meal break violations; (iv) all claims for rest period violations; (v) all claims
13 for paid sick leave violations; (vi) all claims for the failure to timely pay wages upon
14 termination; (vii) all claims for the failure to timely pay wages during employment; (viii) all
15 claims for wage statement violations; (ix) all claims for reporting time pay; and (x) all other
16 penalties recoverable for such claims under PAGA.

17 58. Plaintiff agrees that there is a risk that any injury that he may have suffered by
18 reason of the Released Parties' relationship with them might not now be known, and there is a
19 further risk that said injuries, whether known or unknown at the date of this Settlement
20 Agreement, might possibly become progressively worse, and that as a result thereof further
21 damages may be sustained. Nevertheless, Plaintiff agrees to forever and fully release and
22 discharge the Released Parties, and understands that by the execution of this Settlement
23 Agreement no further claims for any such injuries that existed at the time of the execution of this
24 Settlement Agreement may ever be asserted by Plaintiff with respect to claims arising in the time
25 period from the beginning of time to the execution of this Settlement Agreement.

26 59. In consideration for Plaintiff's general release, Defendant shall also grant a full
27 and general release of all claims it may have against Plaintiff.

28 60. Plaintiff and Defendant both expressly waive and relinquish all rights and benefits

1 afforded by Section 1542 of the Civil Code of the State of California and do so understanding
2 and acknowledging the significance of the waiver of Section 1542. Section 1542 of the Civil
3 Code of the State of California states:

4 A GENERAL RELEASE DOES NOT EXTEND TO CLAIMS
5 THAT THE CREDITOR OR RELEASING PARTY DOES NOT
6 KNOW OR SUSPECT TO EXIST IN HIS OR HER FAVOR AT
7 THE TIME OF EXECUTING THE RELEASE AND THAT, IF
8 KNOWN BY HIM OR HER, WOULD HAVE MATERIALLY
9 AFFECTED HIS OR HER SETTLEMENT WITH THE DEBTOR
10 OR RELEASED PARTY.

9 Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 1542, and for the purpose of implementing a
10 full and complete release and discharge of all parties, Plaintiff and Defendant expressly
11 acknowledge that this Settlement Agreement is intended to include in its effect, without
12 limitation, all claims that Plaintiff and Defendant knew of, as well as all claims that they does not
13 know or suspect to exist in their favor against each other for the time period from the beginning
14 of time to the execution of this Settlement Agreement, and that this Settlement Agreement
15 contemplates the extinguishment of any such claims by Plaintiff and Defendant. Notwithstanding
16 the above, the general release by Plaintiff and Defendant shall not extend to claims for workers'
17 compensation benefits, claims for unemployment benefits, or other claims that may not be
18 released by law.

19 **G. Interim Stay of Proceedings**

20 61. Pending completion of all prerequisites necessary to effectuate this Settlement,
21 the Parties agree, subject to Court approval, to a stay of all proceedings in the Action except such
22 as are necessary to effectuate the Settlement.

23 **H. Notice Process**

24 62. Appointment of Settlement Administrator. The Parties have agreed to the
25 appointment of the Settlement Administrator to perform the duties of a settlement administrator,
26 including mailing the Notice Packet, using standard devices to obtain forwarding addresses,
27 independently reviewing and verifying documentation associated with any claims or opt-out
28 requests, resolving any disputes regarding the calculation or application of the formula for

determining the Individual Settlement Amounts, drafting and mailing the settlement checks to Participating Class Members and Aggrieved Employees, issuing all necessary tax forms, and performing such other tasks as set forth herein or as the Parties mutually agree or that the Court orders.

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

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

65. Total Workweeks. At least 5 days prior to mailing the Notice Packet, the Settlement Administrator shall provide a spreadsheet to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel containing a preliminary calculation of all payments to be paid from the Settlement Amount, including the estimated Individual Class Payments to each Class Member and Individual PAGA Payments to each Aggrieved Employee (a person's name shall be redacted and a control number

1 used in place of the name). In the event that the total Workweeks worked by all Class Members
2 triggers the Escalator Clause, the Settlement Administrator shall notify the Parties of the
3 increased Settlement Amount, and related increased payments from the Settlement Amount,
4 including increased Attorneys' Fees and Costs and any increased Settlement Administration
5 Costs, all of which shall be subject to Court approval, and shall update Notice accordingly.

6 66. Notice Packet. The Notice Packet, as approved by the Court, shall be sent by the
7 Settlement Administrator to the Class Members, by first class mail, in English and Spanish,
8 within ten (10) calendar days following the Settlement Administrator's receipt of the Class Data.
9 For all Class Members, the Notice Packet will include the Notice, a Request for Exclusion Form,
10 an Objection Form, and a Dispute Form. The Settlement Administrator shall use standard
11 devices, including a skip trace, to obtain forwarding addresses of Class Members if any
12 envelopes are returned.

13 67. Returned Notice Packets. The Settlement Administrator will take steps to ensure
14 that the Notice Packet is received by all Class Members, including utilization of the National
15 Change of Address Database maintained by the United States Postal Service to review the
16 accuracy of and, if possible, update a mailing address. Notices will be re-mailed to any Class
17 Member for whom an updated address is located within ten (10) calendar days following both
18 the Settlement Administrator learning of the failed mailing and its receipt of the updated address.
19 The Notice Packet shall be identical to the original Notice Packet, except that it shall notify the
20 Class Member that the exclusion (opt-out) request or objection must be returned by the later of
21 the Response Deadline or fifteen (15) days after the remailing of the Notice Packet.

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

25 69. Disputes Regarding Class Data. Class Members are deemed to participate in the
26 Settlement unless they opt-out, and Aggrieved Employees may not opt out of the Released
27 PAGA Claims. The Notice will inform Class Members of his/her estimated Individual Class
28 Payment and Individual PAGA Payment, as well as the number of Weeks Worked during the

1 Class Period and the PAGA Period. Class Members may dispute their Weeks Worked by timely
2 submitting evidence to the Settlement Administrator. Defendant's records will be presumed
3 determinative absent reliable evidence to rebut Defendant's records, but the Settlement
4 Administrator will evaluate the evidence submitted by the Class Member and provide the
5 evidence submitted to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel who agree to meet and confer in good
6 faith about the evidence to determine the Class Member's actual number of Work Weeks, and
7 estimated Individual Class and PAGA Payments. If Class Counsel and Defense Counsel are
8 unable to agree, they agree to submit the dispute to the Court to render a final decision. Class
9 Members and Aggrieved Employees will have until the Response Deadline to dispute Weeks
10 Worked, object or opt out, unless extended by the Court.

11 70. Declaration of Due Diligence. The Settlement Administrator shall provide
12 counsel for the Parties, at least five (5) days after the initial Response Deadline, a declaration of
13 due diligence and proof of mailing with regard to the mailing of the Notice Packet.

14 71. Class Members' Rights. Each Class Member will be fully advised of the
15 Settlement, the ability to object to the settlement, and the ability to opt-out or request exclusion
16 from the Class Claims portion of the Settlement. The Notice Packet will inform the Class
17 Members of the Court-established deadlines for filing objections or requesting exclusion from
18 the Settlement in accordance with the following guidelines:

19 (a) Requests for Exclusion from Class. Any Class Member, other than
20 Plaintiff, may request to be excluded from the Class by completing the Request for Exclusion
21 Form provided within the Notice Packet. The Request for Exclusion Form must be mailed to the
22 Settlement Administrator and postmarked on or before the Response Deadline in order to be
23 timely, unless the Parties otherwise agree in writing. Any such Request must be made in
24 accordance with the terms set forth in the Notice Packet. The Settlement Administrator shall
25 attach each Request for Exclusion to its declaration of due diligence and file with the Court prior
26 to the Final Approval Hearing. Any Class Member who timely requests exclusion in compliance
27 with these requirements: (i) will not have any rights under this Agreement, including the right to
28 object, appeal or comment on the Settlement; (ii) will not be entitled to receive any payments

1 under this Agreement; and (iii) will not be bound by this Agreement, or the Judgment. Any
2 Class Member who is an Aggrieved Employee who requests timely exclusion will still be subject
3 to the Released PAGA Claims to the fullest extent permitted by law and receive an Individual
4 PAGA Payment. All Parties and their counsel, including Defendant and their agents and
5 employees, shall not encourage or solicit opt-outs or objections, directly or indirectly, through
6 any means.

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

12 (c) Objections to Settlement. Any Class Member, other than Plaintiff, who
13 does not submit a valid and timely Request for Exclusion may object to the terms of this
14 Agreement by completing the Objection Form provided within the Notice Packet. Any Class
15 Member that intends to object must mail the Objection Form to the Settlement Administrator.
16 The Objection Form must be postmarked on or before the Response Deadline in order to be
17 timely, unless the Parties otherwise agree in writing. Additionally, any objection must be made
18 in accordance with the terms set forth in the Notice Packet. The Settlement Administrator shall
19 provide any objections to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel within three (3) days of receipt,
20 and the Settlement Administrator shall attach the same to its declaration of due diligence and file
21 with the Court prior to the Final Approval Hearing. Any Participating Class Member who files
22 an objection remains eligible to receive monetary compensation from the Settlement. Plaintiff
23 and Defendant shall not be responsible for any fees, costs, or expenses incurred by any Class
24 Member and/or his or her counsel related to any objections to the Settlement. Submitting an
25 objection does not preserve the right to appeal a final judgment. Rather, the right to appeal is
26 preserved by becoming a party of record by timely and properly intervening or filing a motion to
27 vacate the judgment under Code of Civil Procedure § 663.

28 (d) Failure to Object. Any Class Member who does not timely and properly

1 become a party of record by intervening or filing a motion to vacate the judgment waives any
2 and all rights to appeal from the Judgment, including all rights to any post-judgment proceeding
3 and appellate proceeding, such as a motion to vacate judgment, motion for new trial, a motion
4 under California Code of Civil Procedure § 473, and extraordinary writs.

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

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

13 72. Funding of the Settlement Amount. Defendant shall deposit the Settlement
14 Amount, plus Defendant's share of payroll taxes, but less the credit of \$44,420 for Prior
15 Payments, with the Settlement Administrator within fifteen (15) days after the Effective Date.

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

23 74. Deadline for Cashing Settlement Checks. Participating Class Members and
24 Aggrieved Employees shall have 180 calendar days after mailing by the Settlement
25 Administrator to cash their settlement checks. The release will be binding upon all Participating
26 Class Members who do not cash their checks within the 180-day period. In the event that any
27 settlement check is returned to the Settlement Administrator within 180 days of mailing, the
28 Settlement Administrator will, within five (5) business days of receipt of the returned settlement

1 check, perform a skip trace to locate the individual, and notify Defense Counsel and Class
2 Counsel of the results. If a new address is located by these means, the Administrator will have
3 ten (10) business days to re-issue the check. Neither Defendant, Defense Counsel, Class
4 Counsel, Plaintiff, nor the Settlement Administrator will have any liability for lost or stolen
5 settlement checks, forged signatures on settlement checks, or unauthorized negotiation of
6 settlement checks. Without limiting the foregoing, in the event a Participating Class Member
7 and/or Aggrieved Employee notifies the Settlement Administrator that he or she believes that a
8 settlement check has been lost or stolen, the Settlement Administrator shall immediately stop
9 payment on such check. If the check in question has not been negotiated prior to the stop
10 payment order, the Settlement Administrator will issue a replacement check.

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

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

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

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

23 (a) Scheduling the Final Approval Hearing on the issue of whether this
24 Settlement should be finally approved as fair, reasonable and adequate as to the Class Members
25 and a hearing on fees, costs and the Service Payments;

26 (b) Approving as to form and content the proposed Notice Packet;

27 (c) Directing the mailing of the Notice Packet by first class mail to the Class
28 Members;

- 1 (d) Preliminarily approving this Settlement;
- 2 (e) Preliminarily certifying the class for purposes of this Settlement; and
- 3 (f) Advising the LWDA of the proposed Settlement.

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

5 76. In connection with the Final Approval Hearing provided for in this Agreement,

6 Class Counsel shall submit a proposed Final Approval Order:

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

13 **K. Voiding the Agreement**

14 77. If the Court fails or refuses to issue the Final Approval Order or fails to approve

15 any material condition of this Agreement which effects a fundamental change of the Settlement,

16 the entire Agreement shall be rendered voidable and unenforceable as to all Parties herein at the

17 option of either Party.

18 78. If the Settlement is voided or fails for any reason, Plaintiff and Defendant will

19 have no further obligations under the Settlement, including any obligation by Defendant to pay

20 the Settlement Amount, or any amounts that otherwise would have been owed under this

21 Settlement.

22 79. If the Settlement is voided or fails for any reason, any costs incurred by the

23 Settlement Administrator shall be borne equally by Defendant and Plaintiff, unless otherwise

24 specified in this Agreement.

25 **L. Other Terms**

26 80. Waiver. The waiver by one Party of any breach of this Agreement by another

27 Party shall not be deemed a waiver of any other prior or subsequent breach of this Agreement.

28

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

3 82. Mutual Full Cooperation. The Parties agree to fully cooperate with each other to
4 accomplish the terms of this Agreement, including but not limited to, execution of such
5 documents and to take such other action as may reasonably be necessary to implement the terms
6 of this Agreement. The Parties to this Agreement shall use their best efforts, including all efforts
7 contemplated by this Agreement and any other efforts that may become necessary by order of the
8 Court, or otherwise, to effectuate this Agreement and the terms set forth herein. As soon as
9 practicable after execution of this Agreement, Class Counsel shall, with the assistance and
10 cooperation of Defendant and Defense Counsel, take all necessary steps to secure the Court's
11 preliminary and final approval of the settlement, and the final entry of judgment.

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

16 84. No Admission. Defendant denies any and all liability to Plaintiff and/or any Class
17 Member and/or Aggrieved Employee in this Action, as to any and all causes of action that were
18 asserted or that might have been asserted in this Action. Nonetheless, Defendant wishes to settle
19 and compromise the matters at issue in the Complaint to avoid further substantial expense and
20 the inconvenience and distraction of protracted and burdensome litigation. Defendant has taken
21 into account the uncertainty and risks inherent in litigation, and without conceding any infirmity
22 in the defenses that they have asserted or could assert against Plaintiff, have determined that it is
23 desirable and beneficial that Plaintiff's claims be settled in the manner and upon the terms and
24 conditions set forth in this Agreement.

25 85. Inadmissibility of Agreement. Whether or not the Court issues the Final Approval
26 Order, nothing contained herein, nor the consummation of this Agreement, is to be construed or
27 deemed an admission of liability, culpability, negligence, or wrongdoing on the part of
28 Defendant or any of the other Released Parties. Each of the Parties hereto has entered into this

1 Agreement with the intention of avoiding further disputes and litigation with the attendant
2 inconvenience and expenses. This Agreement is a settlement document, and it, along with all
3 related documents such as the notices, and motions for preliminary and final approval, shall,
4 pursuant to California Evidence Code § 1152 and/or Federal Rule of Evidence 408, be
5 inadmissible in evidence in any proceeding, except an action or proceeding to approve the
6 settlement, and/or interpret or enforce this Agreement. The stipulation for class certification as
7 part of this Agreement is for settlement purposes only and if, for any reason the settlement is not
8 approved, the stipulation will be of no force or effect.

9 86. No Publicity. The Parties will not publicize the Settlement or disclose it to third
10 parties prior to the Court granting Preliminary Approval, except as required or necessary to
11 effectuate its terms and comply with law. After the Final Approval Date, Class Counsel and
12 Class Representatives agree that they will not discuss the Settlement with the media, any
13 settlement and verdict reporting service, any social media postings or other Internet postings.
14 Nothing herein shall be construed to prevent Class Counsel from the public filing of motions or
15 other case materials in the Action related to seeking and obtaining Court approval of this
16 Settlement and the related awards of attorneys' fees and costs, or to communications with Class
17 Members or their representatives about this Settlement, including through the posting of Court-
18 filed documents on Class Counsel's websites for access solely by the Class Members, or to
19 prevent the Parties or their representatives from communicating with financial or legal advisors
20 regarding the Settlement. In response to any media inquiry, Class Counsel may state only that
21 the Action has been settled on terms mutually agreeable to the Parties.

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

<i>To the Class:</i>	<i>To Defendant:</i>
Brian J. Mankin <i>brian@lmlfirm.com</i> Lauby, Mankin & Lauby LLP 5198 Arlington Ave, PMB 513 Riverside, CA 92504 Tel: (951) 320-1444 Fax: (951) 320-1445	Alexander M. Chemers, Esq. <i>alexander.chemers@ogletree.com</i> OGLETREE, DEAKINS, NASH, SMOAK & STEWART, P.C. 400 South Hope Street, Suite 1200 Los Angeles, CA 90071 Tel: 213-239-9800 Fax: 213-239-9045

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

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

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

91. Dispute Resolution. Prior to instituting legal action to enforce the provisions of this Agreement or to declare rights and/or obligations under this Agreement, a Party shall provide written notice to the other Party and allow an opportunity to cure the alleged

1 deficiencies, and Plaintiff and Defendant may agree to seek the help of the Mediator to resolve
2 any dispute they are unable to resolve informally. During this period, the Parties shall bear their
3 own attorneys' fees and costs. This provision shall not apply to any legal action or other
4 proceeding instituted by any person or entity other than Plaintiff or Defendant.

5 92. Choice of Law. This Settlement Agreement shall be governed by and construed,
6 enforced and administered in accordance with the laws of the State of California, without regard
7 to its conflicts-of-law rules.

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

13 94. Binding On Assigns. This Agreement shall be binding upon and inure to the
14 benefit of the Parties hereto and their respective heirs, trustees, executors, administrators,
15 successors and assigns.

16 95. Signatures of All Class Members Unnecessary to be Binding. It is agreed that,
17 because the members of the Class are numerous, it is impossible or impractical to have each
18 Class Member execute this Agreement. The Notice Packet will advise all Class Members of the
19 binding nature of the release provided herein and such shall have the same force and effect as if
20 this Agreement were executed by each Class Member.

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

26 Dated: Nov 4, 2024

PLAINTIFF AND CLASS REPRESENTATIVE,

27 

Dustin Reischman (Nov 4, 2024 14:23 PST)

28 Dustin Reischman

Dated: _____

DEFENDANT MERCHANTS METALS LLC

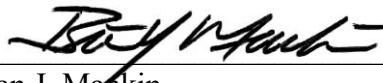
By: _____

Title: _____

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Dated: Nov. 4, 2024

CLASS COUNSEL
LAUBY, MANKIN & LAUBY LLP



Brian J. Mankin
Attorneys for Plaintiff

Dated: _____

DEFENSE COUNSEL:
OGLETREE, DEAKINS, NASH, SMOAK & STEWART, P.C.

Alexander M. Chemers, Esq.
Attorneys for Defendant

Dated: 05-Nov-2024

DEFENDANT MERCHANTS METALS LLC

Signed by:

9C77CE32070D498...

By: Brad Greene

Title: Chief People Officer

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Dated: _____

CLASS COUNSEL
LAUBY, MANKIN & LAUBY LLP

Brian J. Mankin
Attorneys for Plaintiff

Dated: November 5, 2024

DEFENSE COUNSEL:
OGLETREE, DEAKINS, NASH, SMOAK & STEWART, P.C.



Alexander M. Chemers, Esq.
Attorneys for Defendant

EXHIBIT “B”

FILED
SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

DEC 02 2024

T. Aragon

SM2

DEC 04 2024

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

DUSTIN REISCHMAN, individually, on a
representative basis, and on behalf of all
others similarly situated;

Plaintiff,

vs.

MERCHANTS METALS LLC, a
Delaware Limited Liability Company; and
DOES 1 through 20, inclusive;

Defendants.

Case No.: CVRI2301910

*[Assigned to Hon. Harold Hopp, Dept 1, for all
purposes]*

~~PROPOSED~~ ORDER:

- 1) **PRELIMINARILY APPROVING
CLASS ACTION AND PAGA
SETTLEMENT;**
- 2) **CONDITIONALLY CERTIFYING A
CLASS FOR SETTLEMENT
PURPOSES ONLY;**
- 3) **DIRECTING DISTRIBUTION TO THE
CLASS OF THE SETTLEMENT
NOTICE AND EXPLANATION FORM;
AND**
- 4) **SETTING A HEARING FOR FINAL
APPROVAL OF THE SETTLEMENT**

1 Having reviewed the Class and PAGA Settlement Agreement and Release of Claims (the
2 "Settlement Agreement" or "S.A."), which is attached as Exhibit A to the Declaration of Brian
3 Mankin in Support of Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action and PAGA Settlement
4 filed on November 5, 2024, between Plaintiff Dustin Reischman ("Plaintiff") and Defendant
5 Merchants Metals LLC ("Defendant") (Plaintiff and Defendant shall collectively be referred to
6 as "Parties"), as well as the Memorandum of Points and Authorities in Support of the Unopposed
7 Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlement, the documents submitted in
8 support of the motion, and all supporting legal authorities and documents, IT IS HEREBY
9 ORDERED:

10 1. The Court GRANTS preliminary approval of the Settlement based upon the terms
11 set forth in the Settlement Agreement and finds its terms to be within the range of reasonableness
12 of a settlement that ultimately could be granted final approval by the Court at a Final Approval
13 hearing. The settlement appears to be fair, adequate and reasonable to the Class. Based on a
14 review of the papers submitted by Plaintiff, the Court finds that the Settlement is the result of
15 arms-length negotiations conducted after the Parties adequately investigated and became familiar
16 with the strengths and weaknesses of the claims. The assistance of an experienced mediator in
17 the Settlement process supports the Court's conclusion that the Settlement is non-collusive.

18 2. For settlement purposes only, the Court finds that the proposed Class is
19 ascertainable and that there is a sufficiently defined community of interest among the Class
20 Members in questions of law and fact. The Court certifies the following Class, for settlement
21 purposes only:

22 All current and former nonexempt (hourly paid) employees
23 employed by Defendant in California during the Class Period
24 (which is April 13, 2019, through June 2, 2024).

25 3. Additionally, the "Aggrieved Employee(s)" are defined to include: "all current
26 and former nonexempt (hourly paid) employees employed by Defendant in California during the
27 PAGA Period (which is April 13, 2022, through June 2, 2024)."
28

1 4. The class action settlement set forth in the Settlement Agreement between
2 Plaintiff and Defendant is preliminarily approved as it appears to be proper, to fall within the
3 range of a fair, reasonable, and adequate settlement, and to be presumptively valid, subject only
4 to any objections that may be raised at the Final Approval Hearing.

5 5. For settlement purposes only, the Court appoints Plaintiff Dustin Reischman as
6 Class Representative, and Brian Mankin and Peter Carlson as Class Counsel.

7 6. The Court approves Phoenix Settlement Administrators to act as the Settlement
8 Administrator, who is directed to fulfill all of the duties and services set forth in the Settlement
9 Agreement, including but not limited to paragraphs 61 to 73. The Settlement Administrator shall
10 file a declaration concurrently with the Motion for Final Approval, authenticating a copy of
11 every Objection Form and Exclusion Form received by the Settlement Administrator.
12 Furthermore, in the event of a continuance of the hearing of the motion for final approval, the
13 Settlement Administrator must give notice of such continuance to any objecting party.

14 7. The Court approves, as to form and content, the Class Notice, Exclusion Form,
15 Objection Form, and Dispute Form (attached hereto as Exhibits A, B, C, and D, respectively)
16 that the Class Members may use. The Court further finds the Class Notice, Exclusion Form,
17 Objection Form and Dispute Form fairly apprise the Class Members of the terms of the proposed
18 settlement and of their options in connection with the settlement.

19 8. Class Members who wish to request exclusion, object to the Settlement or dispute
20 Weeks Worked via the Exclusion Form and/or Objection Form and/or Dispute Form are directed
21 to mail the appropriate form above to the Settlement Administrator (and not to the Court) within
22 the time periods set forth in the Class Notice.

23 9. The Settlement Administrator is directed to mail the Notice, Request for
24 Exclusion Form, Objection Form, and Dispute Form by first class mail to the Class Members in
25 English in accordance with the Settlement Agreement and schedule set forth below.

26 10. The Court finds that the deadlines and method set forth in the Settlement
27 Agreement for the mailing of the Notice and related forms described herein meet the
28 requirements of due process, provide the best notice practicable under the circumstances,

1 constitute due and sufficient notice to all persons entitled to notice, and otherwise satisfy the
2 requirements of California law.

3 11. The Court directs the Administrator to perform address verification measures and
4 mail the Notice by first class mail to the Class Members (in English) not later than 10 days after
5 it receives the "Class Data" as defined in the Settlement Agreement and to otherwise carry out
6 the Settlement according to the terms of the Settlement Agreement and in conformity with this
7 Order. The Parties are also ordered to carry out the Settlement according to the terms of the
8 Settlement Agreement.

9 12. All Class Members shall be deemed to participate in the Settlement, although any
10 Class Member who wishes to comment on or object to the Settlement or who elects not to
11 participate in the Settlement has until forty-five (45) days after the mailing of the Class Notice to
12 submit an objection or Request to be Excluded, pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Notice.

13 13. The Court approves the handling of unclaimed funds set forth in the Settlement
14 Agreement, specifically that any unclaimed funds in the Administrator's account as a result of a
15 failure to timely cash a settlement check shall be issued to the State Controller's Office in the
16 name of the Class Member, as set forth in the Settlement Agreement.

17 14. The following dates shall govern for purposes of this settlement:

18	December 2, 2024	Preliminary Approval (PA) hearing
19	December 26, 2024	<i>24 days after PA</i> : Deadline for Administrator to complete first
20		mailing of the Notice Packet to all Class Members.
21	February 10, 2024	<i>45 days after mailing Notice</i> : Deadline for Class Members to
22		submit Requests for Exclusion, Disputes and Objections to the
23	16 court days before Final	settlement.
24	Approval hearing	Deadline for Plaintiff to file and serve Motion for Final Approval
25	9 court days before Final	and application for award of fees, costs and service payments.
26	Approval hearing	Deadline for filing of any written opposition to Plaintiff's Motion
27	5 court days before final	for Final Approval, or filing response to an objection.
28	approval hearing	Deadline for filing of any written reply to opposition Motion for
	Date: April 9, 2025	Final Approval
	Time: 8:30AM	<i>Approx. 120 days after PA</i> : Final Approval Hearing

1 15. A final approval hearing shall be held in this Court on the date and time above to
2 determine (1) whether the proposed settlement is fair, reasonable, and adequate and should be
3 finally approved by the Court; (2) the amount of Attorneys' Fees and Costs Award to Class
4 Counsel; and (3) the amount of the Service Payment to the Class Representative.

5 16. Neither this Order, the Settlement Agreement, nor any document referred to
6 therein, nor any action taken to carry out the settlement embodied in the Settlement Agreement
7 may be construed as, or may be used by Plaintiff or the Class Members in this Action as an
8 admission by or against Defendant or any of the other Released Parties (as that term is defined in
9 the Settlement Agreement) of any fault, wrongdoing or liability whatsoever.

10 17. The Court may, for good cause shown, extend any of the deadlines set forth in
11 this Order. If any Class Member submits an objection to the settlement and the Final Approval
12 Hearing is continued, either Class Counsel or the Settlement Administrator are directed to give
13 notice of the new hearing date to the objecting party; and

14 18. In the event that the Settlement Agreement does not receive final approval or the
15 Effective Date of the Settlement does not occur, this Order shall be rendered null and void and
16 shall be vacated.

17
18 Date: 12/2/24

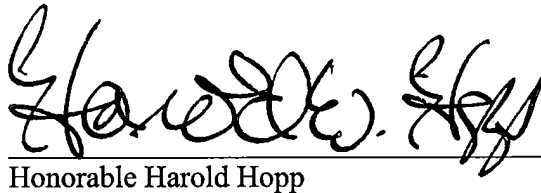

Honorable Harold Hopp

EXHIBIT "A"

COURT APPROVED NOTICE OF CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT

Reischman v. Merchants Metals LLC

(Riverside County Superior Court, Case No. CVRI2301910)

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

You may be eligible to receive money from an employee class action lawsuit filed by Dustin Reischman ("Plaintiff" or "Class Representative") against Defendant Merchants Metals LLC ("Defendant") for alleged violations of the California Labor Code (the "Action"). (Plaintiff and Defendant shall be collectively referred to as the "Parties").

The Action seeks payment of (1) unpaid wages, statutory damages and penalties, interest and attorneys' fees on behalf of all Class Members, who are defined as "all current and former nonexempt (hourly paid) employees employed by Defendant in California during the Class Period (which is April 13, 2019, through June 2, 2024); and (2) penalties under the California Private Attorneys General Act ("PAGA") on behalf of all Aggrieved Employees, who are defined as "all current and former nonexempt (hourly paid) employees employed by Defendant in California during the PAGA Period (which is April 13, 2022, through June 2, 2024). PAGA is a California law that allows employees to bring claims for civil penalties on behalf of the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency ("LWDA") and all Aggrieved Employees for alleged violations of the Labor Code, and any payment for PAGA penalties shall be paid 75% to the LWDA and 25% to all Aggrieved Employees as civil penalties (rather than wages).

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

[CLASS MEMBER NAME] [ID/CONTROL NUMBER]

<i>Calculations and Data Points for Estimated Individual Class Payment</i>		
Weeks Worked during Class Period	Prior Payment Received (if any)	Estimated Individual Class Payment
INSERT	INSERT	INSERT

<i>Calculations and Data Points for Estimated Individual PAGA Payment</i>	
Weeks Worked during PAGA Period	Estimated Individual PAGA Payment
INSERT	INSERT

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

In granting preliminarily approval of the proposed Settlement and approving this Notice, the Court has determined only that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the proposed Settlement might be fair, adequate and reasonable, and that any final determination of those issues will be made at the Final Approval Hearing. Your legal rights are affected whether you act or do not act. Read this Notice carefully. You will be deemed to have carefully read and understood it. At the Final Approval Hearing, the Court will decide whether to finally approve the Settlement and how much of the Settlement will be paid to Plaintiff and Plaintiff's attorneys ("Class Counsel"). The Court will also decide whether to enter a judgment that requires Defendant to make payments under the Settlement and requires Class Members and Aggrieved Employees to

give up their rights to assert certain claims against Defendant.

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

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

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

1. WHAT IS THE ACTION ABOUT?

Plaintiff is an employee of Defendant. The Action accuses Defendant of violating California labor laws due to the alleged: failure to pay minimum and overtime wages, failure to pay vested vacation, failure to provide meal periods and rest breaks, failure to timely pay wages upon separation of employment, and failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements. Based on the same claims, Plaintiff has also asserted a claim for civil penalties under PAGA.

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

Both Parties are represented by attorneys in the Action. See Section 9 below for their contact information.

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

The Parties hired an experienced, neutral mediator in an effort to resolve the Action by negotiating to end the case by agreement (settle the case) rather than continuing the expensive and time-consuming process of litigation. The negotiations were successful. By signing a lengthy written settlement agreement ("Agreement"), Plaintiff and Defendant have negotiated a proposed Settlement that is subject to the Court's Final Approval. Both sides agree the proposed Settlement is a compromise of disputed claims. By agreeing to settle, Defendant does not admit any violations or concede the merit of any claims.

Plaintiff and Class Counsel strongly believe the Settlement is a good deal for you because they believe that: (1) Defendant has agreed to pay a fair, reasonable and adequate amount considering the strength of the claims and the risks and uncertainties of continued litigation; and (2) Settlement is in the best interests of the Class Members and Aggrieved Employees. So far, the Court has made no determination whether Defendant or Plaintiff is correct on the merits, and has determined only that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the proposed settlement might be fair, adequate, and reasonable, and that any final determination of those issues will be made at final hearing. The Court preliminarily approved the proposed Settlement as fair, reasonable and adequate, authorized this Notice, and scheduled a hearing to determine Final Approval.

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

1. Defendant Will Pay \$295,000 as the gross settlement amount (the "Settlement Amount"). Defendant has agreed to pay a total Settlement Amount of \$295,000, and this amount includes a credit for \$44,420 in "Prior Payments" made by Defendant ("Prior Payments" refers to the amount paid by Defendant to Class Members in order to obtain settlement agreements and releases from certain Class Members relating to claims alleged in this Action). Defendant will deposit the Settlement Amount into an account controlled by the Settlement Administrator. The Settlement Administrator will use the Settlement Amount to pay the Individual Class Payments, Individual PAGA Payments, Class Representative's Service Payments, Class Counsel's attorney's fees and expenses, the Administrator's Costs, and PAGA Penalties to be paid to the LWDA. Assuming the Court grants Final Approval, Defendant will fund the Settlement Amount not more than fifteen (15) days after the Judgment entered by the Court becomes final. The Judgment will be final on the date the Court enters Judgment, or a later date if the Judgment is appealed.

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

A. Up to one-third (1/3) of the Settlement Amount to Class Counsel for attorneys' fees, plus reasonable costs and expenses, not to exceed \$25,000. To date, Class Counsel have worked incurred expenses on the Action without payment.

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

C. \$6,500 to the Settlement Administrator for services administering the Settlement.

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

E. Participating Class Members have the right to object to any of these deductions. The Court will consider all objections.

3. Net Settlement Distributed to Class Members. After making the above deductions in amounts approved by the Court, the Settlement Administrator will distribute the rest of the remainder of the Settlement Amount (the "Net Settlement Amount") by making Individual Class Payments to Participating Class Members based on their pro rata share of total Weeks Worked during the Class Period.

4. Taxes Owed on Payments to Class Members. Plaintiff and Defendant are asking the Court to approve an allocation of one-third (33.33%) of each Individual Class Payment to taxable wages ("Wage Portion") and two-thirds (66.67%) to penalties and interest ("Non-Wage Portion"). The Wage Portion is subject to withholdings and will be reported on IRS W-2 Forms. Defendant will separately pay employer payroll taxes it owes on the Wage Portion. The Individual PAGA Payments are counted as penalties rather than wages for tax purposes. The Administrator will report the Individual PAGA Payments and the Non-Wage Portions of the Individual Class Payments on IRS 1099 Forms.

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

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

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

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

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

9. Participating Class Members' Release. After the Judgment is final and Defendant has fully funded the Settlement Amount and separately paid all employer payroll taxes, Participating Class Members will be legally barred from asserting any of the claims released under the Settlement. This means that unless you opted out by validly excluding yourself from the Class Settlement, you cannot sue, continue to sue, or be part of any other lawsuit against Defendant or the "Released Parties" (which means Defendant, together with its officers, directors, employees, and agents) based on the facts alleged in the Action for wages based on the facts alleged in the Action for the duration of the Class Period and PAGA Period, which are resolved by this Settlement.

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

All Participating Class Members release the Defendant and the Released Parties from "all claims stated in the Complaint and those based solely upon the facts in the Complaint, including: (1) failure to pay minimum wages, (2) failure to pay overtime wages, (3) failure to pay vested vacation, (4) failure to provide meal periods, (5) failure to provide rest breaks, (6) failure to timely pay final wages, (7) failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements, and (8) unfair and unlawful competition." Additionally, this definition of "Released Class Claims" expressly excludes all claims for vested benefits, wrongful termination, unemployment insurance, disability, social security, workers' compensation, claims while classified as exempt, and claims outside of the Class Period.

10. Release of Released PAGA Claims. After the Court's judgment is final, and Defendant has paid the Settlement Amount (and separately paid the employer-side payroll taxes), Plaintiff on behalf of himself, the State of

California and the LWDA shall release the Released Parties from “all PAGA claims that Plaintiff alleged against the Released Parties, based on the facts stated in the relevant LWDA notice letters and only to the extent that they are alleged in the Complaint, including all PAGA claims seeking civil penalties premised upon: (1) failure to pay minimum wages, (2) failure to pay overtime wages, (3) failure to pay vested vacation, (4) failure to provide meal periods, (5) failure to provide rest breaks, (6) failure to timely pay wages each period, (7) failure to timely pay wages upon separation of employment, (8) failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements, and (9) all other claims for civil penalties recoverable under the Private Attorneys General Act, Labor Code §§ 2698 et seq. based on the facts or claims alleged in the LWDA notice letters and Complaint.”

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

1. Individual Class Payments. The Administrator will calculate Individual Class Payments by (a) dividing the Net Settlement Amount by the total number of Weeks Worked by all Participating Class Members during the Class Period, (b) multiplying the result by each Participating Class Members’ Weeks Worked, and (c) if applicable, reducing the Individual Class Payment by any Prior Payment received by the Class Member (but in no instance shall the offset from the Prior Payment cause an Individual Class Payment to drop below \$50.00).

2. Individual PAGA Payments. The Settlement Administrator will calculate Individual PAGA Payments by (a) dividing \$6,250 by the total number of Weeks Worked by all Aggrieved Employees during the PAGA Period and (b) multiplying the result by the number of Weeks Worked by each individual Aggrieved Employee during the PAGA Period.

3. Disputing Weeks Worked. The number of weeks you worked during the Class and PAGA Periods, as recorded in Defendant’s records, are stated in the tables on page 1 of this Notice. You have until INSERT DATE (the “Response Deadline”) to dispute the number of Workweeks credited to you by mailing the enclosed Dispute Form to the Settlement Administrator on or before [INSERT DATE 45 Days After Mailing]. Section 9 of this Notice has the Administrator’s contact information.

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

5. HOW WILL I GET PAID?

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

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

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

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

You will be treated as a Participating Class Member, participating fully in the Settlement, unless you opt-out of the Settlement, not later than the Response Deadline. To opt-out, you must complete, sign, and mail the accompanying Request for Exclusion Form to the Settlement Administrator, postmarked on or before the Response Deadline (as a reminder, **the “Response Deadline” is DATE, 2024**). Any person who submits a timely Request for Exclusion from the Class Claims (1) will not have any rights under this Settlement, including the right to object, appeal or comment on the Settlement; (2)

will not be entitled to receive an Individual Class Payment; (3) will preserve the right to pursue the Released Class Claims, and (4) will not be bound by this Settlement, or the Judgment, as to the Released Class Claims.

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

7. HOW DO I OBJECT TO THE SETTLEMENT?

Only Participating Class Members have the right to object to the Settlement. A Participating Class Member who disagrees with any aspect of the Settlement may wish to object. If you wish to object to the proposed Settlement, you or your own attorney must submit a written objection, on the enclosed Objection Form and include any and all evidence and supporting papers. The Objection Form and any accompanying evidence and papers must be sent to the Settlement Administrator at the address listed in Section 9 on the Objection Form, **postmarked** on or before the Response Deadline. If you do not comply with these procedures and the deadline for objections, the Court may not consider your objection at the Final Approval Hearing, and you may lose the right to contest the approval of the Settlement. You are still eligible to receive a settlement payment should the settlement become Final even if you object to the settlement. Submitting an objection does not preserve the right to appeal a final judgment. Rather, the right to appeal is preserved by becoming a party of record by timely and properly intervening or filing a motion to vacate the judgment before entry of judgment.

8. WHEN IS THE FINAL APPROVAL HEARING?

On _____, 2024, at ____ a.m./p.m., the Court will hold a public hearing in Department 1 of the Superior Court for the State of California, County of Riverside, 4050 Main St, Riverside, CA 92501, for the purposes of determining whether the proposed Settlement is fair, adequate and reasonable and should be approved, whether to approve Class Counsel's applications for attorneys' fees and costs, whether to approve the payments to the LWDA, and whether to approve Plaintiff's request for the service award. This hearing may be continued or rescheduled by the Court. Objectors to the proposed settlement will be provided notice in the event that the Final Approval Hearing is continued to a later date. Class Members who support the proposed Settlement do not need to appear at the hearing and do not need to take any other action to indicate their approval. Class Members who object to the proposed Settlement are not required to attend the Final Approval Hearing.

9. HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

If you have questions about this Notice, the enclosed Request for Exclusion Form, Dispute Form, or Objection Form, or the Settlement itself, or if you did not receive this Notice in the mail and you believe that you are or may be a member of the Class, you should contact the Administrator for more information or to request that a copy of this Notice and request for Exclusion, Objection, and Dispute Forms be sent to you in the mail. If you wish to communicate directly with Class Counsel, you may contact them at the information below. You may also seek advice and guidance from your own private attorney at your own expense if you so desire.

This Notice is only a summary. For more detailed information, you may review the Settlement Agreement, containing the complete terms of the proposed Settlement, which is on file with the Court and attached to the Declaration of Brian J. Mankin in Support of Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlement filed on November 5, 2024 and available to be inspected at any time during regular business hours at the Clerk's Office, Superior Court for the State of California, County of Riverside, 4050 Main St, Riverside, CA 92501. You may also review the pleadings, records, and other papers on file in this lawsuit at the Clerk's Office or online at <https://epublic-access.riverside.courts.ca.gov/public-portal/>. To access the case file, click on "Case Number Search," then create a free online account, then type in the case number (CVRI2301910) where requested, and click "Search." You may also email Class Counsel and request a copy of the Settlement Agreement.

DO NOT TELEPHONE THE COURT TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT THE SETTLEMENT

The contact information for Class Counsel and the Settlement Administrator are below:

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

10. WHAT IF I LOSE MY SETTLEMENT CHECK?

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

11. WHAT IF I CHANGE MY ADDRESS?

To receive your check, you should immediately notify the Settlement Administrator if you move or otherwise change your mailing address.

EXHIBIT "B"

REQUEST FOR EXCLUSION FORM

Reischman v. Merchants Metals LLC

(Riverside County Superior Court, Case No. CVRI2301910)

[NAME]

[ADDRESS LINE 1]

[ADDRESS LINE 2]

DO YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SETTLEMENT AND RECEIVE A SETTLEMENT CHECK? (check the box that applies)

☐

YES: STOP HERE -- DO NOT RETURN THIS FORM. NO FURTHER ACTION IS NEEDED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SETTLEMENT.

☐

NO: SIGN, DATE AND RETURN THIS FORM TO EXCLUDE YOURSELF FROM THE SETTLEMENT.

By signing below, I am excluding myself from the Settlement:

I do NOT want to participate in the settlement in *Reischman v. Merchants Metals LLC* (Riverside Superior Court Case No. CVRI2301910). I understand by excluding myself that I will no longer be a Class Member, and I will not receive an Individual Class Payment. I further understand that I cannot opt-out of the PAGA portion of the Settlement, and that if I qualify as an Aggrieved Employee (see first page of the Notice), I will receive an Individual PAGA Payment and give up my rights to pursue the Released PAGA Claims even if I exclude myself.

Signed on _____, 2024

[NAME]

MAIL TO THE SETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATOR, BY U.S. MAIL, POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN [INSERT DEADLINE]:

Settlement Administrator:

Name
Mailing Address
Telephone Number

EXHIBIT "C"

OBJECTION FORM

Reischman v. Merchants Metals LLC

(Riverside County Superior Court, Case No. CVRI2301910)

[NAME]

[ADDRESS LINE 1]

[ADDRESS LINE 2]

DO YOU OBJECT TO THE SETTLEMENT? (check the box that applies)

☐

NO: STOP HERE -- DO NOT RETURN THIS FORM

☐

YES: COMPLETE THE REVERSE SIDE AND RETURN THIS FORM

The Court will consider your objection at the Final Approval Hearing if you submit a timely and valid written statement of objection. Any objection should describe the nature of and basis for the objection, and any other information that you would like the Court to consider.

I OBJECT to the Settlement in the case of *Reischman v. Merchants Metals LLC* (Riverside Superior Court Case No. CVRI2301910) on the following grounds (if additional space is necessary, please include additional sheets of paper):

Signed on _____, 2024

[NAME]

MAIL TO THE SETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATOR, BY U.S. MAIL, POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN [INSERT DEADLINE]:

Settlement Administrator:

Name
Mailing Address
Telephone Number

EXHIBIT "D"

DISPUTE FORM

Reischman v. Merchants Metals LLC

(Riverside County Superior Court, Case No. CVRI2301910)

Please verify and/or complete any missing identifying information:

[NAME]

[ADDRESS LINE 1]

[ADDRESS LINE 2]

The following charts are based on the records of Defendant Merchants Metals LLC and reflect the number of weeks worked for Defendant in California as a nonexempt (hourly paid) during the applicable periods, along with the amount of "Prior Payment" you received from Defendant (if any) in connection with a prior settlement agreement and release of claims.

<i>Data Points for Calculations of Individual Class Payment</i>	
Weeks Worked from 4/13/2019 to 6/2/2024	INSERT
Prior Payment received from Defendant	INSERT

<i>Data Points for Calculations of Individual PAGA Payment</i>	
Weeks Worked from 4/13/2022 to 6/2/2024	INSERT

DO YOU DISAGREE WITH ANY OF THE INFORMATION ABOVE AND WANT THE PARTIES AND ADMINISTRATOR TO INVESTIGATE FURTHER?

☐

NO: STOP HERE -- DO NOT RETURN THIS FORM.

☐

YES: COMPLETE THE REVERSE SIDE AND RETURN THIS FORM.

Please state why you believe that you should be credited with more Weeks Worked than shown in the chart and attach copies (not originals) of supporting documentation. Similarly, if you dispute the amount of Prior Payment received, please state all facts supporting your position and attached copies (not originals) of supporting documentation. The Parties and Settlement Administrator will consider your challenge and make a determination as to these issues.

Signed on _____, 2024 [NAME] _____

MAIL TO THE SETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATOR, BY U.S. MAIL, POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN [INSERT DEADLINE]:

Settlement Administrator:

Name
Mailing Address
Telephone Number

EXHIBIT “C”

All Expenses

Lauby, Mankin & Lauby LLP

Staff Member = All (Active Only)
Group By Staff Member Group
Client - Project = 14000-00536 Reischman v
Merchants Metals (Active Only)

Activity Code = All
Expense Code = All
View = Original
Approval Status = All
Selected Expenses = All
From Earliest To Latest

Entered	Status	Approval	BillableType	Expense	Staff Member	Price	Mark Up %	Qty	Amount
<u>Dustin Reischman</u> <u>14000-00536 Reischman v Merchants Metals</u>									
04-12-2023	Approved		Billable	E112 Court fees	Chiarito, Tracie	75.00	0.00	1.00	75.00
Receipt for LWDA to submit PAGA letter									
04-13-2023	Approved		Billable	E101 Copying	Chiarito, Tracie	0.20	0.00	52.00	10.40
52 copies @ .20 - initial letters to company									
04-13-2023	Approved		Billable	E108 Postage	Chiarito, Tracie	19.32	0.00	1.00	19.32
Postage for April 2023									
04-14-2023	Approved		Billable	Attorney Service	Chiarito, Tracie	1,510.02	0.00	1.00	1,510.02
Onelgal Order # 20209214 - file complaint									
04-25-2023	Approved		Billable	Attorney Service	Chiarito, Tracie	102.90	0.00	1.00	102.90
Bosco Inv #8735163 Serve: Merchants Metals LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company Summons; Complaint; Civil Case Cover Sheet; Certificate of Counsel; Notice of Case Management Conference (To: Brian Mankin); Notice of Case Management Conference (To: Dustin Reischman); Notice of Case Management Conference (To: Merchants Metals LLC); Notice of Department Assignment; ADR Court; Riverside County Superior Court - Central District Completed on: 04/20/2023									
06-06-2023	Approved		Billable	Attorney Service	Chiarito, Tracie	17.24	0.00	1.00	17.24
Onelgal Order #20552215 - file Joint Statement									
06-26-2023	Approved		Billable	Attorney Service	Chiarito, Tracie	17.24	0.00	1.00	17.24
Onelgal Order #20675082 - file Stip and Order re FAC									
06-28-2023	Approved		Billable	Attorney Service	Chiarito, Tracie	17.24	0.00	1.00	17.24
Onelgal Order #20691137 - file Joint Statement									
06-29-2023	Approved		Billable	Attorney Service	Chiarito, Tracie	17.24	0.00	1.00	17.24
Onelgal Order #20698333 - file FAC									
08-08-2023	Approved		Billable	Attorney Service	Chiarito, Tracie	17.24	0.00	1.00	17.24
Onelgal Order #20957164 - file Stip and Order to Cont CMC									
11-20-2023	Approved		Billable	E125 Mediation fees	Chiarito, Tracie	9,000.00	0.00	1.00	9,000.00

All Expenses
Lauby, Mankin & Lauby LLP

Staff Member = All (Active Only)
Group By Staff Member Group
Client - Project = 14000-00536 Reischman v Merchants Metals (Active Only)
Activity Code = All
Expense Code = All
View = Original
Approval Status = All
Selected Expenses = All
From Earliest To Latest

Entered	Status	Approval	BillableType	Expense	Staff Member	Price	Mark Up %	Qty	Amount
<u>Dustin Reischman</u> <u>14000-00536 Reischman v Merchants Metals</u>									
Todd Smith Mediation Invoice for 4/3/24 mediation									
04-11-2024	Approved		Billable	E119 Experts	Chiarito, Tracie	2,655.00	0.00	1.00	2,655.00
Berger Consulting Inv #11329									
04-23-2024	Approved		Billable	Attorney Service	Chiarito, Tracie	19.30	0.00	1.00	19.30
Onelgal Order #22720286 - file Joint Statement									
08-05-2024	Approved		Billable	Attorney Service	Chiarito, Tracie	19.30	0.00	1.00	19.30
Onelgal Order #23453248 - file Joint Statement									
09-25-2024	Approved		Billable	Attorney Service	Chiarito, Tracie	20.96	0.00	1.00	20.96
Onelgal Order #23792386 - file Joint Statement									
11-05-2024	Approved		Billable	Attorney Service	Chiarito, Tracie	42.64	0.00	1.00	42.64
Onelgal Order #24071651 - file Stip and Order to File SAC									
11-06-2024	Approved		Billable	Attorney Service	Chiarito, Tracie	83.94	0.00	1.00	83.94
Onelgal Order #24086512 - file MPA									
12-05-2024	Approved		Billable	Attorney Service	Chiarito, Tracie	20.96	0.00	1.00	20.96
Onelgal Order #24241088 - file Supp PA docs									
03-17-2025	Approved		Billable	Attorney Service	Chiarito, Tracie	180.00	0.00	1.00	180.00
Estimated cost to file MFA, supporting documents, and supplemental documents									
Project Total									13,845.94
Client Total									13,845.94
Grand Total									13,845.94

EXHIBIT “D”