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Attorneys for Plaintiffs, REBECA BALBUENA
ANDRES and MARTIN SOHAL on behalf of
themselves and others similarly situated

(See additional counsel information next page)

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA

COUNTY OF STANISLAUS

**IN RE: STANISLAUS FOOD
PRODUCTS COMPANY
EMPLOYMENT CASES**

Included Actions:

*Rigoberto Valle v. Stanislaus Food Products
Company*, Case No. CV-23-001433

*Mario Castillo v. Stanislaus Food Products
Company*, Case No. CV-23-003465

*Victoria Martinez v. Stanislaus Food
Products Company*, Case No. CV-23-
004653

*Rebeca Balbuena Andres v. Stanislaus Food
Products Company*, Case No. CV-23-
007019

*Martin Sohal v. Stanislaus Food Products
Company*, Case No. CV-24-000548

LEAD CASE NO. CV-23-001433

[Assigned to Hon. John Freeland, Dept. 23]

CLASS ACTION

**DECLARATION OF PLAINTIFF REBECA
BALBUENA ANDRES IN SUPPORT OF
MOTION FOR PRELIMINARY
APPROVAL OF CLASS ACTION AND
PAGA SETTLEMENT**

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DECLARATION OF REBECA BALBUENA ANDRES

I, Rebeca Balbuena Andres, declare as follows:

1. I am a resident of Modesto, California. I am a former employee of Stanislaus Food Products Company (hereinafter “Stanislaus Food”) and am one of the named plaintiffs in this case.

2. I am over the age of eighteen. I have personal knowledge of the following facts, and if called to testify, I could and would testify competently to them.

3. I am aware that filing a class action lawsuit against my former employer would require me to work with my attorneys. I worked closely with my attorneys in filing the lawsuit, assisting the discovery process, mediation, and settlement discussions. I am familiar with all aspects of the litigation, and I participated in all stages of it.

4. I am not aware of any conflicts that would prevent me from serving as a class representative in this matter. I do not have any business or personal relationships with any of my attorneys other than me retaining them to represent me in this lawsuit.

Employment History

5. I worked for Stanislaus Food from approximately July 31, 2023, through October 15, 2023, at its Modesto, California location.

6. During that time, I worked as a non-exempt, hourly employee, with my position as line sorting, earning \$18.11 per hour.

Typicality of Claims

7. During my time working for Stanislaus Food, I was not paid for all the hours that I worked, including, but not limited to, overtime and minimum wages.

8. I was also not provided with all my entitled meal and rest periods nor compensated at my regular rate of pay for any noncompliant meal and rest periods.

9. During the entire period of my employment with Stanislaus Food, my paycheck stubs were not accurate because they did not reflect gross wages earned, net wages earned, all applicable hourly rates, or applicable deductions as a result of Stanislaus Food not compensating me for all hours that I worked. The lack of this information on my paycheck stubs subjected me

1 to the difficulty of having to reconstruct the hours I actually worked, and compensation earned
2 during a pay period.

3 10. Furthermore, I was not paid timely wages during my employment.

4 11. I also believe I was not paid all wages owed at the time of my termination.

5 12. I was subjected to an unsafe indoor working environment with conditions of
6 excessive heat.

7 13. Lastly, I was not provided adequate seating during my work shifts.

8 **My Involvement in the Litigation & Adequacy as Class Representative**

9 14. I participated in all aspects of this litigation. Initially, I participated in a pre-
10 litigation investigation, then I assisted with the drafting of the complaint, provided
11 documentation, and was involved in settlement discussions and mediation. I have had numerous
12 discussions with my attorneys over the course of this matter.

13 15. I also spent a considerable amount of time learning about California labor laws,
14 deciding whether pursuing a lawsuit was a step I should take. I had to research attorneys and
15 research whether I had claims that were actionable under California law. Through my research, I
16 located experienced wage and hour attorneys and met with them to determine if I would retain
17 them to handle my case. We spent several hours discussing my case, reviewing my records, and
18 discussing the remedies I could pursue. When I decided to file a lawsuit, I decided not to just file
19 a lawsuit on behalf of myself, but also those of my former co-workers by filing a class-action
20 lawsuit against Stanislaus Food for its violations of labor laws. My attorneys and I discussed what
21 it meant to be a class representative, and I understood I would have to devote a significant amount
22 of my time to this lawsuit.

23 16. I spent several hours “educating” my attorneys about Stanislaus Food’s policies
24 and practices. I searched for, and produced, documents that I had from my employment and what
25 my concerns with them were.

26 17. I also made sure that I was available to speak to my lawyers and was fully prepared
27 for mediation as part of my duty as the class representative.

28 18. I have spent considerable time and attention working on this case.

1 19. I believe I have fairly represented the absent class and request that the Court
2 approve this settlement and confirm me as a class representative. I have always maintained the
3 best interest of the class while performing my class representative duties. I am not aware of any
4 conflicts of interest that would prevent me from being confirmed as the class representative in
5 this lawsuit.

6 20. I am not related in any way to my lawyers or any other employee of the law firm
7 that is representing me. I do not have business dealings or other involvement with my attorneys
8 beyond this lawsuit and this representation. I was not promised any money or any type of bribe
9 or gift to serve as the class representative in this action.

10 **My Understanding Regarding the Terms of the Settlement**

11 21. I understand that as part of this class action settlement, I am required to provide
12 Stanislaus Food with a full and complete release of all claims, known and unknown, and that this
13 is something that other class members do not have to provide. I understand that this means that I
14 will be giving up any claims I may have against Stanislaus Food. I have agreed to this term
15 because I think it is in the best interests of the class and this settlement.

16 22. As I discussed above, I participated significantly in this lawsuit, on behalf of
17 myself and for the Settlement Class. As a class representative, I have been actively involved in
18 all stages of the litigation and have been continually updated, and I participated in all aspects of
19 my lawsuit. I would frequently call my attorneys to see how I could assist in moving the lawsuit
20 forward. I estimate that I have spent significant time in the litigation of this case, including
21 searching for documents related to my employment, providing necessary documents in
22 preparation of mediation, and fielding numerous phone calls, emails, and letters from my
23 attorneys.

24 23. In addition to my hours spent participating in the prosecution of this case, I was
25 nervous filing this lawsuit because I knew I was taking a very big risk by coming forward and
26 filing a class action. I was aware that my name could be in the public domain. I also knew that if
27 I lost this case, I could have been held liable for Stanislaus Food's litigation costs, which would
28 have destroyed me financially. Moreover, there was an increased the risk of retaliation by

1 prospective employers. This lawsuit has cost Stanislaus Food considerable resources and such
2 conduct might be of interest to future prospective employers

3 24. In light of the time that I have put into this case since the original meetings and
4 conversations in late October or early November 2023 through the present, including my
5 continued commitment to the case and the risks that came with being a named plaintiff, I
6 respectfully request that the Court grant a service payment of up to \$5,000, in an amount that the
7 Court deems to be fair and appropriate. I believe a significant award is warranted here because of
8 the result achieved, the many hours of my personal time that I have invested in the case, my
9 commitment to seeing it through to a strong settlement for my co-workers, and my release of all
10 other claims that I may have against Stanislaus Food.

11 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the
12 foregoing is true and correct to the best of my personal knowledge. This declaration is executed
13 on November 19, 2024, at Modesto, California.

Signed by:

Balbuena Andres, Rebeca

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REBECA BALBUENA ANDRES