

1 HEATHER DAVIS, SBN 239372
2 heather@protectionlawgroup.com
3 AMIR NAYEBDADASH, SBN 232204
4 amir@protectionlawgroup.com
5 PRISCILLA GAMINO, SBN 315404
6 priscilla@protectionlawgroup.com
7 **PROTECTION LAW GROUP, LLP**
8 237 California Street
9 El Segundo, California 90245
10 Telephone: (424) 290-3095
11 Facsimile: (866) 264-7880

12 *Attorneys for Plaintiff*
13 MARGARITA PARDO

14
15 **SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**
16
17 **COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO**

18 MARGARITA PARDO, as an aggrieved
19 employee and private attorney general,

20 Plaintiff,

21 vs.

22 SANCHEZ FAMILY CORPORATION
23 DBA MCDONALD'S, a California
24 corporation; SANCHEZ FAMILY
25 CORPORATION III DBA MCDONALD'S,
26 a California corporation; SANCHEZ
27 FAMILY CORPORATION IV DBA
28 MCDONALD'S, a California corporation;
and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive,

Defendants.

FILED
SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO
SAN BERNARDINO DISTRICT

SEP 29 2023

BY: Paola Iniguez
PAOLA INIGUEZ, Deputy

Case No. **CIV SB 2323703**

**REPRESENTATIVE ACTION
COMPLAINT**

**(1) VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA
LABOR CODE § 2699, ET SEQ.
(PRIVATE ATTORNEYS
GENERAL ACT)**

COPY

1 Plaintiff MARGARITA PARDO (“Plaintiff”), as an aggrieved employee and as a private
2 attorney general, based upon facts that either have evidentiary support or are likely to have
3 evidentiary support after a reasonable opportunity for further investigation and discovery, alleges
4 as follows:

5 **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

6 1. Plaintiff brings this action against Defendants SANCHEZ FAMILY
7 CORPORATION dba McDONALD’S; SANCHEZ FAMILY CORPORATION III dba
8 McDONALD’S; SANCHEZ FAMILY CORPORATION IV dba McDONALD’S; and DOES 1
9 THROUGH 50 (hereinafter also collectively referred to as “Defendants”) as a representative
10 action on behalf of herself and certain other current and former non-exempt employees of
11 Defendants against whom one or more of the alleged violations was committed (hereinafter
12 collectively referred to as the “Aggrieved Employees”) pursuant to California Labor Code
13 sections 2698, *et seq.* Plaintiff is an aggrieved employee against whom one or more of the alleged
14 violations was committed. The civil penalties sought by Plaintiff exceed the minimal jurisdiction
15 limits of the Superior Court and will be established according to proof at trial.

16 2. The Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to the California Constitution,
17 Article VI, Section 10, which grants the superior court “original jurisdiction in all other causes”
18 except those given by statute to other courts. The statutes under which this action is brought do
19 not specify any other basis for jurisdiction.

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

25 4. Venue is proper in this Court because, upon information and belief, Defendants
26 maintain offices, have agents, and/or transact business in the State of California, County of San
27 Bernardino.

28 ///

PARTIES

5. Plaintiff Margarita Pardo is an individual residing in the County of San Bernardino, State of California.

6. Defendant SANCHEZ FAMILY CORPORATION dba McDONALD'S is, and at all times herein mentioned was, a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the state of California, and registered to do business in the state of California.

7. Defendant SANCHEZ FAMILY CORPORATION III dba McDONALD'S is, and at all times herein mentioned was, a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the state of California, and registered to do business in the state of California.

8. Defendant SANCHEZ FAMILY CORPORATION IV dba McDONALD'S is, and at all times herein mentioned was, a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of California, and registered to do business in the state of California.

9. Plaintiff is ignorant of the identities of defendants Does 1 through 50, inclusive, and therefore sues these defendants by such fictitious names. The Doe defendants may be individuals, partnerships, or corporations. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges, that, at all times mentioned herein, each of the Doe defendants was the parent, subsidiary, agent, servant, employee, co-venturer, and/or co-conspirator of each of the other defendants and was at all times mentioned acting within the scope, purpose, consent, knowledge, ratification and authorization of such agency, employment, joint venture and conspiracy. Plaintiff will amend this Complaint to allege their true names and capacities when ascertained. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that each of the fictitiously named Doe defendants is responsible in some manner for the occurrences herein alleged, and that Plaintiff's damages as herein alleged were proximately caused by its conduct. SANCHEZ FAMILY CORPORATION dba McDONALD'S; SANCHEZ FAMILY CORPORATION III dba McDONALD'S; SANCHEZ FAMILY CORPORATION IV dba McDONALD'S; and Doe Defendants 1 through 50 are collectively referred to herein as "Defendants."

10. Defendants are, and at all times herein mentioned were, (a) conducting business

1 in the County of San Bernardino, State of California, and (b) the employer of Plaintiff consistent
2 with the California Labor Code and Industrial Welfare Commission Wage Orders (“Wage
3 Orders”).

4 11. Plaintiff further alleges that Defendants, directly or indirectly, controlled or
5 affected the working conditions, wages, working hours, and conditions of employment of Plaintiff
6 and the Class, so as to make each of said Defendants employers and employers jointly liable under
7 the statutory provisions set forth herein.

8 **GENERAL ALLEGATIONS**

9 12. Defendants are owners and operators of McDonald’s fast-food restaurants.

10 13. Defendants have employed Plaintiff to work as a Cook since approximately March
11 2022.

12 14. At all relevant times set forth herein, Defendants employed Plaintiff and
13 Aggrieved Employees as hourly-paid or non-exempt employees.

14 15. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants had the authority to
15 hire and terminate Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees; to directly or indirectly control work rules,
16 working conditions, wages, working hours, and conditions of employment of Plaintiff and
17 Aggrieved Employees; and to hire and terminate the employment of Plaintiff and Aggrieved
18 Employees.

19 16. At all times herein mentioned, Defendants were subject to the Labor Code of the
20 State of California and the applicable Industrial Welfare Commission Orders.

21 17. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges that Defendants engaged in
22 an ongoing and systematic scheme of wage abuse against their hourly-paid or non-exempt
23 employees. As set forth in more detail below, this scheme involved, *inter alia*, regularly requiring
24 Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees to work off-the-clock without compensation, thereby failing
25 to pay them for all hours worked, including minimum and overtime wages. Defendants also
26 implemented policies that prohibited Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees from accurately
27 recording the actual time worked, resulting in a failure to pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved
28

1 Employees all wages owed. In addition, Defendants routinely failed to permit Plaintiff and the
2 Aggrieved Employees to take timely and duty-free meal periods and rest periods in violation of
3 California law. Defendants also failed to reimburse Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees for all
4 necessary business-related expenses and failed to pay reporting wages.

5 18. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants have implemented
6 policies and practices which failed to provide Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees with timely and
7 duty-free meal periods. Defendants routinely failed to relieve Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees
8 of all duties during their meal periods, regularly failed to relinquish control over Plaintiff and
9 Aggrieved Employees during their meal periods, regularly failed to permit Plaintiff and
10 Aggrieved Employees a reasonable opportunity to take their meal periods, and regularly impeded
11 or discouraged Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees from taking thirty (30) minute uninterrupted
12 meal breaks no later than the end of their fifth hour of work and/or from taking a second thirty
13 (30) minute uninterrupted meal break no later than their tenth hour of work for shifts lasting more
14 than ten (10) hours. Defendants also failed to maintain accurate records of meal periods taken by
15 Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees.

16 19. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants did not adequately
17 inform Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees of their right to take meal periods under California
18 law. Moreover, Defendants systematically disregarded their own written policies regarding the
19 provision and timing of meal periods for Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees. Instead,
20 Defendants' actual policy and practice was to schedule Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees in a
21 way the prohibited them from taking timely and duty-free meal periods, and to require Plaintiff
22 and Aggrieved Employees to work through their meal periods, for which they were not
23 compensated.

24 20. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff
25 and Aggrieved Employees premium wages for meal periods that were missed, late, interrupted,
26 or shortened in violation of California law. Defendants knew or should have known that Plaintiff
27 and Aggrieved Employees were entitled to receive all meal periods or payment of one additional
28 hour of pay at their regular rate of pay when a meal period was missed, short, late, and/or

1 interrupted. Notwithstanding this knowledge, Defendants routinely failed to provide legally
2 compliant meal periods to Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees, and routinely failed pay one
3 additional hour of pay to Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees at their regular rate of pay when a
4 meal period was missed, short, late, and/or interrupted.

5 21. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants have implemented
6 policies and practices which prohibited Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees from taking timely
7 and duty-free rest periods. Defendants regularly failed to provide, authorize, and permit Plaintiff
8 and Aggrieved Employees to take full, uninterrupted, off-duty rest periods for every shift lasting
9 three and one-half (3.5) to six (6) hours and/or two full, uninterrupted, off-duty rest periods for
10 every shift lasting six (6) to ten (10) hours, and failed to make a good faith effort to authorize,
11 permit, and provide such rest breaks in the middle of each work period.

12 22. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants did not adequately
13 inform Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees of their right to take rest periods under California law.
14 Moreover, Defendants systematically disregarded their own written policies regarding the
15 provision and timing of rest periods for Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees. Instead, Defendants'
16 actual policy and practice was to schedule Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees in a way that
17 regularly prohibited them from taking timely and duty-free rest periods, and to regularly require
18 Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees to work through their rest periods.

19 23. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff
20 and Aggrieved Employees premium wages for rest periods that were missed, late, interrupted, or
21 shortened in violation of California law. Defendants knew or should have known that Plaintiff
22 and Aggrieved Employees were entitled to receive all rest periods or payment of one additional
23 hour of pay at their regular rate of pay when a rest period was missed, short, late, and/or
24 interrupted. Notwithstanding this knowledge, Defendants routinely failed to authorize and permit
25 Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees to take duty-free rest periods, and failed to pay one additional
26 hour of pay to Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees at their regular rate of pay when a rest period
27 was missed, short, late, and/or interrupted.

28 24. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendant regularly required

1 Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees to perform work off-the-clock. Although Defendants
2 prohibited overtime, Defendants still regularly required Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees
3 complete all of their assigned duties. To do so, Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees were regularly
4 required to perform work off-the-clock for which they were not compensated.

5 25. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants implemented
6 policies that prohibited Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees from accurately recording the
7 actual time worked, resulting in a failure to pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees all wages
8 owed.

9 26. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Plaintiff and Aggrieved
10 Employees worked more than eight (8) hours in a day and/or forty (40) hours in a week.

11 27. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to
12 pay overtime compensation to Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees when they worked in excess
13 of eight (8) hours in a single work-day and/or forty (40) hours in a single work week, or in excess
14 of twelve (12) hours in a single work-day and/or eighty (80) hours in a single work week.
15 Defendants knew or should have known that Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees were entitled to
16 receive certain wages for overtime or double overtime compensation and that they were not
17 receiving wages for overtime or double overtime compensation.

18 28. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants failed to pay
19 overtime to Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees for all overtime hours worked based on regular
20 rates of pay correctly calculated to include all applicable remuneration.

21 29. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to
22 pay Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees at least minimum wages for all hours worked. Defendants
23 knew or should have known that Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees were entitled to receive at
24 least minimum wages for all hours worked and that they were not receiving at least minimum
25 wages for all hours worked. Defendants' failure to pay minimum wages included, *inter alia*,
26 failing to pay Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees at the required minimum wage pursuant to
27 California law, and requiring Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees to perform work off-the-clock.

28 30. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to

1 pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees at least minimum wages for all hours worked.
2 Defendants knew or should have known that Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees were entitled
3 to receive at least minimum wages for all hours worked and that they were not receiving at least
4 minimum wages for all hours worked. Defendants' failure to pay minimum wages included, *inter*
5 *alia*, failing to pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees at the required minimum wage pursuant
6 to California law, and requiring Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees to perform work off-the-
7 clock.

8 31. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to
9 pay the Aggrieved Employees all wages owed to them upon discharge or resignation. Defendant
10 knew or should have known that the Aggrieved Employees were entitled to receive all wages
11 owed to them upon termination within the time permissible under California Labor Code section
12 202. The Aggrieved Employees did not receive payment of all final wages owed to them upon
13 discharge or resignation, including overtime compensation and minimum wages within any time
14 permissible under California Labor Code section 202.

15 32. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to
16 pay Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees all wages within any time permissible under California
17 law, including, *inter alia*, California Labor Code section 204. Defendants knew or should have
18 known that Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees were entitled to receive all wages owed to them
19 during their employment. Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees did not receive payment of all
20 wages, including overtime compensation, minimum wages, and meal and rest period premiums,
21 within any time permissible under California Labor Code section 204.

22 33. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to
23 provide complete or accurate wage statements to Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees. Defendants
24 knew or should have known that Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees were entitled to receive
25 complete and accurate wage statements in accordance with California law, but, in fact, they did
26 not receive complete and accurate wage statements from Defendants. These deficiencies included,
27 *inter alia*, the failure to include the total number of hours worked, the actual gross wages earned,
28 and the correct rates of pay.

1 34. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to
2 keep complete or accurate payroll records for Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees. Defendants
3 knew or should have known that Defendants were required keep complete and accurate payroll
4 records for Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees in accordance with California law, but, in fact, did
5 not keep complete and accurate payroll records.

6 35. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants regularly failed to
7 maintain accurate records relating to Plaintiff's and the Aggrieved Employees' work periods,
8 meal periods, total daily hours, hours per pay period, and applicable pay rates.

9 36. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants failed to reimburse
10 Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees for all necessary business-related expenses, including but
11 not limited to expenses incurred in the use of non-slip shoes, and the laundry and maintenance of
12 uniforms. Defendants knew or should have known that Defendants were required to reimburse
13 Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees for all necessary business-related expenses and costs, but,
14 in fact, failed to do so in violation of California law.

15 37. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Plaintiff and the Aggrieved
16 Employees were sometimes required by Defendants to report for work and did report for work,
17 but were either not to put to work or were furnished with less than half of their usual or scheduled
18 day's work. On such occasions, Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees
19 required reporting time wages for half their usual or scheduled day's work. Defendant also failed
20 to pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees for two (2) hours at the employee's regular rate of
21 pay on days in which Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees were required to report for work a
22 second time in one workday and were furnished less than two (2) hours of work upon the second
23 reporting.

24 38. Throughout the time period involved in this case, Defendants knew or should have
25 known that they had a duty to compensate Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees pursuant to
26 California law. Defendants had the financial ability to pay such compensation, but willfully,
27 knowingly, and intentionally failed to do so, and falsely represented to Plaintiff and Aggrieved
28 Employees that they paid all wages owed to them, all in order to increase Defendants' profits.

1 39. On or about July 24, 2023, Plaintiff notified Defendants via certified mail and filed
2 an online PAGA claim notice with the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency
3 (“LWDA”) identifying Defendants’ violations of the California Labor Code identified in this
4 Complaint and Plaintiff’s intent to bring a claim for civil penalties under California Labor Code
5 section 2698 *et seq.* in accord with Cal. Lab. Code section 2699.3. As of the filing of this
6 Complaint, the LWDA has not responded to Plaintiff’s PAGA claim notice.

7 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

8 **(Violation of California Labor Code § 2699, Et Seq.)**

9 **(Against All Defendants)**

10 40. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges as if fully stated herein each and
11 every allegation set forth above.

12 41. Plaintiff brings her first and only cause of action as a representative action on
13 behalf of herself and similarly Aggrieved Employees in the capacity as a private attorney general
14 pursuant to the Private Attorneys General Act of 2004, California Labor Code section 2698, *et*
15 *seq.* (“PAGA”).

16 42. PAGA specifically provides for a private right of action to recover civil penalties
17 for violations of the Labor Code as follows: “Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any
18 provision of this code that provides for a civil penalty to be assessed and collected by the Labor
19 and Workforce Development Agency or any of its departments, divisions, commissions, boards,
20 agencies, or employees, for a violation of this code, may, as an alternative, be recovered through
21 a civil action brought by an aggrieved employee on behalf of himself or herself and other current
22 or former employees pursuant to the procedures specified in Section 2699.3.” Cal. Lab. Code §
23 2699(a).

24 43. Plaintiff was employed by Defendants and the Labor Code violations alleged
25 above were committed against her during her time of employment. Plaintiff and the other non-
26 exempt employees of Defendants are therefore “aggrieved employees” as defined by California
27 Labor Code section 2699(c) in that they are all current or former employees of Defendants, and
28 one or more of the alleged violations were committed against them.

1 44. As set forth in detail above, during all times relevant to this Action, Defendants
2 have routinely subjected Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees to violations of California Labor
3 Codes by:

- 4 a. Failing to pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees all earned minimum wage
5 compensation in violation of Labor Code §§ 1194 and 1198 *et seq.*
- 6 b. Failing to pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees all earned overtime
7 compensation in violation of Labor Code §§ 204, 510, 1194, and 1198 *et seq.*
- 8 c. Failing to provide legally required meal periods to Plaintiff and the Aggrieved
9 Employees, and failing to pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees an additional
10 hour of premium pay for meal period violations in violation of Labor Code §§
11 226.7 and 512.
- 12 d. Failing to provide authorize and permit Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees to
13 take duty-free rest periods, and failing to pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved
14 Employees an additional hour of premium pay for rest period violations in
15 violation of Labor Code §§ 226.7 and 512.
- 16 e. Failing to timely pay the Aggrieved Employees all wages at end of their
17 employment in violation of Labor Code § 203.
- 18 f. Failing to timely pay Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees all wages owed
19 during employment in violation of Labor Code § 204.
- 20 g. Failing to furnish Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees with complete, accurate,
21 itemized wage statements in violation of Labor Code § 226.
- 22 h. Failing to maintain accurate records relating to Plaintiff and the Aggrieved
23 Employees' work periods, meal periods, total daily hours, hours per pay period,
24 total wages and compensation, and applicable pay rates in violation of Labor Code
25 § 1174(d) and the applicable IWC Wage Order.
- 26 i. Failing to reimburse Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees for necessary
27 business-related expenses in violation of Labor Code §§ 2800 and 2802.
- 28 j. Failing to pay reporting time wages to Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees in

violation of Labor Code § 1198 and the applicable IWC Wage Order.

45. Pursuant to California Labor Code sections 2699 and 2699.5, Plaintiff, individually and on behalf of the Aggrieved Employees and the State of California, requests and is entitled to recover penalties against Defendants for the Labor Code violations described above, including but not limited to penalties under California Code of Regulations Title section 11050, penalties under California Labor Code sections 2699, 558, 210, 1197.1, 225.5, 226, 226.3, 1174.5, and 1197.1, and any and all additional penalties and sums as provided by the California Labor Code and/or other statutes. The exact amount of the applicable penalties, in all, is an amount to be shown according to proof at trial.

46. Plaintiff has exhausted her administrative remedies pursuant to Labor Code § 2699.3. On July 24, 2023, Plaintiff, through her counsel of record, by online filing with the LWDA and by certified mail to the Defendants, notified Defendants and the LWDA of the specific provisions of the Labor Code and IWC Wage Orders that Defendants have violated, including the facts and theories to support the violations, and of Plaintiff's intent to bring a claim for civil penalties under PAGA. Plaintiff also paid the filing fee required under Labor Code § 2699.3. As of the filing of this Complaint, more than 65 days have elapsed since the mailing of Plaintiff's July 24, 2023, notice, and the LWDA has not indicated that it intends to investigate the violations discussed in the notice. Accordingly, Plaintiff may commence a civil action to recover penalties for herself and other Aggrieved Employees pursuant to Labor Code § 2699.3.

47. Plaintiff was compelled to retain the services of counsel to file this court action to protect her interests and the Aggrieved Employees, and to assess and collect the civil penalties owed by Defendants. Plaintiff therefore seeks an award of reasonable attorney's fees and costs pursuant to Labor Code § 2699(g)(1), and any other applicable statute.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, individually and on behalf of all other Aggrieved Employees, and as a private attorney general, prays for relief and judgment against Defendants, jointly and severally, as follows:

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1 **As to the First Cause of Action**

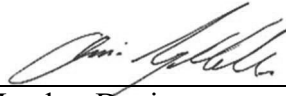
2 1. For statutory attorneys' fees and costs pursuant to 2699(g)(1) of California Labor
3 Code;

4 2. For the imposition of civil penalties pursuant to California Labor Code §§ 2699,
5 210, 558, 225.5, 226, 226.3, 1174.5, 1197.1 and all other penalties allowed by the California
6 Labor Code and/or other applicable statutes; and

7 3. For such other relief as the Court deems just and proper.

8
9 Dated: September 28, 2023

PROTECTION LAW GROUP, LLP

10 By: 

11 Heather Davis
12 Amir Nayebdadash
13 Priscilla Gamino
14 *Attorneys for Plaintiff*
15 MARGARITA PARDO
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