



H A U L K & H E R R E R A L L P

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June 2, 2026

VIA ONLINE SUBMISSION

Labor & Workforce Development Agency
Attn: PAGA Administrator
455 Golden Gate Avenue, 9th Floor
San Francisco, California 94102

Re: **Private Attorney General Act Notice**

Dear PAGA Administrator:

This firm represents Guari Bhalchandra Deshpande (“**Plaintiff**”) with respect to Plaintiff’s claims against Divcowest Services Holdings, LLC (“**Defendant**”).

The purpose of this letter is to comply with Labor Code section 2699.3, which requires an aggrieved employee to notify their employer and the Labor & Workforce Development Agency (“**LWDA**”) of the provisions of the Labor Code that the employer has allegedly violated before filing a civil claim under California’s Labor Code Private Attorneys General Act (“**PAGA**”).

As used herein, the term “**Aggrieved Employees**” refers to Plaintiff and to all current and former employees of Defendant who have worked for Defendant in the State of California. Plaintiff has suffered each of the Labor Code and Wage Order violations asserted herein.

SUMMARY OF FACTS

Plaintiff Guari Bhalchandra Deshpande was employed by Defendant Divcowest Services as an Investment Analyst from approximately June 9, 2025 until her termination on May 14, 2026. Plaintiff worked in Defendant’s Investments Team and was paid on a salary basis. Plaintiff was classified as exempt and was not paid overtime wages.

Although Plaintiff held the title of Investment Analyst, her primary duties were non-exempt in nature. Plaintiff performed data entry, scheduled meetings, took notes, updated PowerPoint presentations with quarterly information, cleaned up data and Excel files, and performed administrative support for senior team members. Plaintiff did not manage



employees, did not supervise anyone, and did not exercise independent discretion and judgment on matters of significance.

Throughout her employment, Plaintiff regularly worked long hours, typically from approximately 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and sometimes on weekends. Plaintiff routinely worked approximately 60 hours per week. Despite working well over eight hours in a day and forty hours in a week, Defendant did not pay Plaintiff overtime wages because she was treated as a salaried exempt employee.

Plaintiff also performed work remotely and after hours using her personal cell phone and home internet for work-related duties, including emails and other communications. Defendant required or permitted Plaintiff to use these personal resources for work but failed to reimburse her for necessary business expenses, including cell phone and internet expenses.

Plaintiff was also not provided compliant meal and rest periods. Plaintiff regularly worked shifts exceeding eight hours per day, and often worked approximately twelve hours per day, but Defendant failed to provide Plaintiff with timely, uninterrupted, duty-free meal periods and compliant rest periods. Plaintiff was required to continue working through breaks, remain available for work-related communications, and complete time-sensitive assignments during the workday and after hours. Defendant also failed to authorize and permit second meal periods on days Plaintiff worked more than ten hours. Despite these violations, Defendant failed to pay Plaintiff meal and rest period premium wages.

Plaintiff is a woman of Indian national origin. During her employment, Plaintiff was subjected to inappropriate and discriminatory comments by her manager concerning Plaintiff's gender, her interactions with women versus men, and gender-based stereotypes. Among other things, Plaintiff's manager questioned why Plaintiff was working and networking with "too many women," asked whether Plaintiff was "scared of men," and stated that Plaintiff's professional strength would be "to be a mother."

Plaintiff was also subjected to conduct relating to her Indian national origin and/or ethnicity. Plaintiff was the only Indian employee on her team, and her manager mocked Indian food in a work group chat, stating words to the effect of "who wants Indian food, I can't stomach that today," while another employee responded with a vomiting emoji and Plaintiff's manager laughed along.

Plaintiff reported the conduct to management and Human Resources, explaining that her manager made her uncomfortable, that she felt bullied, and that she did not believe the work environment was appropriate. Rather than take prompt and effective corrective action,



Defendant delayed follow-up, failed to meaningfully remedy the situation, and later placed Plaintiff on a performance improvement plan based on vague and subjective criticisms.

Although Defendant later represented that Plaintiff would report to a different manager, Plaintiff continued working with the same manager and remained subject to her influence on projects and performance-related feedback. Shortly thereafter, Defendant again raised alleged performance concerns, relied substantially on complaints from the manager Plaintiff had reported, and terminated Plaintiff's employment on or about May 14, 2026.

As a direct and proximate result of Defendant's unlawful conduct, Plaintiff suffered lost wages and compensation, emotional distress, reputational harm, and other damages according to proof. Plaintiff therefore seeks recovery of unpaid wages, overtime compensation, meal and rest period premiums, unreimbursed business expenses, statutory and civil penalties, waiting time penalties, compensatory damages, attorneys' fees, costs, interest, and all other relief permitted by law.

SUMMARY OF CLAIMS

Plaintiff alleges that Defendant engaged in a pattern of knowingly violating numerous Labor Code sections. In particular, Defendant has violated California's wage and hour laws by:

a) **Unpaid Wages:** Failing to pay Aggrieved Employees for all hours worked (including overtime), in violation of the applicable Wage Order and Labor Code sections 204, 510, 1194 et seq.

b) **Meal/Rest Breaks (Failure to Provide):** Failing to permit Aggrieved Employees to take timely rest/meal breaks in violation of Labor Code section 226.7, 512, and the applicable Wage Order.

c) **Meal/Rest Breaks (Failure to Pay Premium Pay):** Failing to pay premium pay to Aggrieved Employees for missed or untimely rest/meal breaks, in violation of Labor Code sections 226.7 and 512.

d) **Failure to Pay Wages (Intervals):** Failing to pay all earned wages (including overtime compensation, and premium pay for missed meal and rest breaks), to Aggrieved Employees at least twice a month in violation of Labor Code section 204.

e) **Wage Statement Violations:** Failing to maintain and furnish to Aggrieved Employees accurate, itemized statements of hours worked, gross and net wages earned all applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the number of hours worked at



each hourly rate, and deductions in violation of the applicable Wage Order and Labor Code sections 226 and 226.3.

f) **Waiting Time Penalties:** Failing to pay all earned wages (including overtime compensation, and premium pay for missed meal breaks) at the time of termination or within 72 hours of resignation to Aggrieved Employees in violation of Labor Code sections 201, 202, 203, 206, and 227.3.

g) **Failure to Reimburse:** Failing to reimburse Aggrieved Employees for business expenses in violation of Labor Code section 2802.

h) **Violation of IWC Wage Order:** As set forth above, Plaintiff's violations of the Labor Code are also violations of the applicable IWC Wage Order, including those Paragraphs identified as "Hours and Days of Work," "Minimum Wages," "Reporting Time Pay," "Records," "Meal Periods," and "Rest Periods."

Plaintiff has suffered the violations alleged herein. This notice is based on the facts currently known to Plaintiff and is made without prejudice to Plaintiff's right to seek all available remedies for any and all additional violations that may subsequently be discovered or identified.

Please advise this office within 65 days of the post-mark date of this notice whether the Labor & Workforce Development Agency intends to investigate the above-noted Labor Code and Wage Order violations. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,

Jose M. Herrera

cc: Divcowest Services Holdings, LLC - *via Certified Mail/Return Receipt Requested*