



FILED
Superior Court of California
County of San Francisco

JUN 26 2026

CLERK OF THE COURT

BY: *Alan Kane*
Deputy Clerk

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

CHANDNI SINGH, individually, and on behalf
of all others similarly situated

Plaintiff,

v.

SHORT STORY, INC., a corporation; and
DOES 1 through 10, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No. CGC-23-609394

ORDER GRANTING PLAINTIFF'S
MOTION FOR FINAL APPROVAL AND
APPROVING ATTORNEY'S FEES, COSTS,
AND A SERVICE AWARD

Before the court is an unopposed motion by plaintiff Chandni Singh for final approval of the \$500,000 settlement of wage-and-hour claims, including a claim under PAGA, reached with defendant Short Story, Inc. along with a request for approval of attorney's fees, costs, and a service award. The motion was heard on June 25, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. in Department 613, the Honorable Jeffrey S. Ross presiding. Alan Wilcox (Wilshire Law Firm) appeared for plaintiff. Vani Parti (DLA Piper LLP) appeared for defendant. IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the motion for final approval is **GRANTED** with approved attorney's fees of **\$110,000**, costs of **\$25,685.23**, and a service award of **\$3,000**. A compliance hearing is **RESERVED** for **March 12, 2027, at 9:00 a.m.** with an interim compliance statement containing an accounting of all settlement funds due by **August 31, 2026**, and an updated compliance statement due by **March 5, 2027**. The court otherwise ORDERS as follows:

1 1. Except as otherwise specified here, the court adopts and incorporates by reference the
2 terms and definitions of the settlement agreement.

3 2. The following Settlement Class is certified for settlement purposes (SA, §§ 1.5, 1.13): *All*
4 *individuals employed by Defendant in the State of California in non-exempt positions during the Class*
5 *Period, which is the period from September 29, 2019, through January 21, 2026.*

6 3. The court finds that the Settlement Class meets the requirements for certification under
7 Code of Civil Procedure section 382 because: (1) the proposed Settlement Class is numerous and
8 ascertainable; (2) there are predominant common questions of law or fact; (3) Singh's claims are typical
9 of the claims of the members of the proposed Settlement Class; and (4) a class action is superior to other
10 methods to efficiently adjudicate this controversy.

11 4. The notice and plan of distribution approved by this court met the requirements of due
12 process and constituted the best notice practicable under the circumstances. As set forth in the declaration
13 of Beth Paris, Apex Class Action, LLC distributed notice in compliance with this court's preliminary
14 approval order and the settlement agreement. The court finds the administration process to date was
15 adequate and comported with due process, reaching nearly all class members (Paris Decl., ¶ 9).

16 5. No class members requested to exclude themselves from the settlement. (Paris Decl., ¶ 11.)

17 6. No class members objected to the settlement. (Paris Decl., ¶ 12.)

18 7. The court has considered the *Dunk/Kullar* factors and approves the as a fair, adequate, and
19 reasonable settlement.

20 8. For settlement purposes only, Chandni Singh is appointed as class representative. Singh
21 proposes receiving a service award of \$10,000, which is more than ten times the average class member's
22 settlement share (\$747.32). While Singh conferred with counsel throughout the case as any client or class
23 representative must do, the record does not establish Singh was deposed or undertook extraordinary
24 efforts that warrant such a substantial service award in comparison to the size of the settlement and
25 average payment to class members. Singh did not submit any declaration with the final approval motion
26 that would supply any new facts to support a \$10,000 service award. The court approves an award of
27 **\$3,000** for plaintiff's service to the class. (See generally *Cellphone Termination Fee Cases* (2010) 186
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1 Cal.App.4th 1380, 1394–95.)

2 9. For settlement purposes only, Wilshire Law Firm, PLC is appointed as Class Counsel.
3 The court authorizes reimbursement of class counsel’s expenses in the amount of **\$25,685.23**, which
4 includes mediation and expert fees along with filing and service fees but does not include \$300 in
5 unverified future costs and \$2,210 in unidentified expenses (opaquely labeled as “Asset Stage 1 & 2”) that
6 are not attributable to work performed by retained expert Berger Consulting Group, LLC. The court does
7 not award the requested attorney’s fees of \$166,666.67 because they are not reasonable under the
8 circumstances. Instead, the court finds that **\$110,000** or 22 percent of the fund is a reasonable award of
9 attorney’s fees under the circumstances. This percentage award is corroborated by a lodestar cross-check
10 as this award exceeds the cited lodestar figure of \$107,000. In reaching this conclusion, the court notes
11 that the true lodestar figure is almost certainly less than \$107,000 as nearly half of the 132.3 hours used to
12 calculate this lodestar figure are based on an estimate by “settlement attorney” Conor Gomez of the hours
13 worked by other attorneys that have since left the firm—including Justin Marquez, Arsine Grigoryan, and
14 Brooke Wilkinson Waldrop—rather than the actual and reasonable number of hours documented by those
15 attorneys. (Gomez Decl. at p. 5, n. 1.) And, it is unclear what Mr. Gomez consulted, if anything, for
16 purposes of estimating these hours. Additionally, the court finds that the substantial number of hours
17 billed by multiple more senior attorneys at rates of \$950 to \$1,200 per hour is unreasonable for the nature
18 and quantum of work necessary to reach a settlement in this ordinary wage-and-hour case in which there
19 was little litigation activity and no motions practice between the time the case was filed in 2023 and the
20 time the motion for preliminary approval was filed in October 2025, more than six months after the
21 parties mediated and settled the case. Accordingly, the court settles on a reasonable award of \$110,000.

22 10. The court hereby approves payment of administration expenses to Apex Class Action, LLC
23 in the amount of **\$7,490**. Apex shall continue to serve as settlement administrator and shall, inter alia,
24 disburse payments to class members, aggrieved employees, and the LWDA in accordance with the terms
25 of the settlement agreement and this final approval order.

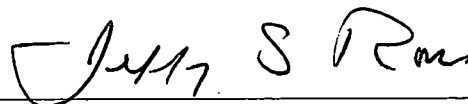
26 11. The Court reserves a compliance hearing for **March 12, 2027, at 9:00 a.m.** No later than
27 **March 5, 2027**, the parties shall submit a compliance statement setting forth an updated accounting of
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1 funds, including the number and value of any uncashed settlement checks, and any other matters the
2 parties need to bring to the court's attention. The compliance statement must be accompanied by a
3 declaration from a representative of Apex. The parties must also submit an interim compliance statement
4 setting forth all disbursements made by **August 31, 2026**.

5 12. Class Counsel shall serve the LWDA with a copy of this order within **5 court days**.

6 13. Pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure section 664.6, and Rule 3.769(h) of the California
7 Rules of Court—and without impacting the finality of this order—the court retains jurisdiction over
8 plaintiff, all members of the Settlement Class, and defendant for the purpose of supervising the
9 implementation, enforcement, construction, administration, and interpretation of the settlement agreement
10 and this order.

11 Dated: June 26, 2026



JEFFREY S. ROSS
Judge of the Superior Court

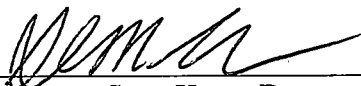
CERTIFICATE OF ELECTRONIC SERVICE
(CCP 1010.6 & CRC 2.251)

I, Sean Kane, a Deputy Clerk of the Superior Court of the County of San Francisco, certify that I am not a party to the within action.

On June 26, 2026, I electronically served the attached document via File & ServeXpress on the recipients designated on the Transaction Receipt located on the File & ServeXpress website.

Dated: June 26, 2026

Brandon E. Riley, Court Executive Officer

By: _____
Sean Kane, Deputy Clerk