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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

FOR THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

ARCELIA MELO, as an aggrieved employee,
and on behalf of all other aggrieved employees
under the labor Code Private Attorneys'
General Act of 2004,

Plaintiff,

v.

RAMONA EGG RANCH, INC., a California
stock corporation; and DOES 1 through 100,
inclusive,

Defendants.

CASE NO.: **CVME2607350**

REPRESENTATIVE ACTION

**COMPLAINT UNDER THE LABOR
CODE PRIVATE ATTORNEYS'
GENERAL ACT OF 2004 FOR CIVIL
PENALTIES UNDER LABOR CODE
SECTIONS 210, 226.3, 558, 1174.5, 1197.1,
and 2699**

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

[Amount in Controversy Greater Than
\$35,000.00]

COMES NOW plaintiff ARCELIA MELO (“Ms. Melo” or “Plaintiff”), as an aggrieved employee, and on behalf of all other aggrieved employees under the Labor Code Private Attorneys’ General Act of 2004, and alleges as follows:

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

1. This is a representative action, pursuant to the Labor Code Private Attorneys General Act of 2004, codified at Labor Code section 2698, et seq. (“PAGA”), against RAMONA EGG RANCH, INC., a California stock corporation (“RAMONA EGG RANCH”); and any of its respective subsidiaries or affiliated companies within the State of California, (Ramona Egg Ranch and DOES 1 through 100, as further defined below, are collectively hereinafter referred to as “Defendants”), as a proxy of the Labor and Workforce Development Agency of the State of California (“LWDA”), on behalf of Plaintiff and all other current and former employees of Defendants working within the Civil Penalty Period, as further defined herein, and, as it pertains to the alleged claims for failure to comply with the Labor Code. Specifically, in connection with the alleged claims for failure to comply with Labor Code sections 96, 98.6, 201, 202, 203, 204, 210, 221, 223, 226, 226.3, 232, 232.5, 245, *et seq.*, 432, 432.3, 1102.5, 1197.5, and 1198.5, Plaintiff seeks to represent all California employees of Defendants working within one (1) year preceding Plaintiff’s provision of notice to the LWDA of the herein-described Labor Code violations and continuing past the date of Plaintiff’s PAGA Notice letter indefinitely based on Defendants’ continuing violations (“Civil Penalty Period”). On all other claims mentioned herein, Plaintiff seeks to represent only non-exempt employees of Defendants working within the Civil Penalty Period. These employees shall collectively be referred to herein as “Aggrieved Employees”.

2. Jurisdiction exists in the Superior Court of the State of California pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure section 410.10.

1 3. Venue is proper in Riverside County, California pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure
2 sections 392, *et seq.* because, among other things, Los Angeles County is where the causes of action
3 complained of herein arose; the county in which the employment relationship began; the county in
4 which performance of the employment contract, or part of it, between Plaintiff and Defendants was
5 due to be performed; the county in which the employment contract, or part of it, between Plaintiff
6 and Defendants was actually performed; and the county in which Defendants, or some of them,
7 reside or do business. Moreover, the unlawful acts alleged herein have a direct effect on Plaintiff
8 and Aggrieved Employees in Riverside County, and because Defendants employ numerous
9 Aggrieved Employees in Riverside County.
10

11 4. Plaintiff is informed and believes and based thereon alleges that, pursuant to
12 California Code of Civil Procedure section 395.5, Venue is proper in this judicial district and the
13 County of Riverside because Defendants transact business within this judicial district and conduct
14 alleged by Plaintiff herein occurred in this judicial district. (*See also Crestwood Behavioral Health,*
15 *Inc. v. Superior Court* (2021) 60 Cal.App.5th 1069 [venue in a PAGA action is proper in any county
16 where the defendants committed Labor Code violations against some of its employees].)
17

18 5. Based on information and belief, Plaintiff is an “aggrieved employee” under PAGA,
19 as Plaintiff was employed by Defendants during the applicable statutory period and suffered the
20 Labor Code violations set forth herein. Accordingly, Plaintiff seeks to recover civil penalties, as the
21 term “civil penalty” is defined under *ZB N.A. v. Superior Court* (2019) 8 Cal.5th 175, under the
22 Labor Code Private Attorneys General Act of 2004, codified at Labor Code section 2698, *et seq.*
23 (“PAGA”), as amended, plus reasonable attorneys’ fees and costs, for Plaintiff and all other
24 aggrieved current and former employees of Defendants during the Civil Penalty Period.
25

26 6. Specifically, Plaintiff seeks to recover PAGA civil penalties through a representative
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1 action permitted by PAGA and the California Supreme Court in, among other authorities, *Arias v.*
2 *Superior Court* (2009) 46 Cal.4th 969. According to the same authorities, class certification of the
3 PAGA allegations described herein is not required.

4 7. During the Civil Penalty Period, Defendants violated, *inter alia*, Labor Code sections
5 96, 98.6, 201, 202, 203, 204, 210, 221, 223, 226, 226.3, 226.7, 232, 232.5, 245, *et seq.*, 432,
6 432.3, 510, 512, 558, 558.1, 1102.5, 1174, 1174.5, 1182.12, 1194, 1194.2, 1197, 1197.1, 1197.5,
7 1198, 1198.5, 2699, and 2810.5, among others.

8
9 8. Labor Code section 2699, subdivisions (a) and (g), authorizes aggrieved employees
10 such as Plaintiff, on behalf of Plaintiff and all other aggrieved current and former employees within
11 the statutory period, to bring a civil action to recover civil penalties pursuant to the procedures
12 specified in Labor Code section 2699.3.

13 9. On or around January 29, 2026, Plaintiff provided written notice pursuant to Labor
14 Code section 2699.3 online and by certified mail, with return receipt requested, of Defendants'
15 violation of various, including the herein-described, provisions of the Labor Code, to the LWDA,
16 as well as by certified mail, with return receipt requested to Defendants, and each of them.

17
18 10. To the extent that any of the Defendants previously used the notice and cure
19 provisions of Labor Code section 2699.3 within the last twelve months, under Labor Code section
20 2699.3(d), then Defendants, or those who have availed themselves of the cure provisions validly,
21 are not eligible to cure the violations discussed herein under Labor Code section 2699.3 or otherwise
22 using the early evaluation conference process under Labor Code section 2699.3(f).

23 11. Insofar as any of the Defendant(s) is/are determined to have satisfied Labor Code
24 sections 2699(g), 2699(h), or otherwise 2699(d)(1), said Defendants, or any that is determined to
25 have satisfied Labor Code sections 2699(g) or (h), is also, in the alternative, liable for civil penalties
26 pursuant to Labor Code sections 2699(j), 2699(e)(2), and 2699(f)(2).
27

1 12. Insofar as any of the Defendant(s) is/are determined to have, prior to Plaintiff's
2 PAGA Notice or a request for records under Labor Code sections 226, 432, or 1198.5, from Plaintiff
3 and/or Plaintiff's counsel, adequately taken all reasonable steps to be in compliance with all
4 provisions identified in Plaintiff's PAGA Notice, said Defendant(s) is/are still liable for civil
5 penalties pursuant to Labor Code section 2699(g)(1)-(3).

6 13. Insofar as any of the Defendant(s) is/are deemed to have adequately taken all
7 reasonable steps to be in compliance with all provisions identified in Plaintiff's PAGA Notice within
8 sixty (60) days of receiving Plaintiff's PAGA Notice, said Defendant(s) is/are still liable for civil
9 penalties pursuant to Labor Code section 2699(h)(1)-(3).

10 14. Insofar as the LWDA or a court has issued a finding or determination as to the
11 Defendants, or any of them, that its/their policy(ies) or practice(s) giving rise to such violations
12 was/were unlawful, said Defendant(s) is/are further liable for civil penalties pursuant to Labor Code
13 section 2699(f)(2)(B)(i). Furthermore, insofar as Defendants, or any of them, was/were found to
14 have unlawfully committed some or all of the above-referenced Labor Code violations, said
15 Defendant(s) is/are subject to increased penalties, as applicable, under Labor Code sections
16 2699(f)(2)(B)(i), 2699(g)(3) and 2699(h)(3), and is/are *not* eligible for reduced penalties under
17 either Labor Code sections 2699(g) or 2699(h) for remedying violations either prior to or after the
18 serving of Plaintiff's PAGA Notice.
19

20 15. Moreover, regardless of the foregoing, because Defendants' conduct giving rise to
21 the violations described herein was and is malicious, fraudulent, and/or oppressive, the Defendants
22 are thus subject to increased penalties under Labor Code section 2699(f)(2)(B)(ii) and, per Labor
23 Code sections 2699(g)(3) and 2699(h)(3), are *not* eligible for reduced penalties under either Labor
24 Code section 2699(g) or 2699(h), for remedying violations either prior to or after the Defendants'
25 receipt of Plaintiff's PAGA Notice.
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16. Pursuant to Labor Code section 2699.3, subdivision (a)(2)(A), the LWDA did not provide notice of its intention to investigate Defendants' alleged violations within sixty-five (65) calendar days of the January 29, 2026, postmarked date of the herein-described notice sent by Plaintiff to the LWDA and Defendants.

PAGA REPRESENTATIVE ALLEGATIONS

17. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a policy or practice of failing to pay overtime wages to Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees in the State of California in violation of California state wage and hour laws as a result of, without limitation, Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees working over eight (8) hours per day, over twelve (12) hours per day, over forty (40) hours per week, and seven (7) straight work days in a work week without paying them proper overtime wages, as a result of, without limitation, failing to accurately track and/or pay for all minutes and hours actually worked at the proper overtime rate of pay; engaging, suffering, or permitting employees to work off the clock and/or being subject to Defendants' control, including, without limitation, by requiring Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees: to complete pre-shift tasks before clocking in and post-shift tasks after clocking out, deducting time from employees' hours worked for meal periods not actually taken or shorter in length than the amount of time being automatically deducted; to clock out for meal periods and continue working; failing to include all forms of remuneration, including non-discretionary bonuses, incentive pay, and other forms of remuneration into the regular rate of pay for the pay periods where overtime was worked and the additional compensation was earned for the purpose of calculating the overtime rate of pay; and for paying straight pay instead of overtime pay and/or otherwise paying overtime hours and minutes worked at the improper rate(s) of pay, all to the detriment of Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees.

1 18. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a practice or policy
2 of failing to compensate Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees with minimum wages for all hours
3 worked or otherwise under Defendants' control as a result of, without limitation, failing to
4 accurately track and/or pay for all minutes and hours actually worked at their regular rate of pay that
5 is above the minimum wage; engaging, suffering, or permitting employees to work off the clock
6 and/or be subject to Defendants' control, including, without limitation; requiring Plaintiff and other
7 Aggrieved Employees: to complete pre-shift tasks before clocking in and post-shift tasks after
8 clocking out, deducting time from employees' hours worked for meal periods not actually taken or
9 shorter in length than the amount of time being automatically deducted; and to clock out for meal
10 periods and continue working, all to the detriment of Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees.

12 19. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a policy or practice
13 of failing to provide Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees a full, timely thirty (30) minute
14 uninterrupted meal period for days on which they worked more than five (5) hours in a work day
15 and a second thirty (30) minute uninterrupted meal period for days on which they worked in excess
16 of ten (10) hours in a work day, including, without limitation: by interrupting meal periods; not
17 providing timely meal periods; failing to provide first and second meal periods; providing short
18 meal periods; auto-deducting meal periods that could not be auto-deducted by law or during which
19 employees worked; and otherwise requiring on-duty meal periods, which in turn prevented
20 employees from leaving the premises for meal periods, and failing to provide compensation for such
21 unprovided meal periods as required by California wage and hour laws.

23 20. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a policy or practice
24 of failing to authorize and permit Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees to take rest periods of at
25 least ten (10) minutes per four (4) hours worked or major fraction thereof in which they are
26 completely relieved of all of their duties, including, without limitation: by failing to provide rest
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1 periods altogether; interrupting them; not providing them in a timely fashion; not permitting
2 employees to leave the premises; and otherwise requiring on-duty rest periods, and failed to provide
3 compensation for such unprovided rest periods as required by California wage and hour laws.

4 21. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a policy or practice
5 of failing to provide Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees the full amount of their wages owed
6 to them upon termination and/or resignation as required by Labor Code sections 201 and 202,
7 including for, without limitation, failing to pay overtime wages, minimum wages, premium wages,
8 and paid time off as well as vacation pay.

9 22. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a policy or practice
10 of failing to provide Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees the full amount of their wages for
11 labor performed in a timely fashion as required under Labor Code section 204.

12 23. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a policy or practice
13 of failing to provide Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees with itemized wage statements that
14 accurately reflect gross wages earned; total hours worked; net wages earned; all applicable hourly
15 rates in effect during the pay period and the corresponding number of hours worked at each hourly
16 rate; and other such information as required by Labor Code section 226, subdivision (a). As a result
17 thereof, Defendants have, on occasion, further failed to furnish employees with an accurate
18 calculation of gross and net wages earned, as well as gross and net wages paid.

19 24. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a policy or
20 practice of failing to comply with Labor Code section 226, subdivision (a) by failing to keep
21 adequate or accurate time records including wage statements and similar payroll documents under
22 Labor Code section 226, intentionally failing to furnish Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees
23 with documents signed to obtain or hold employment under Labor Code section 432, personnel
24 records under Labor Code section 1198.5, and time records under Labor Code section 1174, making
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1 it difficult for Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees to calculate their unpaid wages and/or
2 premium payments, to the detriment of Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees.

3 25. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a policy or practice
4 of failing to timely pay Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees, among other wages, all wages
5 owed as a result of Defendants' practice or policy of failing to pay, among other wages, overtime
6 wages, minimum wages, premium wages, paid time off and vacation time owed as required by Labor
7 Code sections 201, 202, and 203.

8 26. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants have had a policy or practice of
9 failing to pay Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees their wages in accordance with Labor Code
10 Section 204, which requires that: "[l]abor performed between the 1st and 15th days, inclusive, of
11 any calendar month shall be paid for between the 16th and 26th day of the month during which the
12 labor was performed, and labor performed between the 16th and the last day, inclusive of any
13 calendar month, shall be paid for between the 1st and 10th day of the following month" and for
14 payroll periods such as those that are weekly, biweekly, or semimonthly, wages must be paid within
15 seven (7) calendar days following the close of the payroll period in which wages were earned.

16 27. At all relevant times mentioned herein, Defendants had and have a policy or practice
17 of preventing Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees from using or disclosing the skills, knowledge and
18 experience they obtained at Defendants for purposes of competing with Defendants, including,
19 without limitation, preventing Employees from disclosing their wages in negotiating a new job with
20 a prospective employer, and from disclosing who else works at Defendants and under what
21 circumstances that they might be receptive to an offer from a rival employer. Plaintiff is informed
22 and believes that this policy and/or practice violates Business and Professions Code sections 17200,
23 16600 and 16700, and, by virtue thereof, various provisions of the Labor Code, including Labor
24 Code sections 232, 232.5, and 1197.5, subdivision (k).
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1 28. Defendants had and have a policy or practice of preventing Plaintiff and other
2 Aggrieved Employees from disclosing violations of state and federal law, either within Defendants
3 to their managers or outside to private attorneys or government officials, among others, in violation
4 of Business and Professions Code section 17200, and, thus, in violation of Labor Code section
5 1102.5. In addition, Plaintiff is informed and believes that Defendants' herein-described policies
6 and/or practices prevent Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees from disclosing information about
7 unsafe or discriminatory working conditions, or about wage and hour violations in violation of Labor
8 Code section 232 and 232.5.
9

10 29. Defendants had and have a policy or practice of preventing Plaintiff and other
11 Aggrieved Employees from engaging in lawful conduct during non-work hours, thus violating state
12 statutes entitling employees to disclose wages, working conditions, and illegal conduct, including,
13 without limitation, Labor Code sections 96, subdivision (k), 98.6, 232, 232.5, and 1197.5,
14 subdivision (k). Plaintiff is informed and believes that this lawful conduct includes the exercise of
15 Plaintiff's and other Aggrieved Employee's constitutional rights of freedom of speech and economic
16 liberty.
17

18 30. Defendants had and have a policy or practice of relying on the salary history
19 information of an applicant for employment as a factor in determining whether to offer employment
20 to an applicant or what salary to offer the applicant in violation of Labor Code section 432.3 by
21 including, on Defendants' application for employment, an inquiry regarding current and/or former
22 salary history information, including, without limitation, compensation and benefits of the applicant
23 for employment. As such, Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that
24 Defendants violated, without limitation, Labor Code section 432.3.
25

26 31. Plaintiff, in Plaintiff's representative capacity, seeks civil penalties under Labor
27 Code sections 210, 226.3, 558, 558.1, 1174.5, 1197.1, and 2699 for the herein-described acts, which

1 violate the California Labor Code as described above, including on behalf of Plaintiff and other
2 Aggrieved Employees pursuant to PAGA.

3 **PARTIES**

4 **A. Plaintiff**

5 32. Plaintiff is a resident of the State of California. At all relevant times herein, Plaintiff
6 is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that Defendants employed Plaintiff as a non-
7 exempt employee, with duties that included, but were not limited to, packing food products and
8 cleaning machinery. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that Plaintiff
9 worked for Defendants from approximately August of 2025 through September of 2025.
10

11 **B. Defendants**

12 33. Plaintiff is informed and believes and based thereon alleges that defendant
13 RAMONA EGG RANCH is, and at all times relevant hereto was, a stock corporation organized,
14 authorized, and licensed to do business in in the State of California. Plaintiff is further informed and
15 believes, and based thereon alleges, that RAMONA EGG RANCH is, and at all times relevant hereto
16 was, authorized to and operating and doing business in the County of Riverside, State of California.
17 At all relevant times herein, defendant RAMONA EGG RANCH employed Plaintiff and similarly
18 aggrieved employees within the State of California.
19

20 34. Plaintiff is informed and believes and based thereon alleges that defendant RAMONA
21 EGG RANCH is, and at all times relevant hereto was, a “person” as defined in Labor Code section 17 and
22 Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 17201.

23 35. The true names and capacities, whether individual, corporate, associate, or otherwise,
24 of defendants sued herein as DOES 1 through 100, inclusive, are currently unknown to Plaintiff,
25 who therefore sues defendants by such fictitious names under Code of Civil Procedure section 474.
26 Plaintiff is informed and believes and based thereon alleges that each of the defendants designated
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1 herein as DOE is legally responsible in some manner for the unlawful acts referred to herein.
2 Plaintiff will seek leave of court to amend this Complaint to reflect the true names and capacities of
3 the defendants designated hereinafter as DOES when such identities become known. Plaintiff is
4 informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that each defendant acted in all respects pertinent
5 to this action, as the agent of the other defendant(s), carried out a joint scheme, business plan or
6 policy in all respects pertinent hereto, and the acts of each defendant are legally attributable to the
7 other defendants. Whenever, heretofore or hereinafter, reference is made to "Defendants," it shall
8 include RAMONA EGG RANCH, and any of its parents, subsidiaries, or affiliated companies
9 within the State of California, as well as DOES 1 through 100 identified herein.
10

11 **JOINT LIABILITY ALLEGATIONS**

12 36. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that at all times
13 mentioned herein, each of the Defendants was the agent, principal, employee, employer,
14 representative, joint venture or co-conspirator of each of the other defendants, either actually or
15 ostensibly, and in doing the things alleged herein acted within the course and scope of such agency,
16 employment, joint venture, and conspiracy.

17 37. All of the acts and conduct described herein of each and every corporate and limited
18 liability company defendant was duly authorized, ordered, and directed by the respective and
19 collective defendant corporate and limited liability company employers, and the owners, officers,
20 directors, members and management-level employees of said corporate and limited liability
21 company employers. In addition thereto, said corporate and limited liability company employers
22 participated in the aforementioned acts and conduct of their said employees, agents, and
23 representatives, and each of them; and upon completion of the aforesaid acts and conduct of said
24 corporate and limited liability company employees, agents, and representatives, the defendant
25 corporation and limited liability company respectively and collectively ratified, accepted the
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1 benefits of, condoned, lauded, acquiesced, authorized, and otherwise approved of each and all of
2 the said acts and conduct of the aforementioned corporate and limited liability company employees,
3 agents and representatives.

4 38. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon allege, that there exists such a
5 unity of interest and ownership between Defendants, and each of them, that their individuality and
6 separateness have ceased to exist.

7 39. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges that despite the
8 formation of the purported corporate and/or limited liability existence of RAMONA EGG RANCH,
9 and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive (the “Alter Ego Defendants”), they, and each of them, are one
10 and the same with DOES 51 through 100 (“Individual Defendants”), and each of them, due to, but
11 not limited to, the following reasons:
12

13 A. The Alter Ego Defendants are completely dominated and controlled by the Individual
14 Defendants who personally committed the wrongful and illegal acts and violated the
15 laws as set forth in this Complaint, and who have hidden and currently hide behind
16 the Alter Ego Defendants to perpetrate frauds, circumvent statutes, or accomplish
17 some other wrongful or inequitable purpose;

18 B. The Individual Defendants derive actual and significant monetary benefits by and
19 through the Alter Ego Defendants’ unlawful conduct, and by using the Alter Ego
20 Defendants as the funding source for the Individual Defendants’ own personal
21 expenditures;

22 C. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that the Individual Defendants
23 and the Alter Ego Defendants, while really one and the same, were segregated to
24 appear as though separate and distinct for purposes of perpetrating a fraud,
25 circumventing a statute, or accomplishing some other wrongful or inequitable
26 purpose;
27

1 D. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that the business affairs of the
2 Individual Defendants and the Alter Ego Defendants are, and at all relevant times
3 mentioned herein were, so mixed and intermingled that the same cannot reasonably
4 be segregated, and the same are inextricable confusion. The Alter Ego Defendants are,
5 and at all relevant times mentioned herein were, used by the Individual Defendants as
6 mere shells and conduits for the conduct of certain of their, and each of their affairs.
7 The Alter Ego Defendants are, and at all relevant times mentioned herein were, the
8 alter egos of the Individual Defendants;

9 E. The recognition of the separate existence of the Individual Defendants and the Alter
10 Ego Defendants would promote injustice insofar that it would permit defendants to
11 insulate themselves from liability to Plaintiff for violations of the Civil Code, Labor
12 Code, and other statutory violations. The corporate existence of these defendants
13 should thus be disregarded in equity and for the ends of justice because such disregard
14 is necessary to avoid fraud and injustice to Plaintiff herein;

15 F. Accordingly, the Alter Ego Defendants constitute the alter ego of the Individual
16 Defendants (and vice versa), and the fiction of their separate corporate existence must
17 be disregarded;

18 40. As a result of the aforementioned facts, among others, Plaintiff is informed and
19 believes, and based thereon alleges, that the Individual Defendants, the Alter Ego Defendants, and
20 each of them, are joint employers by virtue of a joint enterprise, and that Plaintiff was an employee
21 of the Alter Ego Defendants and the Individual Defendants. Plaintiff performed services for each
22 and every defendant, and to the mutual benefit of all defendants, and all defendants shared control
23 of Plaintiff, either directly or indirectly, and in the manner in which defendants' business was and
24 is conducted.

25 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

26 **(Violation of PAGA – Against All Defendants)**

27 41. Plaintiff re-alleges each and every allegation set forth in the preceding paragraphs

1 and incorporates each by reference as though fully set forth hereat.

2 Civil Penalties Under Labor Code § 210

3 42. At all relevant times herein, Labor Code section 204, requires and required that:
4 “[l]abor performed between the 1st and 15th days, inclusive, of any calendar month shall be paid for
5 between the 16th and 26th day of the month during which the labor was performed, and labor
6 performed between the 16th and the last day, inclusive, of any calendar month, shall be paid for
7 between the 1st and 10th day of the following month” and for payroll periods such as those that are
8 weekly, biweekly, or semimonthly, wages must be paid within seven (7) calendar days following
9 the close of the payroll period in which wages were earned.
10

11 43. At all relevant times herein, Labor Code section 210, subdivision (a) states and stated
12 that “[i]n addition to, and entirely independent and apart from, any other penalty provided in this
13 article, every person who fails to pay the wages of each employee as provided in Sections 201.3,
14 204, 204b, 204.1, 205, 205.5, and 1197.5, shall be subject to a civil penalty as follows: (1) For any
15 initial violation, one hundred dollars (\$100) for each failure to pay each employee” and “(2) For
16 each subsequent violation, or any willful or intentional violation, two hundred dollars (\$200) for
17 each failure to pay each employee, plus 25 percent of the amount unlawfully withheld.”
18

19 44. At all relevant times herein, Defendants have had a consistent policy or practice of
20 failing to pay Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees during their employment on a timely basis as per
21 Labor Code section 204 including, without limitation, for the reasons and in the manner alleged
22 herein. Thus, pursuant to Labor Code section 210, Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees are
23 entitled to recover civil penalties for Defendants’ violations of Labor Code section 204, in the
24 amount of one hundred dollars (\$100) for each Aggrieved Employee for each initial violation per
25 employee, and two hundred dollars (\$200) for each Aggrieved Employee for each subsequent
26 violation in connection with each payment that was made in violation of Labor Code section 204 as
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1 well as injunctive relief.

2 Civil Penalties Under Labor Code § 226.3

3 45. Defendants had and have a policy or practice of failing to comply with Labor Code
4 section 226, subdivision (a) by intentionally failing to furnish Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees
5 with itemized wage statements that accurately reflect: reflect gross wages earned; total hours
6 worked; net wages earned; all applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the
7 corresponding number of hours worked at each hourly rate; and other such information as required
8 by Labor Code section 226, subdivision (a).
9

10 46. Labor Code section 226.3 states that “[a]ny employer who violates subdivision (a)
11 of Section 226 shall be subject to a civil penalty in the amount of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250)
12 per employee per violation in an initial citation and one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per employee for
13 each violation in a subsequent citation, for which the employer fails to provide the employee a wage
14 deduction statement or fails to keep the records required in subdivision (a) of Section 226.”

15 47. Labor Code section 226.3 further provides that “[t]he civil penalties provided for in
16 this section are in addition to any other penalty provided by law.”

17 48. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that Defendants had
18 and have a policy or practice of failing to furnish non-exempt employees, including, without
19 limitation, Plaintiff, itemized wage statements that accurately reflect: reflect gross wages earned;
20 total hours worked; net wages earned; all applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and
21 the corresponding number of hours worked at each hourly rate; and other such information as
22 required by Labor Code section 226, subdivision (a) as alleged herein.
23

24 49. Pursuant to Labor Code section 226.3, Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees are
25 entitled to recover civil penalties for Defendants’ violation of Labor Code section 226, subdivision
26 (a) in the amount of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) for each Aggrieved Employee per pay period
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1 for the initial violation, and one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for each Aggrieved Employee per pay
2 period for each subsequent violation.

3 Violation of Labor Code § 558

4 50. Pursuant to Labor Code section 558, subdivision (a): “Any employer or other person
5 acting on behalf of an employer who violates, or causes to be violated . . . any provision regulating
6 hours and days of work in any of the Industrial Welfare Commission” shall be subject to a civil
7 penalty as follows:

8 (1) For any initial violation, fifty dollars (\$50) for each underpaid employee and
9 for each pay period for which the employee was underpaid in addition to an amount sufficient to
10 recover underpaid wages;
11

12 (2) For each subsequent violation, one hundred dollars (\$100) for each underpaid
13 employee for each pay period for which the employee was underpaid in addition to an amount
14 sufficient to recover underpaid wages;

15 (3) Wages recovered pursuant to this section shall be paid to the affected
16 employee.

17 51. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that Defendants, and
18 each of them, violated, or caused to be violated, the Labor Code sections described herein, including
19 causing Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees not to: be paid overtime wages and minimum
20 wages, receive meal and rest periods or compensation in lieu thereof, be paid timely wages during
21 their employment and after their employment separation, receive accurate, itemized wage
22 statements, to be provided with the opportunity to inspect employment records, be provided with
23 notice as required under Labor Code section 2810.5, be provided with the proper accrual and use of
24 paid sick leave, and/or be paid out all paid time off and/or vested vacation wages owed at the proper
25 rate of pay.
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52. As a direct and proximate result of the herein-described Labor Code violations, pursuant to Labor Code section 558, Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees are entitled to recover civil penalties for Defendants' herein-described Labor Code violations in the amount fifty dollars (\$50) for each Aggrieved Employee per pay period for the initial violation, and one hundred dollars (\$100) for each Aggrieved Employee per pay period for each subsequent violation.

Violation of Labor Code § 1174.5

53. At all times mentioned herein, Labor Code section 1174, subdivision (b) has required every person employing labor in California to “[a]llow any member of the commission or the employees of the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement free access to the place of business or employment of the person to secure any information or make any investigation that they are authorized by this chapter to ascertain or make. The commission may inspect or make excerpts, relating to the employment of employees, from the books, reports, contracts, payrolls, documents, or papers of the person.”

54. At all times mentioned herein, Labor Code section 1174, subdivision (c) has required every person employing labor in California to “[k]eep a record showing the names and addresses of all employees employed and the ages of all minors.”

55. At all times mentioned herein, Labor Code section 1174, subdivision (d) has required every person employing labor in California to “[k]eep, at a central location in the state or at the plants or establishments at which employees are employed, payroll records showing the hours worked daily by and the wages paid to, and the number of piece-rate units earned by and applicable piece rate paid to, employees employed at the respective plants or establishments. These records shall be kept in accordance with rules established for this purpose by the commission, but in any case, shall be kept on file for not less than three years. An employer shall not prohibit an employee from maintaining a personal record of hours worked, or, if paid on a piece-rate basis, piece-rate units

1 earned.”

2 56. Pursuant to Labor Code section 1174.5, “[a]ny person employing labor who willfully
3 fails to maintain the records required by subdivision (c) of [Labor Code] Section 1174 or accurate
4 and complete records required by subdivision (d) of [Labor Code] Section 1174, or to allow any
5 member of the commission or employees of the division to inspect records pursuant to subdivision
6 (b) of [Labor Code] Section 1174, shall be subject to a civil penalty of five hundred dollars (\$500).

7
8 57. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that Defendants have
9 willfully failed keep adequate or accurate time records including wage statements and similar
10 payroll documents under Labor Code section 226, documents signed to obtain or hold employment
11 under Labor Code section 432, personnel records under Labor Code section 1198.5, and time records
12 under Labor Code section 1174.

13 58. As a direct and proximate result of the herein-described Labor Code violations,
14 pursuant to Labor Code section 1174.5, Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees are entitled to
15 recover civil penalties for Defendants’ herein-described Labor Code violations in the amount of five
16 hundred dollars (\$500) per violation per pay period per Aggrieved Employee.

17 Violation of Labor Code § 1197.1

18 59. Pursuant to Labor Code section 1197.1, subdivision (a): “Any employer or other
19 person acting either individually or as an officer, agent, or employee of another person, who pays
20 or causes to be paid to any employee a wage less than the minimum fixed by an applicable state or
21 local law, or by an order of the commission shall be subject to a civil penalty, restitution of wages,
22 liquidated damages payable to the employee, and any applicable penalties imposed pursuant to
23 Section 203 as follows:

24
25 A. For any initial violation that is intentionally committed, one hundred dollars (\$100)
26 for each underpaid employee for each pay period for which the employee is underpaid. This amount
27

1 shall be in addition to an amount sufficient to recover underpaid wages, liquidated damages pursuant
2 to Section 1194.2, and any applicable penalties imposed pursuant to Section 203.

3 B. For each subsequent violation for the same specific offense, two hundred fifty dollars
4 (\$250) for each underpaid employee for each pay period for which the employee is underpaid
5 regardless of whether the initial violation is intentionally committed. This amount shall be in
6 addition to an amount sufficient to recover underpaid wages, liquidated damages pursuant to Section
7 1194.2, and any applicable penalties imposed pursuant to Section 203.

8 C. Wages, liquidated damages, and any applicable penalties imposed pursuant to
9 Section 203, recovered pursuant to this section shall be paid to the affected employee.”

10 60. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that Defendants caused
11 Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees not to be paid minimum wages for all hours worked or otherwise
12 under Defendants’ control as a result of, without limitation, failing to accurately track and/or pay
13 for all minutes and hours actually worked at their regular rate of pay that is above the minimum
14 wage; engaging, suffering, or permitting employees to work off the clock and/or be subject to
15 Defendants’ control, including, without limitation, by requiring Plaintiff and other Aggrieved
16 Employees to complete pre-shift tasks before clocking in and post-shift tasks after clocking out,
17 deducting time from employees’ hours worked for meal periods not actually taken or shorter in
18 length than the amount of time being automatically deducted; and to clock out for meal periods and
19 continue working, entitling Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees to actual and liquidated
20 damages.

21 61. As a direct and proximate result of the herein-described Labor Code violations,
22 pursuant to Labor Code section 1197.1, Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees are entitled to
23 recover civil penalties for Defendants’ herein-described Labor Code violations in the amount one
24 hundred dollars (\$100) for each Aggrieved Employee per pay period for the initial violation, and
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1 two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250) for each Aggrieved Employee per pay period for each
2 subsequent violation.

3 Civil Penalties Under Labor Code § 2699

4 62. Pursuant to Labor Code section 2699, subdivision (a), notwithstanding any other
5 provision of law, any provision of the Labor Code that provides for a civil penalty to be assessed
6 and collected by the LWDA or any of its departments, divisions, commissions, boards, agencies or
7 employees for a violation of the Labor Code may, as an alternative, be recovered through a civil
8 action brought by an aggrieved employee on behalf of himself or herself and other current or former
9 employees pursuant to the procedures specified in Labor Code section 2699.3.

10 63. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges that Defendants, and
11 each of them, violated the Labor Code sections described herein in each of the preceding paragraphs
12 alleged herein.

13 64. As such, Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees are entitled to injunctive relief, one
14 hundred dollars (\$100) for each Aggrieved Employee for each pay period in the PAGA Period, and
15 two hundred dollars (\$200) for each Aggrieved Employee for each pay period in the PAGA Period
16 to the extent Defendants' conduct is found to be malicious, fraudulent and/or oppressive.

17 65. Moreover, Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees within the State of California
18 whom she seeks to represent are entitled to an award of reasonable attorneys' fees and costs in
19 connection with their herein-described claims for civil penalties.

20 REQUEST FOR JURY TRIAL

21 A. Plaintiff hereby requests a trial by jury.

22 PRAYER

23 **WHEREFORE**, on behalf of Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees, Plaintiff prays for
24 judgment against Defendants as follows:
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- 1 A. An award of civil penalties pursuant to Labor Code sections 210, 226.3, 558,
2 1174.5, 1197.1, and 2699;
3 B. Injunctive relief under Labor Code sections 2699(e)(1) and 2699(k);
4 C. An award of reasonable attorneys' fees and costs pursuant to Labor Code sections
5 210, 226.3, 558, 558.1, 1174.5, 1197.1, and 2699;
6 C. Pre-judgment and post-judgment interest;
7 D. For costs of suit incurred herein; and
8 E. Such other and further relief as the Court deems just and proper.
9

10 Dated: April 6, 2026

J. GILL LAW GROUP, P.C.

11
12 BY: /s/ Cristian J. Garcia

13 JASMIN K. GILL

14 ASHLIE E. FOX

CRISTIAN J. GARCIA

Attorneys for Plaintiff ARCELIA MELO, as
an aggrieved employee, and on behalf of all
other aggrieved employees under the Labor
Code Private Attorneys' General Act of 2004,
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