

1 JAMIE K. SERB, ESQ. (SBN 289601)
jamie@crosnerlegal.com
2 BRANDON BROUILLETTE, ESQ. (SBN 273156)
bbrouillette@crosnerlegal.com
3 ZACHARY M. CROSNER, ESQ. (SBN 272295)
zach@crosnerlegal.com
4 **CROSNER LEGAL, PC**
5 9440 Santa Monica Blvd. Suite 301
Beverly Hills, CA 90210
6 Tel: (866) 276-7637
Fax: (310) 510-6429
7

8 Attorneys for Plaintiff CANDICE VALENZUELA
on behalf of the State of California,
9 and others similarly situated and aggrieved

10 **SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

11 **COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

12 CANDICE VALENZUELA, on behalf of the
State of California, and others similarly
13 situated and aggrieved,

14 Plaintiff,

15 v.

16
17 KAZI FOODS, INC., a California
Corporation; and DOES 1-100, inclusive,

18 Defendants.
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Executive Officer/Clerk of Court,
By Y. Ayala, Deputy Clerk

Case No.: **23STCV29564**

**PLAINTIFF'S REPRESENTATIVE
COMPLAINT FOR VIOLATION OF
THE PRIVATE ATTORNEYS
GENERAL ACT, CAL. LABOR CODE
SECTIONS 2698, et seq.**

1 Plaintiff, CANDICE VALENZUELA, (“PLAINTIFF”), an individual on behalf of
2 PLAINTIFF, the State of California, and all other Aggrieved Employees (as defined below), hereby
3 files this Complaint against Defendants KAZI FOODS, INC., a California Corporation; and DOES
4 1-100, inclusive, (collectively referred to herein as “DEFENDANTS”). PLAINTIFF is informed
5 and believes and thereon alleges as follows:

6 **INTRODUCTION**

7 1. This is a representative action filed by PLAINTIFF on behalf of PLAINTIFF, all
8 Aggrieved Employees and the State of California against DEFENDANTS, pursuant to California’s
9 Private Attorney General Act, Labor Code section 2698 *et. seq.* (“PAGA”), to recover civil penalties
10 (75% payable to the Labor and Workforce Development Agency and 25% payable to Aggrieved
11 Employees) for DEFENDANTS’ violations of the California Labor Code as alleged below.

12 **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

13 2. This Court has jurisdiction over PLAINTIFF’s claims for penalties pursuant to
14 California statutes, including but not limited to the PAGA, and decisional law and regulations.

15 3. Venue is proper in the County of Los Angeles pursuant to sections 395 and 395.5 of
16 the California Code of Civil Procedure section 395.5 because DEFENDANTS transact business
17 within this judicial district and conduct alleged by PLAINTIFF herein occurred in this this judicial
18 district. See also *Crestwood Behavioral Health, Inc. v. Superior Court* (2021) 60 Cal. App. 5th 1069
19 (venue in a PAGA action is proper in any county where the defendants committed Labor Code
20 violations against some of its employees). Venue is also proper pursuant to section 393 of the
21 California Code of Civil Procedure because the cause, or some part of the cause, arose in the County
22 of Los Angeles.

23 **THE PARTIES**

24 4. PLAINTIFF is, and at all relevant times, was an individual domiciled in the State of
25 California and a citizen of the State of California.

26 5. PLAINTIFF is a current employee of DEFENDANTS. PLAINTIFF worked for
27 DEFENDANTS as a non-exempt employee with a job title of cashier and/or assistant manager
28 and/or non-exempt manager and/or similar titles and/or job positions from on or around November

1 18, 2020, through the present. PLAINTIFF worked for DEFENDANTS at DEFENDANTS'
2 Pacoima and Canoga Park, California location(s).

3 6. Defendant KAZI FOODS, INC. is a California Corporation that, at all relevant times,
4 was authorized to do business within the State of California and is doing business in the State of
5 California.

6 7. DEFENDANTS operate multiple locations in California under the name(s) "KFC"
7 and/or "Kentucky Fried Chicken."

8 8. The true names and capacities of the DOE Defendants sued herein as DOES 1
9 through 100, inclusive, are currently unknown to PLAINTIFF, who therefore sues each such
10 Defendant by said fictitious names. Each of the Defendants designated herein as a DOE is legally
11 responsible for the unlawful acts alleged herein. PLAINTIFF will seek leave of Court to amend this
12 Complaint to reflect the true names and capacities of the Doe Defendants when such identities
13 become known.

14 9. PLAINTIFF is further informed and believes that, at all relevant times, each
15 Defendant was the principal, agent, partner, joint venturer, joint employer, officer, director,
16 controlling shareholder, subsidiary, affiliate, parent corporation, successor in interest and/or
17 predecessor in interest of some or all of the other Defendants, and was engaged with some or all of
18 the other defendants in a joint enterprise for profit, and bore such other relationships to some or all
19 of the other Defendants so as to be liable for their conduct with respect to the matters alleged in this
20 complaint. PLAINTIFF is further informed and believes and thereon alleges that each Defendant
21 acted pursuant to and within the scope of the relationships alleged above, and that at all relevant
22 times, each Defendant knew or should have known about, authorized, ratified, adopted, approved,
23 controlled, aided and abetted the conduct of all other Defendants.

24 **JOINT LIABILITY**

25 10. Under California law, the definition of the terms "to employ" are broadly construed
26 under the applicable IWC Wage Order(s) to have three alternative definitions, including: (1) to
27 exercise control over the wages, hours or working conditions; (2) to suffer or permit to work; or (3)
28 to engage, thereby creating a common law employment relationship. See, *Martinez v. Combs*, 49

1 Cal.4th 35, 64 (2010). One reason that the IWC defined “employer” in terms of exercising control
2 was to reach situations in which multiple entities control different aspects of the employment
3 relationship. Supervision of the work, in the specific sense of exercising control over how services
4 are properly performed, is properly viewed as one of the “working conditions” mentioned in the
5 wage order. *Id.* at 76. A joint employer relationship exists, for example, when one entity (such as a
6 temporary employment agency) hires and pays a worker, and the other entity supervises the work.
7 *Id.* Moreover, the California Court of Appeal recently broadened the test for joint employment in
8 California, applying a less stringent standard to what constitutes sufficient control by a business
9 over its vendor’s employees’ wages and working conditions to render that business liable as a joint
10 employer. See, *Medina v. Equilon Enterprises, LLC*, 68 Cal. App. 5th 868 (2021); “[i]f the putative
11 joint employer instead exercises enough control over the intermediary entity to *indirectly* dictate the
12 wages, hours, or working conditions of the employee, that is a sufficient showing of joint
13 employment,” *Id.* at 875 [emphasis added].

14 11. During PLAINTIFF’s employment by DEFENDANTS, PLAINTIFF and other
15 Aggrieved Employees (defined below) were jointly employed by DEFENDANTS for purposes of
16 the Wage Orders, under the alternative definitions of “to employ” adopted by the California
17 Supreme Court in *Martinez*, supra. As discussed below, these DEFENDANTS (1) exercised control
18 over wages, hours and working conditions of PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees; (2) suffered
19 or permitted PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees to work for them; and (3) engaged PLAINTIFF
20 and Aggrieved Employees to work for them.

21 12. PLAINTIFF is informed and believes, and thereon alleges that at all relevant times
22 DEFENDANTS operated as a single integrated enterprise with common ownership and centralized
23 human resources. As a result, DEFENDANTS utilized the same unlawful policies and practices
24 across all of their locations/facilities and subjected all of the Aggrieved Employees to these same
25 policies and practices regardless of the location(s) where they worked. Among other things,
26 PLAINTIFF is informed and believes that: (1) there is common ownership in, and financial control,
27 in DEFENDANTS’ companies, (2) DEFENDANTS utilize common management, who have control
28 over the day-to-day operations and employment matters, including the power to hire and fire, set

1 schedules, issue employee policies, and determine rates of compensation across its locations in
2 California; (3) DEFENDANTS utilize the same policies and procedures for all California
3 employees, including issuing the same employee handbooks and other form agreements; (4)
4 DEFENDANTS use at least some of the same Human Resources personnel and attorneys to oversee
5 employment matters; and, (6) DEFENDANTS share employees.

6 13. PLAINTIFF is informed and believes, and thereon alleges that at all times relevant
7 to this Complaint, DEFENDANTS were the joint employers of PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved
8 Employees upon whose behalf PLAINTIFF brings these allegations and cause of action, in that
9 DEFENDANTS, exercised sufficient control over PLAINTIFF and the Aggrieved Employees'
10 wages, hours and working conditions, and/or suffered or permitted them to work so as to be
11 considered the joint employers of PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees.

12 14. Upon information and belief, PLAINTIFF alleges that DEFENDANTS created a
13 uniform set of policies, practices and/or procedures concerning, inter alia, hourly and overtime pay,
14 time-keeping practices, meal and rest periods, reimbursement of business expenses and other
15 working conditions that were distributed to, and/or applied to PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved
16 Employees, and further that DEFENDANTS uniformly compensated and controlled the wages of
17 PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees in a uniform manner. DEFENDANTS collectively
18 represented to PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees that each was an "at-will" employee of
19 DEFENDANTS, and that DEFENDANTS collectively retained the right to terminate PLAINTIFF's
20 and other Aggrieved Employees' employment with or without cause. Upon information and belief,
21 DEFENDANTS further collectively represented to PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees in
22 writing the details of their compensation, and the manner in which they were to take meal and rest
23 periods, the procedures required by DEFENDANTS collectively for recordation of hours worked
24 and the policies applicable to PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees by which DEFENDANTS
25 collectively would evaluate their wage rates.

26 15. Thus, DEFENDANTS collectively exercised the right to control the wages, hours
27 and working conditions of PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees. As such, DEFENDANTS
28 collectively held the right to control virtually every aspect of PLAINTIFF's and the Aggrieved

1 Employees' employment, including the instrumentality that resulted in the illegal conduct for which
2 PLAINTIFF seeks relief in this Complaint.

3 16. PLAINTIFF is informed and believes that DEFENDANTS exercised the same
4 control over, applied the same policies and practices, and engaged in the same acts and omissions
5 with regard to the other Aggrieved Employees.

6 17. PLAINTIFF is informed and believes and hereon alleges that DEEFENDANTS must
7 be classified as joint employers of PLAINTIFF for purposes of liability for civil penalties under
8 PAGA, as the aforementioned entities engaged, suffered and permitted PLAINTIFF to perform
9 services from which they benefited, and furthermore that the aforementioned entities had the right
10 to exercise control over the wages, hours and/or working conditions of PLAINTIFF at all relevant
11 times herein, so as to be considered the joint employers of PLAINTIFF.

12 18. By reason of their status as joint employers of PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved
13 Employees, DEFENDANTS are each liable for civil penalties for violations of the California Labor
14 Code and applicable Wage Orders as to all Aggrieved Employees.

15 **PAGA ALLEGATIONS**

16 19. PLAINTIFF brings this action under the PAGA, as a representative action on behalf
17 of the State of California and all Aggrieved Employees, regarding violations of the California Labor
18 Code as set forth herein as to all Aggrieved Employees. Said "Aggrieved Employees" include:

19 All current and former non-exempt employees that worked either
20 directly or via a staffing agency for any one or more of the
21 DEFENDANTS at any location in California at any time from one
22 year plus 65 days from the filing of the initial Complaint through the
23 present ("PAGA Period").

24 20. PLAINTIFF is an "aggrieved employee," as that term is defined under Labor Code
25 section 2699(c), as PLAINTIFF was employed by DEFENDANTS during the applicable statutory
26 limitations period and suffered one or more of the Labor Code violations set forth herein.
27 Accordingly, PLAINTIFF seeks to recover on behalf of the State of California, and all Aggrieved
28 Employees, the civil penalties provided by PAGA, plus reasonable attorney's fees and costs.

1 PLAINTIFF has standing to bring a PAGA cause of action on behalf of the State and all Aggrieved
2 Employees, as PLAINTIFF was jointly employed by DEFENDANTS and is thereby affected by
3 one or more of the alleged violations. *See Huff v. Securitas Security Services USA, Inc.* (2018) 23
4 Cal.App.5th 745, 757. A PAGA plaintiff has authority to seek penalties for all known violations
5 committed by the employer – regardless of whether Plaintiff experienced all violations personally.
6 *Id.* at 760-761.

7 **COMPLIANCE WITH PAGA’S NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

8 21. PLAINTIFF, on September 27, 2023, through counsel, gave written notice by online
9 filing with the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency (“LWDA”) informing it that
10 DEFENDANTS failed to comply with California’s labor laws with regard to the allegations alleged
11 in this Complaint (“PAGA Notice”).

12 22. The PAGA Notice outlined PLAINTIFF’s claims for violations of the California
13 Labor Code and the applicable wage orders on behalf of the State of California and all Aggrieved
14 Employees.

15 23. The LWDA did not provide notice of its intention to investigate DEFENDANTS’
16 violations after expiration of the 65-day waiting time period, or at any time. To the extent any of the
17 alleged violations were curable, DEFENDANTS failed to cure within the time allotted by PAGA.
18 PLAINTIFF has exhausted the administrative remedies as required by Labor Code section 2699.3.
19 Consequently, PLAINTIFF’s right to file the instant lawsuit has duly accrued.

20 24. PLAINTIFF seeks to recover the PAGA civil penalties through a representative
21 action permitted by PAGA and the California Supreme Court in *Arias v. Superior Court* (2009) 46
22 Cal.4th 969. Therefore, class certification of the PAGA claims is not required.

23 **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

24 25. During the relevant period, PLAINTIFF, and each of the Aggrieved Employees,
25 worked for DEFENDANTS in the State of California. At all times referenced herein,
26 DEFENDANTS exercised control over PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees, and suffered and/or
27 permitted them to work.

28 26. PLAINTIFF worked for DEFENDANTS as a non-exempt employee with a job title
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1 of cashier and/or assistant manager and/or non-exempt manager and/or similar titles and/or job
2 positions from on or around November 18, 2020, through the present.

3 27. PLAINTIFF worked for DEFENDANTS at DEFENDANTS' Pacoima and Canoga
4 Park, California location(s).

5 28. PLAINTIFF regularly worked at least six (6) to eight (8) hours per day, at times
6 working at least twelve (12) hours per day, at least five (5) to six (6) days per week.

7 29. DEFENDANTS paid PLAINTIFF an hourly rate for time counted by
8 DEFENDANTS as hours worked.

9 30. At all relevant times, PLAINTIFF was a non-exempt employee that was paid on an
10 hourly basis for time counted by DEFENDANTS as hours worked.

11 31. **Unpaid Minimum and Overtime Wages.** DEFENDANTS failed to compensate
12 PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees for all hours worked, resulting in the underpayment of
13 minimum and overtime wages. DEFENDANTS failed to compensate PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved
14 Employees for all hours worked by virtue of, DEFENDANTS' automatic deduction and time
15 rounding policies, and failure to relieve employees of all duties/employer control during unpaid
16 meal periods or otherwise unlawful practices for missed or improper meal periods, as explained
17 below.

18 32. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS implemented a policy and/or
19 practice of rounding meal period start and end times and/or automatically deducting at least thirty
20 minutes per shift for meal periods, despite having actual and/or constructive knowledge that
21 PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees were subject to DEFENDANTS' control during
22 purported meal periods and/or were otherwise not afforded lawful meal periods, depriving
23 PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees of all wages owed.

24 33. Based on information and belief, Aggrieved Employees were not paid for all hours
25 worked due to DEFENDANTS' policy and/or practice of paying according to scheduled hours
26 worked instead of actual time worked, time rounding policies and practices, and/or mandated off-
27 the clock work policies and/or practices.

28 34. For example, based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS sometimes
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PLAINTIFF'S REPRESENTATIVE COMPLAINT FOR VIOLATION OF THE PRIVATE ATTORNEYS
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1 require/required Aggrieved Employees to travel between DEFENDANTS' restaurants, facilities
2 and/or locations and/or run business errands before and/or after a scheduled shift and/or during
3 unpaid meal periods without compensating Aggrieved Employees for the travel time and/or other
4 off-the-clock work performed.

5 35. For example, based on information and belief, due to scheduling issues and/or
6 understaffing, PLAINTIFF was sometimes required to perform business errands for
7 DEFENDANTS but was not compensated for the time spent traveling and/or time spent performing
8 business errands for DEFENDANTS, resulting in the underpayment of minimum and overtime
9 wages owed to PLAINTIFF.

10 36. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS did not compensate Aggrieved
11 Employees for time spent donning and doffing personal protective equipment and/or uniforms (e.g.,
12 rubber gloves, hairnets, aprons, hats, and/or face masks) during meal periods, before the start of a
13 scheduled shift, and/or after completing a scheduled shift, resulting in the underpayment of wages
14 owed to Aggrieved Employees.

15 37. Based on information and belief, at times, Aggrieved Employees were required to
16 complete off-the-clock work outside of scheduled shifts due to work-related phone calls and/or
17 messages they received to their phones/mobile devices and were required to respond to, including
18 but not limited to, communications from supervisors regarding scheduling and/or other work tasks,
19 resulting in the underpayment of wages owed to Aggrieved Employees.

20 38. PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees were required to perform other off-the-
21 clock work for which they were not compensated. For example, based on information and belief,
22 at times, DEFENDANTS' biometric/electronic employee time-keeping system malfunctioned such
23 that Aggrieved Employees were required to either reinitiate and/or otherwise troubleshoot the
24 system prior to being able to clock in and/or were unable to clock in at all for the start of their shifts
25 and/or clock back in from meal periods, resulting in off-the-clock work and the underpayment of
26 wages owed to Aggrieved Employees. Based on information and belief, Aggrieved Employees
27 experienced the same issues when clocking out for shifts and/or back in for meal periods. This time
28 spent under DEFENDANTS' control was not recorded and not compensated and resulted in unpaid

1 minimum wages owed to Aggrieved Employees.

2 39. Moreover, based on information and belief, Aggrieved Employees who opened their
3 work locations were required to first unlock the doors, turn on all the lights in the restaurant/facility
4 and/or deactivate the alarm before clocking in for work, resulting in pre-shift off-the-clock work
5 and the underpayment of wages owed to Aggrieved Employees. Based on further information and
6 belief, Aggrieved Employees in charge of closing their location(s) were required to first clock out
7 for their shifts before enabling the alarm, turning off all the lights in the facility and/or locking the
8 doors. This resulted in additional off-the-clock post-shift work that was not compensated and the
9 underpayment of wages owed to Aggrieved Employees.

10 40. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS required Aggrieved Employees to
11 undergo COVID-19 temperature screenings and/or complete questionnaires prior to beginning their
12 scheduled shift and/or prior to clocking/signing in, thereby, resulting in pre-shift off-the-clock work.

13 41. PLAINTIFF also alleges that DEFENDANTS would unlawfully edit the clock in and
14 out times for his and other Aggrieved Employees' meal periods in order to display at least a thirty
15 minute off-duty meal period during most if not all shifts worked, notwithstanding the fact that
16 DEFENDANTS had actual and/or constructive knowledge that DEFENDANTS had required
17 PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees' to perform work-related tasks during their meal
18 periods.

19 42. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to pay PLAINTIFF and
20 other Aggrieved Employees the applicable minimum wage for the county and/or city within which
21 the Aggrieved Employee worked in California.

22 43. For example, based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to pay
23 PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees working in DEFENDANTS' facilities located in the
24 city of Los Angeles and/or within an unincorporated area of the county of Los Angeles, at the
25 applicable minimum wage rate(s) in effect for the city and/or county of Los Angeles, and as such
26 failed to pay all owed minimum wages.

27 44. For example, based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS paid Aggrieved
28 Employees \$15.00 per hour after July 1, 2022 and/or another hourly rate that was below minimum

1 wage rate in effect for the city and/or county of Los Angeles. See Section 187.02(d) of the Los
2 Angeles Municipal Code (increasing the minimum wage rate, effective July 1, 2023, by \$.74 for a
3 new minimum wage rate of \$16.78 per hour) and Los Angeles County Minimum Wage Ordinance
4 section 8.100.040 (increasing the minimum wage rate for the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles
5 to \$16.90 per hour).

6 45. Moreover, based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to pay
7 PLAINTIFF and/or other Aggrieved Employees split shift premium wages when they worked split
8 shifts during the relevant period.

9 46. For example, based on information and belief, at times, DEFENDANTS required
10 PLAINTIFF and/or other Aggrieved Employees to work two separate shifts in the same day. Based
11 on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to pay PLAINTIFF and/or other Aggrieved
12 Employees split shift compensation whenever PLAINTIFF's and/or other Aggrieved Employees'
13 work schedules were interrupted by non-paid non-working periods established by DEFENDANTS,
14 which resulted in a violation of the applicable Wage Order (See section 4 of all applicable Wage
15 orders, "When an employee works a split shift, one (1) hour's pay at the minimum wage shall be
16 paid in addition to the minimum wage for that workday...). See, also, Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 8, §
17 11050 (when an employee works a split shift, one (1) hour's pay at the minimum wage shall be paid
18 in addition to the minimum wage for that workday, except when the employee resides at the place
19 of employment). DEFENDANTS also failed to separately itemize these split shift premium wages
20 on PLAINTIFF's and/or other Aggrieved Employees' wage statements, in violation of Labor Code
21 sections 510, 1194 and all applicable IWC Wage Orders. See,
22 https://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/split_shift.htm. (The employer must itemize the premium payment on
23 the pay stub provided to the employee, and it should be shown as a separate category such as "Split
24 Shift Premium" and should not be lumped into another category such as wages, bonus, etc.
25 DEFENDANTS failed to separately account for the split shift premiums earned by PLAINTIFF
26 and/or other Aggrieved Employees on their wage statements.

27 47. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to pay Aggrieved
28 Employees for time they were required to spend completing orientation, policy questionnaires,

1 and/or time spent completing the onboarding process including but not limited to reviewing various
2 documents and policies provided by DEFENDANTS. Based on information and belief, this work time
3 was completed off-the-clock and was not compensated.

4 48. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS implemented a time-rounding
5 system that as applied systematically deprived PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees of
6 compensable time because the time-rounding system implemented by DEFENDANTS would
7 almost always, if not always, result in understating actual compensable work time.

8 49. DEFENDANTS' failure to pay for all time worked by virtue of its time rounding,
9 auto-deduction policies and practices for unlawful meal periods, failure to provide lawful meal
10 periods, and/or other off-the-clock work practices and policies, resulted in the underpayment of
11 minimum wages owed to PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees as well as unpaid overtime wages
12 for those Aggrieved Employees who worked more than eight (8) hours in a day and/or more than
13 forty (40) hours in a week.

14 50. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS had actual and/or constructive
15 knowledge that its time rounding policies/practices, auto-deduction policies and practices, failure to
16 provide lawful meal periods (as described below) and/or other off-the-clock work resulted in the
17 underpayment of minimum wages and overtime wages owed to Aggrieved Employees, in violation
18 of California's minimum and overtime wage laws.

19 51. Based on further information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to pay the applicable
20 minimum wage rate(s) in effect for the city and/or county in which the Aggrieved Employee worked,
21 which resulted in a failure to pay all owed overtime wages as the overtime rate was based on an
22 unlawful minimum wage rate. For example, based on information and belief DEFENDANTS failed
23 to pay the applicable minimum wage rate(s) in effect for the city and/or county of Los Angeles,
24 which resulted in a failure to pay all owed overtime wages owed to Aggrieved Employees as the
25 overtime rate was based on an unlawful minimum wage rate.

26 52. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed and continue to fail to pay
27 a premium wage rate for all hours worked beyond eight (8) hours in a day or beyond forty (40) hours
28 in a week.

1 53. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed and continue to fail to pay
2 Aggrieved Employees two times their regular rate of pay for time worked beyond twelve (12) hours
3 per workday and for time worked beyond eight (8) hours on the seventh consecutive day of work in
4 a work week, in violation of California's overtime laws.

5 54. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to incorporate all non-
6 discretionary remuneration, including but not limited to, shift differential pay, bonus pay/incentive
7 pay, multiple base rates of pay and/or other non-discretionary pay into the regular rate of pay used
8 to calculate the owed overtime rate(s), resulting in the miscalculation and underpayment of overtime
9 wages owed to PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees.

10 55. For example, based on information and belief, Aggrieved Employees earned non-
11 discretionary bonuses/incentive pay and/or shift differential pay and/or other non-discretionary
12 compensation during pay periods in which they worked overtime, yet DEFENDANTS failed to
13 incorporate all non-discretionary compensation into the regular rate(s) used to calculate the owed
14 overtime rate(s), resulting in the miscalculation and underpayment of overtime wages owed to
15 Aggrieved Employees.

16 56. **Meal Period Violations.** PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees consistently
17 worked shifts of at least five and one-half hours or more, entitling them to at least one meal period.
18 However, PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees would not receive legally compliant thirty
19 (30) minute first and second meal periods. Based on information and belief, Aggrieved Employees
20 were consistently unable to take timely, off duty, thirty-minute, uninterrupted meal periods, often
21 being forced to take late meal periods, interrupted meal periods, and/or work through part or all their
22 meal periods due to understaffing, the nature and constraints of their job duties and/or commentary
23 from supervisors pressuring them to take non-compliant meal periods or skip meal periods
24 completely.

25 57. For example, based on information and belief, Aggrieved Employees were frequently
26 forced to take late meal periods in order to complete assigned job duties. Based on information and
27 belief, Aggrieved Employees were frequently interrupted during purported meal periods and/or had
28 meal periods cut short and/or restricted to DEFENDANTS' premises due to the need to continue

1 assigned job duties.

2 58. For example, while working as a cashier and/or assistant manager and/or other
3 similar title(s) and/or position(s), including but not limited to, at DEFENDANTS' Pacoima
4 location(s), PLAINTIFF was restricted to DEFENDANTS' premises during purportedly off-duty
5 meal periods, resulting in DEFENDANTS' failure to relieve PLAINTIFF of all duties and control
6 during unpaid meal periods, in violation of California meal period laws and minimum wage laws,
7 among other violations of the Labor Code described herein.

8 59. Also, while working as a non-exempt manager and/or similar title(s) and/or
9 position(s) at DEFENDANTS' Canoga Park location(s) beginning in or around June/July 2022,
10 PLAINTIFF was frequently, if not always, interrupted during unpaid meal periods and/or required
11 to clock out for her meal periods but to continue working due to the need to complete assigned job
12 duties.

13 60. Based on information and belief, other Aggrieved Employees were consistently
14 suffered and permitted to take meal periods past the fifth hour of work and/or had their meal periods
15 interrupted, cut short, and/or otherwise on duty due to commentary from supervisors, understaffing,
16 the nature and constraints of their job duties, and/or the need to meet DEFENDANTS' goals and
17 expectations.

18 61. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS implemented policies and/or
19 practices that failed to relieve Aggrieved Employees of all duties and DEFENDANTS' control
20 during unpaid meal periods.

21 62. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS required Aggrieved Employees to
22 complete off-the-clock work prior to their scheduled shift time which DEFENDANTS failed to take
23 into account when scheduling meal periods for Aggrieved Employees. Based on information and
24 belief, meal periods were late, in part due to unaccounted pre-shift off-the-clock work.

25 63. Based on information and belief, despite DEFENDANTS' failure to provide lawful
26 meal periods, DEFENDANTS implemented a policy and/or practice of rounding the start and end
27 times of PLAINTIFF's and other Aggrieved Employees' meal periods and/or automatically
28 deducting at least thirty minutes per shift for missed, on-duty, and/or otherwise unlawful meal

1 periods despite having actual and/or constructive knowledge that PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved
2 Employees did not receive lawful meal periods.

3 64. Moreover, based on information and belief, Aggrieved Employees who worked shifts
4 of more than ten hours did not receive a second legally compliant thirty (30) minute meal period.

5 65. For example, when PLAINTIFF worked more than ten (10) and/or twelve (12) hours
6 in a shift, PLAINTIFF was not provided with any version of a second meal period.

7 66. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to instruct PLAINTIFF and
8 other Aggrieved Employees as to the timing and duty-free nature of meal periods. Based on further
9 information and belief, DEFENDANTS did not have a compliant written meal period policy, nor
10 did DEFENDANTS have any sort of compliant policy in practice.

11 67. Moreover, based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to keep accurate
12 records of the true start and end times of PLAINTIFF's and Aggrieved Employees' meal periods.
13 Based on information and belief, to the extent meal periods were recorded, DEFENDANTS illegally
14 rounded the start and end times of purported meal periods resulting in PLAINTIFF and other
15 Aggrieved Employees not being paid for all time worked as well as late and/or shortened meal
16 periods. *See Donohue v. AMN Services, LLC* (2021) 11 Cal.5th 58.

17 68. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS had actual and/or constructive
18 knowledge that its policies and practices resulted in the denial of timely uninterrupted meal periods
19 that were free of DEFENDANTS' control owed to PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees, in
20 violation of California's meal period laws.

21 69. DEFENDANTS failed to pay PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees, an
22 additional hour of wages at their respective regular rates of compensation for each workday a lawful
23 meal period was not provided. DEFENDANTS either failed to pay a meal period premium at all for
24 each workday a lawful meal period was not provided and/or failed to pay the proper meal period
25 premium for failure to incorporate all non-discretionary remuneration, including but not limited to,
26 bonuses, shift differential pay and/or other non-discretionary compensation into the regular rate or
27 compensation for purposes of calculating the owed meal period premium.

28 70. **Rest Period Violations.** DEFENDANTS did not properly authorize and provide
15
PLAINTIFF'S REPRESENTATIVE COMPLAINT FOR VIOLATION OF THE PRIVATE ATTORNEYS
GENERAL ACT

1 PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees with legally compliant rest periods at a rate of every
2 four (4) hours worked or major fraction thereof, that insofar as practicable, are provided in the
3 middle of the work period, as required by law.

4 71. PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees were not adequately informed,
5 authorized, instructed about, nor permitted an opportunity to take proper rest periods per California
6 law. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS had no policy in place nor instruction as to
7 the taking or timing of duty-free rest periods.

8 72. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS did not have a have a compliant
9 written rest period policy, nor did DEFENDANTS have any sort of compliant rest period policy in
10 practice.

11 73. For example, based on information and belief, Aggrieved Employees were frequently
12 unable to take compliant rest periods due to their need to complete assigned job duties and/or were
13 unable to take a net ten-minute rest period in a suitable rest area and/or had purported rest periods
14 restricted to DEFENDANTS' premises.

15 74. For example, PLAINTIFF rarely, if ever, received a ten-minute, off-duty rest period
16 from including but not limited to, in or around November 2020 through in or around May 2023.

17 75. Based on information and belief, any purported rest periods were interrupted, cut
18 short, on duty, restricted to premises, and/or late due to understaffing, the nature and constraints of
19 their job duties, and/or commentary from supervisors pressuring them to skip rest periods
20 completely and/or take non-compliant rest periods.

21 76. Moreover, based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to provide any
22 form of a third rest period on shifts lasting longer than ten hours.

23 77. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS implemented policies and/or
24 practices that failed to relieve PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees of all duties and
25 DEFENDANTS' control during rest periods.

26 78. Based on information and belief, Aggrieved Employees were pressured to complete
27 their work duties according to a designated schedule such that rest periods were only taken once
28 tasks were completed, and/or as time permitted.

1 79. Furthermore, DEFENDANTS failed to pay a rest period premium for each day in
2 which PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees experienced a missed/unlawful rest period in
3 violation of California law. DEFENDANTS either failed to pay a rest period premium at all for each
4 workday a proper rest period was not provided and/or failed to pay the proper rest period premium
5 for failure to incorporate all non-discretionary remuneration, including but not limited to, bonuses,
6 shift differential pay, and/or other non-discretionary compensation into the regular rate of
7 compensation for purposes of calculating the owed rest period premium.

8 80. **Failure to Provide Suitable Resting Facilities.** Per section 13 of all applicable IWC
9 Wage Orders, employees shall be provided with suitable resting facilities. Section 13(B) of the
10 Wage Orders provides: “Suitable resting facilities shall be provided in an area separate from the
11 toilet rooms and shall be available to employees during work hours.”

12 81. DEFENDANTS’ locations/facilities are generally similar in layout and design, and
13 there was, and continues to be, space that allows for a resting facility that employees may use to
14 cease work and recover during meal or rest periods. DEFENDANTS could have provided Aggrieved
15 Employees with a resting facility within DEFENDANTS’ facilities/locations with reasonable or no
16 modification, but instead denied and continues to deny, employees with suitable areas to rest (e.g. a
17 breakroom). As a result, Aggrieved Employees were forced to adjust to areas not conducive to
18 resting, including but not limited to leaning up against the wall, or search for facilities outside of
19 DEFENDANTS’ premises which are not designated or reserved for their rest, such as their personal
20 vehicles.

21 82. DEFENDANTS did not provide Aggrieved Employees with suitable resting facilities
22 during their hours of work, particularly during meal and/or rest periods.

23 83. DEFENDANTS’ failure to provide suitable resting facilities to Aggrieved
24 Employees violated and continue to violate the applicable Wage Order, section 13(B) and the
25 California Labor Code, including but not limited to section 1198.

26 84. **Inaccurate Wage Statements.** During the relevant period, DEFENDANTS failed to
27 provide PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees with accurate wage statements that complied
28 with Labor Code section 226. As DEFENDANTS failed to provide PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved

1 Employees with meal and rest periods that complied with Labor section 226.7, the wage statements
2 DEFENDANTS issued to PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees failed and continue to fail to
3 correctly set forth the gross wages earned, the total hours worked, the net wages earned, and all
4 applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the corresponding number of hours
5 worked at each hourly rate by the employee.

6 85. DEFENDANTS issued wage statements to PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved
7 Employees that also failed to indicate the earned gross and net wages earned during the pay period,
8 the correct applicable rates of pay for all hours worked, and the total hours worked by PLAINTIFF
9 and Aggrieved Employees (by virtue of rounded time entries, automatic deduction for meal
10 periods/failure to relieve Aggrieved Employees of all duties and employer control during unpaid
11 meal periods, payment according to scheduled hours worked rather than actual hours worked, and/or
12 other off-the-clock work policies and practices described above) which results in a violation of
13 Labor Code section 226(a).

14 86. Separately, and independent of the above allegations, based on information and
15 belief, DEFENDANTS issued wage statements to Aggrieved Employees that failed to list the total
16 hours worked, in violation of including but not limited to, Labor Code section 226(a)(2).

17 87. Based on information and belief, wage statements issued by DEFENDANTS failed
18 to list all applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the corresponding number of
19 hours worked at each hourly rate by the employee, in violation of, including but not limited to, Labor
20 Code section 226(a)(9).

21 88. For example, based on information and belief, wage statements issued by
22 DEFENDANTS failed to list all applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the
23 corresponding number of hours worked at each hourly rate by the employee, in violation of Labor
24 Code section 226(a)(9) due to DEFENDANTS' failure to list an overtime rate category at all and/or
25 failure to list a category containing the proper overtime rate.

26 89. Based on information and belief, wage statements issued by DEFENDANTS failed
27 to list the inclusive dates of the pay period for which the Aggrieved Employee is being paid.

28 90. For example, based on information and belief, at times, DEFENDANTS issued wage

1 statements to Aggrieved Employees containing payment for hours worked during previous pay
2 periods, yet DEFENDANTS' wage statements do not include the inclusive dates of the accurate
3 pay period for that retroactive pay, further failing to list the total hours worked for the pay period,
4 including but not limited to, the total hours worked for the pay period the retroactive pay corresponds
5 with. For example, based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS' wage statements provided to
6 Aggrieved Employees list a category for "Retro" and/or retroactive pay without including the
7 inclusive dates of the accurate pay period for that retroactive pay, further failing to list the total
8 hours worked for the pay period, including but not limited to, the total hours worked for the pay
9 period the retroactive pay corresponds with, in violation of including but not limited to, Labor Code
10 sections 226(a)(2) and/or 226(a)(6).

11 91. Moreover, based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS issued wage statements
12 to PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees that further violate Labor Code section 226(a), by among
13 other things, failing to list the correct name and/or address of the legal entity that is the employer,
14 in violation of Labor Code section 226(a)(8).

15 92. As such, DEFENDANTS' issued wage statements to Aggrieved Employees that did
16 not include all of the statutorily required information, including but not limited to, the correct name
17 and/or address of the legal entity that is the employer.

18 93. Based on further information and belief, DEFENDANTS issued wage statements to
19 Aggrieved Employees that failed to list the accurate total hours worked whenever shift differential
20 wages were paid in violation of Labor Code section 226.

21 94. As a result, DEFENDANTS issued wage statements to PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved
22 Employees that were not accurate and did not include all of the statutorily required information. As
23 such, DEFENDANTS violated Labor Code section 226.

24 95. **Unlawful Deductions:** Labor Code section 221 prohibits an employer from
25 "collect[ing] or receiv[ing] from an employee any part of wages theretofore paid by said employer
26 to said employee." Based on information and belief DEFENDANTS made unlawful deductions
27 from Aggrieved Employees paychecks during the relevant period including but not limited to,
28 deducting costs of uniforms and/or other business costs and/or deducting wages for purported

1 overpayments from previous pay periods and/or unlawfully deducting wages for negligently
2 damaged property. Such a practice is in violation of including but not limited to, Labor Code
3 Sections 221-222 which subjects DEFENDANTS to civil penalties under Labor Code Section 2699.

4 96. **Inaccurate Records.** Based on the above-described unlawful policies and practices,
5 DEFENDANTS failed and continue to fail, to keep accurate and complete payroll records as
6 required by Labor Code sections 1174, 1198, 1199, and section 7 of all applicable Wage Orders.
7 DEFENDANTS failed, and continue to fail, to keep accurate and complete payroll records as
8 required by law, including but not limited to the following records: total daily hours worked,
9 applicable rates of pay, time records showing when PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees
10 began and ended each work period, time records of meal periods, and accurate itemized wage
11 statements.

12 97. DEFENDANTS have failed and continue to fail to keep accurate and complete
13 records showing total hours worked by virtue of DEFENDANTS' time rounding, automatic meal
14 period deductions, failure to relieve PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees of all duties and
15 employer control during unpaid meal periods, failure to record the true start and end times of meal
16 periods, shift start times and shift end times, and other off-the-clock work policies and practices
17 described herein.

18 98. **Unreimbursed Business Expenses.** Based on information and belief,
19 DEFENDANTS required PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees to incur business expenses
20 as a direct consequence of the performance of their job duties without providing reimbursement, in
21 violation of Labor Code section 2802. Based on information and belief, PLAINTIFF and other
22 Aggrieved Employees were improperly required to provide and maintain work tools that are
23 supposed to be the responsibility of the employer.

24 99. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS shifted the costs of doing business
25 onto Aggrieved Employees by requiring them to pay for business expenses, including but not limited
26 to, uniforms/work clothing/work shoes, personal protective/safety gear and/or the use of Aggrieved
27 Employees' personal mobile phone and data usage for work related purposes including but not
28 limited to receiving and responding to work related messages and/or phone calls. For example, on

1 information and belief, Aggrieved Employees received calls/messages to their personal cell
2 phones/mobile devices from supervisors and/or other Aggrieved Employees regarding scheduling
3 and/or other work tasks but were not provided any and/or full reimbursement from DEFENDANTS
4 for this personal cell phone use.

5 100. For example, PLAINTIFF was consistently required to make and/or receive work-
6 related calls and/or messages to/from her personal cell phone/mobile device but was not provided
7 with any and/or full reimbursement from DEFENDANTS for this business use of PLAINTIFF's
8 personal cell phone/mobile device.

9 101. Based on information and belief, Aggrieved Employees were not reimbursed for the
10 cost of using their personal phone for work related purposes and/or the cost of purchasing and/or
11 maintaining work uniforms/work clothing/work shoes, personal protective/safety gear.

12 102. For example, based on information and belief, Aggrieved Employees were not
13 reimbursed for the costs of purchasing and/or maintaining work uniforms/work clothing/work shoes,
14 personal protective/safety gear, such as, but not limited to, face masks, gloves, hairnets and/or work
15 shoes.

16 103. Based on information and belief, at times, DEFENDANTS required Aggrieved
17 Employees to use their personal vehicles for work without reimbursing them for the personal vehicle
18 expenses they incurred in connection therewith.

19 104. For example, based on information and belief, at times, DEFENDANTS required
20 Aggrieved Employees to travel from one of DEFENDANTS' facilities/restaurants to a second of
21 DEFENDANTS' facilities/restaurants for work and/or otherwise required Aggrieved Employees to
22 use their personal vehicles to carry out their assigned job duties without reimbursing Aggrieved
23 Employees for the expenses incurred in connection with DEFENDANTS' business use of their
24 personal vehicles.

25 105. For example, DEFENDANTS sometimes required PLAINTIFF to run business
26 errands for DEFENDANTS using PLAINTIFF's personal vehicle, however, DEFENDANTS failed
27 to provide any and/or full reimbursement for the business expenses PLAINTIFF incurred in
28 connection therewith, including without limitation, reimbursement for cost of fuel, vehicle wear and

1 tear and/or mileage. As such, DEFENDANTS failed to compensate Aggrieved Employees at the
2 legally mandated Internal Revenue Service (IRS) per mile compensation rates in effect during the
3 relevant period.

4 106. As explained above, based on information and belief, Aggrieved Employees were
5 not reimbursed for the cost of using their personal phone for work related purposes and/or the cost
6 of purchasing and/or maintaining work uniforms/work clothing/work shoes, personal
7 protective/safety gear.

8 107. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS regularly failed to reimburse and
9 indemnify Aggrieved Employees for business expenses. Pursuant to California Labor Code section
10 2802, PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees were entitled to be reimbursed for all reasonable
11 expenses associated with carrying out DEFENDANTS' orders and/or carrying out the duties
12 assigned by DEFENDANTS.

13 108. DEFENDANTS' failure to provide Aggrieved Employees with full reimbursement
14 for all reasonable expenses associated with carrying out their duties required that Aggrieved
15 Employees subsidize and/or carry the burden of business expenses in violation of Labor Code section
16 2802.

17 109. **Reporting Time Pay Violations.** Section 5 of all applicable IWC Wage Orders,
18 provides as follows:

19 110. (A) Each workday an employee is required to report for work and does report, but is
20 not put to work or is furnished less than half said employee's usual or scheduled day's work, the
21 employee shall be paid for half the usual or scheduled day's work, but in no event for less than two
22 (2) hours nor more than four (4) hours, at the employee's regular rate of pay, which shall not be less
23 than the minimum wage. (B) If an employee is required to report for work a second time in any one
24 workday and is furnished less than two (2) hours of work on the second reporting said employee
25 shall be paid for two hours at the employee's regular rate of pay, which shall not be less than the
26 minimum wage.

27 111. Aggrieved Employees were not paid reporting time wages in accordance with
28 California law, including but not limited to the applicable IWC Wage Order. For example, based on

1 information and belief, at times, Aggrieved Employees reported to work for a scheduled shift but
2 were sent home and/or were not put to work and were not paid all owed reporting time pay wages
3 in accordance with California law.

4 112. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS have a policy and practice of
5 failing to pay all reporting time wages to Aggrieved Employees, in violation of California law,
6 including but not limited to, the applicable IWC Wage Order, Section 5. DEFENDANTS' failure to
7 pay all reporting time wages to Aggrieved Employees violated and continues to violate the
8 applicable Wage Order, and the California Labor Code, including but not limited to section 1198.

9 113. **Violation of California Day of Rest Law.** Under California law, every employee in
10 California is "entitled" to "one day's rest [from labor] in seven"; and, no employer may "cause" its
11 employees "to work more than six days in seven." *See* Labor Code Sections 551 and 552. Labor
12 Code section 553 provides that a violation of the foregoing sections is a misdemeanor.

13 114. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS have and continue to have a
14 uniform policy and practice of requiring Aggrieved Employees to work at least seven days
15 consecutively in a workweek, in violation of including but not limited to, Labor Code Section
16 551. Based on information and belief, PLAINTIFF and/or other Aggrieved Employees were
17 suffered, permitted, or required to work at least seven (7) days consecutively in a workweek, in
18 violation of California law, including but not limited to Labor Code Section 551.

19 115. **Sick Leave Violations.** Throughout the relevant time period, DEFENDANTS failed
20 to provide proper paid sick leave to PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees. DEFENDANTS
21 either failed to provide paid sick leave at all or improperly calculated the sick leave accrual and the
22 sick leave rate of pay owed to PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees by failing to base the
23 accrued sick leave hours on the correct number of hours worked (as a result of the
24 rounding/automatic deduction policies and practices for meal periods and/or shift start and end
25 times/other required off-the-clock work including but not limited to unpaid meal periods) and by
26 failing to incorporate multiple rates of pay and/or all non-discretionary remuneration, including but
27 not limited to, non-discretionary bonuses, shift differential pay, and/or other non-discretionary
28 compensation into the sick leave pay rate calculation.

1 116. Upon information and belief, DEFENDANTS further failed to place PLAINTIFF
2 and Aggrieved Employees on notice of their paid sick leave rights – or thereby putting their
3 entitlement to sick leave in a Labor Code section 2810.5 notice. Based on information and belief,
4 DEFENDANTS failed to provide notice of the correct sick leave amount balance available to
5 PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees on their wage statements or other written statement.
6 Moreover, based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to maintain accurate records of
7 used sick leave and the balance of paid sick leave.

8 117. Based on information and belief, throughout the relevant time period,
9 DEFENDANTS failed to provide notice of the balance of sick leave pay left for PLAINTIFF and
10 all Aggrieved Employees, thus affecting their intelligent exercise of their paid sick leave. But for
11 this failure, PLAINTIFF and all Aggrieved Employees would have used their paid sick leave at least
12 prior to their respective separations, for as on several occasions thereafter, he or she would have
13 been entitled to use the banked sick leave and earn appropriate compensation.

14 118. Upon information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed and continue to fail to comply
15 with Labor Code section 246, by failing to provide PLAINTIFF and all Aggrieved Employees with
16 a Labor Code section 226 wage statement, or separate writing containing the amount of paid sick
17 leave available, or paid time off leave an employer provides in lieu of sick leave, at the time it pays
18 wages.

19 119. As such, DEFENDANTS have violated California's paid sick leave laws and
20 unlawfully retained and continue to retain paid sick leave that should have been paid and was not as
21 a result of DEFENDANTS' failure to properly institute a lawful paid sick leave program. These
22 unlawful practices and policies violate Labor Code sections 245-248.5.

23 120. **Failure To Provide Supplemental Paid Sick Leave.** Labor Code § 248.2 provides
24 that all employers with 26 or more employees are required to provide up to 80 hours for covered
25 employees to take 2021 COVID-19 Supplemental Paid Sick Leave to care for themselves, to care
26 for a family member or if it is vaccine-related. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS
27 violated Labor Code § 248.2 by not providing Aggrieved Employees with required 2021 COVID-
28 19 Supplemental Paid Sick Leave. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to

1 provide Supplemental Paid Sick Leave in 2022 in violation of Labor Code section 248.6.

2 121. **Seating Violations.** Per section 14(A-B) of all applicable IWC Wage Orders,
3 employees shall be provided with suitable seats when the nature of the work reasonably permits the
4 use of seats and when they are not actively engaged in the work duties that would not permit them
5 to be seated.

6 122. All applicable IWC Wage Orders, Section 14(A-B) provides:

7 (A) All working employees shall be provided with suitable seats when the nature of the
8 work reasonably permits the use of seats.

9 (B) When employees are not engaged in the active duties of their employment and the
10 nature of the work requires standing, an adequate number of suitable seats shall be placed in
11 reasonable proximity to the work area and employees shall be permitted to use such seats when it
12 does not interfere with the performance of their duties.

13 123. Suitable seating is one of the worker protections covered by California's Wage
14 Orders, which have the same dignity as statutes, are remedial in nature and are to be broadly
15 construed to effectuate the goal of protecting the comfort and welfare of employees. *Brinker*
16 *Restaurant Corp. v. Superior Court*, 53 Cal.4th 1004, 1027 (2012).

17 124. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to provide Aggrieved
18 Employees with suitable seating, and when such employees were not engaged in duties which
19 required them to stand, no seating was placed in reasonable proximity to their workstations.

20 125. Moreover, based on information and belief, the nature of the work reasonably
21 permitted the use of seats for at least part of the time that Aggrieved Employees were working.
22 Lastly, there were periods of time when Aggrieved Employees were not engaged in active duties of
23 their employment, yet there were no suitable seats in reasonable proximity to the work area and use
24 of seats would not interfere with the performance of their duties.

25 126. **Violation of Labor Code section 351 and 353.** Labor Code Section 351 prohibits
26 employers and their agents from sharing in or keeping any portion of a gratuity left for or given to
27 one or more employees by a patron. Furthermore, it is illegal for employers to make wage deductions
28 from gratuities, or from using gratuities as direct or indirect credits against an employee's

1 wages. Labor Code Section 353 mandates employers to keep accurate records of all gratuities
2 received.

3 127. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to ensure that Aggrieved
4 Employees fully received the gratuities left for them by patrons, in that DEFENDANTS' and its
5 agents would collect and/or take a portion of the gratuities for themselves, in violation of Labor
6 Code Section 351. Based on further information and belief, DEFENDANTS also failed to keep
7 accurate records of all tips received, in violation of Labor Code Section 353. Based on information
8 and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to pay gratuities paid by customers using credit cards to
9 Aggrieved Employees by the next regular payday following the credit card payment, in violation of
10 Labor Code section 351.

11 128. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS charges an additional service
12 charge to its customers/patrons. Customers are led to believe that the service charge will be paid to
13 DEFENDANTS' Aggrieved Employees. Instead, DEFENDANTS keep a majority (if not the
14 entirety) of the service charge, thereby depriving Aggrieved Employees of the service
15 charge/gratuity that is left by the patron/customer for the Aggrieved Employees. *See O'Grady v*
16 *Merchant Exchanges Production, Inc.*, 41 Cal.App.5th 771, 790 (a mandatory service charge can
17 constitute a gratuity that is intended to the employees providing the service).

18 129. Pursuant to PAGA, DEFENDANTS are liable for penalties of \$100 per pay period
19 payable to each Aggrieved Employee for the first violation of Labor Code Sections 351 and 353
20 they experienced within the statutory period, and \$200 per pay period for each additional violation.

21 130. **Failure to Pay Vested Vacation/Paid Time Off.** Based on information and belief,
22 DEFENDANTS have and continue to have a uniform policy and practice of failing to allow
23 Aggrieved Employees to use their earned vacation/paid time off during their employment and/or
24 failing to pay all vested, accrued paid time off (including but not limited to, all owed vacation
25 pay/paid time off paid at the final rate including non-discretionary compensation, including but not
26 limited to, shift differentials) to Aggrieved Employees upon separation of employment, in violation
27 of California law, including but not limited to, Labor Code section 227.3.

28 131. **Failure to Timely Pay All Wages Upon Separation of Employment.** Based on

1 information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to timely pay Aggrieved Employees all wages that
2 were due and owing upon termination or resignation. Based on information and belief,
3 DEFENDANTS untimely provide final wages to Aggrieved Employees without regard to the timing
4 requirements of Labor Code sections 201-202.

5 132. Upon separation of employment, Aggrieved Employees' final paychecks were not
6 timely provided and/or were not timely provided with all owed vacation pay and/or paid time off.
7 Moreover, Aggrieved Employees' final paychecks, once provided, did not include all wages owed
8 as they were devoid of, including but not limited to, all owed minimum wages, overtime wages,
9 premium wages, vacation pay, and all owed sick leave and/or paid time off wages at the properly
10 accrued rates (including but not limited to, all owed vacation pay/paid time off paid at the final rate
11 including non-discretionary compensation, including but not limited to, shift differentials).

12 133. Based on further information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to timely provide all
13 owed wages immediately upon discharge of employment. Based on information and belief, at times,
14 Aggrieved Employees experienced breaks in employment caused by DEFENDANTS whereby
15 Aggrieved Employees would not be called in for work for longer than a single pay period due to
16 including but not limited to DEFENDANTS' lack of work or lack of assignments. Such instances
17 qualify as a discharge of employment. Yet, DEFENDANTS failed to timely pay all owed wages at
18 the end of such periods of employment, in violation of including but not limited to Labor Code
19 section 201-202.

20 134. **Violation of Labor Code Section 208.** Labor Code Section 208 provides: Every
21 employee who is discharged shall be paid at the place of discharge, and every employee who quits
22 shall be paid at the office or agency of the employer in the county where the employee has been
23 performing labor. All payments shall be made in the manner provided by law.

24 135. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS have a policy and practice of
25 failing to provide Aggrieved Employees who are terminated with their final paychecks at the place
26 of discharge and/or of failing to provide Aggrieved Employees with their final paychecks at the
27 office or agency of DEFENDANTS in the county where the work was performed, in violation of
28 Labor Code Section 208.

1 136. **Unlawful Agreements-Unlawful Criminal History Inquiries.**

2 Unlawful Agreements/ Unlawful Financial and Criminal Background Checks.

3 137. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS required Aggrieved Employees to
4 agree in writing to unlawful conditions of employment including but not limited to unlawful non-
5 solicitation/non-compete agreements, unlawful confidentiality and/or nondisclosure agreements,
6 unlawful releases and/or waivers, including but not limited to unlawful meal period waivers,
7 unlawful forum selection clauses and/or choice of law provisions/agreements and/or unlawful
8 criminal and/or financial checks as a condition of obtaining and/or continuing employment in
9 violation of Labor Code section 432.5.

10 138. Labor Code section 432.6(a), provides that “a person shall not, as a condition of
11 employment, continued employment, or the receipt of any employment-related benefit, require any
12 applicant for employment or any employee to waive any right...”

13 139. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS required Aggrieved Employees to
14 sign meal period waivers that were universally signed as a condition of employment, including but
15 not limited to, during the onboarding process. By requiring Aggrieved Employees to sign unlawful
16 meal period waivers as a condition of obtaining and/or maintaining employment, DEFENDANTS
17 violated Labor Code section 432.5. Further, these invalid waivers are otherwise unlawful under
18 Labor Code section 432.6.

19 140. Moreover, based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS ordered unlawful
20 financial credit checks on Aggrieved Employees, in violation of Labor Code section 1024.5, and
21 required Aggrieved Employees to provide ongoing written consent to the unlawful credit checks as
22 a condition of employment, in violation of California and Federal law, which results in a further
23 violation of Labor Code section 432.5.

24 141. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS also required Aggrieved
25 Employees to submit and/or agree to submit in writing to unlawful criminal background checks as
26 a condition of obtaining and/or holding employment in violation of the Investigative Consumer
27 Reporting Agencies Act (ICRAA- CA Civil Code section 1786, *et seq.*) and the Fair Credit
28 Reporting Act (FCRA - 15 U.S.C. section 1681, *et seq.*). Based on information and belief,

1 DEFENDANTS failed and continue to fail to comply with the requirements of the ICRAA and
2 FCRA when conducting background screenings for applicants, including but not limited to
3 Aggrieved Employees that were subject to a background check as a condition of employment during
4 the application phase.

5 142. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS required Aggrieved Employees to
6 agree in writing to a background check which failed to abide by the requirements set forth in CA
7 Civil Code section 1786, *et seq.* and 15 U.S.C. section 1681, *et seq.*, including but not limited to by
8 failing to provide a clear and conspicuous disclosure and/or failing to provide any disclosure at all,
9 failing to provide disclosures free of extraneous information, failing to provide a lawful purpose for
10 the background check, failing to provide a summary of rights under the ICRAA and/or the FCRA,
11 failing to provide a way by which the individual could request a copy of the report, failing to disclose
12 the name, address, and telephone number of the third party preparing the report, and failing to
13 properly obtain authorization or consent to such a background check, and thus was an unlawful
14 background check.

15 143. By requiring Aggrieved Employees to agree in writing to unlawful criminal and/or
16 financial checks not in conformance with the applicable laws, DEFENDANTS violated Labor Code
17 section 432.5.

18 144. Based on further information and belief, DEFENDANTS also required Aggrieved
19 Employees to agree in writing to provide ongoing consent to DEFENDANTS to conduct
20 background checks throughout the duration of employment, in violation of the ICRAA and/or FCRA
21 and/or other applicable laws, resulting in a further violation of Labor Code section 432.5, by
22 requiring applicants and employees to agree to an unlawful provision as a condition of employment.

23 145. Based on further information and belief, DEFENDANTS knew that requiring
24 Aggrieved Employees to agree to unlawful criminal and/or financial background checks as a
25 condition of obtaining and/or holding employment was unlawful.

26 146. By requiring Aggrieved Employees to agree in writing to unlawful provisions as a
27 condition of employment, DEFENDANTS violated Labor Code section 432.5.

1 Unlawful Inquires into Criminal History

2 147. Labor Code section 432.7 prohibits an employer from asking applicants about past
3 arrest(s) unless they resulted in conviction(s) and even then, certain limitations apply. Based on
4 information and belief, DEFENDANTS asked Aggrieved Employees about arrests not resulting in
5 convictions on its employment application, in violation of California law.

6 148. Upon information and belief, DEFENDANTS, in violation of California law,
7 including but not limited to the Fair Chance Act/the California Fair Employment and Housing Act
8 (“FEHA”), asked Aggrieved Employees about convictions prior to extending an offer of
9 employment and/or otherwise impermissibly inquired into criminal history on its employment
10 application in violation of California law, and in violation of Labor code section 432.5.

11 Unlawful PAGA Waiver

12 149. Additionally, DEFENDANTS violated Labor Code section 432.5 by requiring
13 Aggrieved Employees to agree in writing to other unlawful agreements, including but not limited
14 to, an unlawful waiver of PAGA and or representative actions as a condition of employment.

15 150. An action pursuant to PAGA “...is a representative action on behalf of the state”
16 *Kim v Reins Int’l California, Inc.*, (2020) 9 Cal. 5th 73, 86-87. It is well settled that agreements
17 purporting to waive an employee’s right to a trial of PAGA claims is contrary to California law and
18 unenforceable. See *Iskanian v CLS Transportation Los Angeles, LLC* (2014) 59 Cal. 4th 348, 384
19 (“We conclude that where, as here, an employment agreement compels the waiver of representative
20 claims under the PAGA, it is contrary to public policy and unenforceable as a matter of state law.”)

21 151. Moreover, the California Supreme Court has ruled that a court cannot compel
22 arbitration of an aggrieved employee’s individual PAGA claim because there is no such thing as an
23 individual PAGA claim. *Kim v Reins Int’l California, Inc.*, (2020) 9 Cal. 5th 73, 86-87 (“There is
24 no individual component to a PAGA action because ‘every PAGA action ... is a representative
25 action on behalf of the state.’”)

26 152. Upon information and belief, DEFENDANTS required Aggrieved Employees to
27 agree in writing to waive their right to a trial of PAGA claims in violation of California law. By
28 requiring Aggrieved Employees to agree, in writing, to an unlawful PAGA waiver, DEFENDANTS

1 required written agreement to an unlawful provision as a condition of employment which is a
2 violation of labor code section 432.5.

3 153. **Violation of Labor Code Section 432.6.** Based on information and belief,
4 DEFENDANTS require/required Aggrieved Employees to waive their right to first and/or second
5 meal periods as a condition of working for DEFENDANTS in violation of California law. As such,
6 DEFENDANTS violated including but not limited to, Labor Code section 432.6 by virtue of
7 including but not limited to, requiring Aggrieved Employees to sign invalid meal period waivers as
8 a condition of employment and/or for threatening, retaliating and/or discriminating against and/or
9 terminating Aggrieved Employees because of their refusal to waive their meal period rights.

10 154. PLAINTIFF is informed and believes and alleges thereon that DEFENDANTS
11 engaged in these same herein described unlawful practices, which led to violations of the California
12 Labor Code as further alleged below, and that DEFENDANTS applied these same herein described
13 unlawful practices to all of its employees that it applied to PLAINTIFF.

14
15 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**
16 **VIOLATION OF PRIVATE ATTORNEYS GENERAL ACT, LABOR CODE SECTIONS**
17 **2698, *ET SEQ.***
18 **(On behalf of PLAINTIFF, Aggrieved Employees and the State of California against all**
19 **Defendants)**

20 155. PLAINTIFF incorporates all preceding paragraphs as if fully alleged herein.

21 **Failure to Keep Accurate Records**

22 156. California Labor Code § 1174 requires employers to keep “accurate and complete”
23 payroll records showing, among other things, the hours worked daily by all non-exempt employees.
24 All applicable Wage Orders § 7 similarly requires employers to keep time records reflecting the
25 times during which all owed meal periods were provided each day.

26 157. At all relevant times, DEFENDANTS failed, and continue to fail, to keep accurate
27 and complete records as required by law, including but not limited to the following records: total
28 daily hours worked, applicable rates of pay, time records showing when PLAINTIFF and other
Aggrieved Employees began and ended each work period, time records of meal periods, and
accurate itemized wage statements.

1 158. DEFENDANTS’ failure to keep “accurate and complete” payroll records for
2 PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees violates Labor Code §§ 1174, 1198, 1199, and all
3 applicable Wage Orders, section 7. These violations subject DEFENDANTS to civil penalties under
4 Labor Code §§ 558.1, 226.6, 1174.5 and 2699. Each violation of each Labor Code section and
5 Wage Order provision results in a *separate* civil penalty, for each Aggrieved Employee for each pay
6 period during which the referenced statutes and Wage Order provisions were violated.¹

7 **Meal Period Violations**

8 159. California law requires employers to provide employees a duty-free, uninterrupted
9 thirty (30) minute meal period when an employee works more than five (5) hours in a workday, and
10 it must be provided within the first five (5) hours the employee works. Lab. Code section 512 (and
11 all applicable IWC Wage Orders), section 11(A) and (C); *Brinker Restaurant Corp. v. Superior*
12 *Court* (2012) 53 Cal.4th 1004.

13 160. Employers must also provide employees with a second duty-free, uninterrupted thirty
14 (30) minute meal period when an employee works more than (10) hours in a workday, and it must
15 be provided before the end of the 10th hour of work. *Ibid.*

16 161. Employers covered by any and all applicable IWC Wage Orders have an obligation
17 to both (1) relieve their employees for at least one meal period for shifts over five hours (see above),
18 and (2) to record having done so. If the employer fails to properly record a valid meal period, it is
19 presumed that no meal period was provided. All applicable IWC Wage Orders, section 7(A)(3)
20 (“Meal periods . . . shall also be recorded”); *Brinker, supra*, 53 Cal.4th 1004, 1052-1053, citing
21 section 7(A)(3) (“If an employer’s records show no meal period for a given shift over five hours, a
22 rebuttable presumption arises that the employee was not relieved of duty and no meal period was
23 provided”).

24 162. Employers must pay employees an additional hour of wages at the employees’

25 ¹ Labor Code § 2699(f)(2) (establishing that the civil penalty is “for each aggrieved employee per pay period”); Labor
26 Code § 558 (establishing that the civil penalty is “for each underpaid employee for each pay period for which the
27 employee was underpaid”); All applicable wage orders, § 20 (establishing that “[i]n addition to any other civil
28 penalties provided by law, any employer or any other person acting on behalf of the employer who violates, or causes
to be violated, the provisions of this order, shall be subject to the civil penalty...for each underpaid employee for each
pay period during which the employee was underpaid”) (emphasis added).

1 regular rate of pay for each missed or unlawful meal period (e.g., less than 30 minutes, interrupted
2 meal period, first meal period provided after five (5) hours, second meal period provided after 10
3 hours). Lab. Code § 226.7; all applicable IWC Wage Orders, §11(B) (“If an employer fails to
4 provide an employee a meal period in accordance with the applicable provision of this Order, the
5 employer shall pay the employee one (1) hour of pay at the employee’s regular rate of compensation
6 for each workday that the meal period is not provided”); *Brinker, supra*, 53 Cal.4th 1004.

7 163. As explained above, PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees were consistently
8 unable to take timely, off duty, thirty-minute, uninterrupted first and second meal periods, often
9 being forced to take late meal periods, interrupted meal periods, and/or work through part or all of
10 their meal periods due to understaffing, the nature and constraints of their job duties, and/or
11 commentary from supervisors pressuring them to take non-compliant meal periods or skip meal
12 periods completely.

13 164. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS had and continue to have a policy
14 of rounding the start and end times of employees’ meal periods and/or automatically deducting thirty
15 minutes per shift despite having actual and/or constructive knowledge that PLAINTIFF and
16 Aggrieved Employees did not receive compliant meal periods.

17 165. Moreover, based on information and belief, Aggrieved Employees did not receive a
18 timely, uninterrupted second meal period when working shifts over ten (10) hours in a workday.

19 166. PLAINTIFF is informed and believes and thereon alleges that DEFENDANTS had
20 actual and/or constructive knowledge that its time-rounding and auto-deduction policies and
21 practices, other unlawful policies and practices resulted in the denial of compliant meal periods in
22 violation of California's meal period laws.

23 167. DEFENDANTS also failed to pay premiums for missed/otherwise unlawful meal
24 periods in violation of California law and/or failed to pay the proper meal period premium for failure
25 to incorporate all non-discretionary remuneration including but not limited to, bonuses, shift
26 differential pay and/or other non-discretionary compensation into the regular rate or compensation
27 for purposes of calculating the owed meal period premium.

28 168. These unlawful meal period policies and practices result in violations of Labor Code
33
PLAINTIFF’S REPRESENTATIVE COMPLAINT FOR VIOLATION OF THE PRIVATE ATTORNEYS
GENERAL ACT

1 sections 226.7, 512, and 1198-1199, and all applicable wage orders, § 11. These violations subject
2 DEFENDANTS to civil penalties under Labor Code §§ 558, 558.1 and 2699, and all applicable
3 Wage Orders, § 20. These practices result in further violations such as violations of Labor Code §
4 1174 as discussed above, 1198-1199, 226.6 and other violations discussed below.

5 **Rest Period Violations**

6 169. Labor Code section 226.7 and all applicable IWC Wage Orders require an employer
7 to authorize or permit an employee to take a rest period of ten (10) net minutes for every four hours
8 worked or major fraction thereof. Such rest periods must be in the middle of the four-hour period
9 “insofar as practicable.” In *Brinker v. Restaurant Corp.*, 53 Cal.4th 1004 (2012),
10 the California Supreme Court held that employees are entitled to a 10-minute paid rest period for
11 shifts from 3 ½ to 6 hours in a length, two 10-minute rest periods for shifts more than 6 hours up to
12 10 hours, and three 10-minute rest periods for shifts of more than 10 hours up to 14 hours. (*Id.* at
13 1029). The rest period requirement obligates employers to permit and authorize employees to take
14 off-duty rest periods, meaning employers must relieve employees of all duties and relinquish control
15 over how employees spend their time. *Augustus v. ABM Security Services, Inc.*, (2016) 5 Cal.5th
16 257. If the employer fails to provide any required rest period, the employer must pay the employee
17 one hour of pay at the employee’s regular rate of compensation for each workday the employer did
18 not provide at least one legally required rest period, pursuant to Labor Code section 226.7, and
19 applicable IWC Wage Order, §12(B).

20 170. Moreover, under California law rest periods must be a “net” ten minutes in a suitable
21 rest area. *Id.* at 268 (relying on January 3, 1986 and February 22, 2002 Division of Labor Standards
22 Enforcement (DLSE) Letters wherein the DLSE ruled that the net ten-minute language for rest
23 periods means ten minutes of time in a rest area and cannot include time it takes to get to and from
24 the rest area). The employer must show that it clearly articulates the right to a net ten minutes,
25 which means it must clearly communicate what “net” ten minutes means (i.e., regardless of what
26 happens along the way to and from a rest area, employees are entitled to a full ten minutes of rest in
27 the rest area). *Id.*; see also, *Bufile v. Dollar Fin. Grp., Inc.*, (2008) 162 Cal. App. 4th 1193, 1199 (the
28 “onus is on the employer to clearly communicate the authorization and permission [to take rest

1 periods] to its employees.”).

2 171. PLAINTIFF and the Aggrieved Employees did not receive legally compliant, timely
3 10-minute rest periods for every four (4) hours worked or major fraction thereof. As explained
4 above, any purported rest periods were late, interrupted, cut short, on duty, and/or otherwise subject
5 to DEFENDANTS’ control due to the nature and constraints of Aggrieved Employees’ job duties,
6 understaffing, and/or commentary from supervisors pressuring PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved
7 Employees to skip rest periods completely or otherwise take non-compliant rest periods.

8 172. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS implemented policies and/or
9 practices that failed to relieve PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees of all duties and
10 employer control during rest periods. Based on further information and belief, Aggrieved
11 Employees were pressured to complete their work duties according to a designated schedule such
12 that rest periods were only taken once tasks were completed, and/or as time permitted.

13 173. As a result, PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees did not receive legally compliant
14 first, second, or third rest periods as required by California law.

15 174. Moreover, based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to pay a rest
16 period premium to PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees for each workday in which there
17 was a missed or otherwise unlawful rest period. Based on further information and belief, when a
18 rest premium was paid, DEFENDANTS failed to include non-discretionary compensation including
19 but not limited to, bonuses, shift differential pay, and/or other non-discretionary compensation into
20 the regular rate of compensation for purposes of determining the owed rest period premium.

21 175. As such, DEFENDANTS violated Labor Code sections 226.7, and 1198-1199, and
22 all applicable IWC Wage Orders, §12. These violations subject DEFENDANTS to civil penalties
23 under Labor Code §§ 558 and 2699, and all applicable Wage Orders, §20.

24 **Failure to Provide Suitable Resting Facilities**

25 176. Per section 13 of all applicable IWC Wage Orders, employees shall be provided with
26 suitable resting facilities. Section 13(B) of the Wage Orders provides: “Suitable resting facilities
27 shall be provided in an area separate from the toilet rooms and shall be available to employees during
28 work hours.”

1 177. DEFENDANTS' locations/facilities are generally similar in layout and design, and
2 there was, and continues to be, space that allows for a resting facility that employees may use to
3 cease work and recover during meal or rest periods. DEFENDANTS could have provided Aggrieved
4 Employees with a resting facility within DEFENDANTS' facilities/locations with reasonable or no
5 modification, but instead denied and continues to deny, employees with suitable areas to rest (e.g. a
6 breakroom). As a result, Aggrieved Employees were forced to adjust to areas not conducive to
7 resting, including but not limited to leaning up against the wall, or search for facilities outside of
8 DEFENDANTS' premises which are not designated or reserved for their rest, such as their personal
9 vehicles.

10 178. DEFENDANTS did not provide Aggrieved Employees with suitable resting facilities
11 during their hours of work, particularly during meal and/or rest periods.

12 179. DEFENDANTS' failure to provide suitable resting facilities to Aggrieved
13 Employees violated and continue to violate the applicable Wage Order, section 13(B) and the
14 California Labor Code, including but not limited to section 1198.

15 **Minimum and Overtime Wage Violations**

16 180. California law provides that employees in California must be paid for all hours
17 worked, up to forty (40) hour per week or eight (8) hours per day, at a regular rate that is no less
18 than the mandated minimum wage. *See* Labor Code section 1197 and the applicable Wage Order.
19 The minimum wage standard applies to each hour employees worked for which they were not paid.
20 Therefore, an employer's failure to pay for any particular hour worked by an employee is unlawful
21 even if averaging an employee's total pay over all hours worked, paid or not, results in an average
22 hourly wage above minimum wage. *Armenta v. Osmose, Inc.* (2005) 135 Cal.App.4th 314, 324.

23 181. California law also provides that employees in California must be paid overtime,
24 equal to 1.5 times the employee's regular rate of pay for all hours worked in excess of 40 hours per
25 week or 8 hours per day. *See* Labor Code 510 and the applicable Wage Order section 3. Employers
26 must pay overtime equal to double the regular hourly rate of pay for each hour worked beyond
27 twelve (12) hours per workday and for all hours worked in excess of eight (8) hours on the seventh
28 consecutive day of work in a work week. *Ibid.*

1 182. As explained above, DEFENDANTS violated California's minimum and overtime
2 wage laws by failing to compensate PLAINTIFF and the Aggrieved Employees for all hours worked
3 by virtue of, among other things, DEFENDANTS' time rounding policies and practices (for shift
4 start and end times and meal period start and end times), payment according to scheduled hours
5 worked, automatic deduction for meal periods, and/or off-the-clock/unpaid work completed during
6 meal periods, and/or other otherwise off-the-clock work (described above), and/or other unlawful
7 policies and/or practices described above which resulted in unpaid minimum and overtime wages.

8 183. DEFENDANTS had and continue to have a policy of failing to pay PLAINTIFF and
9 Aggrieved Employees for all hours worked.

10 184. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS had actual or constructive
11 knowledge that its time-rounding policies and practices, auto-deduction policies and practices for
12 meal periods, payment according to scheduled hours, failure to relieve employees of all duties and
13 employer control during unpaid meal periods, and/or other off-the-clock work resulted in the
14 underpayment of minimum and overtime wages owed to PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved
15 Employees.

16 185. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to pay twice Aggrieved
17 Employees' regular rate(s) of pay for time worked beyond twelve (12) hours per workday and for
18 time worked beyond eight (8) hours on the seventh consecutive day of work in a work week, in
19 violation of California's overtime laws.

20 186. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS further violated California's
21 overtime wage laws by failing to incorporate all non-discretionary compensation, including but not
22 limited to, non-discretionary bonus compensation, shift differentials, and/or other non-discretionary
23 compensation into the regular rate of pay used to calculate the overtime rate of pay. Failing to
24 include non-discretionary compensation into the regular rate of pay resulted in a miscalculation of
25 the overtime wage rate, resulting in the underpayment of overtime wages owed to PLAINTIFF and
26 other Aggrieved Employees.

27 187. This conduct results in violations of Labor Code sections 218.5, 510, 558, 558.1,
28 1194, 1197, 1198-1199, and all applicable Wage Orders. These violations subject DEFENDANTS

1 to civil penalties under Labor Code sections 218.5, 558, 558.1, 1197.1, 2699, and all applicable IWC
2 Wage Orders, section 20.

3 **Statutory Wage Violations**

4 188. California Labor Code section 223 makes it unlawful for an employer to secretly pay
5 wages lower than required by statute while purporting to pay legal wages. As described above,
6 DEFENDANTS willfully and systematically denied PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees of all
7 earned minimum and overtime compensation for all hours worked which resulted in the payment of
8 less than statutorily required wages. DEFENDANTS acted with the intent to deprive them of
9 statutory wages, including, but not limited to, minimum and overtime wages, to which they were
10 entitled to under California law. Thus, DEFENDANTS paid PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved
11 Employees lower wages than those they were entitled to while purporting that PLAINTIFF and
12 other Aggrieved Employees were properly paid. As a result, PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved
13 Employees are entitled to recover penalties, attorney's fees, costs, and interest thereon, pursuant to
14 Labor Code § 2699(f)-(g).

15 **Refusal to Make Payment**

16 189. Labor Code section 216 declares unlawful an employer's refusal to pay wages due
17 and payable and/or the denial of the validity of any claim to wages due. DEFENDANTS violated
18 and continue to violate this section by failing to pay PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees for all
19 hours worked at the proper wage rate and by failing to pay an additional hour of pay for each
20 meal/rest period not provided or that was otherwise unlawful. *Gould v. Maryland Sound Industries,*
21 *Inc.* (1995) 31 Cal.App.4th 1137, 1154-1155. These violations subject DEFENDANTS to civil
22 penalties under Labor Code section 225.5. Each violation results in a *separate* civil penalty, for
23 each Aggrieved Employee, for each pay period during which the statute provisions were violated.²

24 **Standard Conditions of Labor Violations**

25 190. Together, Labor Code sections 1198 and 1199 make unlawful any employment of
26

27 ² Labor Code § 225.5 (establishing that “[i]n addition to, and entirely independent and apart from, any other penalty
28 provided in this article, every person who unlawfully withholds wages due any employee in violation of sections 212,
216, 221, 222, or 223 shall be subject to a civil penalty...for each failure to pay each employee”) (emphasis added).

1 any employee under conditions of labor prohibited by the Wage Orders, and any violation, refusal,
2 or neglect to comply with any provision within Part 4, Chapter 1 of the Labor Code, including
3 sections 1174, 1197, and 1198, or order or ruling of the commission. Therefore, DEFENDANTS'
4 violations with respect to meal periods, rest periods, record keeping provisions, business expenses,
5 minimum/overtime wages and other violations described herein result in separate violations of
6 sections 1198 and 1199, which subject DEFENDANTS to civil penalties under Labor Code sections
7 1197.1 and 2699.

8 **Business Expense Violations**

9 191. California law requires employers to indemnify their employees for all necessary
10 expenditures incurred by the employee in direct consequence of the discharge of their duties or of
11 their obedience to the directions of the employer. *See* Cal. Lab. Code s. 2802 and all applicable
12 Wage Orders section 9(b). Furthermore, “for purposes of [section 2802], the term ‘necessary
13 expenditure or losses’ shall include all reasonable costs, including, but not limited to, attorneys’ fees
14 incurred by the employee enforcing the rights granted by this section.”

15 192. Among other things, under California law, when employees must use their personal
16 cellphones for work-related purposes, the employer must reimburse them for a reasonable
17 percentage of their cell phone bills. *See Cochran v. Schwan’s Home Services, Inc.* (2014) 228
18 Cal.App.4th 1137, 1140. To show liability, an employee will only need to show that he or she was
19 required to use their personal cellphone for work-related purposes and not reimbursed for the use.
20 *Id.* 1144-1145. California law also requires employers to reimburse employees for automobile
21 expenses incurred for the business use of personal vehicles, such as for mileage, gas, and the wear
22 and tear on the vehicle. *See Gattuso v. Harte-Hanks Shoppers, Inc.* (2007) 42 Cal.4th 554.

23 193. Further, “any contract or agreement, express or implied, made by any employee to
24 waive the benefits of this article or any part thereof, is null and void, and this article shall not deprive
25 any employee or his personal representative of any right or remedy to which he is entitled to under
26 the laws of this State.” *See* Cal. Lab. Code section 2804.

27 194. As described above, PLAINTIFF and the Aggrieved Employees were improperly
28 required to pay for business expenses that are legally the responsibility of the employer.

1 195. DEFENDANTS' failure to provide PLAINTIFF and the Aggrieved Employees with
2 full reimbursement for all reasonable expenses associated with carrying out their duties required
3 that PLAINTIFF and the Aggrieved Employees subsidize and/or carry the burden of business
4 expenses in violation of Labor Code section 2802.

5 196. As a result of DEFENDANTS' unlawful conduct, PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved
6 Employees have suffered injury in that they were not completely reimbursed as mandated by
7 California law.

8 197. DEFENDANTS' failure to provide PLAINTIFF and the Aggrieved Employees with
9 full reimbursement for all reasonable expenses associated with carrying out their duties required
10 that PLAINTIFF and the Aggrieved Employees subsidize and/or carry the burden of business
11 expenses in violation of Labor Code section 2802.

12 198. As a result of DEFENDANTS' unlawful conduct, PLAINTIFF and the Aggrieved
13 Employees have suffered injury in that they were not completely reimbursed as mandated by
14 California law.

15 199. Despite being aware of these business expenses, DEFENDANTS failed to reimburse
16 PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees for such expenses in violation of California Labor
17 Code § 2802. In turn, there constitutes a PAGA violation based on violations of California Labor
18 Code § 2802 and the applicable Wage Order.

19 **Wage Statement Violations**

20 200. California law requires every employer semi-monthly or at the time of each payment
21 of wages to furnish its employees with an accurate itemized wage statement in writing that contains
22 the following: (1) gross wages earned; (2) total hours worked by the employee; (3) the number of
23 piece-rate units earned and any applicable piece rate if the employee is paid on a piece-rate basis;
24 (4) all deductions; (5) net wages earned; (6) the inclusive dates of the period for which the employee
25 is paid; (7) the name of the employee and only the last four digits of his or her social security number
26 or an employee identification number other than a social security number; (8) the name and address
27 of the legal entity that is the employer; and (9) all applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay
28 period and the corresponding number of hours worked at each hourly rate. Lab. Code § 226.

1 201. As DEFENDANTS failed to provide PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees
2 with meal and rest periods that complied with Labor Code section 226.7, the wage statements
3 DEFENDANTS issued to PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees failed and continue to fail
4 to correctly set forth (a) the gross wages earned, in violation of Labor Code section 226(a)(1); (b)
5 the total hours worked by the employee in violation of Labor Code section 226(a)(2); (c) the net
6 wages earned, in violation of Labor Code section 226(a)(5); and (d) all applicable hourly rates in
7 effect during the pay period and the corresponding number of hours worked at each hourly rate by
8 the employee, in violation of Labor Code section 226(a)(9).

9 202. Moreover, due to violations detailed above, including but not limited to,
10 DEFENDANTS' failure to pay regular and overtime wages for all hours worked, failure to provide
11 meal and rest break premiums, and failure to pay all sick leave wages at the proper rates,
12 DEFENDANTS have violated California Labor Code § 226 by willfully failing to furnish
13 PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees with accurate, itemized wage statements that listed
14 the gross and net wages earned and the correct applicable rates of pay for all hours worked. Based
15 on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to incorporate all forms of non-discretionary
16 compensation earned during the pay period into the regular rate of pay for purposes of calculating
17 the owed overtime rate, and as such, failed to display the proper overtime rate(s) for each hour of
18 overtime worked by PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees.

19 203. As explained above, wage statements issued by DEFENDANTS failed to list the
20 "total hours worked" by PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees (by virtue of rounded time entries,
21 automatic deduction for meal periods/failure to relieve Aggrieved Employees of all duties and
22 employer control during unpaid meal periods, and/or other off-the-clock work policies and practices
23 described above), which results in a violation of Labor Code section 226(a). Failure to list all hours
24 worked on a wage statement, gives rise to an inference of injury under Labor Code Section 226
25 (*Maldonado v. Epsilon Plastics, Inc.*, (2018) 22 Cal.App.5th 1308, 1337).

26 204. Based on information and belief, wage statements issued by DEFENDANTS failed
27 to list all applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the corresponding number of
28 hours worked at each hourly rate by the employee, in violation of, including but not limited to, Labor

1 Code section 226(a)(9).

2 205. Separately, and independent from the above allegations, based on information and
3 belief, DEFENDANTS issued wage statements to PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees that
4 violate Labor Code section 226(a)(8), by failing to list the correct name and/or address of the legal
5 entity that is the employer.

6 206. Based on information and belief, wage statements issued by DEFENDANTS failed
7 to list the inclusive dates of the pay period for which the Class Member is being paid.

8 207. DEFENDANTS' failure to accurately list all hours worked on all wage statements
9 caused confusion to PLAINTIFF and caused and continues to cause confusion to other Aggrieved
10 Employees over whether they received all wages owed to them.

11 208. As a result, PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees have suffered injury as
12 they could not easily determine whether they received all wages owed to them and whether they
13 were paid for all hours worked.

14 209. Moreover, as a result of DEFENDANTS' failure to list the correct name and/or
15 address of the legal entity that is the employer, PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees have suffered
16 injury as they could not contact their employer regarding any question(s) they had about wages paid.

17 210. DEFENDANTS' knowingly and intentionally failed to provide PLAINTIFF and
18 Aggrieved Employees with accurate, itemized wage statements.

19 211. As a result of DEFENDANTS' unlawful conduct, PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved
20 Employees have suffered injury. The absence of accurate information on their wage statements has
21 prevented earlier challenges to DEFENDANTS' unlawful pay practices, will require discovery and
22 mathematical computations to determine the amount of wages owed, and will cause difficulty and
23 expense in attempting to reconstruct time and pay records. DEFENDANTS' conduct led to the
24 submission of inaccurate information about wages and amounts deducted from wages to state and
25 federal government agencies. As a result, PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved Employees are required to
26 participate in this lawsuit and create more difficulty and expense from having to reconstruct time
27 and pay records than if DEFENDANT had complied with its legal obligations.

28 212. These violations subject DEFENDANTS to civil penalties under Labor Code § 226.

1 Each violation results in a *separate* civil penalty, for each Aggrieved Employee, for each pay period
2 during which the statute provisions were violated. ³

3 **Unlawful Deductions**

4 213. Labor Code section 221 prohibits an employer from “collect[ing] or receiv[ing] from
5 an employee any part of wages theretofore paid by said employer to said employee.” Based on
6 information and belief DEFENDANTS made unlawful deductions from Aggrieved Employees
7 paychecks during the relevant period. Such a practice is in violation of including but not limited to,
8 Labor Code Sections 221-222 which subjects DEFENDANTS to civil penalties under Labor Code
9 Section 2699.

10 214. Each violation results in a separate civil penalty, for each Aggrieved Employee, for
11 each pay period during which the statute provisions were violated. See Lab. Code §225.5
12 (establishing that “[i]n addition to, and entirely independent and apart from, any other penalty
13 provided in this article, every person who unlawfully withholds wages due any employee in
14 violation of Section 212, 216, 221, 222, or 223 shall be subject to a civil penalty...for each failure
15 to pay each employee”).

16 **Reporting Time Pay Violations**

17 215. Section 5 of all applicable IWC Wage Orders, provides as follows:

18 216. (A) Each workday an employee is required to report for work and does report, but is
19 not put to work or is furnished less than half said employee’s usual or scheduled day’s work, the
20 employee shall be paid for half the usual or scheduled day’s work, but in no event for less than two
21 (2) hours nor more than four (4) hours, at the employee’s regular rate of pay, which shall not be less
22 than the minimum wage. (B) If an employee is required to report for work a second time in any one
23 workday and is furnished less than two (2) hours of work on the second reporting said employee
24 shall be paid for two hours at the employee's regular rate of pay, which shall not be less than the
25 minimum wage.

26 217. Aggrieved Employees were not paid reporting time wages in accordance with
27 California law, including but not limited to the applicable IWC Wage Order. For example, based on

28 ³ Labor Code § 226.3 (establishing that the civil penalty is ~~4~~³ per employee per violation”).

1 information and belief, at times, Aggrieved Employees reported to work for a scheduled shift but
2 were sent home and/or were not put to work and were not paid all owed reporting time pay wages
3 in accordance with California law.

4 218. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS have a policy and practice of
5 failing to pay all reporting time wages to Aggrieved Employees, in violation of California law,
6 including but not limited to, the applicable IWC Wage Order, Section 5. DEFENDANTS' failure to
7 pay all reporting time wages to Aggrieved Employees violated and continues to violate the
8 applicable Wage Order, and the California Labor Code, including but not limited to section 1198.

9 **Violation of California Day of Rest Law**

10 219. Under California law, every employee in California is "entitled" to "one day's rest
11 [from labor] in seven"; and, no employer may "cause" its employees "to work more than six days in
12 seven." *See* Labor Code Sections 551 and 552. Labor Code section 553 provides that a violation of
13 the foregoing sections is a misdemeanor.

14 220. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS have and continue to have a
15 uniform policy and practice of requiring Aggrieved Employees to work at least seven days
16 consecutively in a workweek, in violation of including but not limited to, Labor Code Section
17 551. Based on information and belief, PLAINTIFF and/or other Aggrieved Employees were
18 suffered, permitted, or required to work at least seven (7) days consecutively in a workweek, in
19 violation of California law, including but not limited to Labor Code Section 551.

20 **Seating Violations**

21 221. Per section 14(A-B) of all applicable IWC Wage Orders, employees shall be
22 provided with suitable seats when the nature of the work reasonably permits the use of seats and
23 when they are not actively engaged in the work duties that would not permit them to be seated.

24 222. All applicable IWC Wage Orders, Section 14(A-B) provides:

25 (A) All working employees shall be provided with suitable seats when the nature of the
26 work reasonably permits the use of seats.

27 (B) When employees are not engaged in the active duties of their employment and the
28 nature of the work requires standing, an adequate number of suitable seats shall be placed in

1 reasonable proximity to the work area and employees shall be permitted to use such seats when it
2 does not interfere with the performance of their duties.

3 223. Suitable seating is one of the worker protections covered by California's Wage
4 Orders, which have the same dignity as statutes, are remedial in nature and are to be broadly
5 construed to effectuate the goal of protecting the comfort and welfare of employees. *Brinker*
6 *Restaurant Corp. v. Superior Court*, 53 Cal.4th 1004, 1027 (2012).

7 224. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to provide Aggrieved
8 Employees with suitable seating, and when such employees were not engaged in duties which
9 required them to stand, no seating was placed in reasonable proximity to their workstations.

10 225. Moreover, based on information and belief, the nature of the work reasonably
11 permitted the use of seats for at least part of the time that Aggrieved Employees were working.
12 Lastly, there were periods of time when Aggrieved Employees were not engaged in active duties of
13 their employment, yet there were no suitable seats in reasonable proximity to the work area and use
14 of seats would not interfere with the performance of their duties.

15 226. The Aggrieved Employees worked in various positions. The nature of Aggrieved
16 Employees' work reasonably permitted the use of seats. However, DEFENDANTS failed to provide
17 suitable seating in reasonable proximity to Aggrieved Employees' work areas in violation of section
18 14(A-B) of all applicable Wage Orders, and Labor Code sections 1198 and 1199, subjecting
19 DEFENDANTS to civil penalties under Labor Code sections 1199 and 2699. Each violation of each
20 Labor Code section and IWC Wage Order provision, for each Aggrieved Employee, results in a
21 separate civil penalty.

22 **Violation of Labor Code section 351 and 353**

23 227. Labor Code Section 351 prohibits employers and their agents from sharing in or
24 keeping any portion of a gratuity left for or given to one or more employees by a patron.
25 Furthermore, it is illegal for employers to make wage deductions from gratuities, or from using
26 gratuities as direct or indirect credits against an employee's wages. Labor Code Section 353
27 mandates employers to keep accurate records of all gratuities received.

28 228. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to ensure that Aggrieved

1 Employees fully received the gratuities left for them by patrons, in that DEFENDANTS' and its
2 agents would collect and/or take a portion of the gratuities for themselves, in violation of Labor
3 Code Section 351. Based on further information and belief, DEFENDANTS also failed to keep
4 accurate records of all tips received, in violation of Labor Code Section 353. Based on information
5 and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to pay gratuities paid by customers using credit cards to
6 Aggrieved Employees by the next regular payday following the credit card payment, in violation of
7 Labor Code section 351.

8 229. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS charges an additional service
9 charge to its customers/patrons. Customers are led to believe that the service charge will be paid to
10 DEFENDANTS' Aggrieved Employees. Instead, DEFENDANTS keep a majority (if not the
11 entirety) of the service charge, thereby depriving Aggrieved Employees of the service
12 charge/gratuity that is left by the patron/customer for the Aggrieved Employees. *See O'Grady v*
13 *Merchant Exchanges Production, Inc.*, 41 Cal.App.5th 771, 790 (a mandatory service charge can
14 constitute a gratuity that is intended to the employees providing the service).

15 230. Pursuant to PAGA, DEFENDANTS are liable for penalties of \$100 per pay period
16 payable to each Aggrieved Employee for the first violation of Labor Code Sections 351 and 353
17 they experienced within the statutory period, and \$200 per pay period for each additional violation.

18 **Sick Leave Violations**

19 231. DEFENDANTS violated California's paid sick leave laws including, Labor Code
20 section 245-248.5 and 233-234. DEFENDANTS either failed to provide sick leave pay to
21 PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees or failed to properly accrue paid sick leave due to
22 DEFENDANTS' failure to account for actual hours worked (as explained above), and/or failure to
23 incorporate multiple rates of pay and/or all forms of non-discretionary remuneration including but
24 not limited to, non-discretionary bonuses, shift differential pay, and/or other non-discretionary
25 compensation into the sick leave pay rate calculation.

26 232. DEFENDANTS further failed to give PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees
27 notice of their paid sick leave rights – or thereby putting their entitlement to sick leave in a Labor
28 Code section 2810.5 notice. In addition, DEFENDANTS failed to maintain accurate records of used

1 sick leave and the balance of paid sick leave left to the employees, which affected PLAINTIFF and
2 Aggrieved Employees' intelligent exercise of their paid sick leave.

3 233. But for this failure, PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved Employees would have used
4 their paid sick leave at least prior to their respective separations, for as on several occasions
5 thereafter, he or she would have been entitled to use the banked sick leave and earn appropriate
6 compensation.

7 234. In violation of Labor Code section 247.5, DEFENDANTS failed to maintain records
8 documenting the hours worked and paid sick days accrued and used by PLAINTIFF and all
9 Aggrieved Employees, permitting the presumption that PLAINTIFF and all Aggrieved Employees
10 were entitled to the maximum number of hours accruable.

11 235. Upon information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed and continue to fail to comply
12 with Labor Code section 246, by failing to provide PLAINTIFF and all Aggrieved Employees with
13 a Labor Code section 226 wage statement, or separate writing containing the amount of paid sick
14 leave available, or paid time off leave an employer provides in lieu of sick leave, at the time it pays
15 wages.

16 236. These practices violated California's sick leave laws, Labor Code section 245, *et seq.*

17 237. On information and belief, PLAINTIFF alleges that all of these practices were
18 experienced and continue to be experienced by other Aggrieved Employees.

19 238. Accordingly, PLAINTIFF seeks all appropriate relief under the PAGA, the
20 aforementioned code provisions including but not limited to Labor Code section 233 and 234, and
21 seeks injunctive relief, attorney's fees, declaratory relief, and penalties as permitted by law.

22 **Failure To Provide Supplemental Paid Sick Leave**

23 239. Labor Code § 248.2 provides that all employers with 26 or more employees are
24 required to provide up to 80 hours for covered employees to take 2021 COVID-19 Supplemental
25 Paid Sick Leave to care for themselves, to care for a family member or if it is vaccine-related.
26 DEFENDANTS violated Labor Code § 248.2 by not providing PLAINTIFF and other Aggrieved
27 Employees with required 2021 COVID-19 Supplemental Paid Sick Leave. Based on information
28 and belief, DEFENDANTS failed to provide Supplemental Paid Sick Leave in 2022 in violation of

1 Labor Code section 248.6.

2 **Failure to Pay Vested Vacation/Paid Time Off**

3 240. California Labor Code section 227.3 provides that when an employer policy provides
4 for paid vacations and/or paid time off, and an employee is terminated without having taken off his,
5 her, or their vested vacation time, all vested vacation shall be paid to the employee as wages at the
6 employee's final rate in accordance with such contract of employment or employer policy respecting
7 eligibility or time served and that there shall be no forfeiture of vested vacation time or paid time
8 off upon termination.

9 241. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS had and continue to have a
10 uniform policy and practice of failing to allow Aggrieved Employees to use their earned
11 vacation/paid time off during their employment and failing to pay all vested, accrued paid time off
12 to Aggrieved Employees upon separation of employment, in violation of California law, including
13 but not limited to, Labor Code section 227.3.

14 **Untimely Payment of Final Wages**

15 242. California Labor Code section 201(a) provides, in relevant part, that "[i]f an
16 employer discharges an employee, the wages earned and unpaid at the time of discharge are due and
17 payable immediately." California Labor Code section 202(a) provides, in relevant part, that "[i]f an
18 employee not having a written contract for a definite period quits his or her employment, his or her
19 wages shall become due and payable not later than 72 hours thereafter, unless the employee has
20 given 72 hours previous notice of his or her intention to quit, in which case the employee is entitled
21 to his or her wages at the time of quitting."

22 243. Pursuant to Labor Code section 203, an employer that willfully fails to pay wages
23 due an employee who is terminated or resigns must pay (in addition to the unpaid wages) a penalty
24 equal to the employee's daily wages for each day, not exceeding 30 days, that the wages are unpaid.
25 Case law clarifies this 30-day waiting time penalty is recoverable under the PAGA via Labor Code
26 section 256. See, *Iskanian v. CLS Transportation Los Angeles, LLC*, 59 Cal.4th 348 (2014); see also,
27 *Caliber Bodyworks, Inc. v. Superior Court*, 134 Cal. App. 4th 365 (2005).

28 244. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS failed and continue to fail to timely

1 pay final wages to Aggrieved Employees upon separation of employment in violation of Labor Code
2 section 201-202. Moreover, final paychecks once provided to PLAINTIFF and Aggrieved
3 Employees did not include all wages owed as they are devoid of, including but not limited to, all
4 owed minimum wages, overtime wages, premium wages, vacation pay, and all owed sick leave
5 and/or paid time off wages at the properly accrued rates.

6 245. As a result, DEFENDANTS violated Labor Code sections 201, 202, and 203. These
7 violations subject DEFENDANTS to civil penalties under Labor Code sections 203, 210, and/or
8 256.

9 **Unlawful Agreements/ Unlawful Criminal History Inquiries**

10 246. *Unlawful Agreements.* Labor Code section 432.5 provides that “no employer...shall
11 require any employee or applicant for employment to agree, in writing, to any term or condition
12 which is known by such employer...to be prohibited by law.” DEFENDANTS required Aggrieved
13 Employees to agree in writing to unlawful conditions of employment including but not limited to
14 unlawful non-solicitation/non-compete agreements, unlawful confidentiality and/or nondisclosure
15 agreements, unlawful releases and/or waivers, including but not limited to unlawful meal period
16 waivers, unlawful forum selection clauses and/or choice of law provisions/agreements and/or
17 unlawful criminal and/or financial checks as a condition of obtaining and/or continuing employment
18 in violation of Labor Code section 432.5.

19 247. Labor Code section 432.6(a), provides that “a person shall not, as a condition of
20 employment, continued employment, or the receipt of any employment-related benefit, require any
21 applicant for employment or any employee to waive any right...”

22 248. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS required Aggrieved Employees to
23 sign meal period waivers that were universally signed as a condition of employment, including but
24 not limited to, during the onboarding process. By requiring Aggrieved Employees to sign unlawful
25 meal period waivers as a condition of obtaining and/or maintaining employment, DEFENDANTS
26 violated Labor Code section 432.5. Further, these invalid waivers are otherwise unlawful under
27 Labor Code section 432.6.

28 249. Moreover, the California Labor Code places certain procedural and substantive limits

1 on an employers' ability to conduct employee background checks and on how employers can use
2 the information they obtain through those background checks. Labor Code section 1024.5 states that
3 employers, except for financial institutions, may order a credit check only if the individual works
4 (or is applying to work) in certain positions (e.g., managerial positions, financially-related positions,
5 and certain government positions). Additionally, the Investigative Consumer Reporting Agencies
6 Act (ICRAA- CA Civil Code section 1786, *et seq.*) and the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA - 15
7 U.S.C. section 1681, *et seq.*) mandate several requirements prior to and following an employee
8 background check, including but not limited to identifying an appropriate reason for the background
9 check, a separate consent form with required disclosures and certain formatting requirements,
10 additional forms such as a summary of rights, a way by which to request a copy of the report, as
11 well as proper notice of adverse actions taken, among other statutory requirements.

12 250. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS ordered unlawful financial credit
13 checks on Aggrieved Employees, in violation of Labor Code section 1024.5, and required them to
14 provide ongoing written consent to the unlawful credit checks as a condition of employment, in
15 violation of California and Federal law, which results in a violation of Labor Code section 432.5.

16 251. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS required Aggrieved Employees to
17 submit and/or agree to submit in writing to unlawful criminal background checks as a condition of
18 obtaining and/or holding employment in violation of the ICRAA and the FCRA as alleged above.

19 252. Based on further information and belief, DEFENDANTS required Aggrieved
20 Employees to agree in writing to provide DEFENDANTS with ongoing consent to conduct
21 background checks throughout the duration of employment, in violation of the ICRAA and/or FCRA
22 and/or other applicable laws, resulting in a further violation of Labor Code section 432.5, by
23 requiring applicants and employees to agree to an unlawful provision as a condition of employment.

24 253. Based on further information and belief, DEFENDANTS knew that requiring
25 Aggrieved Employees to agree to unlawful criminal and/or financial background checks as a
26 condition of obtaining and/or holding employment was unlawful.

27 254. By requiring that Aggrieved Employees sign off on the illegal background and/or
28 financial checks, DEFENDANTS violated Labor Code section 432.5.

1 Unlawful Inquires into Criminal History

2 255. Labor Code section 432.7 prohibits an employer from asking applicants about past
3 arrest(s) unless they resulted in conviction(s) and even then, certain limitations apply. Based on
4 information and belief, DEFENDANTS asked Aggrieved Employees about arrests not resulting in
5 convictions on its employment application, in violation of California law.

6 256. Upon information and belief, DEFENDANTS, in violation of California law,
7 including but not limited to the Fair Chance Act/the California Fair Employment and Housing Act
8 (“FEHA”), asked Aggrieved Employees about convictions prior to extending an offer of
9 employment and/or otherwise impermissibly inquired into criminal history on its employment
10 application in violation of California law.

11 257. By asking about arrests not resulting in convictions, DEFENDANTS violated Labor
12 Code section 432.7. By asking about convictions at the application phase or prior to extending an
13 employment offer, DEFENDANTS violated California’s Fair Chance Act, and thereby violated
14 Labor Code section 432.5 by unlawfully requiring Aggrieved Employees to agree in writing to
15 disclose arrests and/or convictions as a condition of employment.

16 Unlawful PAGA Waiver

17 258. Additionally, DEFENDANTS violated Labor Code section 432.5 by requiring
18 Aggrieved Employees to agree in writing to other unlawful agreements, including but not limited
19 to, an unlawful waiver of PAGA and/or representative actions as a condition of employment.

20 259. An action pursuant to PAGA “...is a representative action on behalf of the state”
21 *Kim v Reins Int’l California, Inc.*, (2020) 9 Cal. 5th 73, 86-87. It is well settled that agreements
22 purporting to waive an employee’s right to a trial of PAGA claims is contrary to California law and
23 unenforceable. See *Iskanian v CLS Transportation Los Angeles, LLC* (2014) 59 Cal. 4th 348, 384
24 (“We conclude that where, as here, an employment agreement compels the waiver of representative
25 claims under the PAGA, it is contrary to public policy and unenforceable as a matter of state law.”)

26 260. Moreover, the California Supreme Court has ruled that a court cannot compel
27 arbitration of an aggrieved employee’s individual PAGA claim because there is no such thing as an
28 individual PAGA claim. *Kim v Reins Int’l California, Inc.*, (2020) 9 Cal. 5th 73, 86-87 (“There is

1 no individual component to a PAGA action because ‘every PAGA action ... is a representative
2 action on behalf of the state.’”)

3 261. Upon information and belief, DEFENDANTS required Aggrieved Employees to
4 agree in writing to waive their right to a trial of PAGA claims in violation of California law. By
5 requiring Aggrieved Employees to agree, in writing, to an unlawful PAGA waiver, DEFENDANTS
6 required written agreement to an unlawful provision as a condition of employment which is a
7 violation of labor code section 432.5.

8 **Violation of Labor Code Section 432.6**

9 262. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS required Aggrieved Employees to
10 sign meal period waivers that were universally signed as a condition of employment, including but
11 not limited to, during the onboarding process. Further, these invalid waivers are otherwise unlawful
12 under Labor Code section 432.6.

13 263. Labor Code Section 432.6(a) provides: “[A] person shall not, as a condition of
14 employment, continued employment, or the receipt of any employment-related benefit, require any
15 applicant for employment or any employee to waive any right...”

16 264. Labor Code Section 432.6(b) provides in pertinent part:

17 265. “An employer shall not threaten, retaliate, or discriminate against, or terminate any
18 applicant for employment or any employee because of the refusal to the waiver of any right...”

19 266. Based on information and belief, DEFENDANTS require/required Aggrieved
20 Employees to waive their right to first and/or second meal periods as a condition of working for
21 DEFENDANTS in violation of California law. As such, DEFENDANTS violated including but not
22 limited to, Labor Code section 432.6 by virtue of including but not limited to, requiring Aggrieved
23 Employees to sign invalid meal period waivers as a condition of employment and/or for threatening,
24 retaliating and/or discriminating against and/or terminating Aggrieved Employees because of their
25 refusal to waive their meal period rights.

26 267. Under the provisions of PAGA and the above mentioned Labor Code sections,
27 including but not limited to Labor Code sections 201-203, 208, 210, 216, 221-223, 225.5, 226,
28 226.7, 227.3, 245-248.6, 256, 432, 432.5, 432.6, 432.7, 510, 512, 558, 558.1, 1174, 1174.5, 1194,

1 1197, 1197.1, 1198, 1198.5, 1199, 2699, 2699.3, 2802, 2810.5 and all applicable Wage Orders as
2 well as all interpretations of these laws by California Courts and administrative bodies, as well as
3 any other law that is enforceable through PAGA, DEFENDANTS are liable for the following
4 penalties:

- 5 a. All statutorily-specified penalties recoverable under PAGA as enumerated in the
6 relevant California Labor Code provisions listed herein only if permitted by the
7 PAGA statute, pursuant to Labor Code section 2699(a); and
- 8 b. Default PAGA penalties for any violation of the enumerated list of Labor Code
9 violations without a civil penalty recoverable under the PAGA, all in the default
10 amounts provided by Labor Code section 2699(f).
- 11 c. The proper measure of penalties under PAGA is the number of violations,
12 whether those violations were committed as against PLAINTIFF or any
13 Aggrieved Employee, whether a party to this action or not.

14 268. Pursuant to Labor Code section 2699(g), and/or any and all other applicable laws,
15 PLAINTIFF is entitled to recover civil penalties, costs, and attorney's fees.

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1 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

2 WHEREFORE, PLAINTIFF prays for relief and judgment as follows on behalf of
3 PLAINTIFF, the State of California, and all Aggrieved Employees:

- 4 1. For civil penalties under Labor Code Section 2699 (75% payable to the
5 LWDA and 25% payable to Aggrieved Employees);
6 2. For an order temporarily, preliminarily and permanently enjoining and
7 restraining DEFENDANTS from engaging in similar unlawful conduct as set
8 forth herein;
9 3. For reasonable attorney's fees and costs of suit; and
10 4. For such other and further relief that the Court deems just and proper.

11
12 Dated: December 4, 2023

CROSNER LEGAL, PC

13
14 By: _____



15 Jamie K. Serb, Esq.
16 Brandon Brouillette, Esq.
17 Zachary M. Crosner, Esq.
18 Attorneys for Plaintiff
19 CANDICE VALENZUELA
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