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15 Attorneys for FRANCISCO ARROYO MORA, on behalf of himself,
16 all others similarly situated, and on behalf of the general public

17 **SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

18 **IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF ORANGE**

19 FRANCISCO ARROYO MORA on behalf of
20 himself, all others similarly situated, and on
21 behalf of the general public,

22 Plaintiffs,

23 v.

24 STERLING PLUMBING, INC.; and DOES

25 1-100,

26 Defendants.

CASE NO. 30-2024-01371468-CU-OE-CXC

*[Assigned for all purposes to the Honorable Layne
H. Melzer; CX 102]*

**DECLARATION OF DAVID MARA ISO
PLAINTIFF'S MOTION FOR FINAL
APPROVAL OF CLASS ACTION
SETTLEMENT**

Date: March 5, 2026

Time: 2:00 p.m.

1 I, DAVID MARA, declare as follows:

- 2 1. I am President of Mara Law Firm, PC, and counsel of record for Plaintiff and the putative class in this
3 matter. I am duly admitted to practice before all the courts of the state of California. The following
4 facts are within my personal knowledge and, if called to testify, I could and would competently testify
5 thereto.
- 6 2. I graduated from California Western School of Law and was admitted to practice law in California in
7 May 2004.
- 8 3. I extensively handle employment cases which involve violations of the California Labor Code and
9 Industrial Welfare Commission Wage Orders, such as wage and hour class actions and cases alleging
10 violations of the Private Attorneys General Act of 2004 (“PAGA”). I have litigated over three hundred
11 and fifty (350) class action and PAGA lawsuits over the course of nearly 20 years.
- 12 4. I was co-class counsel in *Hohnbaum v. Brinker Restaurant Corp.* (San Diego County Superior Court,
13 Case No. GIC834348) which was the underlying case in the California Supreme Court’s landmark
14 decision in *Brinker Restaurant Corp. v. Superior Court* (2012) 53 Cal.4th 1004, in which the
15 California Supreme Court delineated the scope of employer obligations to provide, and employee
16 rights to receive, meal and rest periods under California law.
- 17 5. I previously authored Amicus Curiae briefs on behalf of Consumer Attorneys of California
18 (“CAOC”). For example, I authored the Amicus Curiae briefs on behalf of CAOC in *Augustus v. ABM*
19 *Security Services, Inc.* (2016) 2 Cal.5th 257, (The California Supreme Court ruling that, like meal
20 periods, employers must relieve employees of all duty and relinquish all control to satisfactorily
21 discharge its obligation to authorize and permit rest periods.); *Frlekin v. Apple, Inc.* (2020) 8 Cal.5th
22 1038 (The California Supreme Court ruling that the time spent on the employer’s premises waiting
23 for, and undergoing, required exit searches of packages, bags, or personal technology devices
24 voluntarily brought to work is compensable hours worked within the meaning of the Wage Orders.);
25 *Oliver v. Superior Court* (2021) California Court of Appeal Case No. H049185 (A brief asking the
26 California Court of Appeal for the Sixth Appellate District to determine whether mandatory drive time
27 of personal vehicles should be considered hours worked within the meaning of the Wage Orders’
28 suffered or permitted test.). *Davidson v. O’Reilly Auto Enterprises, LLC* (9th Cir., 2020; Docket No.

1 18-56188) (a brief seeking Review *En Banc* of an order denying class certification in a wage and hour
2 matter).

3 6. My firm has been named as class counsel in a number of wage and hour class actions in which the
4 Court granted the plaintiff's motion for class certification. For example, my firm has been named class
5 counsel: *Mario Norona v. B&G Delivery System, Inc.* (Sacramento County Superior Court, Case No.
6 34-2015-00186826-CU-OE-GDS); *Jerald Schroeder v. YRC, Inc.; et al.* (Central District of
7 California, Case No. 12-cv-01374-TJH); *John Martin v. Sysco Corporation, et al.* (Eastern District of
8 California, Case No. 1:16-cv-00990-DAD-SAB); *William Smith v. Werner Enterprises, Inc. d/b/a*
9 *C.L. Werner, Inc.* (District of Nebraska, Case No. 8:15-cv-287); *Thomas Perez v. City of San Diego*
10 (San Diego County Superior Court, Case No. 37-2014-00016621-CU-OE-CTL); *Eric Mendez v.*
11 *M&N Consulting, Inc. dba A-Line Messenger Service* (San Bernardino County Superior Court, Case
12 No. CIVDS1923624); *Denson Sales v. Professional Auto Transport, Inc. et al.* (San Bernardino
13 County Superior Court, Case No. CIVDS2010153); *Sonny Williams v. Hansen and Adkins Auto*
14 *Transport, Inc.; et al.* (San Bernardino County Superior Court, Case No. CIVDS2020832); *Bobby*
15 *Williams v. Mohsen Transport, Inc.* (San Diego County Superior Court, Case No. 37-2019-00063361-
16 CU-OE-CTL); and *Ashton Harden vs. Mushiana Transport Inc.* (Sacramento County Superior Court,
17 Case No. 34-2021-00301950-CU-OE-GDS).

18 7. My firm has also been named as class counsel in numerous cases during the settlement process. Here
19 is a non-exhaustive list of cases where my firm has been named as class counsel in cases during the
20 settlement process: *Kenneth Cox v. 3PL Worx, et al.* (Yolo County Superior Court, Case No. CV-18-
21 100); *Brian Davidson v. A&B Trucking Services, Inc.* (Kern County Superior Court Case No. BCV-
22 16-102985); *Alex Vega, et al. v. Advance Beverage Co., Inc.* (Kern County Superior Court, Case No.
23 BCV-16-100848); *Jaime Ruiz v. Altura Centers for Health* (Kern County Superior Court, Case No.
24 BCV-19-101577); *George Zamudio v. AmeriPride Service, Inc.* (Alameda County Superior Court,
25 Case No. RG1809666); *Richard Hendricks v. Antonini Freight Express, Inc.* (San Joaquin County
26 Superior Court, Case No. STK-CV-UOE-2016-6999); *Alton Davis v. Apria Healthcare Group, Inc.*
27 (San Diego County Superior Court, Case No. 37-2014-00004724-CU-OE-CTL); *Alan Atchison v.*
28 *Ashley Furniture Industries, Inc., et al.* (Central District of California, Case No. 17-cv-00528-JAK-

1 SP); *Bernard Payton v. Atech Logistics, Inc.* (Sonoma County Superior Court, Case No. SCV
2 258595); *Ramon Jenkins v. Compass Group USA, Inc., et al.* (Yolo County Superior Court, Case No.
3 CVCV-18-747); *Timothy Spikes, et al. v. Bear Trucking, Inc., et al.* (San Bernardino County Superior
4 Court, Case No. CIVDS1715151); *Joshua Turpen v. Benjamin's Transfer Inc.* (Solano County
5 Superior Court, Case No. FCS048845); *Cesar Mendoza v. Bi-Rite Food Service, Inc.* (San Mateo
6 County Superior Court, Case No. 17CIV02044); *Terrance Bailey v. Blue Apron, LLC; et al.* (Northern
7 District of California, Case No. 18-cv-07000-VC); *Jeffrey Weast v. California Aseptic Beverages,*
8 *LLC* (San Bernardino County Superior Court, Case No. CIVDS1825256); *Michael Valentich v. Hub*
9 *Construction Specialties, Inc.* (San Bernardino County Superior Court, Case No. JCCPDS4893); *Jose*
10 *De Jesus Ortega Velazquez v. Hunter Landscape, Inc.; et al.* (San Bernardino County Superior Court,
11 Case No. CIVDS1928062); *Adrian Diaz v. Keystone Automotive Operations, Inc.* (Riverside County
12 Superior Court, Case No. RIC1817450); *Arturo Gonzalez v. NCI Group, Inc. dba NCI Building*
13 *Systems* (Eastern District of California, Case No. 18-cv-00948-AWI-SKO); *Larry Perez v. The*
14 *Nielsen Company (US), LLC* (Orange County Superior Court, Case No. 30-2021-01194324-CU-OE-
15 CXC); *Erik Martinez v. Patrick Industries, Inc.* (San Bernardino County Superior Court, Case No.
16 CIVDS2009663); *Randolph Fitch v. Shaw Industries, Inc.; et al.* (San Bernardino County Superior
17 Court, Case No. CIVSB2024674); *Joshua Rael v. Intercontinental Hotels Group Resources, Inc.* (Los
18 Angeles County Superior Court, Case No. 19STCV16010); and *Aaron Romero v. Vitro Flat Glass,*
19 *LLC* (Kern County Superior Court, Case No. BCV-21-101357).

20 8. I have also lectured as a panelist for California Employment Lawyers Association regarding a host
21 of wage and hour issues.

22 9. Defendant provides plumbing installation and bathroom construction services for its customers. In
23 order to carry out their business, Defendant employs hourly non-exempt employees, like Plaintiff
24 and Class Members. On January 8, 2024, Plaintiff filed PAGA complaint against Defendant was
25 filed by Plaintiff. As part of the Settlement, Plaintiff filed a First Amended Complaint to include
26 class claims for the original underlying alleged PAGA violations.

27 10. After filing, the Parties engaged in extensive informal discovery and Plaintiff conducted further
28 investigation into the claims. On February 9, 2024, Plaintiff served one set of interrogatories and

one set of requests for production of documents on Defendant. In addition, the Parties conducted informal discovery prior to mediation. These discovery efforts led to Defendant producing policy documents, such as its employee handbooks, which include Defendant's meal and rest period policies, as well as the other employment policies at issue in this matter. Defendant also produced time and wage records for Plaintiff and time and wage records for a sampling of Class Members. This permitted Plaintiff to fully understand the nature and scope of the allegations made in the Complaint.

11. The Parties attended an all-day mediation with respected wage and hour mediator Jeff Ross on August 28, 2024. This mediation was successful, and a Memorandum of Understanding was drafted and executed by the end of the day. The Parties then met and conferred over all the terms of the settlement and finalized their settlement in the Parties' Agreement. The Parties seek final approval of the Agreement in the instant motion.

12. Class Counsel applies for an award of attorneys' fees in the sum of \$79,766.66 (one-third of the GSA), and litigation costs of \$14,966.84 (originally estimated not to exceed \$22,500).

13. Class Counsel has worked 159.6 hours to date on this case and have calculated the lodestar fee on those hours at \$113,745 at rates reflecting those currently earned in the marketplace.

14. All of the work and tasks performed by Class Counsel were reasonable and necessary to the prosecution of this case and are reflected in the result achieved.

15. This was a highly contested matter which required a significant amount of time and labor. Class Counsel had to investigate and analyze documents and data produced by Defendant. In addition, as part of the above investigation and analysis, Plaintiff had to marshal the evidence in a manner in which it could be adjudicated on a class-wide basis. So often, lawyers unskilled in the class action aspect of wage and hour cases do not pay attention to or put the work into how the evidence must be presented for class-wide adjudication. Strong class-wide cases perish in the hands of inexperienced counsel because the case has not been worked up to succeed at certification. Class Counsel here has considerable experience in class litigation and, from the beginning of the case, is marshalling the evidence with a sharp focus on class-wide proof needed for the matter to get certified. This case was no different. This filtering of voluminous evidence into class-wide proof

1 while keeping an eye on the merits of the litigation required a considerable amount of attorney time
2 and skill.

3 16. All of the services were performed by Class Counsel on a contingent basis.

4 17. Class Counsel's hourly rates are between \$400 and \$850 and are in line with rates typically
5 approved in wage and hour class action litigation and which rates have been approved by Courts
6 in California in the Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Francisco, Alameda, Orange and San Diego
7 County Superior Courts.

8 18. I devoted 81.3 hours to this case. The following is a summary of my tasks and activities performed
9 in the litigation of this matter: research into new Defendant; reviewing and revising initial
10 complaint in PAGA action and related documents; reviewing and revising PAGA notice; reviewing
11 and revising first amended complaint; researching and investigating legal issues throughout case;
12 interoffice discussions throughout case; investigating Defendant's pay-structures and policies for
13 its employees; analyzing records produced by Defendant relating to its policies, pay-structures, and
14 time keeping; reviewing and revising mediation brief and mediation damage and exposure model;
15 preparing for and attending mediation; drafting and negotiating settlement agreement; drafting
16 declaration in support of preliminary approval; drafting declaration in support of final approval;
17 and reviewing and revising final approval motion and supporting documents.

18 19. My hourly rate is \$850. Based on my hourly rate and the hours expended, 81.3, my fee is \$69,105
19 which is reasonable and necessary to the successful litigation of this matter.

20 20. Carter Cordura is an associate at Mara Law Firm, PC. He extensively handles wage and hour class
21 actions and PAGA actions. Mr. Cordura graduated from the University of San Diego School of
22 Law and was admitted to practice law in California in December 2024 and received his
23 undergraduate degree from the California State University of San Bernardino in 2020.

24 21. Mr. Cordura oversees all aspects of the cases assigned to him. Mr. Cordura routinely writes and
25 opposes motions and argues at hearings. Mr. Cordura drafts discovery propounded on employers;
26 communicates with clients; communicates with class members; communicates with co-counsel;
27 communicates with defense counsel; drafts and revises notices to the Labor and Workforce
28 Development Agency pursuant to the Private Attorneys General Act of 2004; creates exhibits for

1 use in cases; reviews documents produced by employers; attends mediations; drafts, reviews, and
2 revises settlement agreements; drafts, reviews, and revises settlement approval motions; argues at
3 hearings on settlement motions; and oversees all day to day work in his cases.

4 22. As of the date of this filing, Mr. Cordura has devoted 11.7 hours to this case. The following is a
5 summary of his tasks and activities performed in the litigation of this matter: discussions with
6 settlement administrator; review notice documents from the settlement administrator; review and
7 respond to emails from the settlement administrator; review status reports from the settlement
8 administrator; research, prepare, and revise final approval motion and supporting documents.

9 23. Mr. Cordura's hourly rate is \$400. Based on his hourly rate and the hours expended 11.7, his
10 lodestar fee is \$4,680, which was reasonable and necessary to the successful litigation of this
11 matter.

12 24. Matthew Crawford is a former senior associate at Mara Law Firm, PC. During his time at Mara
13 Law Firm PC, he solely handled wage and hour class actions and PAGA actions. Mr. Crawford
14 graduated from Pepperdine University Rick J. Caruso School of Law and was admitted to
15 practice law in California in June 2016 and received his undergraduate degree from University
16 of California, San Diego in 2011. Mr. Crawford has been litigating wage and hour class actions
17 for over eight (8) years and has handled over one hundred and fifty (150) class action and PAGA
18 lawsuits.

19 25. Mr. Crawford has been named as class counsel in the following certified cases as a result of the
20 court granting a motion for class certification: *John Martin v. Sysco Corporation; Sysco Central*
21 *California, Inc.* (Eastern District of California, Case No. 1:16-cv-00990-DAD-SAB); *Eric*
22 *Mendez v. M & N Consulting, Inc. dba A-Line Messenger Service* (San Bernardino County
23 Superior Court, Case No. CIVDS1923624); *Denson M. Sales v. Professional Auto Transport,*
24 *Inc., et al.* (San Bernardino County Superior Court, Case No. CIVDS2010153); *Paul Garcia, et*
25 *al. v. Haralambos Beverage Co.* (Los Angeles County Superior Court, Case No. BC660723);
26 and *Ribaldo Olvera, et al. v. American Corporate Security, Inc.* (Los Angeles County Superior
27 Court, Case No. 21STCV16417).

28 26. Mr. Crawford has also been named as class counsel in numerous cases during the settlement

process. Here is a non-exhaustive list of cases where Mr. Crawford has been named as class counsel in cases during the settlement process: *Kenneth Cox v. 3PL Worx, et al.* (Yolo County Superior Court, Case No. CV-18-100); *Brian Davidson v. A&B Trucking Services, Inc.* (Kern County Superior Court Case No. BCV-16-102985); *Timothy Spikes, et al. v. Bear Trucking, Inc., et al.* (San Bernardino County Superior Court, Case No. CIVDS1715151); *Michael Valentich v. Hub Construction Specialties, Inc.* (San Bernardino County Superior Court, Case No. JCCPDS4893); *Adrian Diaz v. Keystone Automotive Operations, Inc.* (Riverside County Superior Court, Case No. RIC1817450); *Jaime Ruiz v. Altura Centers for Health* (Kern County Superior Court, Case No. BCV-19-101577); *Alicia Juarez, et al. v. Florexpco, LLC, et al.* (San Diego Superior Court, Case No. 37-2020-00015644-CU-OE-CTL); *Rick Frieri v. Sysco Corporation, et al.* (Southern District of California, Case No. 16-cv-1432-JLS-NLS); *Francisco Mejia Calderon, et al. v. Tapia Enterprises, Inc., et al.* (Los Angeles County Superior Court, Case No. BC709635); *Jeremiah Villarreal, et al. v. Wildwood Express* (Fresno County Superior Court, Case No. 18CECG00417); *Kenbron Fryer v. Transforce, Inc.* (Alameda County Superior Court, Case No. RG20071048); *Toiyagaduh Stone v. Sysco Corporation, et al.* (Inyo County Superior Court, Case No. SICVCV1659516); and *Scott Allen v. J.S. West Hardister, LLC, et al* (Stanislaus County Superior Court, Case No. 9000289).

27. Mr. Crawford devoted 66.6 hours to this case. The following is a summary of his tasks and activities performed in the litigation of this matter: interoffice discussions throughout case; discussions with Plaintiff; assist in drafting the complaint; assist in drafting notice to the LWDA; draft discovery to propound on Defendant; draft stipulations; review documents and data produced by Defendant, including records produced by Defendant relating to its policies, pay-structures, and time keeping; create document summary; discussions with Defendant's counsel; perform an analysis on the sampling of Class Member time and wage records; assist in drafting mediation brief and damage model; prepare for and attend mediation; drafting and negotiating settlement agreement; draft and revise preliminary approval motion and supplemental briefing.

28. Mr. Crawford's hourly rate was \$600. Based on his hourly rate and the hours expended, 66.60, his fee is \$39,960 which is reasonable and necessary to the successful litigation of this matter.

- 1 29. My firm's total lodestar amount so far is \$113,745 based on 159.6 hours of attorney time, all of
2 which was reasonable and necessary to the successful litigation of this matter.
- 3 30. As the lodestar fee of \$113,745 is in excess of the \$79,766.66 fee request, a multiplier on the
4 lodestar is not sought herein.
- 5 31. In addition, my firm has incurred \$14,966.84 in costs to date, and is requesting reimbursement
6 of these costs. These costs were all reasonable and necessary to the prosecution of this case, and
7 are fair and reasonable.
- 8 32. Further, Class Counsel seeks approval of the Class Representative Enhancement Payment to the
9 named Plaintiff in the sum of \$5,000. In determining whether to make an incentive award, the
10 court may consider (1) the risk, both financial and otherwise, the class representative faced in
11 bringing the suit; (2) the notoriety and personal difficulties encountered by the class
12 representative; (3) the amount of time and effort spent by the class representative; (4) the duration
13 of the litigation; and (5) the personal benefit received by the class representative as a result of the
14 litigation. *Golba v. Dick's Sporting Goods, Inc.* (2015) 238 Cal. App. 4th 1251, 1272; *Clark v.*
15 *American Residential Services LLC* (2009) 175 Cal. App. 4th 785, 804.
- 16 33. In agreeing to the settlement, Plaintiff has agreed to a general release of his claims against
17 Defendant. The general release being given by Plaintiff is far greater than the release proposed
18 for Class Members. This payment not only compensates Plaintiff for the work he undertook in
19 this case, but also for the claims and potential claims he may have against Defendant that he is
20 releasing. For example, Plaintiff brought this class action lawsuit to seek recourse for other
21 employees instead of filing an individual case on behalf of merely himself. Since the inception
22 of this case, he has put the Class's interests ahead of his own. This payment compensates Plaintiff
23 for the claims that he forwent bringing for the betterment of the Class.
- 24 34. The requested award is also appropriate and reasonable based upon Plaintiff's time and effort
25 expended on this case, the risks he faced, and the outcome of this case. Plaintiff has submitted a
26 declaration detailing the efforts and time he expended on behalf of the Class in order to advance
27 this case to its successful conclusion. For example, Plaintiff searched for and provided documents
28 to his attorneys that aided in the prosecution of this case. There is no question that this case would

1 not have reached the same result but for Plaintiff's involvement and input at all stages of the
2 litigation.

3 35. Moreover, as representative for the absent class members, Plaintiff risked a potential judgment
4 taken against him for attorneys' fees and costs if this matter had not been successfully concluded.
5 Case law holds that a losing party is liable for the prevailing party's costs. *See Early v. Superior*
6 *Court* (2000) 79 Cal.App.4th 1420, 1433. And in some wage and hour actions, such as this case,
7 pursuant to California Labor Code § 218.5, the prevailing party can be liable for attorneys' fees
8 as well. Though the fee agreement provides that Class Counsel would pay such costs, Plaintiff
9 would nevertheless have had a cost bill entered against him leaving him ultimately liable for
10 potentially hundreds of thousands of dollars in the unexpected possibility that Class Counsel did
11 not meet their obligation to cover those costs. Unfortunately, there have been judgments like this
12 entered against class representatives. The risk of payment of Defendant's costs, alone, is a
13 sufficient basis for an award of the requested service award. Few individuals are willing to take
14 this risk, and Plaintiff championed a cause on behalf of others with potentially huge monetary
15 risks.

16 36. Additionally, the modern-day work force is mobile, with employees holding several jobs over
17 the span of their career. It is also true that prospective employers in this computer, high-tech age
18 "Google" and/or do extensive background checks and have access to court databases to see if
19 applicants have ever filed a lawsuit or have ever been sued. Here, Plaintiff's conduct will not be
20 lost on a prospective employer who has to choose between an applicant who has never sued an
21 employer and one who has done so. The requested award far from compensates Plaintiff for
22 opportunities he may lose in the future because of the exercise of a Constitutional right to Petition
23 the Courts for redress of a grievance.

24 37. It should be noted that service awards are particularly important to plaintiffs in wage and hour
25 cases because they promote the important public policies underlying the wage and hour laws.
26 This strong policy is codified in California Labor Code § 90.5, which provides that "[i]t is the
27 policy of this state to vigorously enforce minimum labor standards in order to ensure employees
28 are not required or permitted to work under substandard unlawful conditions . . ." Cal. Lab. Code

1 § 90.5. Nonetheless, the California Supreme Court has noted that “retaliation against employees
2 for asserting statutory rights under the Labor Code is widespread,” despite anti-retaliation statutes
3 designed to protect employees. *Gentry v. Super. Ct.* (2007) 42 Cal.4th 443, 460–61. In this
4 context, class representatives should be rewarded for assuming the risk of retaliation for the sake
5 of class members. *See Frank v. Eastman Kodak Co.* (W.D.N.Y. 2005) 228 F.R.D. 174, 187.

6 38. Courts routinely approve service payments, or incentive awards, to compensate named plaintiffs
7 for the services they provide and the risks they incur during class litigation. *See In re Cellphone*
8 *Fee Termination Cases* (2010) 186 Cal. App. 4th 1380, 1393; *see also Bell v. Farmers Ins. Exch.*
9 (2004) 115 Cal. App. 4th 715, 725-26 (upholding service payments to class representatives);
10 Manual § 21.62 n.971 (noting that service payments are warranted). Based on the foregoing, the
11 \$5,000 payment to the named Class Representative is fair, appropriate and justified as part of the
12 overall settlement.

13 39. A true and correct copy of the Settlement Agreement is attached hereto as **Exhibit 1**.

14 40. A true and correct copy of the Westlaw Court’s Express’s Legal Billing Report, Volume 14,
15 Number 3, California Region for December 2012 is attached as **Exhibit 2**.

16 41. A true and correct copy of the Declaration of Richard M. Pearl in *Hohnbaum v. Brinker*
17 *Restaurant Corp.* SDSC GIC834348 is attached as **Exhibit 3**.

18 42. A true and correct copy of the 2012 National Law Journal Survey of Hourly Billing Rates for
19 Partners and Associates is attached as **Exhibit 4**.

20 43. A Summary of Time and Costs is attached hereto as **Exhibit 5**. This exhibit includes Class
21 Counsel’s time and cost records.

22 44. The final approval motion and supporting documents were uploaded to the Labor Workforce
23 Development Agency. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 6** is a confirmation received as a result of this
24 upload.

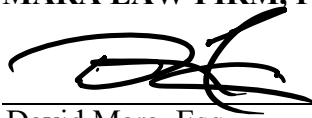
25 I hereby declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the
26 foregoing is true and correct.

27 ///

28 ///

Dated: February 9, 2026

MARA LAW FIRM, PC



David Mara, Esq.

Exhibit 1

JOINT STIPULATION AND SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

Subject to final approval by the Court, this settlement agreement is made between Plaintiff Francisco Arroyo Mora (hereinafter “Plaintiff”) on behalf of himself and the Class and Defendant Sterling Plumbing, Inc. (hereinafter “Defendant”) (collectively Plaintiff and Defendant are referred to in this Agreement as the “Parties”). This agreement is intended to settle the case entitled *Francisco Arroyo Mora v. Sterling Plumbing, Inc.*, Orange County Superior Court Case No. 30-2024-01371468-CU-OE-CXC.

I. DEFINITIONS

In addition to the other terms defined in this agreement, the terms below have the following meaning:

1. **Administration Costs**: The costs incurred by the Settlement Administrator, Apex Class Action Administration, to administer this Settlement, which shall not exceed \$7,500. All Administration Costs shall be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount. If the actual administration costs are less than the amount allocated in this agreement, or if the Court awards less than the amount requested, the difference in the amount allocated in this agreement and the amount awarded by the Court will become part of the Net Settlement Amount for distribution to Participating Class Members.
2. **Agreement, Settlement Agreement, Joint Stipulation, or Settlement**: The settlement agreement reflected in this document, titled “Joint Stipulation and Settlement Agreement.”
3. **Attorneys Fee Award**: The amount of attorneys’ fees approved of by the Court and awarded to Class Counsel. This amount shall not exceed one-third of the Gross Settlement Amount. One-third of the Gross Settlement Amount is currently \$79,766.66. The Attorneys Fee Award shall be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount. If the Court awards less than the amount requested, any amount not awarded will become part of the Net Settlement Amount for distribution to Participating Class Members.
4. **Class**: All hourly, non-exempt employees of Defendant who worked in California at any time from November 4, 2022, to October 28, 2024.
5. **Class Counsel**: David Mara and Matthew Crawford of Mara Law Firm, PC, and Sabrina Sanders and Colette Mahon of Lawyers for Employee and Consumer Rights.
6. **Class Data**: The electronic database Defendant shall deliver to the Settlement Administrator which will list the following information for each Class Member: (1) first and last name; (2) last known mailing address; (3) last known telephone number; (4) social security number; and (5) hire and termination dates.. The

Class Data shall be based on Defendant's payroll, personnel, and other business records.

7. **Class Member**: Each person eligible to participate in this Settlement who is a member of the Class as defined above.
8. **Class Notices**: The Notice of Class Action Settlement, substantially similar to the form attached hereto as **Exhibit A**, subject to Court approval.
9. **Class Period**: November 4, 2022, to October 28, 2024.
10. **Class Representative or Plaintiff**: Francisco Arroyo Mora
11. **Class Representative Enhancement Payment**: The amount the Court awards to Plaintiff, which will not exceed \$5,000. This payment shall be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount. This payment is being offered in consideration for Plaintiff executing a general release of claims against Defendant, a release that is broader than any Participating Class Member will provide in consideration for a settlement share. This payment is also offered in consideration for the Plaintiff's actions in conferring a benefit upon the State of California and the Class, and the time and effort Plaintiff put into pursuing the litigation. If the Court awards less than the amount requested, any amount not awarded will become part of the Net Settlement Amount for distribution to Participating Class Members.
12. **Cost Award**: The amount that the Court orders Defendant to pay Class Counsel for payment of actual litigation costs, which shall not exceed \$22,500. The Cost Award will be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount and will not be opposed by Defendant. The Cost Award is subject to Court approval. If the actual costs incurred are less than the amount allocated in this Agreement, or if the Court awards less than the amount requested, the difference in the amount allocated in this Agreement and the amount awarded by the Court will become part of the Net Settlement Amount for distribution to Participating Class Members.
13. **Counsel for Defendant**: Marie D. DiSante, Leigh A. White, and Osaama Saifi of CDF Labor Law LLP.
14. **Court**: Superior Court of California for the County of Orange.
15. **Defendant**: Sterling Plumbing, Inc.
16. **Disbursement of the Settlement**: The date on which the Settlement Administrator shall disburse the Gross Settlement Amount as indicated herein. Under the terms of this Settlement Agreement, within seven (7) calendar days after the Defendant wires the Gross Settlement Amount and employer's share of taxes to the Settlement Administrator, the Settlement Administrator shall

disburse: (1) the Net Settlement Amount to be paid to Participating Class Members; (2) the Attorneys Fee Award and Cost Award to Class Counsel for attorneys' fees and costs, as approved by the Court; (3) the Class Representative Enhancement Payment paid to the Class Representative, as approved by the Court; (4) the Administration Costs, as approved by the Court; and (5) the PAGA Payment, as approved by the Court.

17. **Effective Final Settlement Date:** The effective date of this Settlement will be the date by when both of the following have occurred: (a) the Court enters the Final Approval order; and (b) the Final Approval order is final. The Final Approval order is final as of the latest of the following occurrences: (a) if no Participating Class Member objects to the Settlement, the day the Court enters Final Approval order; (b) if one or more Participating Class Members objects to the Settlement, the day after the deadline for filing a notice of appeal from the Final Approval order if no appeal is filed; or (c) if a timely appeal from the Final Approval order filed, the day after the appellate court affirms the Final Approval order and issues a remittitur.
18. **Employer Taxes:** Defendant's portion of payroll taxes as the Class Members' current or former employer (including the employer's payment of applicable FICA, FUTA, and SUI contributions, etc.) owed to the appropriate local, state, and federal taxing authorities. Defendant will pay its portion of payroll taxes separate and apart from the Gross Settlement Amount.
19. **Final Judgment or Final Approval:** The final order entered by the Court approving this Agreement.
20. **Funding of Settlement:** Defendants shall wire to the Settlement Administrator the Gross Settlement Amount no later than fourteen (14) calendar days after the Effective Final Settlement Date.
21. **Gross Settlement Amount or GSA:** The total value of the Settlement is a non-reversionary \$239,300. This is the gross amount Defendant can be required to pay under this Settlement Agreement, with the exception of its obligation to pay Employer Taxes. The Gross Settlement Amount includes without limitation: (1) the Net Settlement Amount to be paid to Participating Class Members; (2) the Attorneys Fee Award and Cost Award to Class Counsel for attorneys' fees and costs, as approved by the Court; (3) the Class Representative Enhancement Payment paid to the Class Representative, as approved by the Court; (4) the Administration Costs, as approved by the Court; and (5) the PAGA Payment, as approved by the Court. Defendant's portion of payroll taxes as the Class Members' current or former employer will be paid outside of and in addition to the Gross Settlement Amount. No portion of the Gross Settlement Amount will revert to Defendant for any reason.
22. **Individual Settlement Share(s):** The amount payable to each Participating

Class Member and PAGA Aggrieved Employees under the terms of this Settlement Agreement. Class Members are not required to submit a claim form to receive their Individual Settlement Shares pursuant to this Agreement. Rather, Participating Class Members will receive an Individual Settlement Share automatically, without the return of a claim form.

23. **LWDA**: California Labor and Workforce Development Agency.
24. **Net Settlement Amount or NSA**: The total amount of money available for payout to Participating Class Members and PAGA Aggrieved Employees, which is the GSA less the Attorneys Fee Award, Cost Award, Class Representative Enhancement Payment, the PAGA Payment, and Administration Costs. In other words, the NSA is the portion of the GSA that will be distributed to Participating Class Members and PAGA Aggrieved Employees. The remitting of employee-side taxes on the portion of the settlement shares earmarked as wages shall be deducted out of the Net Settlement Amount. Thus, the Individual Settlement Shares that are paid out of the Net Settlement Amount shall be reduced by the employee's tax liability for the share for the portion of the settlement shares allocated as wages.
25. **PAGA**: The California Labor Code Private Attorneys General Act of 2004 (Cal. Labor Code §§ 2698 *et seq.*).
26. **PAGA Aggrieved Employees**: Class Members who worked during the PAGA Period.
27. **PAGA Fund**: Twenty-five percent (25%) of the PAGA Payment that is available for distribution to PAGA Aggrieved Employees.
28. **PAGA Notice**: The letter submitted on behalf of Plaintiff to the Labor Workforce Development Agency on October 31, 2023, alleging violations against Defendant.
29. **PAGA Payment**: The Parties agree to settle the PAGA claims for \$50,000. 75% of this amount, or \$37,500, shall be paid to the LWDA and is referred to as the PAGA Payment. The remaining 25% of the \$50,000, or \$12,500, shall be added to the PAGA Fund for distribution to PAGA Aggrieved Employees.
30. **PAGA Period**: November 4, 2022, to October 28, 2024.
31. **Opt-Out or Request for Exclusion**: Means a Class Member who requests to be excluded from, or opt-out of, the Settlement within sixty (60) days of the Notices being mailed out by the Settlement Administrator. Class Members who request to be excluded from, or opt-out of, the Settlement shall not receive a Settlement Share and will not release any of the Released Class Claims against the Released Parties herein. PAGA Aggrieved Employees shall have no right

or ability to opt out of the PAGA portion of this Settlement and will have released the Released PAGA Claims.

32. **Participating Class Members:** All Class Members who do not submit a valid and timely request to exclude themselves from this Settlement.
33. **Parties:** Plaintiff Arroyo Mora, as an individual and as Class Representative, and Defendant Sterling Plumbing, Inc.
34. **Preliminary Approval or Preliminary Approval Order:** The Court's order preliminarily approving the Class Settlement.
35. **Released Class Claims:** Participating Class Members will release Defendant and the Released Parties from all claims asserted at any time in the operative complaint and from all other claims that could have been asserted based on the facts alleged in the operative complaint and/or the PAGA Letter. This release will be for the Class Period.
36. **Released PAGA Claims:** Aggrieved Employees shall release Defendant and the Released Parties from all claims for civil penalties under the California Labor Code and the Private Attorneys General Act predicated upon the claims asserted in the PAGA Letter and the operative complaint and from all other claims that could have been asserted based on the facts alleged in the PAGA Letter and the operative complaint. This release will be for the PAGA Period.
37. **Released Parties:** Defendant and its past and present officers, directors, owners, parents, subsidiaries, divisions, related companies, Employee Stock Ownership Plans, employees, representatives, affiliates, administrators, attorneys, agents, consultants, shareholders, joint ventures, predecessors, successors, fiduciaries, beneficiaries, subrogees, executors, insurers, employee benefit plans, and/or assigns of said entities and individuals.
38. **Response Deadline:** Sixty (60) calendar days from the initial mailing of the Class Notices.
39. **Settlement Administration:** The Settlement Administrator will conduct a skip trace for the address of all former employee Class Members. The Settlement Administrator will mail the Class Notices by first class U.S. mail to all Class Members at the address Defendant has on file for those Class Members to all former employee Class Members at the address resulting from the skip trace. The Class Notices will inform Class Members that they have until the Response Deadline to either object to the Settlement or to opt-out of the Settlement. Any Class Member who does not receive notice after the steps outlined above have been taken will still be bound by the Settlement and/or judgment. Any Class Member who is also a PAGA Aggrieved Employee will have released the Released PAGA Claims even if they opt out of the Class.

40. **Settlement Administrator:** The third party administrator agreed upon by Parties to administer this Settlement is Apex Class Action Administration.

II. **RECITALS**

41. Plaintiff sent his Notice of Labor Code Violations Pursuant to Labor Code § 2699.3 on October 31, 2023. In the letter, Plaintiff apprised the LWDA of his wage and hour claims against Defendant. Plaintiff's notice alleged that Defendant violated the California Labor Code by failing to pay all straight time wages, failing to pay minimum wages, failing to pay all overtime wages, failing to provide lawful meal and rest periods, failing to provide accurate itemized wage statements, failing to pay all wages owed at termination, failing to pay wages twice per month, and failure to reimburse business expenses.
42. On January 8, 2024, Plaintiff filed his wage and hour PAGA representative action against Defendant. The complaint alleged causes of action on behalf of Plaintiff and those similarly situated aggrieved employees under the PAGA for failure to pay straight time and minimum wages, failure to pay overtime, failure to provide meal periods, failure to provide rest periods, failure to provide compliant wage statements, failure to keep accurate records of time worked, failure to pay all wages due at termination, failing to pay wages twice per month, and failure to reimburse business expenses.
43. The Parties met and conferred regarding the case and then agreed to attend a mediation. Prior to the mediation, Defendant provided class-wide data, documents, and information permitting Plaintiff and his lawyers to fully evaluate class-wide exposure.
44. On August 28, 2024, the Parties participated in a full-day mediation with respected wage and hour mediator, Jeff Ross, wherein the Parties were able to reach an agreement on settlement that is reflected in this Agreement.
45. As part of the Parties' settlement, a First Amended Complaint will be filed to add class-wide claims for hourly, non-exempt employees during the same statutory time period of the PAGA claims, November 4, 2022, to October 28, 2024, alleging class and PAGA claims for failing to pay all straight time wages, failing to pay minimum wages, failing to pay all overtime wages, failing to provide lawful meal and rest periods, failing to provide accurate itemized wage statements, failing to pay all wages owed at termination, failing to pay wages twice per month, failure to reimburse business expenses, and unfair competition. The Parties will cooperate and agree on the causes of action asserted in the First Amended Complaint before it is filed.
46. **Benefits of Settlement to Class Members.** Plaintiff and Class Counsel recognize the expense and length of continued proceedings necessary to continue the litigation against Defendant through trial and through any possible

appeals. Plaintiff and Class Counsel also have taken into account the uncertainty and risk of further litigation, the potential outcome, and the difficulties and delays inherent in such litigation. Plaintiff and Class Counsel have conducted extensive settlement negotiations. Based on the foregoing, Plaintiff and Class Counsel believe the Settlement set forth in this Agreement is a fair, adequate, and reasonable settlement, and is in the best interests of the Class Members.

47. **Defendant's Reasons for Settlement.** Defendant recognizes that the defense of this litigation will be protracted and expensive. Substantial amounts of time, energy, and resources of Defendant have been and, unless this Settlement is made, will continue to be devoted to the defense of the claims asserted by Plaintiff. Defendant, therefore, has agreed to settle in the manner and upon the terms set forth in this Agreement to put to rest the Released Claims.
48. **Defendant's Denial of Wrongdoing.** Defendant generally and specifically denies any and all liability or wrongdoing of any sort with regard to any of the claims alleged, makes no concessions or admissions of liability of any sort, and contends that for any purpose other than settlement, the Action is not appropriate for class treatment. Defendant asserts a number of defenses to the claims, and has denied any wrongdoing or liability arising out of any of the alleged facts or conduct in the Action. Neither this Agreement, nor any document referred to or contemplated herein, nor any action taken to carry out this Agreement, is or may be construed as, or may be used as an admission, concession, or indication by or against Defendant or any of the Released Parties of any fault, wrongdoing, or liability whatsoever. There has been no final determination by any court as to the merits of the claims asserted by Plaintiff against Defendant or as to whether a class or classes should be certified, other than for settlement purposes only.
49. **Plaintiff's Claims.** Plaintiff asserts that Defendant's defenses are without merit. Neither this Agreement nor any documents referred to or contemplated herein, nor any action taken to carry out this Agreement is, may be construed as, or may be used as an admission, concession or indication by or against Plaintiffs, Class Members, or Class Counsel as to the merits of any claims or defenses asserted, or lack thereof, in the Action. However, in the event that this Settlement is finally approved by the Court, the Plaintiffs, Class Members, and Class Counsel will not oppose Defendant's efforts to use this Agreement to prove that Plaintiffs and Class Members have resolved and are forever barred from re-litigating the Released Claims.

III. SETTLEMENT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

50. **Gross Settlement Amount.** Subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement, the maximum Gross Settlement Amount, that Defendant is obligated to pay under this Settlement Agreement is \$239,300. The Gross

Settlement Amount includes, but is not limited to: (1) the Net Settlement Amount to be paid to Participating Class Members, including their portion of payroll taxes; (2) the Attorneys Fee Award and Cost Award to Class Counsel for attorneys' fees and costs, as approved by the Court; (3) the Class Representative Enhancement Payment paid to the Class Representative, as approved by the Court; (4) the Administration Costs, as approved by the Court; and (5) the PAGA Payment to the LWDA and PAGA Aggrieved Employees, as approved by the Court. Defendant's portion of payroll taxes as the Class Members' current or former employer will be paid outside of and in addition to the Gross Settlement Amount. No portion of the Gross Settlement Amount will revert to Defendant for any reason.

A. Escalator Provision: At the time of mediation, Defendant represented that there were an estimated 9,572 weeks worked by the Class Members during the Class Period. If the number of actual total weeks worked by Class Members during the Class Period, as reported to the Settlement Administrator following preliminary approval, exceeds this amount by more than 10% (i.e., if the workweeks increase by 957, such that the total workweeks exceed 10,529), Defendant will pay an additional sum necessary to increase the Gross Settlement Payment on a proportional basis (i.e., if there was a 15% increase in workweeks, Defendant would increase the Gross Settlement payment by 5%). As of the date of the execution of this Agreement, Defendant represents that there are an estimated 9,370 weeks worked by the Class Members during the Class Period.

51. **Class Certification.** Solely for the purposes of this Settlement, the Parties stipulate and agree to certification of the claims asserted on behalf of Class Members. As such, the Parties stipulate and agree that in order for this Settlement to occur, the Court must certify the Class as defined in this Agreement.
52. **Conditional Nature of Stipulation for Certification.** The Parties stipulate and agree to the certification of the claims asserted on behalf of Plaintiff and Class Members for purposes of this Settlement only. If the Settlement does not become effective, the fact that the Parties were willing to stipulate to certification as part of the Settlement shall not be admissible or used in any way in connection with, the question of whether the Court should certify any claims in a non-settlement context in this Action or in any other lawsuit. If the Settlement does not become effective, Defendant reserves the right to contest any issues relating to class certification and liability. The Parties agree that if this settlement is not finally approved for any reason, Defendant shall not have waived its right to move to compel arbitration of the Plaintiff's individual claims and dismiss the class claims pursuant to its Arbitration Agreement with Plaintiff through this agreement to amend the Complaint for settlement purposes or as a result of the settlement process.

53. **Appointment of Class Representative.** Solely for the purposes of this Settlement, the Parties stipulate and agree Plaintiff Francisco Arroyo Mora shall be appointed as representative for the Class.
54. **Appointment of Class Counsel.** Solely for the purpose of this Settlement, the Parties stipulate and agree that the Court appoint Class Counsel to represent the Class.
55. **Individual Settlement Share.** Subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement, the Settlement Administrator will pay an Individual Settlement Share from the Net Settlement Amount to each Participating Class Member and PAGA Aggrieved Employee.

A. Calculation.

- i. **Individual Class Settlement Share Calculation.** Each Participating Class Member will receive a proportionate share of the Net Settlement Amount that is equal to (i) the number of weeks he or she worked for Defendant in California, as a Class Member, based on the Class Data provided by Defendant, divided by (ii) the total number of weeks worked by all Participating Class Members based on the same Class Data, which is then multiplied by the Net Settlement Amount. One day worked in a given week will be credited as a work week for purposes of this calculation. Therefore, the value of each Class Member's Individual Settlement Share ties directly to the amount of weeks that he or she worked.
- ii. **Individual PAGA Settlement Share Calculation.** Each PAGA Aggrieved Employee will receive a proportionate share of the PAGA Fund that is allocated for distribution to PAGA Aggrieved Employees (i.e., 25% of the PAGA Payment), equal to (i) the estimated number of pay periods he or she worked at least one (1) day of the week for Defendant in California during the PAGA Period based on the Class data provided by Defendant, divided by (ii) the total estimated number of pay periods worked by all PAGA Aggrieved Employees during the PAGA Period based on the same Class data, which is then multiplied by the PAGA Payment allocated for distribution to PAGA Aggrieved Employees.

- B. Tax Withholdings.** Each Class Member's Individual Class Settlement Share will be apportioned as follows: 20% wages and 80% interest and penalties. Each PAGA Aggrieved Employee's Individual PAGA Settlement Share will be apportioned as 100% penalties. The amounts paid as wages shall be subject to all tax withholdings customarily made from an

employee's wages and all other authorized and required withholdings and shall be reported by W-2 forms. Payment of all amounts will be made subject to backup withholding unless a duly executed W-9 form is received from the payee(s). The amounts paid as penalties and interest shall be subject to all authorized and required withholdings other than the tax withholdings customarily made from employees' wages and shall be reported by IRS 1099 forms. Only the employee share of payroll tax withholdings shall be from each Class Member's Individual Settlement Share. The employer share of payroll tax withholdings shall be paid separate from and in addition to the Gross Settlement Amount.

C. Tax Treatment and Payment. The Parties agree that Plaintiff, Class Counsel, and the Participating Class Members who receive any payment pursuant to this Settlement shall be solely responsible for any and all individual tax obligations associated with this Settlement.

56. Constituents of Gross Settlement Amount Disbursement. Subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement, the Settlement Administrator shall disburse the Gross Settlement Amount as directed later on herein to the following:

A. To the Named Plaintiff: In addition to his Individual Settlement Share, and subject to the Court's approval, the named Plaintiff, Francisco Arroyo Mora, will receive up to \$5,000 in consideration for providing Defendant a General Release, a release that is broader than the claims released by Participating Class Members. Defendant shall not oppose this request. The Settlement Administrator will pay the Class Representative Enhancement Payment out of the Gross Settlement Amount. Payroll tax withholdings and deductions will not be taken from the Class Representative Enhancement Payment. An IRS Form 1099 will be issued to Plaintiff with respect to his Class Representative Enhancement Payment.

B. To Class Counsel. At the Final Approval Hearing, Class Counsel will apply to the Court for an Attorneys Fee Award not to exceed one-third of the GSA (which currently equates to \$79,766.66) and a Cost Award not to exceed \$22,500. Defendant shall not oppose this request. The Settlement Administrator will pay the Court approved amounts for the Attorneys Fee Award and Cost Award out of the Gross Settlement Amount. Payroll tax withholding and deductions will not be taken from the Attorneys Fee Award or the Cost Award. IRS Forms 1099 will be issued to Class Counsel with respect to the Attorneys Fee Award. In the event the Court does not approve the entirety of the application for the Attorneys Fee Award and/or Cost Award, the Settlement Administrator shall pay whatever amount the Court awards, and neither Defendant nor the Settlement Administrator shall be responsible for paying the difference between the amount requested and the amount awarded. If the amount awarded is less than the amount requested

by Class Counsel for the Attorneys Fee Award and/or Cost Award, the difference shall become part of the NSA and be available for distribution to Participating Class Members.

C. To the Responsible Tax Authorities. The Settlement Administrator will pay the amount of the Participating Class Members' portion of normal payroll withholding taxes out of each Class Member's Individual Settlement Share. Defendant's portion of payroll taxes as the current or former employer (including the employer's payment of applicable FICA, FUTA, and SUI contributions, etc.) will be paid outside of and in addition to the GSA. The Settlement Administrator will calculate the amount of the Participating Class Members' and Defendant's portion of payroll withholding taxes and will forward the amount of the Participating Class Members' portion of normal payroll withholding taxes to the appropriate taxing authorities.

D. To the Settlement Administrator. The Settlement Administrator – Apex Class Action Administration – will pay to itself Administration Costs (reasonable fees and expenses) approved by the Court not to exceed \$7,500. This will be paid out of the Gross Settlement Amount. If the actual amount of Administration Costs is less than the amount estimated and/or requested, the difference shall become part of the NSA and be available for distribution to Participating Class Members.

E. To the LWDA. The Settlement Administrator will pay \$37,500 of the Gross Settlement Amount to the LWDA. This is 75% of the \$50,000 allocated to satisfy the PAGA penalties claim. The remaining 25% of the PAGA Payment (which equates to \$12,500) shall become part of the PAGA Fund and be available for distribution to PAGA Aggrieved Employees.

F. To Class Members. The Settlement Administrator will pay Participating Class Members and the PAGA Aggrieved Employees according to the Individual Settlement Share calculations set forth above. All payments to Participating Class Members and the PAGA Aggrieved Employees shall be made from the Gross Settlement Amount.

57. Appointment of Settlement Administrator. Solely for the purposes of this Settlement, the Parties stipulate and agree that Apex Class Action Administration shall be retained to serve as Settlement Administrator. The Settlement Administrator shall be responsible for preparing, printing, mailing; performing skip traces and remailing notices to Class Members; calling Class Members with undeliverable notices to obtain accurate addresses; keeping track of any objections or requests for exclusion from Class Members; calculating any and all payroll tax deductions as required by law; calculating each Class Member's Individual Settlement Share; maintaining a website which will include settlement documents; providing weekly status reports to Defendant's

Counsel and Class Counsel, which is to include updates on any objections or requests for exclusion that have been received; providing a due diligence declaration for submission to the Court prior to the Final Approval hearing; mailing and remailing Individual Settlement Shares to Participating Class Members and PAGA Aggrieved Employees; calculating and mailing the PAGA Payment to the LWDA; distributing the Attorneys Fee Award and Cost Award to Class Counsel; printing and providing Participating Class Members, Aggrieved Employees, and Plaintiff with W-2s and 1099 forms as required under this Agreement and applicable law; providing a due diligence declaration for submission to the Court upon the completion of the Settlement; providing any funds remaining in the QSF as a result of uncashed checks to the State of California unclaimed property fund in the name of the Class Member; and for such other tasks as the Parties mutually agree. The Parties each represent that they do not have any financial interest in Apex Class Action Administration or otherwise have a relationship with Apex Class Action Administration that could create a conflict of interest.

58. Procedure for Approving Settlement.

A. Motion for Preliminary Approval and Conditional Certification.

- i.** Plaintiff will move for an order: (1) conditionally certifying the Class for settlement purposes only; (2) granting Preliminary Approval of the Settlement; (3) setting a date for the Final Approval hearing; and (4) approving the Class Notice.
- ii.** At the same time that Plaintiff files his Motion for Preliminary Approval, Plaintiff shall send a copy of the Agreement to the LWDA pursuant to the 2016 amendments to PAGA.
- iii.** At the Preliminary Approval hearing, Plaintiff will appear, support the granting of the motion, and submit a proposed order granting conditional certification of the Class and Preliminary Approval of the Settlement; appointing the Class Representative, Class Counsel, and Settlement Administrator; approving the Class Notice; and setting the Final Approval hearing.
- iv. Effect of Denial of Preliminary Approval.** Should the Court decline to conditionally certify the Class or to Preliminarily Approve all material aspects of the Settlement, the Settlement Agreement will be null and void, and the Parties will have no further obligations under it. Provided, however, that the amounts of the Attorneys Fee Award, Cost Award, Administration Costs, and Class Representative Enhancement Payment shall be determined by the Court, and the Court's determination on these amounts shall be final and binding, and that the Court's approval

or denial of any amount requested for these items are not conditions of this Settlement Agreement, and are to be considered separate and apart from the fairness, reasonableness, and adequacy of the Settlement Agreement. Any order or proceeding relating to an application for the Attorneys Fee Award, Cost Award, Administration Costs, and Class Representative Enhancement Payment shall not operate to terminate or cancel this Settlement Agreement. Nothing in this Agreement shall limit Plaintiff's or Class Counsel's ability to appeal any decision by the Court to award less than the requested Attorneys Fee Award, Cost Award, Administration Costs, and Class Representative Enhancement Payment.

B. Notice to Class Members. After the Court enters its Preliminary Approval Order, every Class Member will be provided with the Class Notice in accordance with the following procedure:

- i. Delivery of Class Data.** Within fourteen (14) calendar days after entry of the Preliminary Approval Order, Defendant shall deliver to the Settlement Administrator an Excel spreadsheet, which will list the following information for each Class Member: (1) first and last name; (2) last known mailing address; (3) last known telephone number; (4) social security number; and (5) hire and termination dates. The Settlement Administrator will conduct a skip trace for the address of all former Defendant employee Class Members. The Class Data shall be based on Defendant's payroll, personnel, and other business records. The Settlement Administrator shall maintain the Class Data and all information contained within the Class Data as private and confidential.
- ii. Preparation of Class Notices.** Based on the information in the Class Data and the formulas set forth in Paragraph 55(A), above, the Settlement Administrator shall promptly calculate the estimated Individual Class Settlement Share for every Class Member and Individual PAGA Settlement Share for every PAGA Aggrieved Employee, to be included in the individualized Class Notice to be sent to that Class Member, and shall prepare and mail a spreadsheet setting forth those calculations (without names and contact information of Class Members) to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel no fewer than five (5) days before mailing the Class Notices to Class Members. The Class Notices will inform each Class Member of his/her right to do nothing, dispute the number of work weeks worked, opt out of the Settlement, or object to the Settlement. It will also inform Class Members that if they first request exclusion from the Settlement and then object, the objections would not be considered valid. In addition, if the Class

Members object and then request exclusion from the Class Settlement, the Class Members would be deemed to have waived their objection.

- iii. **Mailing of Class Notices.** Within fourteen (14) calendar days after receipt of the Class Data, the Settlement Administrator will mail via first-class regular U.S. Mail the Class Notice to all identified Class Members using the mailing address information provided by Defendant and the results of the skip trace performed on all former Defendant employee Class Members.
- iv. **Posting of Class Notice.** At the same time the Class Notices are mailed, the Settlement Administrator will post a copy of the Class Notice on a settlement website for at least 90 days.
- v. **Returned Notices.** If a Class Notice is returned because of an incorrect address, within five (5) business days from receipt of the returned notice, the Settlement Administrator will conduct a search for a more current address for the Class Member and re-mail the Class Notice to the Class Member. The Settlement Administrator will use the National Change of Address Database and skip traces to attempt to find the current address. The Settlement Administrator will be responsible for taking reasonable steps to trace the mailing address of any Class Member for whom a Class Notice is returned by U.S. Postal Service as undeliverable. These reasonable steps shall include, at a minimum, the tracking of all undelivered mail, performing address searches for all mail returned without a forwarding address, and promptly re-mailing to Class Members for whom new addresses are found. If a Class Notice is returned because of an incorrect address and re-mailed to a Class Member for whom a new address is found, the Class Member's deadline to respond to the settlement shall be increased by forty-five (45) calendar days.
- vi. **Weekly Status Reports.** The Settlement Administrator shall provide a weekly status report to the Parties. As part of its weekly status report, the Settlement Administrator will inform Class Counsel and Defendant's Counsel of the number of Notices mailed, the number of Notices returned as undeliverable, the number of Notices re-mailed, and the number of requests for exclusion or objections received.
- vii. **Settlement Administrator's Declaration.** No later than fourteen (14) calendar days after the Response Deadline, or on a date mutually agreed upon by the Parties and the Settlement Administrator, the Settlement Administrator will serve on the

Parties a declaration of due diligence setting forth its compliance with its obligations under this Agreement. The declaration from the Settlement Administrator shall also be filed with the Court by Class Counsel at the same time as the final approval motion is filed. Before the Final Approval hearing, the Settlement Administrator will supplement its declaration of due diligence if any material changes occur from the date of the filing of its prior declaration.

C. Objections to Settlement. The Class Notice will provide that the Class Members who wish to object to the Settlement must do so in writing, signed, dated, and mailed to the Settlement Administrator postmarked no later than the Response Deadline or by appearing at the Final Approval Hearing. The Settlement Administrator will provide the Parties with any objections received within five (5) days of receipt. Absent good cause found by the Court, objections will not be considered by the Court if not timely or otherwise compliant with the procedures herein. All objections submitted to the Settlement Administrator will be presented to the Court along with the final approval motion.

a. Format. Any Objections shall state: (a) the Class Member's name, address, telephone number, and the last four digits of the Class Member's social security number or employee identification number; (b) the words "Notice of Objection" or "Formal Objection;" and (c) a short statement of the facts supporting the objections, such as, the legal and factual arguments supporting the objection.

b. Notice of Intent to Appear. Class Members may (though are not required to) appear at the Final Approval Hearing to state an objection, either in person or through the objector's own counsel.

D. Request for Exclusion from the Settlement ("Opt-Out"). The Class Notice will provide that Class Members who wish to exclude themselves from the Settlement must mail to the Settlement Administrator a written request for exclusion. The written request for exclusion must: (a) state the Class Member's name, address, telephone number, and the last four digits of the Class Member's social security number or employee identification number; (b) state the Class Member's intention to exclude themselves from or opt-out of the Settlement; (c) be addressed to the Settlement Administrator; (d) be signed by the Class Member or his or her lawful representative; and (e) be postmarked no later than the Response Deadline. A request to Opt-Out of the Settlement shall not serve to exclude the Class Member from participation in the settlement of PAGA claims under this Settlement. PAGA Aggrieved Employees who opt-out from the class portion of the settlement shall still be entitled to their share of the PAGA

Fund. Subject to Court approval of the PAGA Payment, PAGA Aggrieved Employees shall have no right or ability to opt out of the PAGA portion of this Settlement and will have released the Released PAGA Claims. The Court has the final say regarding the validity of any requests for exclusion.

- i. Confirmation of Authenticity.** If there is a question about the authenticity of a signed request for exclusion, the Settlement Administrator may demand additional proof of the Class Member's identity. Any Class Member who returns a timely, valid, and executed request for exclusion will not participate in or be bound by the Class Settlement and subsequent judgment and will not receive an Individual Class Settlement Share, but will still receive an Individual PAGA Settlement Share and be bound by the release of the Released PAGA Claims if a PAGA Aggrieved Employee. A Class Member who does not complete and mail a timely request for exclusion will automatically be included in the Settlement, will receive an Individual Settlement Share, and be bound by all terms and conditions of the Settlement, if the Settlement is approved by the Court, and by the subsequent judgment, regardless of whether he or she has objected to the Settlement.
 - ii. Report.** No later than five (5) business days after the Response Deadline, the Settlement Administrator will provide the Parties with a complete and accurate accounting of the number of Notices mailed to Class Members, the number of Notices returned as undeliverable, the number of Notices re-mailed to Class Members, the number of re-mailed Notices returned as undeliverable, the number of Class Members who objected to the Settlement and copies of their submitted objections, the number of Class Members who returned valid requests for exclusion, and the number of Class Members who returned invalid requests for exclusion.
 - iii.** Defendant, at its sole discretion, shall have the right but not the obligation to revoke the Settlement Agreement if five (5) percent or more of the Class Members timely opt out of the Class. Defendant shall exercise its revocation rights, if at all, within fourteen (14) days of the end of the opt out period by providing written notice to Plaintiff's counsel.
- E. Class Member Disputes.** If a Class Member who receives a Class Notice wishes to dispute the number of work weeks listed on the Class Notice, the Class Member may notify the Settlement Administrator by mail or telephone no later than the Response Deadline and should produce any available supporting evidence, such as wage statements, offers of

employment, termination letters, and/or other employment records, to the Settlement Administrator by the Response Deadline. The documentation should provide evidence of the dates the Class Member contends he or she worked for Defendant during the Class Period. The Settlement Administrator shall then provide the documentation provided by the Class Member to Defendant. Defendant shall review its records, the documentation provided by the Class Member, and shall provide information to the Settlement Administrator in response to any such disputed claim. The Settlement Administrator shall evaluate the evidence submitted by the Class Member and make the decision as to which dates should be applied. All disputes submitted to the Settlement Administrator, including any evidence submitted in conjunction with a dispute, shall be presented to the Court in conjunction with final approval along with the determination made by the Settlement Administrator. The Court shall have the right to review any decision made by the Settlement Administrator regarding a workweek dispute.

F. No Solicitation of Objection or Requests for Exclusion. Neither the Parties nor their respective counsel will solicit or otherwise encourage directly or indirectly any Class Member to object to the Settlement, request exclusion from the Settlement, or appeal from the Judgment.

G. Settlement Website. The Settlement Administrator shall establish a website to host documents relevant to this lawsuit and the proposed settlement, i.e., the pleadings filed in the Action, including all complaints and answers; this Joint Stipulation and Settlement Agreement, together with its exhibits; the Class Notice; the forthcoming settlement motions; and the Court's orders on those motions, including the judgment entered. These items will be posted for a period of at least ninety (90) calendar days.

H. Motion for Final Approval.

- i. Class Counsel will file unopposed motions and memorandums in support thereof for Final Approval of the Settlement and the following payments in accord with the terms of the Settlement: (1) the Attorneys Fee Award; (2) the Cost Award; (3) Administrative Costs; (4) the Class Representative Enhancement Payment; (5) the Individual Settlement Payments; and (6) the PAGA Payment. Class Counsel will also move the Court for an order of Final Approval (and associated entry of Judgment) releasing and barring any Released Claims of the Participating Class Members.
- ii. **Denial or Appeal of Final Approval.** If the Court does not grant Final Approval of the Settlement, or if the Court's Final Approval of the Settlement is reversed or materially modified on appellate review, then this Settlement will become null and void. If that

occurs, the Parties will have no further obligations under the Settlement, including any obligation by Defendant to pay the Gross Settlement Amount or any amounts that otherwise would have been owed under this Agreement. Further, should this occur, the Parties agree they shall be equally responsible for the Settlement Administrator's Administration Costs through that date. An award by the Court of a lesser amount than sought by Plaintiff and Class Counsel for the Class Representative Enhancement Payment, Attorneys Fee Award, Cost Award, will not constitute a material modification to the Settlement within the meaning of this paragraph.

iii. Proposed Order and Judgment. Upon Final Approval of the Settlement, the Parties shall present to the Court a proposed Final Approval Order, approving of the Settlement and entering Judgment in accordance therewith. After entry of Judgment, the Court shall have continuing jurisdiction over the action pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure § 664.6 and California Rules of Court Rule 3.769(h) for purposes of: (1) enforcing this Settlement Agreement; (2) addressing settlement administration matters, and (3) addressing such post-judgment matters as may be appropriate under Court rules and applicable law.

iv. Posting the Judgment. Notice of the Court's entry of a Final Approval Order and Judgment shall be given to Class Members by posting a copy of the Final Approval Order and Judgment on the Settlement Administrator's website for a period of at least ninety (90) calendar days.

I. Waiver of Right to Appeal. Provided that the judgment is consistent with the terms and conditions of this Agreement, if Class Members do not timely object to the Settlement, then the Parties and their respective counsel waive any and all rights to appeal from the judgment, including, but not limited to, all rights to any post-judgment proceeding and appellate proceeding, such as a motion to vacate or set aside judgment, and any extraordinary writ, and the judgment will become non-appealable at the time it is entered. The waiver of appeal does not include any waiver of the right to oppose any appeal, appellate proceeding, or post-judgment proceeding.

J. Vacating, Reversing, or Modifying Judgment on Appeal. If, after a notice of appeal, the reviewing Court vacates, reverses, or modifies the judgment such that there is a material modification to the Settlement Agreement, and that Court's decision is not completely reversed and the judgment is not fully affirmed on review by a higher Court, then this Settlement will become null and void and the Parties will have no further obligations under it. A material modification would include, but not

necessarily be limited to, any alteration of the Gross Settlement Amount, an alteration in the calculation of the Net Settlement Amount, and any change to the calculation of the Individual Settlement Share.

K. Disbursement of Settlement Shares and Payments. Subject to the Court finally approving the Settlement, the Settlement Administrator shall distribute funds pursuant to the terms of this Agreement and the Court's Final Approval Order and Judgment. The Settlement Administrator shall keep Defendant's Counsel and Class Counsel apprised of all distributions from the Gross Settlement Amount. The Settlement Administrator shall respond to questions from Defendant's Counsel and Class Counsel. No person shall have any claim against Defendant, Defendant's Counsel, Plaintiff, Class Counsel, or the Settlement Administrator based on the distributions and payments made in accordance with this Agreement.

- i. Employer's Share of Taxes:** The Settlement Administrator shall inform Defendant of the amount of the employer's share of taxes no later than seven (7) calendar days after the Effective Final Settlement Date. Defendant shall wire to the Settlement Administrator the employer's share of taxes no later than fourteen (14) calendar days of the Effective Final Settlement Date.
- ii. Disbursement:** Within seven (7) calendar days after the Defendant wires the Gross Settlement Amount and employer's share of taxes to the Settlement Administrator, the Settlement Administrator shall disburse: (1) the Net Settlement Amount to be paid to Participating Class Members; (2) the Attorney Fee Award and Cost Award to Class Counsel for attorneys' fees and costs, as approved by the Court; (3) the Class Representative Enhancement Payment paid to the Class Representative, as approved by the Court; (4) the Administration Costs, as approved by the Court; (5) the PAGA Payment to the LWDA and the PAGA Aggrieved Employees; and (6) Defendant's portion of payroll taxes as the Class Members' current or former employer.
- iii. Qualified Settlement Fund or QSF:** The Parties agree that the QSF is intended to be a "Qualified Settlement Fund" under Section 468B of the Code and Treasury Regulations § 1.468B-1, 26 C.F.R. § 1.468B-1 *et seq.*, and will be administered by the Settlement Administrator as such. The Parties and Settlement Administrator shall treat the QSF as coming into existence as a Qualified Settlement Fund on the earliest date permitted as set forth in 26 C.F.R. § 1.468B-1, and such election statement shall be attached to the appropriate returns as required by law.

L. Settlement Administrator's Final Report. Within ten (10) business days after the disbursement of all funds, the Settlement Administrator will serve on the Parties a declaration providing a final report on the disbursements of all funds. The Parties shall file this declaration with the Court. The Settlement Administrator will provide any supplemental declaration required by the Court or the Parties. At the same time the Settlement Administrator's declaration is filed, the Parties will file an amended judgment in compliance with California Code of Civil Procedure § 384.

M. Uncashed Checks. Participating Class Members and PAGA Aggrieved Employees must cash or deposit their Individual Settlement Share checks within one hundred and eighty (180) calendar days after the checks are mailed to them.

- i. Reminder Postcard.** If any checks are not redeemed or deposited within ninety (90) calendar days after mailing, the Settlement Administrator will send a reminder postcard indicating that unless the check is redeemed or deposited in the next ninety (90) days, it will expire and become non-negotiable, and offer to replace the check if it was lost or misplaced.
- ii. Returned Checks.** If a check is returned because of an incorrect address, within five (5) business days from receipt of the returned check, the Settlement Administrator will conduct a search for a more current address for the Class Member and re-mail the Class Notice to the Class Member. The Settlement Administrator will use the National Change of Address Database and skip traces to attempt to find the current address. The Settlement Administrator will be responsible for taking reasonable steps to trace the mailing address of any Class Member for whom a check is returned by U.S. Postal Service as undeliverable. If the Settlement Administrator is unable to locate a better address through a database search or skip trace, the Settlement Administrator shall call the last known phone number provided by Defendant to attempt to obtain an accurate address. If an address is obtained, the Settlement Administrator shall promptly re-mail the check to the updated address.
- iii.** If any checks remain uncashed or not deposited by the expiration of the 90-day period after mailing the reminder notice, the Settlement Administrator will, within two hundred (200) calendar days after the checks are mailed, cancel the checks. All funds associated with the Individual Settlement Share checks returned as undeliverable and funds associated with those checks remaining un-cashed, shall escheat to the State of California Controller's Office under the Unclaimed Property Statutes in the name of the

Class Member.

N. Defendant's Legal Fees. Defendant is responsible for paying for all of Defendant's own legal fees, costs, and expenses incurred in this Action outside of the Gross Settlement Amount.

59. Release of Claims. As of the Effective Final Settlement Date, Class Members who do not submit a timely and valid request for exclusion release the Released Parties from the Released Class Claims. Participating Class Members agree not to sue or otherwise make a claim against any of the Released Parties for any of the Released Claims. As of the Effective Final Settlement Date, PAGA Aggrieved Employees release the Released Parties from the Released PAGA Claims.

60. Plaintiff's Release of Claims and General Release. As of the Effective Final Settlement Date, and in exchange for the Class Representative Enhancement Payment to the named Plaintiff in an amount not to exceed \$5,000, Plaintiff Francisco Arroyo Mora shall give the following general release of claims for himself and his respective spouse, heirs, successors and assigns, forever release the Released Parties from any and all charges, complaints, claims, liabilities, obligations, promises, agreements, controversies, damages, actions, causes of action, suits, rights, demands, costs, losses, debts, penalties and expenses of any nature whatsoever, from the beginning of time through the date of his signature on this Agreement, known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected, whether in tort, contract, equity, or otherwise, for violation of any federal, state or local statute, rule, ordinance or regulation, including but not limited to all claims arising out of, based upon, or relating to his employment with Defendant or the remuneration for, or termination of, such employment. Plaintiff's Release of Claims also includes a waiver of California Civil Code section 1542, which provides as follows:

A GENERAL RELEASE DOES NOT EXTEND TO CLAIMS THAT THE CREDITOR OR RELEASING PARTY DOES NOT KNOW OR SUSPECT TO EXIST IN HIS OR HER FAVOR AT THE TIME OF EXECUTING THE RELEASE AND THAT, IF KNOWN BY HIM OR HER, WOULD HAVE MATERIALLY AFFECTED HIS OR HER SETTLEMENT WITH THE DEBTOR OR RELEASED PARTY.

This release excludes any release of any claims not permitted to be released by law.

61. Miscellaneous Terms

A. No Admission of Liability. Defendant makes no admission of liability or wrongdoing by virtue of entering into this Agreement. Additionally, Defendant reserves the right to contest any issues relating to arbitration, class certification and liability if the Settlement is not approved. Defendant

denies that it has engaged in any unlawful activity, has failed to comply with the law in any respect, has any liability to anyone under the claims asserted in the Action, or that but for the Settlement, a Class should be certified in the Action. This Agreement is entered into solely for the purpose of compromising highly disputed claims. Nothing in this Agreement is intended or will be construed as an admission by Defendant of liability or wrongdoing. This Settlement and Plaintiff's and Defendant's willingness to settle the Action will have no bearing on, and will not be admissible in connection with, any litigation (other than solely in connection with this Settlement including to enforce the terms of the releases herein).

- B. No Effect on Employee Benefits.** The Class Representative Enhancement Payment and/or Individual Settlement Shares paid to Plaintiff and Participating Class Members shall not be deemed to be pensionable earnings and shall not have any effect on the eligibility for, or calculation of, any of the employee benefits (*e.g.*, vacation, holiday pay, retirement plans, etc.) of Plaintiff or the Participating Class Members. The Parties agree that any Class Representative Enhancement Payment and/or Individual Settlement Share paid to Plaintiff or the Participating Class Members under the terms of this Agreement do not represent any modification of Plaintiff's or Participating Class Members' previously credited hours of service or other eligibility criteria under any employee pension benefit plan or employee welfare benefit plan sponsored by Defendant. Further, any Class Representative Enhancement Payment shall not be considered "compensation" in any year for purposes of determining eligibility for, or benefit accrual within, an employee pension benefit plan or employee welfare benefit plan sponsored by Defendant.
- C. Integrated Agreement.** After this Agreement is signed and delivered by all Parties and their counsel, this Agreement and its exhibits will constitute the entire Agreement between the Parties relating to the Settlement, and it will then be deemed that no oral representations, warranties, covenants, or inducements have been made to any party concerning this Agreement or its exhibits, other than the representations, warranties, covenants, and inducements expressly stated in this Agreement and its exhibits.
- D. Authorization to Enter Into Settlement Agreement.** Class Counsel and Defendant's Counsel warrant and represent that they are authorized by Plaintiff and Defendant, respectively, to take all appropriate action required or permitted to be taken by such Parties under this Agreement to effectuate its terms, and to execute any other documents required to effectuate the terms of this Agreement. The Parties and their counsel will cooperate with each other and use their best efforts to effect the implementation of the Settlement. In the event the Parties are unable to reach agreement on the form or content of any document needed to implement this Agreement, or on any supplemental provisions that may become necessary to effectuate

the terms of this Agreement, the Parties will seek the assistance of the Court, and in all cases, all such documents, supplemental provisions, and assistance of the Court will be consistent with this Agreement.

- E. Exhibits and Headings.** The terms of this Agreement include the terms set forth in the attached exhibits, which are incorporated by this reference as though fully set forth herein. Any exhibits to this Agreement are an integral part of the Settlement and must be approved substantially as written. The descriptive headings of any paragraphs or sections of this Agreement are inserted for convenience of reference only and do not constitute a part of this Agreement.
- F. Interim Stay of Proceedings.** The Parties agree to stay and hold all proceedings in the Action in abeyance, except such proceedings necessary to implement and complete the Settlement, pending the Final Approval hearing to be conducted by the Court.
- G. Amendment or Modification of Agreement.** This Agreement, and any and all parts of it, may be amended, modified, changed, or waived only by an express written instrument signed by counsel for all Parties or their successors-in-interest.
- H. Agreement Binding on Successors and Assigns.** This Agreement will be binding upon, and inure to the benefit of, the successors and assigns of the Parties, as previously defined.
- I. No Prior Assignment.** Plaintiffs hereby represent, covenant, and warrant that they have not directly or indirectly, assigned, transferred, encumbered, or purported to assign, transfer, or encumber to any person or entity any portion of any liability, claim, demand, action, cause of action or rights herein released and discharged.
- J. Applicable Law.** All terms and conditions of this Agreement and its exhibits will be governed by and interpreted according to the laws of the State of California, without giving effect to any conflict of law principles or choice of law principles.
- K. Fair, Adequate, and Reasonable Settlement.** The Parties and their respective counsel believe and warrant that this Agreement reflects a fair, reasonable, and adequate settlement of the Action and have arrived at this Agreement through arms-length negotiations, taking into account all relevant factors, current and potential.
- L. No Tax or Legal Advice.** The Parties understand and agree that the Parties are neither providing tax or legal advice, nor making representations regarding tax obligations or consequences, if any, related to this Agreement,

and that Class Members will assume any such tax obligations or consequences that may arise from this Agreement, and that Class Members shall not seek any indemnification from the Parties or any of the Released Parties in this regard. The Parties agree that, in the event that any taxing body determines that additional taxes are due from any Class Member, such Class Member assumes all responsibility for the payment of such taxes.

M. Jurisdiction of the Court. The Court shall retain jurisdiction with respect to the interpretation, implementation, and enforcement of the terms of this Agreement and all orders and judgment entered in connection therewith, and the Parties and their counsel hereto submit to the jurisdiction of the Court for purposes of interpreting, implementing, and enforcing the Settlement embodied in this Agreement and all orders and judgments in connection therewith.

N. Invalidity of Any Provision; Severability. Before declaring any provision of this Agreement invalid, the Parties request that the Court first attempt to construe the provisions valid to the fullest extent possible consistent with applicable precedents, so as to define all provisions of this Agreement valid and enforceable. In the event any provision of this Agreement shall be found unenforceable, the unenforceable provision shall be deemed deleted, and the validity and enforceability of the remaining provisions shall not be affected thereby.

O. Cooperation in Drafting. The Parties have cooperated in the drafting and preparation of this Agreement. This Agreement will not be construed against any Party on the basis that the Party was the drafter or participated in the drafting.

P. Execution in Counterpart. This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts. All executed counterparts, and each of them, will be deemed to be one and the same instrument provided that counsel for the Parties will exchange between themselves original signed counterparts. Facsimile or PDF signatures will be accepted. Any executed counterpart will be admissible in evidence to prove the existence and contents of this Agreement.

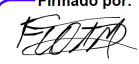
IV. EXECUTION BY PARTIES AND APPROVAL OF COUNSEL

The Parties execute this Agreement.

[signatures on the following page]

Dated: 8/6/2025

FRANCISCO ARROYO MORA

Firmado por:

5C5D12536C94475...

Dated: _____

STERLING PLUMBING, INC.

Name:

Title:

AGREED AS TO FORM:

Dated: August 7, 2025

MARA LAW FIRM, PC



David Mara, Esq.

Matthew Crawford, Esq.

Attorneys for Plaintiff, on behalf of himself, and all
others similarly situated

Dated: 8/8/202
5

**LAWYERS FOR EMPLOYEE AND
CONSUMER RIGHTS**



Sabrina Sanders, Esq.

Colette Mahon, Esq.

Attorneys for Plaintiff, on behalf of himself, and all
others similarly situated

Dated: _____

CDF LABOR LAW LLP

Marie D. DiSante, Esq.

Leigh A. White, Esq.

Osaama Saifi, Esq.

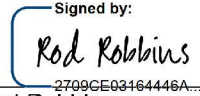
Attorneys for Defendant

Dated: _____

FRANCISCO ARROYO MORA

Dated: 8/6/2025

STERLING PLUMBING, INC.

Signed by:

2709CE03164446A...

Name: Rod Robbins

Title: President

AGREED AS TO FORM:

Dated: _____

MARA LAW FIRM, PC

David Mara, Esq.
Matthew Crawford, Esq.
Attorneys for Plaintiff, on behalf of himself, and all
others similarly situated

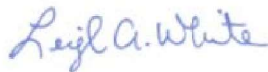
Dated: _____

**LAWYERS FOR EMPLOYEE AND
CONSUMER RIGHTS**

Sabrina Sanders, Esq.
Colette Mahon, Esq.
Attorneys for Plaintiff, on behalf of himself, and all
others similarly situated

Dated: August 6, 2025

CDF LABOR LAW LLP



Marie D. DiSante, Esq.
Leigh A. White, Esq.
Osaama Saifi, Esq.
Attorneys for Defendant

ORANGE COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT

If you worked for Sterling Plumbing, Inc. (“Sterling Plumbing” or “Defendant”) in California as an hourly, non-exempt employee at any time between November 4, 2022, and October 28, 2024, a class action settlement will affect your rights. You may be entitled to a payment under this settlement.

A court authorized this notice. This is not a solicitation from a lawyer.

- Former employee, Francisco Arroyo Mora (“Plaintiff”), filed a proposed class action and California Private Attorneys General Act (“PAGA”) lawsuit against Sterling Plumbing. The lawsuit alleges class and PAGA claims against Sterling Plumbing failing to pay all straight time wages, failing to pay minimum wages, failing to pay all overtime wages, failing to provide lawful meal and rest periods, failing to provide accurate itemized wage statements, failing to pay all wages owed at termination, failing to pay wages twice per month, failure to keep accurate records of time worked, failure to reimburse business expenses, and unfair competition. Sterling Plumbing denies all alleged violations and denies liability. The Court has not made a ruling on the merits of the case. The Parties have agreed to settle the claims set forth in the lawsuit.
- Your legal rights are affected whether you act or do not act. Read this notice carefully.

YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS AND OPTIONS IN THIS SETTLEMENT:	
DO NOTHING	Get a settlement payment and give up any rights to sue for the Released Claims (defined below). <u>If you are still employed by Sterling Plumbing and choose to receive a settlement payment, this will not affect your employment.</u>
EXCLUDE YOURSELF	Get no payment as a Class Member. This is the only option that allows you to ever be part of any other lawsuit against Sterling Plumbing involving the legal claims and statutory period alleged in this case. Please note that you are unable to exclude yourself from the PAGA portion of the settlement if you are a PAGA Aggrieved Employee.
OBJECT	Write to the Court about why you don’t agree with the settlement.

- These rights and options—and the deadlines to exercise them—are explained in this Notice.
- The Court still has to decide whether to approve of the settlement. Payments will be made if the Court approves the settlement. Please be patient.

WHAT INFORMATION IS IN THIS NOTICE?

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1. Why Have I Received this Notice?

Sterling Plumbing's records indicate that you were employed as an hourly, non-exempt employee in California by Sterling Plumbing at sometime between November 4, 2022, and October 28, 2024. This period of time is referred to as the "Class Period." If you worked for Sterling Plumbing in California during the "Class Period," you may be entitled to money under this Settlement. This Notice provides you with basic information about the case and advises you of your options with regard to the Settlement.

2. What is this Case About?

On October 31, 2023, Plaintiff provided notice to the LWDA in accordance with the PAGA. A PAGA complaint against Defendant was filed by Plaintiff in the Orange County Superior Court on January 8, 2024 (Case No. 30-2024-01371468-CU-OE-CXC). The complaint alleged violations against Defendant of the PAGA, Labor Code §2699, et seq. for failure to pay straight time and minimum wages, failure to pay overtime, failure to provide meal periods, failure to provide rest periods, failure to provide compliant wage statements, failure to keep accurate records of time worked, failure to pay all wages due at termination, failing to pay wages twice per month, and failure to reimburse business expenses.

As part of the Settlement, Plaintiff filed a First Amended Complaint to include class claims for the original underlying alleged PAGA violations. The First Amended Complaint alleges causes of action against Defendant for: (1) Failure to Pay All Straight Time Wages; (2) Failure to Pay Overtime Wages; (3) Failure to Provide Meal Periods; (4) Failure to Authorize and Permit Rest Periods; (5) Knowing and Intentional Failure to Comply with Itemized Employee Wage Statement Provisions; (6) Failure to Pay All Wages Due at Termination; (7) Failure to Pay All Wages Twice Per Month; (8) Failure to Reimburse/Illegal Deductions; (9) Violation of Unfair Competition Law (Bus. & Prof. Code § 17200, et seq.); and (10) Violations of the PAGA.

The Court has not made any determination as to whether the claims advanced by Plaintiff have

any merit. In other words, the Court has not determined whether any laws have been violated, nor has it decided in favor of Plaintiff or Defendant; instead, both sides agreed to resolve the lawsuit with no decision or admission of who is right or wrong. By agreeing to resolve the lawsuit, all parties avoid the risks and cost of a trial. Defendant expressly denies that it did anything wrong or that it violated the law and further denies any liability whatsoever to Plaintiff or to the Class.

3. *How Does this Class Action Settlement Work?*

Plaintiff and his attorneys believe the settlement is fair, adequate, and reasonable. The Orange County Superior Court has preliminarily reviewed the terms of the settlement and determined the settlement is fair, adequate, and reasonable. On [date of ruling on preliminary approval], the Court conditionally certified the Class for settlement purposes only and directed that you receive this Notice.

The Court will hold a Final Approval Hearing concerning the proposed settlement on [date of final approval hearing], 2025 at [time a.m./p.m.], in Department CX-102 before Judge Layne H. Melzer at 751 W. Santa Ana Blvd., Santa Ana, CA 92701. The date of the Final Approval Hearing may change without further notice to the Class. You are advised to check the Court's website (instructions on accessing this site are provided in Section 15 of this Notice) to confirm that the date has not been changed.

4. *Who Are the Attorneys Representing the Parties?*

Attorneys for Plaintiffs and the Class ("Class Counsel")	Attorneys for Sterling Plumbing
MARA LAW FIRM, PC David Mara dmara@maralawfirm.com Matthew Crawford jvecchi@maralawfirm.com 2650 Camino Del Rio North, Suite 302 San Diego, CA 92108 Telephone: (619) 234-2833 Facsimile: (619) 234-4048 LAWYERS FOR EMPLOYEE AND CONSUMER RIGHTS Sabrina Sanders ssanders@lfecr.com Colette Mahon cmahon@lfecr.com 3500 West Olive Avenue, Third Floor Burbank, CA 91505 Telephone: (323) 375-5101 Facsimile: (323) 306-5571	CDF LABOR LAW LLP Marie D. DiSante mdisante@cdflaborlaw.com Leigh A. White lwhite@cdflaborlaw.com Osaama Saifi osaifi@cdflaborlaw.com 18300 Von Karman Avenue, Suite 800 Irvine, CA 92612 Telephone: (949) 622-1661

The Court has appointed Mara Law Firm, PC and Lawyers for Employee and Consumer Rights to represent you and all other Class Members simultaneously in this Settlement. You are not required to hire your own attorney because Mara Law Firm, PC and Lawyers for Employee and

Consumer Rights is working on your behalf. But, if you want your own attorney, you may hire one at your own cost.

5. How do I Participate in the Settlement?

If you do nothing, you will automatically be included as a participant in this Settlement and will not have to take any further action to receive your settlement payment. By participating in the Settlement, you will be bound by the Release described in Section 8 below. It is your responsibility to ensure that the Settlement Administrator has your current address on file, or you may not receive important information or a settlement payment.

Important Note: *Sterling Plumbing will not retaliate against you in any way for either participating or not participating in this Settlement.*

If you do nothing, you will receive money and will be bound by the release of claims stated in this notice.

6. How Do I Request to be Excluded from the Settlement?

If you request to be excluded from the settlement, you **will not** receive any part of the class portion of the settlement. This is the only option that allows you to ever be a part of any other lawsuit against Sterling Plumbing about the legal claims and statutory period alleged in this case. By timely opting out, you will no longer receive any part of the class portion of the Settlement, nor bound by the release of class claims. You will still be bound by the release of PAGA claims.

HOW TO REQUEST TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE SETTLEMENT:	
How can I request to be excluded from the settlement?	You can request to be excluded from the class portion of the settlement by mailing the Settlement Administrator a written request for exclusion. To do this, you can use the enclosed Request for Exclusion Form.
Is there a deadline to request to be excluded?	You must postmark your completed Request for Exclusion Form or other written request to be excluded by 60 DAYS AFTER MAILING . If your class notice was returned to the Settlement Administrator as undeliverable and was then remailed to you because a more accurate address was found for you, your deadline to respond to the settlement will be forty-five (45) days from the date your notice was remailed.
What information do I need to provide?	You must fully complete the enclosed Request for Exclusion Form. Alternatively, you can send a written request for exclusion that includes all of the following: (1) your full name, current address, telephone number, last four digits of your Social Security number or employee identification number; (2) state your intention to exclude yourself from or opt-out of the Settlement, (3) be addressed to Settlement Administrator; and (4) your signature and date of signature or your lawful representative signature and date of signature. A written request for exclusion must be postmarked by 60 DAYS AFTER MAILING .

The proposed settlement includes the settlement of claims for civil penalties under PAGA. An employee may not request exclusion from the settlement of a PAGA claim. Thus, if the Court approves this settlement, then even if you request exclusion from the settlement, you still will receive an individual settlement share for the PAGA claims if you were employed between November 4, 2022, and October 28, 2024 and will be deemed to have released the PAGA claims. A request for exclusion will preserve your right to individually pursue only the remaining substantive, individual and/or class claims.

7. *How Do I Object to the Settlement?*

You can ask the Court to deny approval by filing an objection or appearing at the Final Approval Hearing to assert the objection. You cannot ask the Court to order a larger settlement; the Court can only approve or deny the settlement. If the Court denies approval, no settlement payments will be sent out and the lawsuit will continue. Importantly, you cannot object to the settlement if you have requested to be excluded from the settlement.

HOW TO OBJECT TO THE SETTLEMENT:	
How can I object to the settlement?	As long as you have not requested to be excluded from the Settlement, you can object to the settlement by mailing the Settlement Administrator a written objection or appearing at the Final Approval Hearing to assert your objection. To do this, you can use the enclosed Formal Objection Form.
Is there a deadline to object?	You must postmark your completed Formal Objection Form or other written objection by 60 DAYS AFTER MAILING . If your class notice was returned to the Settlement Administrator as undeliverable and was then remailed to you because a more accurate address was found for you, your deadline to respond to the settlement will be forty-five (45) days from the date your notice was remailed.
What information do I need to provide?	You must fully complete the enclosed Formal Objection Form. Alternatively, you can send a written objection that includes all of the following: (1) your full name, address, telephone number, the last four digits of your social security number or employee identification number; (2) the words “Notice of Objection” or “Formal Objection” and (3) a short statement of the facts supporting the objections, such as, the legal and factual arguments supporting the objection. A written objection must be postmarked by 60 DAYS AFTER MAILING .

Absent good cause found by the Court, Class Members who fail to file timely written objections in the manner specified above or fail to appear at the Final Approval Hearing to assert an objection shall be deemed to have waived any objections and shall be foreclosed from making any objection (whether an appeal or otherwise) to the settlement.

If the Court rejects the objection, the objector will receive a settlement payment and will be bound by the terms of the settlement and will release claims as defined in Section 8 of this notice

and in the settlement agreement.

8. *How Does This Settlement Affect Employees' Rights?*

If you do not submit a Request for Exclusion Form or other request to be excluded from the settlement and the Court approves of the settlement, you will receive your share of the settlement as described in Section 10 of this notice. In exchange for your share of the settlement, you will be releasing your right to bring your own lawsuit against Sterling Plumbing for the same claims that Plaintiff alleged in the lawsuit, or to bring claims that could have been alleged based on a reasonable interpretation of the facts alleged in the Lawsuit. Specifically, if you choose to receive your share of the settlement, you will be releasing your right to file a lawsuit or other claim against Sterling Plumbing for California wage and hour violations that occurred from November 4, 2022, to October 28, 2024, such as claims for failure to all regular rate and overtime wages owed during employment, failure to provide lawful meal and rest periods, failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements, failure to pay all wages due upon termination, failure to pay all wages owed twice per month, failure to keep accurate records of time worked, failure to reimburse business expenses, and unfair competition.

In addition, the proposed settlement includes the settlement of claims for civil penalties under the PAGA. If you worked for Sterling Plumbing from November 4, 2022, to October 28, 2024, you are a PAGA Aggrieved Employee. PAGA Aggrieved Employees will release claims for civil penalties under the PAGA for the claims alleged in Plaintiff's lawsuit. This release will be for the period of time between November 4, 2022, to October 28, 2024.

If you would like to see the settlement documents or complaint on file, you can check www.courtrecords.org, the Court's website, or contact Class Counsel. Directions for accessing the Court's website are outlined in Section 15 of this notice. Class Counsel's information is outlined in Section 4 of this notice.

9. *How Much is the Settlement?*

The amount that Sterling Plumbing is required to pay under this settlement is \$239,300. This amount is referred to as the "Gross Settlement Amount." The Gross Settlement Amount includes the following amounts: (1) approximately \$74,533.34 for disbursement to Class Members who do not request to be excluded from the settlement; (2) \$5,000 to Plaintiff Francisco Arroyo Mora for his effort in bringing this action; (3) costs to administer the settlement – meaning costs associated with mailing this notice to employees and costs associated with sending out settlement checks – to the Settlement Administrator, Apex Class Action Administration, which will not exceed \$7,500; (3) \$50,000 to Plaintiff's claims under the PAGA (of this amount \$37,500 will be paid to the Labor and Workforce Development Agency pursuant to the Private Attorneys' General Act of 2004 and \$12,500 will be available for distribution to PAGA Aggrieved Employees); and (4) payment to Class Counsel in the amount of \$79,766.66 (33.33% of the Gross Settlement Amount) in attorneys' fees for investigating the facts of the case, litigating the case, and negotiating the settlement, and an amount not to exceed \$22,500 for actual costs spent litigating this case. All of these payments are subject to Court approval.

The Court will not approve these requests until the Final Approval Hearing. If any of the amounts awarded are less than what is requested, the difference shall become part of the amount available for distribution to employees who do not request to be excluded from the settlement.

10. How Much Can I Expect to Receive from the Settlement?

Each employee who does not request to be excluded from the settlement will be provisionally assigned an award amount based on his or her tenure as part of the Class. Each Participating Class Member will receive a proportionate share of the Net Settlement Amount that is equal to (i) the number of weeks he or she worked for Sterling Plumbing in California, as a Class Member, based on the data provided by Defendant, divided by (ii) the total number of weeks worked by all Participating Class Members based on the same data, which is then multiplied by the Net Settlement Amount. One day worked in a given week will be credited as a work week for purposes of this calculation. Therefore, your settlement payment ties directly to the number of workweeks you worked for Sterling Plumbing between November 4, 2022, to October 28, 2024.

Although your exact settlement share cannot be precisely calculated until employees have had the opportunity to request to be excluded from the settlement, based upon the calculation formula above, your approximate share of the settlement is: \$ [REDACTED] (based on Sterling Plumbing's data which shows you worked # of workweeks between November 4, 2022, and October 28, 2024). If you began your employment prior to November 4, 2022, this lawsuit only compensates you for the weeks you worked for Sterling Plumbing on or after November 4, 2022.

If you believe the number of workweeks attributed to you is incorrect, you must notify the Settlement Administrator by completing the enclosed Workweek Dispute Form and mailing to the Settlement Administrator no later than **60 DAYS AFTER MAILING**. Alternatively, you can notify the Settlement Administrator by mail or telephone, no later than **60 DAYS AFTER MAILING**, explaining the basis for the dispute and including any supporting documentation showing that the workweeks credited to you are inaccurate. If your class notice was returned to the Settlement Administrator as undeliverable and was then remailed to you because a more accurate address was found for you, your deadline to submit a dispute as to the workweeks attributed to you will be forty-five (45) days from the date your notice was remailed. In response to a dispute submitted by a Class Member, Sterling Plumbing will review its records, the documentation provided by the Class Member, and shall provide information to the Settlement Administrator in response to any such disputed claim. The Settlement Administrator will make an initial determination about any disputes submitted. The Court shall have the right to review any decision by the Settlement Administrator regarding disputes.

You may also be entitled to a payment for your release of PAGA claims if you worked for Sterling Plumbing on or after November 4, 2022, to October 28, 2024. If you worked for Sterling Plumbing during this time period you are a PAGA Aggrieved Employee. Based on Sterling Plumbing's data which shows you worked # of pay periods between November 4, 2022, and October 28, 2024, your payment as a PAGA Aggrieved Employee is \$ [REDACTED]. If you submit a dispute, as outlined in the paragraph above, the initial determination made by the Settlement Administrator, subject to Court review, will also apply to the number of pay periods you are attributed to have worked as a PAGA Aggrieved Employee.

11. Will Taxes be Taken Out of My Settlement Share?

Yes, twenty percent (20%) of each settlement payment is intended to settle employees' claims for unpaid wages. This portion of your settlement share will be reduced by applicable payroll tax withholdings and deductions. Sterling Plumbing will pay the employer's share of legally required payroll taxes separately and outside of the settlement. The Settlement Administrator will issue you an IRS Form W-2 with respect to this portion of your settlement share.

Eighty percent (80%) of each settlement payment is intended to settle each employees' claims for interest and penalties. This portion will not be reduced by payroll tax withholding and deductions. The Settlement Administrator will issue you an IRS Form 1099 with respect to this portion of your settlement share.

One hundred percent (100%) of each PAGA settlement share is intended to settle each employees' claims for penalties under the PAGA. This portion will not be reduced by payroll tax withholding and deductions. The Settlement Administrator will issue you an IRS Form 1099 with respect to this portion of your settlement share.

12. When Can I Expect to Receive Money from the Settlement?

If you do not request to be excluded from the settlement, you should receive your settlement check approximately three months after the Court gives final approval of the settlement and it becomes effective. The effective date of this Settlement will be when the final approval of the settlement can no longer be appealed.

Please note that you must cash or deposit your settlement check within 180 calendar days after the check is mailed to you. If your check was lost or misplaced or you have changed your address, please contact the Settlement Administrator. If any checks remain uncashed or not deposited by the expiration of the 180-day period after mailing, they will be deemed void and of no further force and effect. This means that you will not be able to cash or redeem your settlement check 180 days after its issuance. The funds from settlement checks that are voided will be paid to the State of California unclaimed property fund in your name.

13. How Will the Attorneys for the Class Be Paid?

The Court-appointed attorneys for Plaintiff and the employees will be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount, subject to Court approval, in an amount not to exceed 33.33% of the Gross Settlement Amount (estimated to be \$79,766.66) in attorneys' fees and an amount not to exceed \$22,500 in actual litigation costs. Sterling Plumbing has paid and will continue to pay all of its own attorneys' fees and costs.

14. How Will the Class Representative Be Paid?

Plaintiff Francisco Arroyo Mora will also be paid, subject to Court approval, an amount not to exceed \$5,000, in consideration for bringing this case, for the time and effort they put into litigating this case and for conferring a benefit upon other employees and the State of California.

15. What do I do if I Need More Information or Have Questions?

This notice summarizes the proposed settlement. For the precise terms and conditions of the settlement, you can receive a copy of the settlement agreement by contacting Class Counsel at the information listed in Section 4, above, or by accessing the Court docket in this case through the Court's website at <https://www.occourts.org> or by visiting the office of the Court at 751 W. Santa Ana Blvd., Santa Ana, CA 92701 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding Court holidays. You may also ask Class Counsel for a copy of any of the case documents to be mailed to you free of charge. Please refer to the Sterling Plumbing Class Action Settlement when calling the settlement administrator or Class Counsel.

To view the case documents on the Court's website, access the website <https://www.occourts.org>. Once at this website, click on the "Online Services" link. Then click the link that says "Case Access" under the heading "Online Services". Then click "Civil Case & Document Access." At the bottom of the page, click "Accept Terms". On the next page, type the case number "01371468" into the box with the words "Case Number" and "2024" in the box with the words "Year Filed". Then, click the "Search" button. You will be directed to a screen with the case name. Find the case title "FRANCISCO ARROYO MORA VS. STERLING PLUMBING, INC." and click on the case number associated with this case (30-2024-01371468-CU-OE-CXC). This will take you to the case information. If you scroll down on this page, you will be able to access all of the documents filed in the case.

Additionally, the Court will hold a Final Approval Hearing on the adequacy, reasonableness, and fairness of the Settlement on [FINAL APPROVAL HEARING DATE/TIME], in Department CX-102 of the Orange County Superior Court, located at 751 W. Santa Ana Blvd., Santa Ana, CA 92701. The Court also will be asked to rule on Class Counsel's request for attorneys' fees and reimbursement of documented costs and expenses and the Service Award to the Class Representative. The Final Approval Hearing may be postponed without further notice to Settlement Class Members. You are not required to attend the Final Approval Hearing, although any Settlement Class Member is welcome to attend the hearing.

Settlement documents, including the Court's final judgment, will be posted on the Settlement Administrator's website (INSERT). Other documents available on the Settlement Administrator's website include the operative complaints, the settlement agreement, and the Court's order granting preliminary approval.

PLEASE DO NOT TELEPHONE THE COURT OR THE COURT CLERK'S OFFICE ABOUT THIS SETTLEMENT OR THE CLAIM PROCESS.

Exhibit 2

Westlaw Court Express

LEGAL BILLING REPORT

VOLUME 14, NUMBER 3

December 2012

CA REGION

BY REGION, BY FIRM

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California Report

FIRM		GRADUATED	ADMITTED	STATE	RATE	HOURS	TOTAL
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP	Partner	1993	1993	CA	\$ 825.00	8.10	\$ 6,682.50
	David P. Simonds	1993	1993	CA	\$ 725.00	2.60	\$ 1,885.00
	Senior Counsel Edward P. Christian	1993	1993	CA	\$ 725.00	10.70	\$ 8,567.50
TOTAL							
DLA Piper LLP							
Partner	Nate McQuirk	1979	1979	CA	\$ 790.00	0.60	\$ 474.00
Partner	Richard Yankovich	1979	1979	CA	\$ 790.00	39.40	\$ 30,732.00
Partner	Ann Lawrence	1989	2000	CA	\$ 755.00	90.30	\$ 68,176.50
Partner	Heather Dunn	2000	2001	CA	\$ 705.00	1.30	\$ 916.50
Partner	Jeffrey D. Aaronson	1998	1998	CA	\$ 650.00	12.70	\$ 8,255.00
Of Counsel	Ben Gipson	2002	2002	CA	\$ 640.00	3.10	\$ 1,984.00
Associate	Bethand Pan	2004	2004	CA	\$ 630.00	170.00	\$ 107,100.00
Associate	Diana M. Melzer	2008	2008	CA	\$ 510.00	67.00	\$ 34,170.00
Associate	Natasha Heleth	2011	2011	CA	\$ 470.00	1.80	\$ 846.00
Associate	Thia Bhanthall	2000	2000	CA	\$ 400.00	4.10	\$ 1,640.00
TOTAL						390.30	\$ 254,254.00
Gibson Dunn & Crutcher, LLP							
Associate	Virginia Pitt	2010	2010	CA	\$ 445.00	18.20	\$ 8,544.00
Associate	Matthew Bouslog	2011	2011	CA	\$ 395.00	12.60	\$ 4,977.00
TOTAL						31.80	\$ 13,521.00

U.S.B.C New York Southern
Private Airline Corp (12-11343 REG)

From the fee application covering
July 1, 2012 through October 31, 2012

NLI Ranking: 40
Firm Size: 791

U.S.B.C Delaware
Trident Microsystems, Inc. (12-10083 CSS)

From the fee application covering
October 1, 2012 through October 31, 2012

NLI Ranking: 2
Firm Size: 3,348

U.S.B.C New York Southern
LightSquared, Inc (12-12080 SCC)

From the fee application covering
October 1, 2012 through October 31, 2012

NLI Ranking: 21
Firm Size: 1,039

California Report

FIRM

Kornfield, Nyberg, Bander & Kuhrer, P.C.,
Partner Eric A. Nyberg
Paraprofessional Nancy L. Nyberg

GRADUATED	ADMITTED	STATE	RATE	HOURS	TOTAL
1987	1987	CA	\$ 425.00	15.90	\$ 7,182.50
		CA	90.00	0.30	24.00
				17.20	\$ 7,206.50
TOTAL					

U.S.B.C California Northern
Hawrey LLP(41-34376-DJ)
From the fee application covering
August 1, 2012 through August 31, 2012
NJ Ranking: n/a
Firm Size: 3

Loeb & Loeb

Partner	Lance N. Jurich	1987	CA	\$ 695.00	1.50	\$ 1,320.50
Partner	Christopher W. Campbell	1999	CA	550.00	46.20	30,030.00
Associate	Ryan M. Audin	2007	CA	550.00	122.30	67,255.00
Associate	Jeanne C. Wanless	1993	CA	435.00	18.20	7,917.00
Paraprofessional	S. Steadman			280.00	0.20	52.00
TOTAL						\$ 105,584.50

U.S.B.C California Central
American Medical Technologies(8-12-12339-MW)
From the fee application covering
July 1, 2012 to September 30, 2012
NJ Ranking: 144
Firm Size: 301

Pachtulski Stang Ziehl Young Jones & Weintraub

Of Counsel	James K. T. Hunter	1976	CA	\$ 745.00	0.10	\$ 74.50
Partner	Samuel R. Matzel	1985	CA	725.00	40.90	29,652.50
Of Counsel	Jeffrey Kandell	1984	CA	615.00	0.50	307.50
Partner	Mahar S. Pagay	1997	CA	615.00	1.80	1,107.00
Partner	Scotta McFarland	1980	CA	615.00	47.80	29,397.00
Of Counsel	Mary Lane	1976	CA	595.00	3.80	2,261.00
Partner	Nina Hong	1995	CA	595.00	0.50	297.50
Associate	Teddy M. Kapur	2004	CA	495.00	8.40	4,158.00
Library	Leslie A. Forrester			295.00	1.10	324.50
Paraprofessional	Felice Harrison			275.00	23.00	6,325.00
TOTAL						\$ 73,904.50

U.S.B.C California Central
American Medical Technologies(8-12-12339-MW)
From the fee application covering
July 1, 2012 to July 31, 2012
NJ Ranking: n/a
Firm Size: 55

California Report

FIRM

Pedraza & Stang Ziehl Young Jones & Weintraub

	GRADUATED	ADMITTED	STATE	RATE	HOURS	TOTAL
Partner	1979	1979	CA	\$ 975.00	0.80	\$ 780.00
Partner	1982	1983	CA	\$ 875.00	12.80	\$ 11,200.00
Of Counsel	1975	1976	CA	\$ 745.00	4.00	\$ 2,980.00
Partner	1983	1983	CA	\$ 745.00	50.80	\$ 37,845.00
Partner	1983	1984	CA	\$ 725.00	11.10	\$ 8,047.50
Of Counsel	1987	1987	CA	\$ 675.00	15.80	\$ 10,452.50
Of Counsel	1987	1987	CA	\$ 595.00	5.20	\$ 3,094.00
Of Counsel	1980	1980	CA	\$ 575.00	4.30	\$ 2,472.50
Associate	2004	2010	CA	\$ 525.00	31.00	\$ 16,275.00
Paraprofessional				265.00	2.50	\$ 862.50
Paraprofessional				265.00	7.70	\$ 2,040.50
Paraprofessional				265.00	1.00	\$ 265.00
Case Management				185.00	5.40	\$ 953.00
Case Management				185.00	0.40	\$ 74.00
TOTAL					152.50	\$ 57,198.50

Paul Hastings LLP

Partner	1976	1976	CA	\$ 840.00	15.80	\$ 13,272.00
Of Counsel	1983	1983	CA	\$ 785.00	132.40	\$ 115,062.00
Associate	2006	2006	CA	\$ 615.00	31.10	\$ 19,126.50
Associate	2007	2008	CA	\$ 575.00	181.70	\$ 104,477.50
Associate	2009	2009	CA	\$ 485.00	87.10	\$ 42,343.50
Associate	2010	2010	CA	\$ 385.00	57.00	\$ 37,345.00
Associate	2010	2010	CA	\$ 385.00	160.20	\$ 81,577.00
TOTAL					725.30	\$ 353,203.50

Seyfarth Shaw LLP

Counsel	1996	1996	CA	\$ 580.00	2.40	\$ 1,832.00
Partner	1985	1985	CA	\$ 620.00	1.50	\$ 930.00
Counsel	1997	1997	CA	\$ 540.00	55.60	\$ 30,564.00
TOTAL					60.50	\$ 33,416.00

U.S.B.C Delaware
Trident Microsystems, Inc. (12-10089 (CSS))

From the fee application covering
September 1, 2012 through September 30, 2012

NJ Ranking: n/a
Firm Size: 55

U.S.B.C New York Southern
AMR Corporation (11-15463 (SHL))

From the fee application covering
July 1, 2012 through July 31, 2012

NJ Ranking: 30
Firm Size: 851

U.S.B.C New York Southern
Grubb & Ellis Company (12-10085 (MG))

From the fee application covering
July 2, 2012 through October 31, 2012

NJ Ranking: 50
Firm Size: 733

California Report

FIRM Sidley Austin LLP

	GRADUATED	ADMITTED	STATE	RATE	HOURS	TOTAL
Partner	1995	1995	CA	\$ 875.00	18.10	\$ 12,217.50
Associate	2010	2010	CA	450.00	117.50	53,063.00
Associate	2011	2011	CA	355.00	41.00	14,555.00
TOTAL					177.00	\$ 79,827.50

U.S.B.C Delaware
Tribune Company, et al. (08-13144) (FCJ)

From the fee application covering
September 1, 2012 through September 30, 2012

NLI Ranking: 10
Firm Size: 1,592

Tenys LLP

Partner	1983	1983	CA	\$ 995.00	5.50	\$ 5,472.50
Partner	1974	1974	CA	995.00	0.40	398.00
Partner	1977	1977	CA	810.00	0.50	405.00
Associate	2008	2008	CA	695.00	21.10	14,564.50
Associate	2007	2007	CA	565.00	110.00	62,150.00
Associate	2008	2008	CA	500.00	0.50	250.00
Library				355.00	0.80	284.00
Law Clerk				395.00	43.90	13,389.50
Paraprofessional				250.00	28.20	7,332.00
Paraprofessional					210.90	\$ 104,345.50
TOTAL						

U.S.B.C Delaware
Nettel Networks Inc. (09-10138)

From the fee application covering
August 1, 2012 through October 31, 2012

NLI Ranking: n/a
Firm Size: 236

Westlaw Court Express

LEGAL BILLING REPORT

VOLUME 14, NUMBER 3

December 2012

CA REGION

BY BILLING RATE

California Rate Report

PROFESSIONAL	FIRM	GRADUATED	ADMITTED	STATE	RATE	HOURS	TOTAL
Partner	John Cameron	1983	1983	CA	\$ 995.00	5.50	\$ 5,472.50
Partner	Shelia Block	1974	1974	CA	\$ 995.00	0.40	398.00
Partner	Richard M. Pachulski	1979	1979	CA	\$ 975.00	0.80	780.00
Partner	Ira D. Kharasch	1982	1982	CA	\$ 875.00	12.80	11,200.00
Partner	J. A. Latham Jr.	1978	1978	CA	\$ 840.00	15.80	13,272.00
Partner	David P. Stronids	1983	1983	CA	\$ 825.00	9.10	6,682.50
Partner	Michael Rotszala	1977	1977	CA	\$ 810.00	0.50	405.00
Partner	Nate McKittick	1989	1989	CA	\$ 780.00	0.60	474.00
Partner	Richard Yankeiwich	1979	1979	CA	\$ 760.00	39.40	30,732.00
Partner	Ana Lawing	1989	1989	CA	\$ 755.00	50.30	68,176.50
Of Counsel	Jennifer S. Baldocchi	1983	1983	CA	\$ 755.00	152.40	115,062.00
Of Counsel	James K.T. Hunter	1976	1976	CA	\$ 745.00	0.10	74.50
Of Counsel	James K.T. Hunter	1976	1976	CA	\$ 745.00	4.00	2,980.00
Partner	John D. Fiero	1989	1989	CA	\$ 745.00	50.80	37,846.00
Senior Counsel	Edward P. Christian	1985	1985	CA	\$ 725.00	2.60	1,885.00
Partner	Samuel R. Malzel	1985	1985	CA	\$ 725.00	40.90	29,632.50
Partner	Bruce Grohschal	1983	1984	CA	\$ 725.00	11.10	8,077.50
Partner	Heather Dunn	2000	2000	CA	\$ 705.00	1.30	916.50
Partner	Lance N. Jurth	1987	1987	CA	\$ 695.00	1.90	1,320.50
Associate	Jessica Bullock	2003	2003	CA	\$ 695.00	21.10	14,684.50
Counsel	Ellen Sueda	1983	1983	CA	\$ 675.00	2.40	1,632.00
Of Counsel	Henry Hochman	1987	1987	CA	\$ 675.00	16.50	10,462.50
Partner	Max C. Fischer	1985	1985	CA	\$ 675.00	18.10	12,217.50
Partner	Jeffrey D. Karson	1988	1988	CA	\$ 650.00	12.70	8,255.00
Partner	Christopher W. Campbell	1989	1989	CA	\$ 650.00	46.20	30,030.00
Of Counsel	Ben Gibson	2002	2002	CA	\$ 640.00	3.10	1,984.00
Associate	Bertrand Pan	2004	2004	CA	\$ 630.00	170.00	107,100.00
Partner	Colleen M. Regan	1985	1985	CA	\$ 620.00	1.50	930.00
Of Counsel	Jeffrey Kamel	1984	1984	CA	\$ 615.00	0.50	307.50
Partner	Malhar S. Pargy	1984	1987	CA	\$ 615.00	1.60	1,107.00
Partner	Scott McFarland	1980	1980	CA	\$ 615.00	47.80	29,337.00
Associate	Melinda A. Gordon	2009	2009	CA	\$ 615.00	31.10	19,126.50
Of Counsel	Mary Lane	1976	1976	CA	\$ 595.00	3.90	2,261.00
Partner	Nina Hong	1986	1986	CA	\$ 595.00	0.90	535.50
Of Counsel	Gabriele Rohrer	1997	1997	CA	\$ 595.00	5.20	3,094.00

California Rate Report

PROFESSIONAL	FIRM	GRADUATED	ADMITTED	STATE	RATE	HOURS	TOTAL
Of Counsel	Pachulski Stang Ziehl Young Jones & Weintraub	1980	1980	CA	\$ 575.00	4.30	\$ 2,472.50
William Ramseyer	Paul Hastings LLP	2007	2008	CA	\$ 575.00	191.70	104,477.50
Robert E. Zivner	Tony's LLP	2007	2007	CA	\$ 555.00	110.00	62,150.00
Adam Siverts	Loeb & Loeb	2007	2007	CA	\$ 550.00	122.30	67,265.00
Associate	Seyfarth Shaw LLP	1997	1997	CA	\$ 40.00	56.60	30,854.00
Associate	Pachulski Stang Ziehl Young Jones & Weintraub	2004	2010	CA	\$ 525.00	31.00	16,275.00
Counsel	John W. Lucas	2004	2010	CA	\$ 510.00	87.00	34,170.00
Associate	Diana M. Malzer	2008	2008	CA	\$ 500.00	0.50	250.00
Associate	Madhew Akoy	2008	2008	CA	\$ 495.00	8.40	4,158.00
Associate	Teddy M. Kumar	2004	2008	CA	\$ 485.00	87.10	42,243.00
Associate	Paul Hastings LLP	2009	2009	CA	\$ 470.00	1.80	846.00
Associate	DLA Piper LLP	2011	2011	CA	\$ 450.00	117.50	53,055.00
Associate	Natasha Hsieh	2010	2010	CA	\$ 445.00	19.20	8,544.00
Associate	Michael T. Gustafson	2010	2010	CA	\$ 435.00	18.20	7,917.00
Associate	Sidley Austin LLP	2010	2010	CA	\$ 425.00	16.90	7,182.50
Associate	Gibson Dunn & Crutcher, LLP	1993	1993	CA	\$ 400.00	4.10	1,640.00
Associate	Loeb & Loeb	1987	1987	CA	\$ 395.00	12.60	4,977.00
Partner	Kornfield, Nyberg, Bendes & Kuhner, P.C.	2000	2000	CA	\$ 385.00	97.00	37,345.00
Associate	Tina Bhattachali	2011	2011	CA	\$ 385.00	160.20	61,677.00
Associate	Matthew Bourisog	2010	2010	CA	\$ 355.00	41.00	14,555.00
Associate	Ji Hae Kim	2011	2011	CA	\$ 305.00	0.80	264.00
Associate	Marlo C. Ortega	2010	2010	CA	\$ 305.00	43.90	13,389.50
Associate	Francis S. Lum	2011	2011	CA	\$ 275.00	1.10	324.50
Librarian	Clare Mauro	2011	2011	CA	\$ 265.00	2.50	662.50
Law Clerk	Bradley Tordick	2011	2011	CA	\$ 265.00	7.70	2,040.50
Librarian	Tony's LLP	2011	2011	CA	\$ 260.00	1.00	260.00
Librarian	Pachulski Stang Ziehl Young Jones & Weintraub	2011	2011	CA	\$ 260.00	0.20	52.00
Librarian	Loeb & Loeb	2011	2011	CA	\$ 260.00	28.20	7,332.00
Librarian	Tony's LLP	2011	2011	CA	\$ 185.00	5.40	995.00
Librarian	Pachulski Stang Ziehl Young Jones & Weintraub	2011	2011	CA	\$ 185.00	0.40	74.00
Librarian	Kornfield, Nyberg, Bendes & Kuhner, P.C.	2011	2011	CA	\$ 80.00	0.30	24.00

Exhibit 3

DEBRA L. HURST (SBN 106118)
KYLE VAN DYKE (SBN 171186)
JULIE CORBO RIDLEY (SBN 234274)
HURST & HURST
701 "B" Street, Suite 1700
San Diego, CA 92101
Telephone: 619.236.0016
Facsimile: 619.236.8569

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SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CENTRAL DIVISION

ADAM HOHNBAUM, ILLYA HAASE,
ROMEO OSORIO, AMANDA JUNE RADER,
and SANTANA ALVARADO and ROES 1
through 500, Inclusive on behalf of themselves
and all others similarly situated, and on behalf
of the general public,

Plaintiffs,

v.

BRINKER RESTAURANT CORPORATION,
BRINKER INTERNATIONAL, INC. and
BRINKER INTERNATIONAL PAYROLL
COMPANY, LP a Delaware Corporation; and
DOES 1 through 500, Inclusive

Defendants.

CASE NO.: GIC834348

CLASS ACTION

DECLARATION OF RICHARD M.
PEARL IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS'
UNOPPOSED MOTION FOR FINAL
APPROVAL AND OF CLASS ACTION
SETTLEMENT AND MOTION FOR
AWARD OF ATTORNEYS' FEES,
COSTS, CLASS REPRESENTATIVE
SERVICE PAYMENTS, AND CLAIMS
ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES

Date: December 12, 2014

Time: 1:30 p.m.

Dept.: C-69

Judge: Hon. Katherine A. Bacal

Complaint Filed: August 16, 2004

1 I, RICHARD M. PEARL, hereby declare the following:

2 1. I am a member in good standing of the California State Bar. I am in
3 private practice as the principal of my own law firm, the Law Offices of Richard
4 M. Pearl, in Berkeley, California. I specialize in issues related to court-awarded
5 attorneys' fees, including the representation of parties in fee litigation and
6 appeals, serving as an expert witness, and serving as a mediator and arbitrator in
7 disputes concerning attorneys' fees and related issues. In this case, I have been
8 asked by Plaintiffs' counsel to render my opinion on the reasonableness of the
9 hourly rates they are requesting in this matter. I make this Declaration in Support
10 of Plaintiffs' Motion for Award of Reasonable Attorneys' Fees.

11 **Professional Background**

12 1. Briefly summarized, my background is as follows: I am a 1969
13 graduate of Boalt Hall School of Law, University of California, Berkeley,
14 California. I took the California Bar Examination in August 1969 and passed it in
15 November of that year, but because I was working as an attorney in Atlanta,
16 Georgia for the Legal Aid Society of Atlanta (LASA), I was not admitted to the
17 California Bar until January 1970. I worked for LASA until summer of 1971,
18 when I then went to work in California's Central Valley for California Rural Legal
19 Assistance, Inc. (CRLA), a statewide legal services program. From 1977 to 1982,
20 I was CRLA's Director of Litigation, supervising more than fifty attorneys. In
21 1982, I went into private practice, first in a small law firm, then as a sole
22 practitioner. Martindale Hubbell rates my law firm "AV." I also have been
23 selected as a Northern California "Super Lawyer" in Appellate Law for 2005,
24 2006, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014. A copy of my current
25 Resume is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

26 2. Since 1982, my practice has been a general civil litigation and
27 appellate practice, with an emphasis on cases and appeals involving court-awarded
28 attorneys' fees. I also am the author of *California Attorney Fee Awards* (3d ed.

1 Cal. CEB 2010) and its February 2011, 2012, 2013, and March 2014 Supplements,
2 as well as all its previous editions and annual supplements. California appellate
3 courts have cited this treatise on more than 35 occasions. *See, e.g., Graham v.*
4 *DaimlerChrysler Corp.* (2004) 34 Cal.4th 553, 576, 584; *Lolley v. Campbell* (2002)
5 28 Cal.4th 367, 373; *Chacon v. Litke* (2010) 181 Cal.App.4th 1234, 1259; *Syers*
6 *Properties III, Inc. v. Rankin* (2014) 226 Cal.App.4th 691, 698, 700. I also have
7 lectured and written extensively on court-awarded attorneys' fees. I have been a
8 member of the California State Bar's Attorneys' Fees Task Force and have
9 testified before the State Bar Board of Governors and the California Legislature on
10 attorneys' fee issues. In addition, I authored a federal manual on attorneys' fees
11 entitled *Attorneys' Fees: A Legal Services Practice Manual*, published by the
12 Legal Services Corporation. I also co-authored the chapter on "Attorney Fees" in
13 Volume 2 of CEB's *Wrongful Employment Termination Practice*, 2d Ed. (1997).

14 3. More than 90% of my practice is devoted to issues involving court-
15 awarded attorneys' fees. I have been counsel in over 180 attorneys' fee
16 applications in state and federal courts, primarily representing other attorneys. I
17 also have briefed and argued more than 40 appeals, at least 25 of which have
18 involved attorneys' fees issues. I have successfully handled five cases in the
19 California Supreme Court involving court-awarded attorneys' fees: (1) *Maria P. v.*
20 *Riles* (1987) 43 Cal.3d 1281, a landmark early decision on the scope of California
21 Code of Civil Procedure section 1021.5; (2) *Delaney v. Baker* (1999) 20 Cal.4th
22 23, which held that heightened remedies, including attorneys' fees, are available in
23 suits against nursing homes under California's Elder Abuse Act; (3) *Ketchum v.*
24 *Moses* (2001) 24 Cal.4th 1122, which held, *inter alia*, that contingent risk
25 multipliers remain available under California attorney fee law, despite the United
26 States Supreme Court's contrary ruling on federal law (note that in *Ketchum*, I was
27 primary appellate counsel in the Court of Appeal and "second chair" in the
28 Supreme Court); (4) *Flannery v. Prentice* (2001) 26 Cal.4th 572, which held that in

1 the absence of an agreement to the contrary, statutory attorneys' fees belong to the
2 attorney whose services they are based upon; and (5) *Graham v. DaimlerChrysler*
3 *Corp.* (2004) 34 Cal.4th 553, which held, *inter alia*, that the "catalyst" theory was
4 still valid under California law despite federal Supreme Court authority to the
5 contrary. I also represented and argued on behalf of *amicus curiae* in
6 *Conservatorship of McQueen* (2014) 59 Cal.4th 602, and, along with Richard
7 Rothschild, filed an *amicus curiae* brief in *Vasquez v. State of California* (2009) 45
8 Cal.4th 243. I also have handled numerous other appeals involving attorney's fees,
9 including: *Davis v. City & County of San Francisco* (9th Cir. 1992) 976 F.2d 1536;
10 *Mangold v. CPUC* (9th Cir. 1995) 67 F.3d 1470; *Moore v. Bank of America* (9th
11 Cir. 2007) 245 Fed.Appx. 613; *Velez v. Wynne* (9th Cir. 2007) 2007
12 U.S.App.LEXIS 2194; *Camacho v. Bridgeport Financial, Inc.* (9th Cir. 2008) 523
13 F.3d 973; *Center for Biological Diversity v. County of San Bernardino* (2010) 185
14 Cal.App.4th 866; and *Environmental Protection Information Center v. California*
15 *Dept. of Forestry & Fire Protection et al* (2010) 190 Cal.App.4th 217. For an
16 expanded list of my representative decisions, see Exhibit A.

17 4. I also have been retained by various governmental entities, including
18 the State of California, at my then current rates to consult with them regarding their
19 affirmative attorney fee claims.

20 5. I am frequently called upon to opine about the reasonableness of
21 attorneys' fees, and numerous federal and state courts have cited my testimony on
22 that issue favorably. The reported cases referencing my testimony include the
23 following California appellate courts: *Laffite v. Robert Half Int'l* (2014)
24 __Cal.App.4th __, 2014 Cal.App.LEXIS 1059; *In re Tobacco Cases I* (2013) 216
25 Cal.App.4th 570; *Heritage Pacific Financial LLC v. Monroy* (2013) 215
26 Cal.App.4th 972, 1009; *Children's Hospital & Medical Center v. Bonta* (2002) 97
27 Cal.App.4th 740; *Wilkinson v. South City Ford* (2010) 2010 Cal.App.Unpub.
28 LEXIS 8680; *Church of Scientology v. Wollersheim* (1996) 42 Cal.App.4th 628

1 (anti-SLAPP case). My declaration also has been favorably referenced by the
2 following federal courts: *Prison Legal News v. Schwarzenegger* (9th Cir. 2010)
3 608 F.3d 446, 455, in which the expert declaration referred to in that opinion is
4 mine; *Antoninetti v. Chipotle Mexican Grill, Inc.* (9th Cir. 2012) Order filed Dec.
5 26, 2012; *In re TFT-LCD (Flat Panel) Antitrust Litigation* (N.D.Cal. 2013) No. M
6 07-1827 SI, MDL, No. 1827, Report and Recommendation of Special Master re
7 Motions for Attorneys' Fees etc., filed Nov. 9, 2012, adopted in relevant part, 2013
8 U.S.Dist.LEXIS 49885; *Rosenfeld v. United States Dept. of Justice* (N.D. Cal.
9 2012) 904 F.Supp.2d 988; *Stonebrae v. Toll Bros.* (N.D. Cal. 2011) 2011
10 U.S.Dist.LEXIS 39832, at *9 (thorough discussion), *aff'd* (9th Cir. 2013) 2013
11 U.S.App.LEXIS 6369; *Hajro v. United States Citizenship & Immigration Service*
12 (N.D.Cal 2012) 900 F.Supp.2d 1034, 1054; *Armstrong v. Brown* (N.D. Cal. 2011)
13 2011 U.S.Dist.LEXIS 87428; *Californians for Disability Rights, Inc. v. California*
14 *Dept. of Transportation* (N.D. Cal. 2010) 2010 U.S.Dist.LEXIS 141030; *Prison*
15 *Legal News v. Schwarzenegger* (N.D. Cal. 2008) 561 F.Supp.2d 1095 (an earlier
16 motion); *Oberfelder v. City of Petaluma* (N.D. Cal. 2002) 2002 U.S.Dist.LEXIS
17 8635, *aff'd* (9th Cir. 2003) 2003 U.S.App.LEXIS 11371; *Bancroft v. Trizechahn*
18 *Corp.*, C.D. Cal. No. CV 02-2373 SVW (FMOx), Order Granting Reasonable
19 Attorneys' Fees etc., filed Aug. 14, 2006; *Willoughby v. DT Credit Corp.*, C.D.
20 Cal. No. CV 05-05907 MMM (Cwx), Order Awarding Reasonable Attorneys' Fees
21 After Remand, filed July 17, 2006; *A.D. v. California Highway Patrol* (N.D.Cal.
22 2009) 2009 U.S.Dist.LEXIS 110743, *rev's'd on other grounds* (9th Cir. 2013) 712
23 F.3d 446, *reaffirmed and additional fees awarded on remand* at 2013
24 U.S.Dist.LEXIS 169275; *National Federation of the Blind v. Target Corp.*
25 (N.D.Cal. 2009) 2009 U.S.Dist.LEXIS 67139. In addition, numerous trial courts
26 have relied upon my testimony in unpublished fee orders.

27 6. I also have extensive experience litigating the merits of class actions,
28 including numerous housing, government benefits, and consumer class actions.

1 See, e.g., *Employment Dev. Dept. v. Superior Court (Boren)* (1981) 30 Cal.3d 256.

2 I also have represented Class Counsel on their fee requests in numerous highly-
3 contested class actions, including *Davis v. City & County of San Francisco, supra*,
4 *Duran v. First National Bank*, Alameda County Superior Court No. 2001-035537,
5 and *Molina, et al. v. Lexmark International, et al.*, Los Angeles County Superior
6 Court No. BC339177.

7 7. In this matter, I have reviewed several documents from the underlying
8 litigation and fee motion, including the entire Motion for Preliminary Approval, as
9 well as the declarations of Plaintiffs' principal counsel filed in support of the
10 instant motion. I also have discussed the case with class counsel Julie Corbo-
11 Ridley.

12 **PLAINTIFFS' ATTORNEYS' HOURLY RATES ARE**
13 **REASONABLE**

14 8. Through my writing and practice, I have become knowledgeable
15 about the non-contingent market rates charged by attorneys in California and
16 elsewhere. I have obtained this knowledge in several ways: (1) by handling
17 attorneys' fee litigation; (2) by preparing expert declarations in numerous cases;
18 (3) by discussing fees with other attorneys; (4) by obtaining declarations regarding
19 prevailing market rates in cases in which I represent attorneys seeking fees; and (5)
20 by reviewing attorneys' fee applications and awards in other cases, as well as
21 surveys and articles on attorneys' fees in the legal newspapers and treatises.

22 9. I am aware of the hourly rates being requested by Plaintiffs' attorneys
23 in this case, their experience and qualifications, the nature of the work performed,
24 and the results achieved. Under California law, Plaintiff's attorneys are entitled to
25 their requested rates if those rates are "within the range of reasonable rates charged
26 by and judicially awarded comparable attorneys for comparable work." *Children's*
27 *Hosp. & Med. Ctr. v. Bonta [CHMC]* (2002) 97 Cal.App.4th 740, 783. In my
28 opinion, the information about non-contingent hourly rates I have gathered, some

1 of which is summarized below, shows that the rates requested by Plaintiffs'
2 counsel in this matter are well within the range of the non-contingent market rates
3 charged by California and San Diego attorneys of reasonably comparable
4 experience, skill, and expertise for reasonably comparable services. I base that
5 opinion in large part on the following data:

6 **Court Awards**

7 10. Several of the Plaintiffs' law firms have had the hourly rates requested
8 here, or their equivalent rates in prior years, approved by the courts in other class
9 actions. For example, Hurst & Hurst's rates were found reasonable in *Serochi v.*
10 *Bosa Development California II, Inc., et al.*, San Diego Superior Court Case No.:
11 37-2009-00096686-CU-BT-CTL. Similarly, Ms. Lorens's 2012 rate of \$795/hour
12 was approved in November 2012 in *Hoch v. Rockin' Baja Coastal Cantina, et al.*,
13 San Diego Superior Court Case No. 37-2012-00095176-CU-OE-CTL/*Mojica v.*
14 *Rockin' Baja Coastal Cantina, et al.*, San Diego Superior Court Case No. 37-2012-
15 00091490-CU-OE-CTL. This is highly probative evidence of the reasonableness
16 of their rates in subsequent reasonably similar cases.

17 11. Counsel's rates are also consistent with the following court awards
18 from the Southern District of California¹:

19 (1) In *Hartless v. Clorox*, 273 F.R.D. 630, 644 (S.D. Cal. 2011), the
20 Court found, *inter alia*, that class counsel's requested rates were consistent with
21 the hourly rates found reasonable in numerous other class actions and with rates
22 charged by other firms in the San Diego area, including rates of \$795 per hour for a
23 25-year attorney and \$675 per hour for an experienced partner. 273 F.R.D. at 644.

24
25 ¹ In my experience, for purposes of the hourly rates charged and found reasonable by the courts,
26 the differences between types of class actions (i.e. wage and hour class actions versus consumer
27 class actions) are not significant, either factually or legally. See, e.g., *Heritage Pacific Financial,*
28 *LLC v. Monroy*, 215 Cal.App.4th 972, 1009 (2013); *Camacho v. Bridgeport Financial, Inc.*, 523
F.3d 973, 979 (9th Cir. 2008).

1 Given the rate increases that have occurred over the ensuing three years, counsel's
2 rates here are certainly within the same range.

3 (2) In *Shames v. Hertz Corp.*, 2012-2 Trade Case. (CCH) ¶78,120 (S.D.
4 Cal. 2012), the Court, relying on *Hartless*, found that plaintiffs' San Diego
5 Counsel there were comparable in skill and experience to the attorneys whose rates
6 were found reasonable in *Hartless*. At *59-61.

7 (3) In *Briarwood Capital LLC v. HCC Investors LLC*, San Diego
8 Superior Court No. GIC877446, on March 30, 2011, the court (Judge William R.
9 Nevitt Jr.) found that the 2009 hourly rates charged by the San Diego office of
10 Bernstein Litowitz Berger & Grossman LLP -- \$725 for partners, \$490-550 for
11 associates -- were reasonable.

12 (4) Similarly, in the same case, the court found that the 2009 rates
13 charged by the Century City office of O'Melveny & Myers LLP, including rates of
14 \$860-950 for a 36-37 year attorney and \$700-710 for 16-18 year attorneys also
15 were reasonable for San Diego litigation. Again, given the rate increases that have
16 occurred over the past three years, Plaintiffs' attorneys' current rates here are in the
17 same range as those found reasonable in *Briarwood Capital*.

18 (5) In *Atlas v. Accredited Home Lenders Holdings, Co.* Case No. 07-
19 CV-488-H-CAB (S.D. Cal. 2009), the court (Judge Marilyn Huff) found the 2009
20 rates charged by Bernstein Litowitz's San Diego office reasonable. Again, those
21 rates ranged from \$490 to \$550 for associates, and \$725 for a partner.

22 (6) In *In re Virgil's Tours*, Case No. 08-30659 (Bank. N.D. Cal. 2008),
23 the court found reasonable the 2008 rates requested by Morrison & Foerster LLP's
24 San Diego office. Those rates ranged from \$600 to \$675 for partners, from \$350 to
25 \$485 for associates, and from \$220 to \$245 for paralegals.

26 (7) In *Qualcomm, Inc. v. Broadcom, Inc.* Case No. 05-CV-1958-B,
27 2008 WL 2705161 (S.D. Cal. 2008), the court found the 2007 hourly rates
28 requested by Wilmer Cutler, Pickering, Hale & Dorr LLP reasonable for San

1 Diego-based litigation. Those rates ranged from \$45 to \$300 for staff and
2 Paralegals, from \$275 to \$505 for associates and counsel, and from \$435 to \$850
3 for partners.

4 12. In addition to local courts, the following hourly rates have been
5 found reasonable by various California courts for reasonably similar services:

6 **2014**

7 (1) *IPVX Patent Holdings, Inc. v. Voxernet LLC*, N.D. Cal. No.
8 5:13-CV-01708-HRL, a patent infringement case, in which the court found the
9 following hourly rates reasonable:

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
<u>2014</u>	
45	\$750
35	750
23	725
19	695
5	400
3	350
Paralegal	125
<u>2013</u>	
18	\$755
11	595
2	425
<u>2012</u>	
40	\$865
17	755
10	595
1	375

23 (2) *Doe v. United Healthcare Insurance Co., et al.*, C.D. Cal. No.
24 SACV 13-0864 DOC(JPRx), Order Granting Attorney's Fees and Costs, filed
25 October 15, 2014, a multi-Plaintiff consumer action, in which the court found the
26 following hourly rates reasonable:

<u>Whatley Kallas</u>	
<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
36	\$950

Whatley Kallas

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
27	900
32	800
33	750
21	700
10	600
4	400
2	375
Paralegal	225
Intern	125

Consumer Watchdog

35	\$925
19	650
4	425

(3) *Rose v. Bank of America Corp.*, N.D. Cal. No. 5:11-CV-02390-EJD; 5:12 CV-04009-EJD, Order Granting Motion for Final Approval of Settlement; Granting in Part and Denying in Part Motion for Attorney's Fees and Costs, filed August 29, 2014, a consumer class action involving the Bank's loan servicing calls, in which the court found the following hourly rates reasonable:

Partners: \$775-350

Associates: \$525-325

(4) *Carpio v. California Department of Social Services, Los Angeles County Superior Court*, No. BS 135127, Order Granting Petitioner's Motion For Attorney's Fees, filed July 24, 2014, a government benefits writ of mandate, in which the court found the following hourly rates reasonable:

<u>Years</u>	<u>Rate</u>
39	\$750
35	730
13	500
8	460
6	440

(5) *Cornell v. City & County of San Francisco*, San Francisco County

1 Superior Court No. CGC-11-509240, Order Granting Motion for Reasonable
2 Attorneys' Fees, Subject to Modifications, filed May 15, 2014, an individual police
3 misconduct/employment action, in which the court found the following hourly
4 rates reasonable, plus a 1.25 lodestar multiplier for merits work:

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
45	\$750
35	750
23	725
19	695
5	400
3	350
Paralegal	125

11 **2013 Rates**

12 (1) *Ellis v. Costco Wholesale Corp.*, N.D. Cal. No. C04-3341 EMC,
13 Order Granting Motion for Final Approval of Class Action Settlement, filed May
14 27, 2014, an employment class action, in which the court found the following
15 hourly rates reasonable:

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
38	\$700
35	825
30	650-825
29	875
19	725
9	500
8	460
7	425-575
6	435
3	315
Paralegals	155-295
Law Clerks	185-275

25 (2) *In re Pacific Bell Late Fee Litigation*, Contra Costa County Superior
26 Ct. No. MSC10-00840, Order Awarding Attorneys' Fees, Costs and Expenses and
27 Authorizing Payment of Incentive Award to the Class Representative, filed
28 October 18, 2013, a consumer class action, in which the court found the following

1 hourly rates reasonable:

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
17	\$850
16	680
11 (partner)	680
36	675
32	675
28 (assoc.)	620
4	400
3	390
Paralegals and Litigation Support	160-180

10 (3) *Reuters America LLC v. The Regents of the Univ. of Calif.*, Alameda
11 County Superior Court No. RG12-613664, Order Granting in Part Motion of
12 Petitioner for Attorneys' Fees filed May 2, 2013, reversed on the merits sub nom
13 *Regents of U.C. v. Superior Court* (2014) 222 Cal.App.4th 383, a California Public
14 Records Act action, in which the trial court found the following hourly rates
15 reasonable, before applying a 1.3 lodestar multiplier:

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
31	\$785
27	600
6	400

19 (4) *Recouvreur v. Carreon* (N.D. Cal. 2013) 940 F.Supp.2d 1063, a
20 Lanham Act/ sanctions fee motion, in which the court found the following hourly
21 rate reasonable:

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
20+	\$700

2012 Rates

25 (1) *In re TFT-LCD (Flat Panel) Antitrust Litigation* (N.D.Cal. 2013) No.
26 M 07 1827 SI, MDL, No. 1827, an antitrust class action, in which the court found
27 the following hourly rates reasonable:
28

Zelle Hofman

<u>Bar Admission</u>	<u>Rate</u>
1967	\$1000
1978	861
2001	619
2002	525
2005	500
2006	472
2009	417

Steyer, Lowenthal et al.

<u>Bar Admission</u>	<u>Rate 2012</u>	<u>Rate 2011</u>	<u>Rate 2010</u>
1981	\$820	\$770	\$730
1995	660	640	590
2007	380	360	320
2008	380	360	320
1982	750	710	680
Paralegal	190		

Cooper & Kirkham

<u>Bar Admission</u>	<u>Rates 2010-2012</u>
1964	\$950
1975	825
2001	550

(2) *Rosenfeld v. United States Dept. of Justice* (N.D. Cal. 2012) 904 F.Supp.2d 988, a Freedom of Information Act action, in which the court found the following hourly rates reasonable:

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
28	\$700
21	550
1	200
Law students	160-180

(3) *Williams v. H&R Block Enterprises, Inc.*, Alameda County Superior Ct. No. RG08366506, Order of Final Approval and Judgment filed November 8, 2012, a wage and hour class action, in which the court found the following hourly

1 rates reasonable:

<u>Year of Bar Admission</u>	<u>Rate</u>
1970	\$785
1976	775
1981	750
1993	650-700
1994-1997	500-650
2004	500
2005	470
2006	445-475
2007	450
2008	400
2009	350

11 (4) *American Civil Liberties Union v. Drug Enforcement Administration*,
12 N.D. Cal. No. C-11-01977 RS, Order Granting Motion for Attorneys' Fees and
13 Litigation Costs Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. §552, filed November 8, 2012, a Freedom of
14 Information Act case, in which the court found the following hourly rates
15 reasonable:

<u>Year of Bar Admission</u>	<u>Rate</u>
1970	\$700
1996	595
1999	575
Law Clerks	150

20 (5) *Luquetta v. The Regents of the Univ. of California*, San Francisco
21 Superior Ct. No.CGC-05-443007, Order Granting Plaintiff's Motion for Common
22 Fund Attorneys' Fees and Expenses, filed October 31, 2012, a class action to
23 recover tuition overcharges, in which the court found the following hourly rates
24 reasonable:

<u>Year of Bar Admission</u>	<u>Rate</u>
1977	\$850
1986	785
1991	750
1994	700
1998	625

2000	570
2001	550
2002	520
Law Clerks	250
Paralegals	215

(6) *Davis v. Prison Health Services* (N.D. Cal. 2012) 2012 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 138556, an individual Fair Employment and Housing Act case, in which the court found the following hourly rates reasonable:

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
33	\$750
29	675
4	300
6	265

2011 Rates

(1) *Pierce v. County of Orange* (C.D. Cal. 2012) 905 F.Supp.2d 1017, a civil rights class action brought by pre-trial detainees, in which the court approved a lodestar, including appellate fees, based on the following 2011 rates:

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
42	\$850
32	825
23	625
18	625
Law Clerks	250
Paralegals	250

(2) *Davis v. Prison Health Services* (N.D. Cal. 2012) 2012 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 138556, an individual Fair Employment and Housing Act case, in which the court found the following hourly rates reasonable:

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
33	\$750
29	675
4	300
6	265

(3) *Holloway et. al. v. Best Buy Co., Inc.* (N.D. Cal. 2011) No. 05-5056

PJH, Order dated November 9, 2011, a class action alleging that Best Buy discriminated against female, African American and Latino employees by denying them promotions and lucrative sales positions, in which the court approved a lodestar award based on the following rates:

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
37	\$825
Associates	
8	490
6	405
Law Clerks	225
Paralegals	215

(3) *Molina, et al. v. Lexmark International, et al.*, Los Angeles County Superior Court No. BC339177, Order Granting Petitioners' Motion for Attorneys' Fees and Costs in the Amount of \$5,722,008.07, filed October 28, 2011, *aff'd* (2013) 2013 Cal.App.Unpub. LEXIS 6684, a class action to recover forfeited vacation pay, in which the court found the following hourly rates reasonable (before applying a 2.0 multiplier):

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
42	\$675
25	550
24	655-675
23	625
20	550
17	600
9	475
6	350
Paralegals	210
Paralegals	210

2010 Rates

(1) *Californians for Disability Rights, Inc., et al. v. California Department of Transportation, et al.* (N.D.Cal. 2010) 2010 U.S.Dist.LEXIS 141030, adopted by Order Accepting Report and Recommendation filed February 2, 2011, a disability-access class action, in which the court found the following

2010 hourly rates reasonable:

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
49	\$835
34	730
26	740
25	730
19	660
10	570
9	560
7	535
6	500
5	475
3	350
2	290
1	225-265
Senior Paralegals	265
Law Clerks	175
Case Clerks	165

Rate Information from Surveys

12. I also base my opinion on several credible surveys of legal rates, including the following:

- The 2014 *Laffey Matrix* is a survey of District of Columbia hourly rates that is often relied upon in other jurisdictions, with appropriate adjustments for differences in income levels, to determine reasonable hourly rates. See, e.g., *Syers Properties III, Inc. v. Rankin* (2014) 226 Cal.App.4th 691, 695. A copy of that survey is attached hereto as Exhibit B. It shows that for attorneys with 20+ years out of law school, the prevailing market in the period between June 1, 2013, and May 31, 2014 was \$771 per hour. For lawyers with 11-19 years out of law school, the prevailing rate for the same period was \$640 per hour. The difference in the Local Pay Tables for the Washington D.C. area and the San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos areas are de minimis -- .03%.

- 1 • On January 13, 2014, the National Law Journal published an article
2 about its most recent rate survey. That article included a chart listing
3 the billing rates of the 50 firms that charge the highest average hourly
4 rates for partners. A true and correct copy of that article is attached
5 hereto as Exhibit C. Of the 50 firms listed, several have offices in the
6 San Diego area and many others have significant litigation experience
7 in this area. And, although the rates that Plaintiffs' counsel are
8 requesting here are significantly *lower* than many of the rates charged
9 by the top 50 firms, the NLJ chart does show the *range* of rates
10 charged for similar services, which *is* the applicable standard. *See*
11 *CHMC*, 97 Cal.App.4th at 783.
- 12 • In an article entitled "On Sale: The \$1,150-Per Hour Lawyer,"
13 written by Jennifer Smith and published in the Wall Street Journal on
14 April 9, 2013, the author describes the rapidly growing number of
15 lawyers billing at \$1,150 or more revealed in public filings and major
16 surveys. A true and correct copy of that article is attached hereto as
17 Exhibit D. The article also notes that in the first quarter of 2013, the
18 50 top-grossing law firms billed their partners at an *average* rate
19 between \$879 and \$882 per hour.
- 20 • In an article published April 16, 2012, the Am Law Daily described
21 the 2012 Real Rate Report, an analysis of \$7.6 billion in legal bills
22 paid by corporations over a five-year period ending in December
23 2011. A true and correct copy of that article is attached hereto as
24 Exhibit E. That article confirms that the rates charged by experienced
25 and well-qualified attorneys have continued to rise over the five-year
26 period between 2006 and 2011, particularly in large urban areas. It
27 also shows, for example, that the top quartile of lawyers bill at an
28 *average* of "just under \$900 per hour."

Altshuler Berzon LLP**

Paralegals	215
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Arnold Porter LLP

<u>2013 Rates:</u>	Average Partner	\$815
	Highest Partner	950
	Lowest Partner	670
	Average Associate	500
	Highest Associate	610
	Lowest Associate	345

The Arns Law Firm LLP **

<u>2014 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	37	\$950
	Law Clerks	165

Bernstein Litowitz Borger & Grossman LLP
(San Diego Office) *, **

<u>2009 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Partners	\$725
	Associates	490-550

Bingham McCutchen

<u>2013 Rates:</u>	Average Partner	\$795
	Highest Partner	1,080
	Lowest Partner	670
	Average Associate	450
	Highest Associate	605
	Lowest Associate	185

<u>2011 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	30	\$780

<u>2010 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	13	\$655
	4	480
	2	400

Blood Hurst & O'Reardon *, **

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	22	\$655
	17	585

Blood Hurst & O'Reardon*, **

6	510
5	410
1	305
Paralegals	260

Burson & Fisher**

<u>2013 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	16	\$680-850
	11	680
	4	400
	3	390
	2	375
	1	300
	Law Clerks	225
	Litigation Support Specialists	180

Chavez & Gertler*

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	33	\$750
	29	725
	32	675
	21	575
	11	535
	7	475
	Legal Assistant	185
<u>2011 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	32	\$725
	28	700
	10	550
	9	510
	5	425
	Paralegals	225

Coblentz Patch & Duffy

<u>2013 Rates:</u>	<u>Year of Bar Admission</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	1979	\$720
	1994	575
	2008	320
	Paralegals/Case Clerks	295

Cohelan Khoury & Singer

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	38	\$750
	28	750
	11	400
	Paralegal	170

Cooper & Kirkham

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	48	\$950
	37	825
	11	600

Covington Burling

<u>2013 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	28	\$750
	16	670
	14	670
	7	510
	2	375
	5	490
	Litigation Support	110-355

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	27	\$730
	15	632-650
	13	650

<u>2011 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	26	\$710
	14	640
	12	600
	9	565
	7	550
	5	425
	3	390
	1	320

<u>2010 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	25	\$710
	13	640
	11	575-600
	8	550-565

Covington Burling

6	525-550
4	390-425
2	350-390

Farella Braun & Martell LLP

<u>2010 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	31	\$715

Fenwick & West

<u>2014 Rates</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	45	\$750
	35	750
	23	725
	19	695
	5	400
	3	350
	Paralegal	125
<u>2013 Rates</u>	18	\$755
	11	595
	2	425
<u>2012 Rates</u>	40	\$865
	17	755
	10	595
	1	375

Furth Firm LLP**

<u>2010 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	51	\$875
	39	750
	38	600
	33	775
	25	550
	23	650
	21	625
	19	610
	18	600
	17	585
	16	570
	15	560

Furth Firm LLP**

14	550
13	525
12	515
11	510
10	505
9	500
7	460
4	435
Law Clerks	125-260

Gibson Dunn & Crutcher LLP

<u>2013 Rates:</u>	Average Partner	\$980
	Highest Partner	1,800
	Lowest Partner	765
	Average Associate	590
	Highest Associate	930
	Lowest Associate	175

Goldstein, Borgen, Dardarian & Ho**

<u>2014 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	33	\$795
	27	750
	8	500
	4	395
	3	350
	1	300
	Law Clerks/Paralegals	160-250

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Partners	
	42	\$785
	36	750
	31	700
	18	650
	Associates	
	7	470
	6	445
<u>2011 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Partners	
	41	\$725
	35	725

Goldstein, Borgen, Dardarian & Ho**

30	700
24	650
18	600
17	600
16	550

2010 Rates:

Years of Experience Rate

Partners

40	\$700
34	700
29	675
23	625
17	575
16	575

Of Counsel

40	725
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Associates

15	\$500
11	440
6	375
5	365
4	355
3	340
2	325
1	305

Law Clerks

Paralegals	195
	150-225

Greenberg, Traurig, LLP

2010 Rates:

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
22	\$850

Greines, Martin, Stein & Richland

2012 Rates:

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
41	\$850
29	850
23	650
18	500
Law Clerks	100

**Hadsell, Stormer, Keeny, Richardson &
Renick****

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	38	\$825
	33	775
	22-23	625
	17	600
	12	525
	10	425
	4	275
	3	250

<u>2010 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	36	\$800
	31	750
	20-21	600
	15	575
	10	475-500
	8	425
	4	325
	2	275
	1	250

Hausfeld LLP**

<u>2014 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	45	\$985
	37	935-895
	15	610-510
	14	600
	7	490
	3	370
	Paralegals	300-320
	Law Clerks	325

Irell & Manella

<u>2013 Rates:</u>		
	Average Partner	\$890
	Highest Partner	975
	Lowest Partner	800
	Average Associate	535
	Highest Associate	750
	Lowest Associate	395

Janssen Malloy LLP

<u>2014 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	33	\$775
	Paralegals	175

Jones Day

<u>2013 Rates:</u>		
	Average Partner	\$745
	Highest Partner	975
	Lowest Partner	670
	Average Associate	435
	Highest Associate	775
	Lowest Associate	205

Kaye, McLane, Bednarski & Litt **

<u>2013 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	44	\$925
	27	725
	24	725
	7	525
	5	475

Keker & Van Nest, LLP

<u>2010 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Partners	
	32	\$775
	Other Partners	525-975
	Associates	340-500
	Paralegals/Support Staff	120-260

Kemnitzer, Barron & Krieg

<u>2014 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	38	\$750
	32	750
	8	475
	3	350
	Senior Paralegal	250

Kiesel, Boucher, Larson LLP *, **

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Partners	
	27-28	\$890

Kiesel, Boucher, Larson LLP *, **

Associates 625-325

Kingsley & Kingsley**

<u>2010 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	14	\$655
	8	475-515
	7	475
	6	485
	5	375
	3	350
	2	300

Kirkland & Ellis

<u>2013 Rates:</u>		
	Average Partner	\$825
	Highest Partner	995
	Lowest Partner	670
	Average Associate	540
	Highest Associate	715
	Lowest Associate	235

Knapp, Petersen & Clarke

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	36	\$753
	9	554
	6	383

Knobbe Martin Olson & Bear LLP

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Partners	\$395-710
	Associates	285-450

Latham & Watkins

<u>2013 Rates:</u>		
	Average Partner	\$990
	Highest Partner	1,100
	Lowest Partner	670
	Average Partner	895
	Average Associate	605
	Highest Associate	725
	Lowest Associate	465

Lewis Feinberg Lee, Renaker & Jackson,
P.C.**

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	38	\$825
	29	750
	24	725
	21	700
	8	450
	7	425
	3	375
	Senior Paralegals	250
	Law Clerks	225

Litt, Estuar, & Kitson, LLP**

<u>2011 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	42	\$825
	18	625
	17	625
	5	425
	3	375
	Senior Paralegals	125-235
	Law Clerks	225

Manatt, Phelps & Phillips

<u>2013 Rates:</u>	<u>Average Partner</u>	<u>\$740</u>
	<u>Highest Partner</u>	<u>795</u>
	<u>Lowest Partner</u>	<u>670</u>
	<u>Lowest Partner</u>	<u>640</u>
<u>2010 Rates:</u>	<u>Partners</u>	<u>525-850</u>
	<u>Associates</u>	<u>200-525</u>

McKenna Long & Aldridge LLP

<u>2014 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	30	\$775
	9	650

McKenna Long & Aldridge LLP

5	420
Litigation Support Mgr.	350
Paralegals	225

Minami Tamaki LLP

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	36	\$750
	15	525
	5	395
	Paralegals	175

Morrison Foerster LLP

<u>2013 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Average Partner	\$865
	Highest Partner	1,195
	Lowest Partner	670
	Lowest Partner	595
	Average Associate	525
	Highest Associate	725
	Lowest Associate	230

<u>2011 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	22	\$775
	11	625
	10	620
	1	335

<u>2009 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	24	\$750

O'Melveny & Myers

<u>2013 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Average Partner	\$715
	Highest Partner	950
	Lowest Partner	615

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	12	\$695
	4	495

Patton Boggs

<u>2010 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
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Patton Boggs

Partners	
14	\$830
29	750
20	750
33	700
27	700
13	575
24	550
14	530
Of Counsel	
30	600
15	500
Associates	
9	450
7	425
3	340
2	315
Senior Paralegals	200-265
Paralegals	170

Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP

<u>2013 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Average Partner	\$865
	Highest Partner	1,070
	Lowest Partner	670
	Average Associate	520
	Highest Associate	860
	Lowest Associate	375
<u>2010 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Partners	
	30	\$705-775
	Other Partners	595-965
	Associates	320-650
	Paralegals/Support Staff	85-380

Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan

<u>2013 Rates:</u>	Average Partner	\$915
	Highest Partner	1,075
	Lowest Partner	810
	Average Associate	410

Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan

Highest Associate	675
Lowest Associate	320

Reed Smith LLP

<u>2013 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Partner	
	36	\$830
	30	805
	17	610-615
	14	570
	Associates	
	8	450-535
	6	495

Robbins Geller Rudman & Dowd LLP *, **

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Partners	
	26	\$695
	19	575
	Associates	535-345
	Paralegals	295

Rosen, Bien, Galvan & Grunfeld LLP

<u>2013 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Partners	
	51	\$875
	33	780
	29	660
	16	630
	Of Counsel	
	30	580
	Associates	
	20	550
	10	480
	9	465
	8	445-450
	7	440
	6	435
	5	405
	4	375

Rosen, Bien, Galvan & Grunfeld LLP

3	355
Paralegals	220-280
Litigation Support/ Paralegal clerk	170
Law Clerk/Students	250
Word Processing	80

2012 Rates:

Years of Experience **Rate**

Partners

50	\$860
32	760
28	640
15	610

Of Counsel

29	570
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Associates

19	540
10	470
9	460
7	400
6	400
5	380
4	360
3	340

Paralegals	215-280
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Litigation Support/ Paralegal clerk	150
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Law Clerk/Students	240
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Word Processing	80
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2011 Rates:

Years of Experience **Rate**

Partners

49	\$840
31	740
27	625
14	590

Of Counsel

28	540
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Associates

18	525
11	465
10	450

Rosen, Bien, Galvan & Grunfeld LLP

9	440
8	420
6	385
5	365
4	350
3	325
2	315
Paralegals	205-275
Litigation Support/ Paralegal clerk	140-220
Law Clerk/Students	225
Word Processing	75

2010 Rates:

Years of Experience Rate

Partners

48	\$800
30	700
26	575
13	560
Of Counsel	
27	520

Associates

17	510
13	490
9	430
8	415
7	390
5	360
3	325
1	285
Paralegals	200-275
Litigation Support/ Paralegal clerk	135-220
Law Clerk/Students	190
Word Processing	70

Rudy, Exelrod, Zieff & Lowe LLP

2010 Rates:

Years of Experience Rate

Partners

42	\$725
32	725

Rudy, Exelrod, Zieff & Lowe LLP

15	625
Associates	
21	495
13	485
8	450

**Schneider Wallace Cottrell Brayton Konecky
LLP****

<u>2014 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Partners	
	13-22	\$750
	Associates/Of Counsel	575
	20	535-345
	37	295
	10-13	650
	0-3	350-475
	Paralegals/Law Clerks	135-300

**Schonbrun, DeSimone, Seplow, Harris &
Hoffman****

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	27	\$695
	22	630

Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton

<u>2010 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Partners	\$495-820
	Associates	270-620

Sidley Austin

<u>2010 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Partners	
	33	\$900
	Senior Partners	1,100
	Legal Assistants	120-280

Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom

<u>2013 Rates:</u>	<u>Average Partner</u>	<u>\$1,035</u>
	Highest Partner	1,150
	Lowest Partner	845

Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom

Average Associate	620
Highest Associate	845
Lowest Associate	340

Spiro Moore LLP**

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	30+	\$700
	17	600

Law Offices of Michael D. Thamer

<u>2014 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	31	\$775

Townsend and Townsend and Crew

<u>2010 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Partners	\$470-475
	Associates	260-460

Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati PC

<u>2010 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	28	\$875
	Other Partners	650-975
	Associates	290-610
	Paralegals/Litigation	120-300
	Support	

Zelle Hofmann Voelbel & Mason, LLP**

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Partners	Up to \$950
	Associates	Up to \$540
	Paralegals	Up to \$290
	Law Clerks	Up to \$250

<u>2012 Rates:</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Rate</u>
	Partners	
	38	\$800
	26	685
	23	650
	22	640
	Associates	
	9	500

1 **Zelle Hofmann Voelbel & Mason, LLP****

2	4	435
3	3	415
4	2	405
5	1	395
6	Paralegals	210-290

7 13. The declaration of San Diego attorneys Vincent J. Bartolotta and
8 Timothy Blood, filed with this motion, also support the rates requested here. All of
9 this evidence shows that Plaintiffs' requested rates are well within the range of
10 rates charged in this forum by comparably qualified and experienced attorneys for
11 comparably difficult work.

12 14. In my experience, fee awards are almost always determined based on
13 current rates, *i.e.*, the attorney's rate at the time a motion for fees is made, rather
14 than the historical rate at the time the work was performed. This is a common and
15 accepted practice to compensate attorneys for the delay in being paid. The hourly
16 rates set forth above are those charged where full payment is expected promptly
17 upon the rendition of the billing and without consideration of factors other than
18 hours and rates. If any substantial part of the payment were to be deferred for any
19 substantial period of time, for example, the fee arrangement would be adjusted
20 accordingly to compensate the attorneys for those factors.

21 15. If called as a witness, I could and would competently testify from my
22 personal knowledge to the facts stated herein. I declare under penalty of perjury
23 that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed this 25th day of November 2014, in
24 Berkeley, California.

25 

26 Richard M. Pearl

1 **ADDITIONAL COUNSEL FOR PLAINTIFFS AND THE CERTIFIED CLASS**

2 Timothy D. Cohelan (Bar No. 60827)

3 Michael D. Singer (Bar No. 115301)

4 COHELAN KHOURY & SINGER

5 605 "C" Street, Suite 200

6 San Diego, CA 92101

7 Telephone: (619) 595-3001

EXHIBIT A

RESUME OF RICHARD M. PEARL

RICHARD M. PEARL
LAW OFFICES OF RICHARD M. PEARL
1816 Fifth Street
Berkeley, CA 94710
(510) 649-0810
(510) 548-5074 (facsimile)
rpearl@interx.net (e-mail)

EDUCATION

University of California, Berkeley, B.A., Economics (June 1966)
Boalt Hall School of Law, Berkeley, J.D. (June 1969)

BAR MEMBERSHIP

Member, State Bar of California (admitted January 1970)
Member, State Bar of Georgia (admitted June 1970) (inactive)
Admitted to practice before all California State Courts; the United States Supreme Court; the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia and Ninth Circuits; the United States District Courts for the Northern, Central, Eastern, and Southern Districts of California, for the District of Arizona, and for the Northern District of Georgia; and the Georgia Civil and Superior Courts and Court of Appeals.

EMPLOYMENT

LAW OFFICES OF RICHARD M. PEARL (April 1987 to Present): Civil litigation practice (AV rating), with emphasis on court-awarded attorney's fees, class actions, and appellate practice. Selected Northern California "Super Lawyer" in Appellate Law for 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014.

QUALIFIED APPELLATE MEDIATOR, APPELLATE MEDIATION PROGRAM, Court of Appeal, First Appellate District (October 2000 to 2013) (program terminated).

ADJUNCT PROFESSOR, HASTINGS COLLEGE OF THE LAW (January 1988 to Present): Teach Public Interest Law Practice, a 2-unit course that focuses on the history, strategies, and issues involved in the practice of public interest law.

PEARL, McNEILL & GILLESPIE, Partner (May 1982 to March 1987): General civil litigation practice, as described above.

RICHARD M. PEARL

Page 2

CALIFORNIA RURAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE, INC. (July 1971 to September 1983) (part-time May 1982 to September 1983):

Director of Litigation (July 1977 to July 1982)

Responsibilities: Oversaw and supervised litigation of more than 50 attorneys in CRLA's 15 field offices; administered and supervised staff of 4-6 Regional Counsel; promulgated litigation policies and procedures for program; participated in complex civil litigation.

Regional Counsel (July 1982 to September 1983 part-time)

Responsibilities: Served as co-counsel to CRLA field attorneys on complex projects; provided technical assistance and training to CRLA field offices; oversaw CRLA attorney's fee cases; served as counsel on major litigation.

Directing Attorney, Cooperative Legal Services Center (February 1974 to July 1977) (Staff Attorney February 1974 to October 1975)

Responsibilities: Served as co-counsel on major litigation with legal services attorneys in small legal services offices throughout California; supervised and administered staff of four senior legal services attorneys and support staff.

Directing Attorney, CRLA McFarland Office (July 1971 to February 1974) (Staff Attorney July 1971 to February 1972)

Responsibilities: Provided legal representation to low income persons and groups in Kern, King, and Tulare Counties; supervised all litigation and administered staff of ten.

HASTINGS COLLEGE OF THE LAW, Instructor, Legal Writing and Research Program (August 1974 to June 1978)

Responsibilities: Instructed 20 to 25 first year students in legal writing and research.

CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD, Staff Attorney, General Counsel's Office (November 1975 to January 1976, while on leave from CRLA)

Responsibilities: Prosecuted unfair labor practice charges before Administrative Law Judges and the A.L.R.B. and represented the A.L.R.B. in state court proceedings.

ATLANTA LEGAL AID SOCIETY, Staff Attorney (October 1969 to June 1971)

Responsibilities: Represented low-income persons and groups as part of 36-lawyer legal services program located in Atlanta, Georgia.

RICHARD M. PEARL

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RICHARD M. PEARL

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Member, Attorneys' Fee Task Force, California State Bar

Chairperson, Board of Directors, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation

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Furnished upon request.

September 2014

Furnished upon request

10/1/2011

EXHIBIT B

LAFFEY MATRIX

History

Easy Link

Expert Opinion

See the Matrix

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Link

Year	Adjustmt Factor**	Paralegal/ Law Clerk	Years Out of Law School *				
			1-3	4-7	8-10	11-19	20 +
6/01/13- 5/31/14	1.0244	\$175	\$320	\$393	\$567	\$640	\$771
6/01/12- 5/31/13	1.0258	\$170	\$312	\$383	\$554	\$625	\$753
6/01/11- 5/31/12	1.0352	\$166	\$305	\$374	\$540	\$609	\$734
6/01/10- 5/31/11	1.0337	\$161	\$294	\$361	\$522	\$589	\$709
6/01/09- 5/31/10	1.0220	\$155	\$285	\$349	\$505	\$569	\$686
6/01/08- 5/31/09	1.0399	\$152	\$279	\$342	\$494	\$557	\$671
6/01/07-5/31/08	1.0516	\$146	\$268	\$329	\$475	\$536	\$645
6/01/06-5/31/07	1.0256	\$139	\$255	\$313	\$452	\$509	\$614
6/1/05-5/31/06	1.0427	\$136	\$249	\$305	\$441	\$497	\$598
6/1/04-5/31/05	1.0455	\$130	\$239	\$293	\$423	\$476	\$574
6/1/03-6/1/04	1.0507	\$124	\$228	\$280	\$405	\$456	\$549
6/1/02-5/31/03	1.0727	\$118	\$217	\$267	\$385	\$434	\$522
6/1/01-5/31/02	1.0407	\$110	\$203	\$249	\$359	\$404	\$487
6/1/00-5/31/01	1.0529	\$106	\$195	\$239	\$345	\$388	\$468
6/1/99-5/31/00	1.0491	\$101	\$185	\$227	\$328	\$369	\$444
6/1/98-5/31/99	1.0439	\$96	\$176	\$216	\$312	\$352	\$424
6/1/97-5/31/98	1.0419	\$92	\$169	\$207	\$299	\$337	\$406
6/1/96-5/31/97	1.0396	\$88	\$162	\$198	\$287	\$323	\$389
6/1/95-5/31/96	1.032	\$85	\$155	\$191	\$276	\$311	\$375
6/1/94-5/31/95	1.0237	\$82	\$151	\$185	\$267	\$301	\$363

The methodology of calculation and benchmarking for this Updated Laffey Matrix has been approved in a number of cases. See, e.g., *McDowell v. District of Columbia*, Civ. A. No. 00-594 (RCL), LEXSEE 2001 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 8114 (D.D.C. June 4, 2001); *Salazar v. Dist. of Col.*, 123 F.Supp.2d 8 (D.D.C. 2000).

* "Years Out of Law School" is calculated from June 1 of each year, when most law students graduate. "1-3" includes an attorney in his 1st, 2nd and 3rd years of practice, measured from date of graduation (June 1). "4-7" applies to attorneys in their 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th years of

practice. An attorney who graduated in May 1996 would be in tier "1-3" from June 1, 1996 until May 31, 1999, would move into tier "4-7" on June 1, 1999, and tier "8-10" on June 1, 2003.

** The Adjustment Factor refers to the nation-wide Legal Services Component of the Consumer Price Index produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor.

EXHIBIT C

\$1,000 Per Hour Isn't Rare Anymore; Nominal billing levels rise, but discounts ease blow.

The National Law Journal

January 13, 2014 Monday

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**THE NATIONAL
LAW JOURNAL**

Section: NLJ'S **BILLING SURVEY**; Pg. 1; Vol. 36; No. 20

Length: 1860 words

Byline: KAREN SLOAN

Body

As recently as five years ago, law partners charging \$1,000 an hour were outliers. Today, four-figure hourly rates for in-demand partners at the most prestigious firms don't raise eyebrows-and a few top earners are closing in on \$2,000 an hour.

These rate increases come despite hand-wringing over price pressures from clients amid a tough economy. But ever-rising standard billing rates also obscure the growing practice of discounts, falling collection rates, and slow march toward alternative fee arrangements.

Nearly 20 percent of the firms included in The National Law Journal's annual survey of large law firm billing rates this year had at least one partner charging more than \$1,000 an hour. Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher partner Theodore Olson had the highest rate recorded in our survey, billing \$1,800 per hour while representing mobile satellite service provider LightSquared Inc. in Chapter 11 proceedings.

Of course, few law firm partners claim Olson's star power. His rate in that case is nearly the twice the \$980 per hour average charged by Gibson Dunn partners and three times the average \$604 hourly rate among partners at NLJ 350 firms. Gibson Dunn chairman and managing partner Ken Doran said Olson's rate is "substantially" above that of other partners at the firm, and that the firm's standard rates are in line with its peers.

"While the majority of Ted Olson's work is done under alternative billing arrangements, his hourly rate reflects his stature in the legal community, the high demand for his services and the unique value that he offers to clients given his extraordinary experience as a former solicitor general of the United States who has argued more than 60 cases before the U.S. Supreme Court and has counseled several presidents," Doran said.

In reviewing billing data this year, we took a new approach, asking each firm on the NLJ 350-our survey of the nation's 350 largest firms by attorney headcount-to provide their highest, lowest and average billing rates for associates and partners. We supplemented those data through public records. All together, this year's survey includes information for 159 of the country's largest law firms and reflects billing rates as of October.

The figures show that, even in a down economy, hiring a large law firm remains a pricey prospect. The median among the highest partner billing rates reported at each firm is \$775 an hour, while the median low partner rate is \$405. For associates, the median high stands at \$510 and the low at \$235. The average associate rate is \$370.

Multiple industry studies show that law firm billing rates continued to climb during 2013 despite efforts by corporate counsel to rein them in. TyMetrix's 2013 Real Rate Report Snapshot found that the average law firm billing rate increased by 4.8 percent compared with 2012. Similarly, the Center for the Study of the Legal Profession at the Georgetown University Law Center and Thomson Reuters Peer Monitor found that law firms increased their rates by an average 3.5 percent during 2013.

Richard Pearl

\$1,000 Per Hour Isn't Rare Anymore; Nominal billing levels rise, but discounts ease blow.

Of course, rates charged by firms on paper don't necessarily reflect what clients actually pay. Billing realization rates-which reflect the percentage of work billed at firms' standard rates- have fallen from 89 percent in 2010 to nearly 87 percent in 2013 on average, according to the Georgetown study. When accounting for billed hours actually collected by firms, the realization rate falls to 83.5 percent.

"What this means, of course, is that- on average-law firms are collecting only 83.5 cents for every \$1.00 of standard time they record," the Georgetown report reads. "To understand the full impact, one need only consider that at the end of 2007, the collected realization rate was at the 92 percent level."

In other words, law firms set rates with the understanding that they aren't likely to collect the full amount, said Mark Medice, who oversees the Peer Monitor Index. That index gauges the strength of the legal market according to economic indicators including demand for legal services, productivity, rates and expenses. "Firms start out with the idea of, 'I want to achieve a certain rate, but it's likely that my client will ask for discounts whether or not I increase my rate,'" Medice said.

Indeed, firms bill nearly all hourly work at discounts ranging from 5 percent to 20 percent off standard rates, said Peter Zeughauser, a consultant with the Zeughauser Group. Discounts can run as high as 50 percent for matters billed under a hybrid system, wherein a law firm can earn a premium for keeping costs under a set level or for obtaining a certain outcome, he added. "Most firms have gone to a two-tier system, with what is essentially an aspirational rate that they occasionally get and a lower rate that they actually budget for," he said.

Most of the discounting happens at the front end, when firms and clients negotiate rates, Medice said. But additional discounting happens at the billing and collections stages. Handling alternative fee arrangements and discounts has become so complex that more than half of the law firms on the Am Law 100-NLJ affiliate The American Lawyer's ranking of firms by gross revenue-have created new positions for pricing directors, Zeughauser said.

THE ROLE OF GEOGRAPHY

Unsurprisingly, rates vary by location. Firms with their largest office in New York had the highest average partner and associate billing rates, at \$882 and \$520, respectively. Similarly, TyMetrix has reported that more than 25 percent of partners at large New York firms charge \$1,000 per hour or more for contracts and commercial work.

Washington was the next priciest city on our survey, with partners charging an average \$748 and associates \$429. Partners charge an average \$691 in Chicago and associates \$427. In Los Angeles, partners charge an average \$665 while the average associate rate is \$401.

Pricing also depends heavily on practice area, Zeughauser and Medice said. Bet-the-company patent litigation and white-collar litigation largely remain at premium prices, while practices including labor and employment have come under huge pressure to reduce prices.

"If there was a way for law firms to hold rates, they would do it. They recognize how sensitive clients are to price increases," Zeughauser said. But declining profit margins-due in part to higher technology costs and the expensive lateral hiring market-mean that firms simply lack the option to keep rates flat, he said.

BILLING SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The National Law Journal's survey of billing rates of the largest U.S. law firms provides the high, low and average rates for partners and associates.

The NLJ asked respondents to its annual survey of the nation's largest law firms (the NLJ 350) to provide a range of hourly billing rates for partners and associates as of October 2013.

For firms that did not supply data to us, in many cases we were able to supplement billing-rate data derived from public records.

In total, we have rates for 159 of the nation's 350 largest firms.

Richard Pearl

\$1,000 Per Hour Isn't Rare Anymore; Nominal billing levels rise, but discounts ease blow.

Rates data include averages, highs and low rates for partners and associates. Information also includes the average full-time equivalent (FTE) attorneys at the firm and the city of the firm's principal or largest office.

We used these data to calculate averages for the nation as a whole and for selected cities.

Billing Rates at the Country's Priciest Law Firms

Here are the 50 firms that charge the highest average hourly rates for partners.

Billing Rates at the Country's Priciest Law Firms

FIRM NAME	LARGEST AVERAGE		PARTNER ASSOCIATE		HOURLY HOURLY		AVERAGE	HIGH	LOW	
	U.S. OFFICE*	FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT ATTORNEYS*	RATES	RATES	RATES	RATES				
			AVERAGE		HIGH		LOW		AVERAGE	
			HIGH		LOW		AVERAGE		HIGH	
			LOW		AVERAGE		HIGH		LOW	
* Full-time equivalent attorney numbers and the largest U.S. office are from the NLJ 350 published in April 2013. For complete numbers, please see NLJ.com .										
** Firm did not exist in this form for the entire year.										
Debevoise & Plimpton	New York	615	\$1,055	\$1,075	\$955	\$490	\$760	\$120		
Paul, Weiss, Riffkind, Wharton & Garrison	New York	803	\$1,040	\$1,120	\$760	\$600	\$760	\$250		
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom	New York	1,735	\$1,035	\$1,150	\$845	\$620	\$845	\$340		
Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson	New York	476	\$1,000	\$1,100	\$930	\$595	\$760	\$375		
Latham & Watkins	New York	2,033	\$990	\$1,110	\$895	\$605	\$725	\$465		
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher	New York	1,086	\$980	\$1,800	\$765	\$590	\$930	\$175		
Davis Polk & Wardwell	New York	787	\$975	\$985	\$850	\$615	\$975	\$130		
Willkie Parr & Gallagher	New York	540	\$950	\$1,090	\$790	\$580	\$790	\$350		
Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft	New York	435	\$930	\$1,050	\$800	\$605	\$750	\$395		
Weil, Gotshal & Manges	New York	1,201	\$930	\$1,075	\$625	\$600	\$790	\$300		
Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan	New York	697	\$915	\$1,075	\$810	\$410	\$675	\$320		
Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr	Washington	961	\$905	\$1,250	\$735	\$290	\$695	\$75		
Dechert	New York	803	\$900	\$1,095	\$670	\$530	\$735	\$395		
Andrews Kurth	Houston	348	\$890	\$1,090	\$745	\$528	\$785	\$265		
Hughes Hubbard & Reed	New York	344	\$890	\$995	\$725	\$555	\$675	\$365		
Irell & Manella	Los Angeles	164	\$890	\$975	\$800	\$535	\$750	\$395		
Proskauer Rose	New York	746	\$880	\$950	\$725	\$465	\$675	\$295		
White & Case	New York	1,900	\$875	\$1,050	\$700	\$525	\$1,050	\$220		

Richard Pearl

\$1,000 Per Hour Isn't Rare Anymore; Nominal billing levels rise, but discounts ease blow.

FIRM NAME	LARGEST AVERAGE U.S. FULL-TIME OFFICE* EQUIVALENT ATTORNEYS*		PARTNER ASSOCIATE HOURLY HOURLY RATES RATES					
			AVERAGE	HIGH	LOW	AVERAGE	HIGH	LOW
Morrison & Foerster	San Francisco	1,010	\$865	\$1,195	\$595	\$525	\$725	\$230
Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman	Washington	609	\$865	\$1,070	\$615	\$520	\$860	\$375
Kaye Scholer	New York	414	\$860	\$1,080	\$715	\$510	\$680	\$320
Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel	New York	320	\$845	\$1,025	\$740	\$590	\$750	\$400
Hogan Lovells	Washington	2,280	\$835	\$1,000	\$705	-	-	-
Kasowitz, Benson, Torres & Friedman	New York	365	\$835	\$1,195	\$600	\$340	\$625	\$200
Kirkland & Ellis	Chicago	1,517	\$825	\$995	\$590	\$540	\$715	\$235
Cooley	Palo Alto	632	\$820	\$990	\$660	\$525	\$630	\$160
Arnold & Porter	Washington	748	\$815	\$950	\$670	\$500	\$610	\$345
Paul Hastings	New York	899	\$815	\$900	\$750	\$540	\$755	\$335
Curtis, Mallet-Prevost, Colt & Mosle	New York	322	\$800	\$860	\$730	\$480	\$785	\$345
Winston & Strawn	Chicago	842	\$800	\$995	\$650	\$520	\$590	\$425
Bingham McCutchen	Boston	900	\$795	\$1,080	\$220	\$450	\$605	\$185
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld	Washington	806	\$785	\$1,220	\$615	\$525	\$660	\$365
Covington & Burling	Washington	738	\$780	\$890	\$605	\$415	\$565	\$320
King & Spalding	Atlanta	838	\$775	\$995	\$545	\$460	\$735	\$125
Norton Rose Fulbright	N/A**	N/A**	\$775	\$900	\$525	\$400	\$515	\$300
DLA Piper	New York	4,036	\$765	\$1,025	\$450	\$510	\$750	\$250
Bracewell & Giuliani	Houston	432	\$760	\$1,125	\$575	\$440	\$700	\$275
Baker & McKenzie	Chicago	4,004	\$755	\$1,130	\$260	\$395	\$925	\$100
Dickstein Shapiro	Washington	308	\$750	\$1,250	\$590	\$475	\$585	\$310
Jenner & Block	Chicago	432	\$745	\$925	\$565	\$465	\$550	\$380
Jones Day	New York	2,363	\$745	\$975	\$445	\$435	\$775	\$205
Manatt, Phelps & Phillips	Los Angeles	325	\$740	\$795	\$640	-	-	-
Seward & Kissel	New York	152	\$735	\$850	\$625	\$400	\$600	\$290
O'Melveny & Myers	Los Angeles	738	\$715	\$950	\$615	-	-	-
McDermott Will & Emery	Chicago	1,024	\$710	\$835	\$525	-	-	-
Reed Smith	Pittsburgh	1,468	\$710	\$945	\$545	\$420	\$530	\$295
Dentons	N/A**	N/A**	\$700	\$1,050	\$345	\$425	\$685	\$210
Jeffer Mangels Butler & Mitchell	Los Angeles	126	\$690	\$875	\$560	-	-	-
Sheppard, Mullin,	Los Angeles	521	\$685	\$875	\$490	\$415	\$535	\$275

Richard Pearl

\$1,000 Per Hour Isn't Rare Anymore; Nominal billing levels rise, but discounts ease blow.

FIRM NAME	LARGEST AVERAGE		PARTNER ASSOCIATE					
	U.S. OFFICE*	FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT ATTORNEYS*	HOURLY RATES	HOURLY RATES	AVERAGE	HIGH	LOW	AVERAGE
Richter & Hampton	Angeles							
Alston & Bird	Atlanta	805	\$675	\$875	\$495	\$425	\$575	\$280

THE FOUR-FIGURE CLUB

These 10 firms posted the highest partner billing rates.

Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher	\$1,800
Dickstein Shapiro	\$1,250
Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr	\$1,250
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld	\$1,220
Kasowitz, Benson, Torres & Friedman	\$1,195
Morrison & Foerster	\$1,195
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom	\$1,150
Baker & McKenzie	\$1,130
Bracewell & Giuliani	\$1,125
Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison	\$1,120

THE FOUR-FIGURE CLUB

Contact Karen Sloan at ksloan@alm.com

SATELLITE TECHNOLOGY (67%); SUPREME COURTS (63%)

Classification

Company: GIBSON DUNN & CRUTCHER LLP (93%); LIGHTSQUARED INC (83%)

Language: ENGLISH

Publication-Type: Newspaper

Industry: NAICS541110 OFFICES OF LAWYERS (93%); SIC8111 LEGAL SERVICES (93%); NAICS517410 SATELLITE TELECOMMUNICATIONS (83%); NAICS334220 RADIO & TELEVISION BROADCASTING & WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURING (83%)

Subject: POLLS & SURVEYS (90%); LEGAL SERVICES (90%); MAJOR US LAW FIRMS (90%); LAW FIRM BILLABLE RATES (90%); LAWYERS (89%); LAW PRACTICE (89%); LAW FIRM BILLABLE HOURS (78%); ECONOMIC CONDITIONS (76%); CORPORATE COUNSEL (73%); US CHAPTER 11 BANKRUPTCY (73%); LAW COURTS & TRIBUNALS (68%);

Geographic: UNITED STATES (92%)

Load-Date: January 13, 2014

Richard Pearl

2011-2012

2011-2012

2011-2012

2011-2012

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The Firms

April 16, 2012 5:20 PM

When It Comes to Billing, Latest Rate Report Shows the Rich Keep Getting Richer

Posted by Sara Randazzo

Hourly rates just keep rising—and the best-paid lawyers are raising their rates faster than everyone else.

Those are two of the key findings contained in the [2012 Real Rate Report](#), an analysis of \$7.6 billion in legal bills paid by corporations over a five-year period ending in December 2011. The report, released Monday, is the second such collaboration between TyMetrix, a company that manages and audits

legal bills for corporate legal departments, and the Corporate Executive Board.

Many of the new rate report's findings echo those contained in the 2010 study, including the fact that rates keep going up, almost across the board, and that the cost of a given matter can vary dramatically depending on a law firm's size and location and its relationship with a particular client.

At the same time, this year's study shows that the legal sector is becoming increasingly bifurcated, with top firms raising rates faster than those at the bottom of the market and large firms charging a premium price based purely on their size.

"What it's really showing is that there's an increased premium being paid for experience and expertise," says Julie Peck, vice president of strategy and market development at TyMetrix. "Some parts of the lawyer market are able to raise rates much more quickly, and are more impervious to economic forces than others."

To compile the current rate report, TyMetrix received permission from its clients to examine legal fees billed to 62 companies across 17 industries including energy, finance, retail, technology, insurance, and health care. The bills, which represent the amount actually paid by the companies in question rather than the amount initially charged, came from more than 4,000 firms in 84 metropolitan areas around the country. Every firm on the 2011 Am Law 100 is represented in the data.

The report's key data points include:

A Widening Gap: Hourly rates charged by lawyers in the legal sector's upper echelon grew faster between 2009 and 2011 than those charged by lawyers toiling on the lower rungs. Particularly striking was the jump in associate rates billed by those falling in the report's top quartile: 18 percent on average, to just over \$600 per hour. Rates billed by top quartile partners, meanwhile, rose 8 percent, to just under \$900 per hour. In the bottom quartile, associate rates rose 4 percent and partner rates rose 3 percent during the same period.

The Recession's (Minor) Toll: Even amid the economic downturn, the cost of an hour of a lawyer's time continued to rise faster than key measures of inflation. That said, the legal industry wasn't completely immune to the broader economy's slowdown. After rising 8.2 percent between 2007 and 2008, hourly rates rose just 2.3 percent in 2009. Law firms bounced back a bit last year, with rates climbing 5.1 percent, to an average of \$530 an hour.

Location Counts: Not surprisingly, lawyers working in major metropolitan areas—where, as the rate report notes, rents are typically higher—are the priciest. An address in Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, or Washington, D.C., alone adds about \$161 to the hourly rate charged by an individual lawyer. Those six cities and Baltimore, Houston, Philadelphia, and San Jose are the ten U.S. markets with the highest hourly rates. With an average partner rate topping \$700 per hour and average associate rate of more than \$450 per hour, New York is the most expensive market in the country. The least expensive? Riverside, California, where the average partner bills at under \$250 per hour and associates bill at just over \$300 an hour.

In the Minority: A small group of lawyers—12 percent—bucked the trend toward higher fees and actually lowered rates between 2009 to 2011—and 3 percent trimmed rates by \$50 or more per hour. (Most of those in the rate-cutting camp were based outside the big six markets identified above.) At the other end of the spectrum, 52 percent of lawyers increased rates by between \$25 and \$200 or more per hour. Another 18 percent increased rates by less than \$25 per hour, and the final 18 percent held rates steady.

First-Year Blues: Even before the recession hit, clients balked at paying for what they considered on-the-job training for first-year associates. The latest rate report is likely to reinforce that reluctance, given its finding that using entry-level lawyers adds as much as 20 percent to the cost of a legal matter. The report offers evidence that firms may be accommodating clients on this front: The percentage of bills attributed to entry-level associates dropped from 7 percent in 2009 to 2.9 percent last year.

Ties That Bind: The more work one firm handles for a client—and the longer the client relationship extends—the higher the average rate the firm charges. For companies that paid one firm \$10 million or more in a single year, the average hourly rate paid was \$553 in 2011. By comparison, clients that limited their spending on an individual firm to \$500,000 paid that firm an average of \$319 per hour.

Four-Digit Frontier: Data has consistently shown that many lawyers hesitate to charge more than \$1,000 an hour, and in 2011 just under 3 percent of the lawyers covered by the rate report had broken that barrier. Of those, the vast majority were working in the six main legal markets identified above and 60 percent of the time, they billed in increments of one hour or less.

Playing Favorites: Across all practice areas, 90 percent of lawyers charged different clients different rates for similar types of work. (The figure for mergers and acquisitions lawyers was 100 percent.) The differences from client to client can be extreme, and were even more pronounced in the current report than in the 2010 edition. Rates charged by intellectual property specialists, for instance, had a median variance of 23.1 percent, while lawyers doing commercial and contract work showed a 18.7 percent median difference.

Who's Doing What? A closer look at law firm bills for work performed on litigation and intellectual property assignments shows that the kind of timekeeper billing on a matter varies by practice type. On patent matters, the report shows, 47 percent of hours billed on average are attributed to paralegals, and 37 percent by partners. By comparison, paralegals account for just 8 percent of the work done on labor and employment litigation hours, while partners handle 45 percent.

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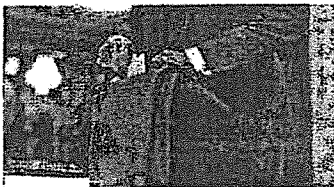
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By JENNIFER SMITH

Top partners at leading U.S. law firms are charging more than ever before, yet those hourly rates aren't all they appear to be.



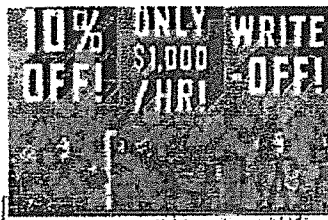
Top partners at leading U.S. law firms are charging more than ever — routinely \$1,150 or more an hour — but after discounts and write-offs the nosebleed rates aren't all they appear to be. Jennifer Smith reports. Photo: Getty Images.

Having blown past the once-shocking price tag of \$1,000 an hour, some sought-after deal, tax and trial lawyers are commanding hourly fees of \$1,150 or more, according to an analysis of billing rates compiled from public filings.

But, as law firms boost their standard rates, many are softening the blow with widespread discounts and write-offs, meaning fewer clients are paying full freight. As a result, law firms on

average are actually collecting fewer cents on the dollar, compared with their standard, or "rack," rates, than they have in years.

Think of hourly fees "as the equivalent of a sticker on the car at a dealership," said legal consultant Ward Bower, a principal at Altman Weil Inc. "It's the beginning of a negotiation.... Law firms think they are setting the rates, but clients are the ones determining what they're going to pay."



James Kobaczewski

the firm's database billed at that level in the first quarter of 2013, up from 158 a year earlier.

Star lawyers still can fetch a premium, and some of them won't budge on price. The number of partners billing \$1,150-plus an hour has more than doubled since this time last year, according to Valeo Partners, a consulting firm that maintains a database of legal rates pulled from court filings and other publicly disclosed information. More than 320 lawyers in

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That glided circle includes tax experts such as Christopher Roman of King & Spalding LLP and Todd Maynes of Kirkland & Ellis LLP, intellectual-property partner Nader A. Mousavi of Sullivan & Cromwell LLP, and deal lawyers such as Kenneth M. Schneider of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP.

Those lawyers and their firms either declined to comment or didn't reply to requests for comment.

When corporate legal departments need a trusted hand to fend off a hostile takeover or win a critical court battle, few general counsels will nitpick over whether a key lawyer is charging \$900 an hour or \$1,150 an hour. But for legal matters where their future isn't on the line, companies are pushing for—and winning—significant price breaks.

"We almost always negotiate rates down from the rack rates," said Randal S. Milch, general counsel for phone giant Verizon Communications Inc. [VZ +0.29%] The result, he said, is a "not-insignificant discount."

For the bread-and-butter work that many big law firms rely on, haggling has become the norm. Many clients grew accustomed to pushing back on price during the recession and continue to demand discounts.

Some companies insist on budgets for their legal work. If a firm billing by the hour exceeds a set cap, lawyers may have to write off some of that time.

Other clients refuse to work with firms who don't discount, lopping anywhere from 10% to 30% off their standard rates. Some may grant rate increases to individual partners or associates they deem worthy. Another tactic: locking in prices with tailored multiyear agreements with formulas governing whether clients grant or refuse a requested rate increase.

In practical terms, that means the gap between law firms' sticker prices and the amount of money they actually bill and collect from their clients is wider than it has been in years.

According to data collected by Thomson Reuters Peer Monitor, big law firms raised their average standard rate by about 9.3% over the past three years. But they weren't able to keep up on the collection side, where the increase over the same period was just 6%. Firms that used to collect on average about 92 cents for every dollar of standard time their lawyers worked in 2007, before the economic downturn, now are getting less than 85 cents. "That's a historic low," said James Jones, a senior fellow at the Center for the Study of the Legal Profession at Georgetown Law.

To be sure, things have certainly picked up some since the recession, when some clients flat-out refused to pay rate increases.

In the first quarter of 2013, the 50 top-grossing U.S. law firms boosted their partner rates by as much as 5.7%, billing on average between \$879 and \$882 an hour, according to Valeo Partners. Rates for junior lawyers, whose labors have long been a profit engine for major law firms, jumped even more.

While some clients resisted using associate lawyers during the downturn, refusing to pay hundreds of dollars an hour for inexperienced first- or second-year attorneys, the largest U.S. law firms have managed to send the needle back up again. This year, for the first time, the average rate for associates with one to four years of experience rose to \$500 an hour, according to Valeo.

The increases continue the upward trend of 2012, when legal fees in general rose 4.8% and associate billing rates rose by 7.4%, according to a coming report by TyMetrix Legal Analytics, a unit of Wolters Kluwer, [WKLAE +0.95%] and CEB, a research and advisory-services company. Those numbers are based on legal-spending data from more than 17,000 law firms.

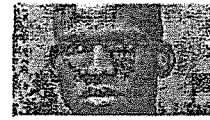
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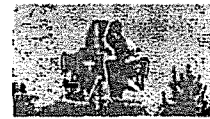
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More than a dozen leaders at major law firms declined to discuss rate increases on the record, though some said privately that the increase in associate rates could be caused in part by step increases as junior lawyers gain in seniority.

Joe Sims, an antitrust partner at Jones Day and former member of the firm's partnership committee, said clients don't mind paying for associates, as long as they feel they are getting their money's worth.

Sophisticated clients, he said, tend to focus on the overall price tag for legal work, not on individual rates. "They are more concerned about how many people are working on the project and the total cost of the project," Mr. Sims said. "Clients want value no matter who is on the job."

While a handful of elite lawyers have successfully staked out the high end—the deal teams at Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz, for example—legal experts say that client pressure to control legal spending means most law firms must be considerably more flexible on price.

"There will always be some 'bet the company' problem where a client will not quibble about rates," said Mr. Jones, the Georgetown fellow. "Unfortunately, from the law firms' standpoint, that represents a small percentage of the work."

Write to Jennifer Smith at jennifer.smith@wsj.com

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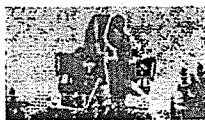
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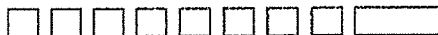
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Exhibit 4

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Exhibit 5

MARA LAW FIRM, PC, SUMMARY OF TIME AND COSTS

Francisco Arroyo Mora v. Sterling Plumbing, Inc.

San Diego County Superior Court, Case Number 30-2024-01371468-CU-OE-CXC

Total Attorneys' Hours: 159.60

Total Lodestar Fees: \$113,745

Total Litigation Expenses: \$14,966.84

ATTORNEYS	YEAR ADMITTED	HOURS	HOURLY RATE	TOTAL
MARA LAW FIRM, PC				
David Mara, Esq.	2004	81.3	\$850	\$69,105
Matthew Crawford, Esq.	2016	66.6	\$600	\$39,960
Carter Cordura, Esq.	2024	11.7	\$400	\$4,680
TOTAL:				\$113,745

LITIGATION EXPENSES	
MARA LAW FIRM, PC	\$14,966.84
TOTAL COSTS	\$14,966.84

Francisco Arroyo Mora v. Sterling Plumbing Inc.
Orange County Superior Court (Case Number 30-2024-01371468-CU-OE-CXC)

Task 1: Client Intakes / Client Communications / Pre-Filing Investigation / Class Member Communications / Co-Counsel Communications			
Attorney	Hourly Rate	Hours	Fee
D. Mara (Partner)	\$ 850	7.40	\$ 6,290
M. Crawford (Assoc.)	\$ 600	3.20	\$ 1,920
C. Cordura (Assoc.)	\$ 400	1.10	\$ 440
Fee Request for Task 1:		11.70	\$ 8,650

Task 2: Legal Research/Motions			
Attorney	Hourly Rate	Hours	Fee
D. Mara (Partner)	\$ 850	9.80	\$ 8,330
M. Crawford (Assoc.)	\$ 600	4.20	\$ 2,520
C. Cordura (Assoc.)	\$ 400	1.50	\$ 600
Fee Request for Task 2:		15.50	\$ 11,450

Task 3: Preparing Evidence/ Case Strategy / Document Review			
Attorney	Hourly Rate	Hours	Fee
D. Mara (Partner)	\$ 850	17.60	\$ 14,960
M. Crawford (Assoc.)	\$ 600	9.90	\$ 5,940
C. Cordura (Assoc.)	\$ 400	0.00	\$ -
Fee Request for Task 3:		27.50	\$ 20,900

Task 4: Pleadings / PAGA Notice			
Attorney	Rate	Hours	Fee
D. Mara (Partner)	\$ 850	3.00	\$ 2,550
M. Crawford (Assoc.)	\$ 600	3.80	\$ 2,280
C. Cordura (Assoc.)	\$ 400	0.00	\$ -
Fee Request for Task 4:		6.80	\$ 4,830

Task 5: Communications with defense counsel			
Attorney	Hourly Rate	Hours	Fee
D. Mara (Partner)	\$ 850	2.30	\$ 1,955
M. Crawford (Assoc.)	\$ 600	2.10	\$ 1,260
C. Cordura (Assoc.)	\$ 400	0.10	\$ 40
Fee Request for Task 5:		4.50	\$ 3,255

Task 6: Status/Case Management Conference statements and appearances

Attorney	Hourly Rate	Hours	Fee
D. Mara (Partner)	\$ 850	0.00	\$ -
M. Crawford (Assoc.)	\$ 600	4.10	\$ 2,460
C. Cordura (Assoc.)	\$ 400	0.00	\$ -
Fee Request for Task 6:		4.10	\$ 2,460

Task 7: Discovery

Attorney	Hourly Rate	Hours	Fee
D. Mara (Partner)	\$ 850	0.90	\$ 765
M. Crawford (Assoc.)	\$ 600	1.70	\$ 1,020
C. Cordura (Assoc.)	\$ 400	0.00	\$ -
Fee Request for Task 7:		2.60	\$ 1,785

Task 8: Mediation preparation, damage models, communications with mediation expert, attend mediation

Attorney	Hourly Rate	Hours	Fee
D. Mara (Partner)	\$ 850	26.30	\$ 22,355
M. Crawford (Assoc.)	\$ 600	17.80	\$ 10,680
C. Cordura (Assoc.)	\$ 400	0.00	\$ -
Fee Request for Task 8:		44.10	\$ 33,035

Task 9: Settlement agreement and class notice negotiations, review, revisions, issues

Attorney	Hourly Rate	Hours	Fee
D. Mara (Partner)	\$ 850	4.90	\$ 4,165
M. Crawford (Assoc.)	\$ 600	12.50	\$ 7,500
C. Cordura (Assoc.)	\$ 400	0.00	\$ -
Fee Request for Task 9:		17.40	\$ 11,665

Task 10: Motion for preliminary approval, declarations and exhibits / Court Appearance at Hearing

Attorney	Hourly Rate	Hours	Fee
D. Mara (Partner)	\$ 850	6.20	\$ 5,270
M. Crawford (Assoc.)	\$ 600	7.30	\$ 4,380
C. Cordura (Assoc.)	\$ 400	1.50	\$ 600
Fee Request for Task 10:		15.00	\$ 10,250

Task 11: Review of Formatted Class Notice / Oversight of Settlement Notice Process			
Attorney	Hourly Rate	Hours	Fee
D. Mara (Partner)	\$ 850	1.20	\$ 1,020
M. Crawford (Assoc.)	\$ 600	0.00	\$ -
C. Cordura (Assoc.)	\$ 400	2.60	\$ 1,040
Fee Request for Task 11:		3.80	\$ 2,060

Task 12: Motion for final approval, declarations and exhibits / Court Appearance at Hearing			
Attorney	Hourly Rate	Hours	Fee
D. Mara (Partner)	\$ 850	1.70	\$ 1,445
M. Crawford (Assoc.)	\$ 600	0.00	\$ -
C. Cordura (Assoc.)	\$ 400	4.90	\$ 1,960
Fee Request for Task 12:		6.60	\$ 3,405

Task 13: Oversight of Settlement Distribution Process / Class Member Communications / Review of Calculations from Administrator			
Attorney	Hourly Rate	Hours	Fee
D. Mara (Partner)	\$ 850	0.00	\$ -
M. Crawford (Assoc.)	\$ 600	0.00	\$ -
C. Cordura (Assoc.)	\$ 400	0.00	\$ -
Fee Request for Task 12:		0.00	\$ -

TOTALS			
Attorney	Hourly Rate	Hours	Fee
D. Mara (Partner)	\$ 850	81.30	\$ 69,105
M. Crawford (Assoc.)	\$ 600	66.60	\$ 39,960
C. Cordura (Assoc.)	\$ 400	11.70	\$ 4,680
Fee Request :		159.60	\$ 113,745

All Expenses

Mara Law Firm PC

Professional = All (Active Only)
 Group By Professional Group
 Client - Matter = Multiple (Active Only)
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 Expense Code = All
 View = Original
 Approval Status = All
 Selected Expenses = All
 From Earliest To Latest

Entered	Status	Expense	Professional	Price	Mark Up %	Qty	Amount
<u>Francisco Arroyo Mora</u>							
<u>Sterling Plumbing - Class</u>							
01-10-2024	Approved	Court fees	Vecchi, Jill	0.00	0.00	0.00	465.54
		Case Initiation Documents - Filing					
01-16-2024	Approved	Court fees	Vecchi, Jill	0.00	0.00	0.00	172.13
		Jury Fees					
01-19-2024	Approved	Court fees	Vecchi, Jill	0.00	0.00	0.00	17.71
		Proof of Service of Summons - Filing					
01-31-2024	Approved	Attorney Service - Process Service		0.00	0.00	0.00	180.15
		Case Initiation Documents Process Service					
03-21-2024	Approved	Court fees		0.00	0.00	0.00	1,199.37
		Complex Fees					
04-29-2024	Approved	Court fees		0.00	0.00	0.00	38.30
		Stipulation - Filing					
05-03-2024	Approved	Mediation Fees		0.00	0.00	0.00	12,500.00
		Ross Mediation Fees					
11-01-2024	Approved	Court fees	Cordura, Carter	39.44	0.00	1.00	39.44
		Order 24056467					
11-04-2024	Approved	Court fees	Cordura, Carter	20.65	0.00	1.00	20.65
		Order 24056463					
02-26-2025	Approved	Court fees		0.00	0.00	0.00	16.95
		Court fees- Order Number 24802470					
03-18-2025	Approved	Court fees		0.00	0.00	0.00	40.20
		Court fees- Order Number 24938199					
03-20-2025	Approved	Court fees		0.00	0.00	0.00	20.00
		Court fees- 24938197					
03-20-2025	Approved	Court fees		0.00	0.00	0.00	80.20
		Court fees-24951044					
03-20-2025	Approved	Court fees		0.00	0.00	0.00	19.20
		Court fees- Order Number 24968894					
08-12-2025	Approved	Court fees		0.00	0.00	0.00	19.20
		Court fees- Order Number 26048054					
08-27-2025	Approved	Court fees		0.00	0.00	0.00	19.20
		Court fees- Order Number 26054516					
09-08-2025	Approved	Court fees		0.00	0.00	0.00	19.20

All Expenses

Mara Law Firm PC

Professional = All (Active Only)
 Group By Professional Group
 Client - Matter = Multiple (Active Only)
 Task Code = All
 Expense Code = All
 View = Original
 Approval Status = All
 Selected Expenses = All
 From Earliest To Latest

Entered	Status	Expense	Professional	Price	Mark Up %	Qty	Amount
<u>Francisco Arroyo Mora</u>							
<u>Sterling Plumbing - Class</u>							
		Court fees- Order Number 26240459					
09-16-2025	Approved	Court fees		0.00	0.00	0.00	19.20
		Court fees- Order Number 26167127					
02-09-2026	Approved	Court fees	Cordura, Carter	80.20	0.00	1.00	80.20
		Final Approval Motion					
						Matter Total	14,966.84
						Client Total	14,966.84
						Grand Total	14,966.84

Exhibit 6