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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF ORANGE

EUN KO, an individual,

Plaintiff,

vs.

HANWHA SEMITECH AMERICAS, INC.,
a business entity; TAEWOO KANG, an
individual; SANGHYUN SOHNG, an
individual; MIN HO CHOI, an individual;
SUNGJIN CHO, an individual; SANGJE
CHO, an individual; KANGIN LEE, an
individual; and DOES 1 through 25, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No.:

COMPLAINT

- (1) Failure to Pay Overtime Wages (Lab. Code, § 510)
- (2) Failure to Provide Meal Periods (Lab. Code, §§ 226.7, 512)
- (3) Failure to Provide Rest Periods (Lab. Code, § 226.7)
- (4) Failure to Furnish Accurate Wage Statements (Lab. Code, § 226)
- (5) Whistleblower Retaliation (Lab. Code, § 1102.5)
- (6) Representative Action for Civil Penalties (Lab. Code, § 2698, et seq. (PAGA))
- (7) Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress
- (8) Receipt of Stolen Property (Pen. Code, § 496(c))

I. INTRODUCTION AND JURISDICTION

1. Plaintiff EUN KO (“Plaintiff”) brings this action against Defendant HANWHA SEMITECH AMERICAS, INC. (“Defendant Employer”) and individual Defendants TAEWOO KANG, SANGHYUN SOHNG, MIN HO CHOI, SUNGJIN CHO, SANGJE CHO, and KANGIN LEE (collectively “Individual Defendants”) for systemic violations of the California

1 Labor Code, whistleblower retaliation, representative claims under the Private Attorneys General
2 Act (“PAGA”), and statutory theft under the Penal Code.

3 2. At all times relevant, Plaintiff was an individual residing in the County of Orange,
4 California, and was employed by Defendant Employer as a non-exempt employee.

5 3. Defendant Employer is a business entity authorized to do business in California,
6 with its principal place of business located in this County at 6000 Phyllis Drive, Cypress, CA.

7 4. Plaintiff is informed and believe and thereon alleges that Individual Defendants
8 TAEWOO KANG, SANGHYUN SOHNG, MIN HO CHOI, SUNGJIN CHO, SANGJE CHO,
9 and KANGIN LEE were, at all times relevant, owners, directors, officers, and/or managing agents
10 of Defendant Employer. Pursuant to Labor Code section 558.1, these Individual Defendants are
11 personally liable for the wage and hour violations alleged herein as persons who “violated, or caused
12 to be violated” the relevant provisions of the Labor Code.

13 5. On November 17, 2025, Plaintiff submitted formal notice to the Labor and
14 Workforce Development Agency (“LWDA”) and Defendant pursuant to Labor Code section 2699.3
15 (Case No. LWDA-CM-1138757-25). As of the filing of this Complaint, more than 65 days have
16 passed without the LWDA providing notice of its intent to investigate the violations. Accordingly,
17 Plaintiff is authorized to bring this representative action.

18 II. FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

19 6. Plaintiff was employed by Defendant Employer from approximately January 1, 2022,
20 to the present.

21 7. Wage and Hour Violations: Although Defendant Employer purportedly designated a
22 standard work schedule of 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. in its employee handbook, in practice, Defendants
23 routinely required or permitted Plaintiff and other aggrieved employees to work substantially longer
24 hours on most workdays, often from approximately 8:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

25 8. Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff for all overtime and double-time hours worked
26 resulting from these extended shifts, and systematically denied Plaintiff and others compliant,
27 uninterrupted 30-minute meal periods and 10-minute rest periods.

28 9. Protected Whistleblower Activity: Beginning in early 2024, Plaintiff discovered and

1 reported internal financial misconduct. In March 2025, following the commencement of an internal
2 diagnostic/audit process, Plaintiff participated and cooperated in the diagnostic process, providing
3 written responses and raising concerns regarding financial irregularities to the diagnostic team
4 leadership and management. These disclosures constituted protected whistleblowing
5 communications.

6 10. In May 2025, Plaintiff further escalated these concerns by submitting a Formal HQ
7 Petition through a formal corporate channel. This petition addressed systemic HR and finance
8 issues, including the manipulation of revenue recognition (altering incoterms from FOB to EXW) to
9 improperly inflate quarterly sales figures in violation of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles
10 (GAAP).

11 11. Retaliatory Adverse Actions: Following her protected reports and participation in the
12 diagnostic process, Defendants engaged in a pattern of retaliation. This included isolating Plaintiff
13 from meetings, dismantling her administrative team, and revoking her “Team Leader” title and
14 associated benefits. This revocation was maliciously applied retroactively to May 2025, coinciding
15 exactly with her formal escalation and the resulting internal audit activities.

16 12. Severe Emotional Distress: As a direct result of Defendants’ retaliatory and hostile
17 conduct, Plaintiff suffered severe physical and emotional distress. Plaintiff has received a formal
18 medical diagnosis of work-related depression and a referral for psychiatric care. Physical
19 manifestations of this stress include a medical diagnosis and significant dental damage requiring
20 surgery.

21 III. CAUSES OF ACTION

22 FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

23 (Failure to Pay Overtime Wages – Labor Code §§ 510, 1194)

24 11. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference the preceding paragraphs.

25 12. At all relevant times, Defendants were required to compensate Plaintiff at a rate of
26 no less than one and one-half times her regular rate of pay for all hours worked in excess of eight
27 hours in one workday or over 40 hours in one workweek.

28 13. Defendants willfully failed to pay Plaintiff the required overtime wages for extended

1 hours and overtime Plaintiff routinely worked in practice, which often spanned from approximately
2 8:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Plaintiff is entitled to recover the unpaid balance of the full amount of
3 overtime compensation, plus interest, and reasonable attorney's fees.

4
5 SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION

(Failure to Provide Meal Periods – Lab. Code §§ 226.7, 512)

6 14. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference the preceding paragraphs.

7 15. Defendants failed to provide Plaintiff with compliant, uninterrupted 30-minute meal
8 periods for workdays in excess of five hours.

9 16. Defendants further failed to compensate Plaintiff with one additional hour of pay at
10 her regular rate for each workday that a compliant meal period was not provided, as required by
11 Labor Code section 226.7.

12
13 THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

(Failure to Provide Rest Periods – Lab. Code § 226.7)

14 17. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference the preceding paragraphs.

15 18. Defendants failed to permit and authorize Plaintiff to take ten-minute rest periods
16 for every four hours worked or major fraction thereof.

17 19. Defendants further failed to compensate Plaintiff with one additional hour of pay at
18 her regular rate for each workday that a compliant rest period was not provided.

19
20 FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Failure to Furnish Accurate Wage Statements – Lab. Code § 226)

21 23. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference the preceding paragraphs.

22 24. Defendants knowingly and intentionally failed to furnish Plaintiff with accurate
23 itemized wage statements showing, among other things, the total hours worked, all applicable hourly
24 rates, and all wages earned.

25 25. Plaintiff suffered injury as a result of these inaccurate statements and is entitled to
26 recover the greater of actual damages or statutory penalties, plus costs and attorney's fees.
27
28

1 FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION
2 (Whistleblower Retaliation – Lab. Code § 1102.5)

3 26. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference the preceding paragraphs.

4 27. Plaintiff engaged in protected activity by disclosing information to persons with
5 authority over her and through formal HQ channels regarding Defendant Employer's violations of
6 state and federal regulations concerning financial reporting and GAAP.

7 28. Defendants took adverse employment actions against Plaintiff, including isolation,
8 demotion, and stripping of benefits, because of her protected disclosures.

9 29. Defendants' conduct violated Labor Code section 1102.5, entitling Plaintiff to
10 compensatory damages, civil penalties, and attorney's fees.

11 SIXTH CAUSE OF ACTION
12 (Representative Action Under PAGA – Lab. Code § 2698, et seq.)

13 33. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference the preceding paragraphs.

14 34. Plaintiff brings this action in a representative capacity on behalf of the State of
15 California for herself and other current and former aggrieved employees of Defendants.

16 35. Defendants violated numerous provisions of the Labor Code, including sections
17 201-204, 226, 226.7, 510, 512, and 1102.5. Plaintiff seeks civil penalties as provided by Labor Code
18 section 2699.

19 SEVENTH CAUSE OF ACTION
20 (Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress)

21 36. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference the preceding paragraphs.

22 37. Defendants' conduct in maliciously stripping Plaintiff of her title and benefits
23 retroactively in response to her reporting financial misconduct was extreme and outrageous.

24 38. Defendants acted with the intent to cause, or with reckless disregard for the
25 probability of causing, severe emotional distress. Plaintiff suffered severe emotional and physical
26 injury as a direct result.
27
28

EIGHTH CAUSE OF ACTION
(Receipt of Stolen Property – Penal Code § 496(c))

39. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference the preceding paragraphs.

40. Defendants willfully withheld earned wages and premium pay belonging to Plaintiff, knowing that such property was earned and owed. This conduct constitutes theft under California law.

41. Pursuant to Penal Code section 496(c), Plaintiff is entitled to recover three times the amount of actual damages sustained, plus costs and attorney's fees.

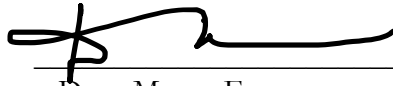
IV. PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays for judgment as follows:

1. For compensatory damages according to proof (estimated in excess of \$178,828.13 for wages and premiums alone);
2. For treble damages pursuant to Penal Code § 496(c) for the theft of earned wages;
3. For general damages for emotional distress and psychiatric injury;
4. For civil penalties under PAGA for all aggrieved employees;
5. For punitive damages for Defendants' malicious and oppressive conduct;
6. For reasonable attorneys' fees and costs (Lab. Code §§ 218.5, 1102.5, 2699 and Pen. Code § 496(c)); and
7. For pre-judgment interest and such other relief as the Court deems just.

DATED: January 22, 2026

MOON & DORSETT, PC

By: 

Dana Moon, Esq.

Attorneys for Plaintiff EUN KO