

Fawn F. Bekam (SBN 307312)
fawn@abramsonlabor.com
Andrew Sandoval (SBN 346996)
andrew.s@abramsonlabor.com
Refugio Ortega-Carrillo (SBN 346933)
refugio@abramsonlabor.com

ABRAMSON LABOR GROUP

1700 W Burbank Blvd
Burbank, CA 91506
Telephone: (213) 493-6300
Facsimile: (213) 336-3704

Attorneys for Plaintiff Jennifer Kruengel, individually,
and on behalf of all other aggrieved employees

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

FOR THE COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

JENNIFER KRUENGEL, individually, and on
behalf of all other aggrieved employees,

Plaintiff,

v.

JACENT STRATEGIC MERCHANDISING,
LLC; and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No.:

**REPRESENTATIVE COMPLAINT FOR
ENFORCEMENT OF THE PRIVATE
ATTORNEYS GENERAL ACT OF 2004,
LABOR CODE §§ 2698, *ET SEQ.*:**

1 Plaintiff Jennifer Kruengel (“Plaintiff”), individually and on behalf of all other aggrieved
2 employees, alleges as follows:

3 INTRODUCTION

4 1. Plaintiff brings this representative action against defendants Jacent Strategic
5 Merchandising, LLC and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive (collectively, “Defendants”), on Plaintiff’s
6 own behalf and on behalf of all other non-exempt or hourly-paid employees currently or formerly
7 employed by Defendants in California at any time from December 8, 2024 to the present
8 (“aggrieved employees”).

9 2. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges, that Defendants have
10 violated state wage and hour laws by, among other things:

- 11 (a) failing to pay all minimum, sick, and overtime wages;
- 12 (b) failing to provide meal periods or pay meal period premiums;
- 13 (c) failing to authorize or permit rest periods or pay rest period premiums;
- 14 (d) failing to provide accurate itemized wage statements; and
- 15 (e) failing to pay all wages due during employment and upon separation of
16 employment.

17 3. Plaintiff seeks monetary relief against Defendants on behalf of himself and all other
18 aggrieved employees to recover, among other things, unpaid wages, statutory penalties, unlawfully
19 deducted wages, benefits, interest, attorneys’ fees, costs and expenses, and penalties pursuant to
20 Labor Code §§ 201, 202, 203, 204, 210, 226, 226.7, 246, 510, 512, 558, 1174, 1174.5, 1194,
21 1194.2, 1197, 1197.1, 1198, 2698, *et seq.*, and Code of California Civil Procedure § 1021.5.

22 JURISDICTION AND VENUE

23 4. The penalties and other legal and equitable relief sought by Plaintiff exceed the
24 minimal jurisdictional limits of this Court and will be established according to proof at trial.

25 5. This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to Article VI, § 10 of the
26 California Constitution, which grants the superior court “original jurisdiction in all other causes”
27 except those given by statute to other courts. The statutes under which this action is brought do not
28 specify any other basis for jurisdiction.

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

7. Venue is proper in this court because Defendants maintain offices, have agents, employ individuals, and/or transact business in this county.

THE PARTIES

8. Plaintiff is a California citizen and was employed by Defendants in Pleasanton, California as a non-exempt merchandiser from approximately November 2022 to approximately November 2025.

9. Defendants were and are subject to the Labor Code and IWC Wage Orders as employers whose employees were and are engaged to work throughout this county and the State of California.

10. Plaintiff is unaware of the true names or capacities of the Defendant sued herein under the fictitious names DOES 1 through 50 but will amend the complaint and serve such fictitiously named Defendants once their names and capacities become known.

11. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that each and all of the acts and omissions alleged herein were performed by, or are attributable, to each Defendant acting as the agent, employee, alter ego, and/or joint venturer of, or working in concert with, each of the other co-Defendants and within the course and scope of such agency, employment, joint venture, or concerted activity with legal authority to act on the others' behalf.

12. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that during the relevant time period, DOES 1 through 50 were the employers of Plaintiff and the other aggrieved employees within the meaning of all applicable state laws and statutes. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that DOES 1 through 50 directly or indirectly controlled or affected the working conditions, working hours, and conditions of employment of Plaintiff and the other aggrieved

///

employees so as to make each Defendant an employer liable under the statutory provision set forth herein.

13. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that DOES 1 through 50 had the authority to hire and terminate Plaintiff and the other aggrieved employees, to set work rules and conditions governing Plaintiff and the other aggrieved employees' employment, and to supervise their daily employment activities.

14. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that DOES 1 through 50 exercise sufficient authority over the terms and conditions of Plaintiff's and the other aggrieved employees' employment for them to be joint employers of Plaintiff and the other aggrieved employees.

GENERAL ALLEGATIONS

15. During the relevant time period, Defendants employed Plaintiff and aggrieved employees as non-exempt employees throughout California at Defendants' California business location(s).

16. During the relevant time period, Defendants knew that Plaintiff and aggrieved employees were entitled to compensation for all hours worked. However, Defendants failed to pay at least the legal minimum wage and overtime wage for all hours worked due to Defendants' policy and practice of failing to pay for all hours worked at the correct rate. For example, Plaintiff and aggrieved employees earned nondiscretionary bonuses that Defendants failed to include in the regular rate of pay when Plaintiff and aggrieved employees earned overtime or used sick pay. As a result, Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and aggrieved employees for all minimum, sick, and overtime wages in violation of the Labor Code and applicable IWC Wage Order.

17. During the relevant time period, Defendants knew that Plaintiff and aggrieved employees were entitled to receive 30-minute, uninterrupted, duty-free meal periods for every 5 hours worked or payment of meal period premiums at their regular rate of pay in lieu thereof. However, Defendants failed to provide Plaintiff and aggrieved employees with 30-minute, uninterrupted, duty-free meal periods for every 5 hours worked and failed to pay meal period

///

1 premiums at their regular rate of pay in lieu thereof in violation of the Labor Code and applicable
2 IWC Wage Order.

3 18. During the relevant time period, Defendants knew that Plaintiff and aggrieved
4 employees were entitled to receive 10-minute, duty-free rest periods for every 4 hours worked or
5 major fraction thereof or payment of rest period premiums at their regular rate of pay in lieu
6 thereof. However, Defendants failed to permit Plaintiff and aggrieved employees to take 10-
7 minute, uninterrupted, duty-free rest periods for every 4 hours worked or major fraction thereof
8 and failed to pay rest period premiums at their regular rate of pay in lieu thereof in violation of the
9 Labor Code and applicable IWC Wage Order.

10 19. During the relevant time period, Defendants knew that Plaintiff and aggrieved
11 employees were entitled to reimburse for necessary expenditures. However, Defendants made it
12 necessary for Plaintiff and aggrieved employees to use their personal devices to clock in and out
13 on a mobile application, and Defendants failed to reimburse Plaintiff and aggrieved employees for
14 these expenses in violation of the Labor Code.

15 20. During the relevant time period, Defendants knew that Plaintiff and aggrieved
16 employees were entitled to itemized wage statements that accurately showed, *inter alia*, gross
17 wages earned, total hours worked, net wages earned, and all applicable hourly rates in effect during
18 the pay period and the corresponding number of hours worked at each hourly rate.

19 21. During the relevant time period, Defendants knew that Plaintiff and aggrieved
20 employees were entitled to timely payment of wages due during employment and upon separation
21 of employment. In violation of the Labor Code, Plaintiff and aggrieved employees did not receive
22 payment of all wages within the required time periods.

23 22. During the relevant time period, Defendants knew they had a duty to compensate
24 Plaintiff and aggrieved employees, and Defendants had the financial ability to pay such
25 compensation but willfully, knowingly, and/or intentionally failed to do so in order to increase
26 Defendants' profits.

27 ///

28 ///

23. Therefore, Plaintiff brings this lawsuit against Defendants on Plaintiff's own behalf and on behalf of all aggrieved employees to recover, among other things, attorneys' fees, civil penalties, costs, and expenses.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

ENFORCEMENT OF LABOR CODE §§ 2698, ET SEQ.

(Private Attorneys General Act of 2004)

24. Plaintiff hereby re-alleges and incorporates by reference all paragraphs above as though fully set forth herein.

25. Labor Code § 2699(a) provides that notwithstanding any other provision of law, any provision of this code that provides for a civil penalty to be assessed and collected by the Labor and Workforce Development Agency or any of its departments, divisions, commissions, boards, agencies, or employees, for a violation of this code, may, as an alternative, be recovered through a civil action brought by an aggrieved employee on behalf of himself or herself and other current or former employees against whom a violation of the same code provision was committed pursuant to the procedures specified in Section 2699.3.

26. Labor Code § 2699(m) provides that civil penalties recovered by aggrieved employees shall be distributed as follows: 65% to the Labor and Workforce Development Agency for enforcement of labor laws, including the administration of this part, and for education of employers and employees about their rights and responsibilities under this code, to be continuously appropriated to supplement and not supplant the funding to the agency for those purposes; and 35% to the aggrieved employees.

27. Plaintiff and all other non-exempt or hourly-paid employees currently or formerly employed by Defendants in California at any time from December 8, 2024 to the present are "aggrieved employees" as defined in Labor Code § 2699(c).

28. Defendants' conduct, as alleged herein, violates numerous Labor Code sections, including the following:

- (a) Failing to pay minimum, sick, and overtime wages to Plaintiff and other aggrieved employees at the correct rate in violation of Labor Code §§ 246,

510, 558, 1194, 1194.2, 1197, 1197.1, and 1198;

- (b) Failing to provide compliant meal periods without paying Plaintiff and other aggrieved employees meal period premiums for each day that lawful meal periods were not provided in violation of Labor Code §§ 226.7 and 512;
- (c) Failing to authorize and permit compliant rest breaks without paying Plaintiff and other aggrieved employees rest period premiums for each day that lawful rest periods were not authorized or permitted in violation of Labor Code § 226.7;
- (d) Failing to provide accurate itemized wage statements in violation of Labor Code § 226;
- (e) Failing to timely pay all wages due during Plaintiff's and other aggrieved employees' employment and at the end of their employment in violation of Labor Code §§ 201, 201.3, 202, 203, 204, and 210; and
- (f) Failing to maintain accurate and complete records showing the hours worked each day by Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees in violation of Labor Code §§ 1174 and 1174.5.

29. Plaintiff personally suffered each of the Labor Code violations alleged in this lawsuit within the one-year period prior to her PAGA notice.

30. Plaintiff has exhausted the administrative requirements provided in Labor Code § 2699.3 as to Defendants and is therefore able to pursue a claim for penalties on Plaintiff's own behalf and on behalf of all other aggrieved employees under PAGA.

31. Plaintiff is entitled to recover civil penalties pursuant to Labor Code §§ 210, 558, 1174.5, 1197.1, 2699, 2699.3, and 2699.5 for the Labor Code violations alleged herein.

32. Plaintiff is entitled to recover attorneys' fees pursuant to Labor Code §§ 210, 218.5, and 2699(g)(1).

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

On Plaintiff's own behalf and on behalf of all other aggrieved employees, Plaintiff prays for relief and judgment against Defendants, jointly and severally, as follows:

1. For civil penalties pursuant to PAGA;
2. For injunctive relief;
3. For reasonable attorneys' fees and costs of suit and interest, pursuant to Labor Code §§ 210, 218.5, 248.5, and 2699(g)(1); and
4. For such other relief as the Court deems just and proper.

Dated: February 12, 2026

ABRAMSON LABOR GROUP

By: 

Fawn F. Bekam
Andrew Sandoval
Refugio Ortega-Carrillo
Attorneys for Plaintiff Jennifer Kruengel