

HAINES LAW GROUP, APC

Paul K. Haines (SBN 248226)
phaines@haineslawgroup.com
Sean M. Blakely (SBN 264384)
sblakely@haineslawgroup.com
Joel M. Gordon (SBN 276490)
jgordon@haineslawgroup.com
2155 Campus Drive, Suite 180
El Segundo, California 90245
Tel: (424) 292-2350
Fax: (424) 292-2355

Attorneys for Plaintiff

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

FOR THE COUNTY OF VENTURA

GUDELIA CRUZ, as an individual and on
behalf of all other aggrieved employees,

Plaintiff,

vs.

REITER BROTHERS, INC., a California
corporation; and DOES 1 through 100,

Defendants.

Case No. 2024CUOE019469

*[Assigned to the Hon. Charmaine H.
Buehner, Dept. J4]*

**DECLARATION OF GUEDELIA CRUZ
IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFF'S
MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF
SETTLEMENT OF CLAIMS BROUGHT
UNDER THE PRIVATE ATTORNEYS'
GENERAL ACT**

Date: August 18, 2025
Time: 8:30 a.m.
Dept.: J4

Complaint filed: January 16, 2024
Trial Date: None Set

DECLARATION OF GUDELIA CRUZ

I, Gudelia Cruz, declare as follows:

1. I am an individual over the age of 18 and am the named plaintiff in this matter against Reiter Brothers, Inc. ("Reiter"). This declaration is submitted in support of approval of the Settlement Agreement reached in this case. I have personal knowledge of the facts stated in this declaration and could testify competently to them if called upon to do so.

2. I have worked for Reiter as a non-exempt employee in the position of "Berry Picker" at Reiter's Oxnard location since approximately June 2021. I have been on leave for a workplace injury since approximately March 8, 2023.

3. While working for Reiter, I was subject to their wage and hour policies and practices at issue in this case. During my employment, I was not allowed to record my own hours. Instead, I was required to give my identification badge to a supervisor, Javier, when I arrived for my shifts, and Javier recorded my hours for me. When recording my hours, Reiter did not record the actual start and end times of my workday, but rounded my time worked to the nearest quarter-hour. As a result of these timekeeping policies and practices, I believe that I was not compensated for all of the hours that I worked.

4. During my employment with Reiter, I could not record my own meal periods, and I believe that 30 minutes were automatically deducted from my time by my supervisors. I was frequently dismissed for my meal periods after the end of my fifth hour of work. My meal periods often lasted fewer than 30 minutes because I had to walk to the break area and perform work-related tasks before eating lunch, such as rinsing out and hanging my collection containers, and then walk back to my worksite after eating lunch, resulting in fewer than 30 minutes for my lunch breaks. Due to work demands and the walk from my worksite to the rest areas, I was also not always able to take full 10-minute rest breaks during my shifts. While working for Reiter, I was also required to buy my own gloves and other work-related clothing, but Reiter did not compensate me for these expenses. As a result of these violations, I understand that I was not provided with accurate, itemized wage statements.

5. When I filed this lawsuit, I understood that it could benefit my former coworkers, other Reiter employees, and the State of California by helping to recover penalties on their behalf as a result of the alleged violations described above. I also understood that I was filing this case as an “aggrieved employee” on behalf of myself and my fellow “aggrieved employees” as well as the State of California.

6. When I filed this lawsuit, I knew there was a risk I could be liable for Reiter's costs if we lost the case. I also understood that filing a lawsuit is a public record. However, I accepted those risks so that I could help recover penalties on behalf of other Reiter employees and the State of California. Even though I assumed these risks, to date, I have not suffered any actual adverse consequences because I filed this lawsuit.

7. I have been actively involved in this case since it started in 2023. Without waiving the attorney-client privilege, I have had many phone conversations and meetings with my attorneys throughout this case to discuss Reiter's wage and hour policies and practices, identify potential witnesses, and discuss case strategy. I also gathered and reviewed documents for use in the lawsuit and reviewed relevant documents with my attorneys. I estimate that I have spent approximately 35-40 hours performing these activities in order to help the case.

8. I understand that my attorneys will request that the Court approve an enhancement payment of \$5,000.00 for my efforts on behalf of the aggrieved employees and the State of California. I believe this amount is reasonable based on the amount of time and effort I have devoted to this case and the risks I have undertaken as a representative. My support for the Settlement is not contingent on me receiving this enhancement payment

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California and the United States that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on July 16, 2025 at Oxford, California.

Gudelia Cruz