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**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

DALE PAYNE, individually, and on behalf of
other members of the general public similarly
situated;

Plaintiff,

v.

AVALON TRANSPORTATION, LLC, a
California limited liability company; VIRGIN
FISH, INC., a California corporation; and
DOES 1 through 100, inclusive;

Defendants.

Case No.: 23STCV30586

Assigned for All Purposes to:
Honorable Elihu M. Berle
Department 6

CLASS ACTION

**NOTICE OF MOTION AND MOTION FOR
PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF CLASS
ACTION SETTLEMENT, CONDITIONAL
CERTIFICATION, APPROVAL OF CLASS
NOTICE, SETTING OF FINAL
APPROVAL HEARING DATE;
MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND
AUTHORITIES IN SUPPORT THEREOF**

[Declaration of Proposed Class Counsel
(Douglas Han); Declaration of Proposed Class
Representative (Kamil Al-Ahdali); Declaration
of John L. Viola; Declaration of Jodey
Lawrence; and [Proposed] Order filed
concurrently herewith]

Hearing Date: December 12, 2025
Hearing Time: 9:00 a.m.
Hearing Place: Department 6

Complaint Filed: December 14, 2023
FAC Filed: March 7, 2024
SAC Filed: April 11, 2024
TAC Filed: July 7, 2025
Trial Date: None Set

1 **PLEASE TAKE NOTICE** that on December 12, 2025 at 9:00 a.m., or as soon as the
2 matter may be heard, before the Honorable Elihu M. Berle in Department 6 of the Los Angeles
3 County Superior Court located at 312 North Spring Street Los Angeles, California 90012, Plaintiff
4 Kamil Al-Ahdali (“Plaintiff”) will and hereby does move for an order:

- 5 • Granting Preliminary Approval of the class action settlement described herein and
6 as set forth in the Class Action and PAGA Settlement Agreement (“Settlement
7 Agreement,” “Settlement,” or “Agreement”), attached as **Exhibit 2** to the
8 Declaration of Douglas Han, including, and not limited to, the means of allocation
9 and distribution of funds;
- 10 • Approving the Court Approved Notice of Class Action Settlement and Hearing
11 Date for Final Court Approval (“Class Notice”) attached as **Exhibit A** to the
12 Settlement Agreement;
- 13 • Directing the mailing of the Class Notice with a postage-paid return envelope to
14 the Class Members;
- 15 • Approving Phoenix Class Action Administration Solutions as the Administrator;
- 16 • Approving the proposed deadlines for the settlement administration process;
- 17 • Conditionally certifying the Class for settlement purposes only;
- 18 • Appointing Justice Law Corporation as Class Counsel;
- 19 • Appointing Plaintiff as the class representative; and
- 20 • Scheduling a hearing to consider whether to grant Final Approval of the Settlement
21 Agreement, at which time the Court will also consider whether to grant Final
22 Approval of the requests for the Class Counsel Fees Payment, Class Counsel
23 Litigation Expenses Payment, Class Representative Service Payment,
24 Administration Expenses Payment, and approval of the allocation of the Private
25 Attorney General Act of 2004 (“PAGA”) Penalties.

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1 This motion is based upon the following memorandum of points and authorities;
2 Declaration of Proposed Class Counsel (Douglas Han); Declaration of Class Representative
3 (Kamil Al-Ahdali); Declaration of John L. Viola; Declaration of Jodey Lawrence; [Proposed]
4 Order filed concurrently with this motion; pleadings and other records on file with the Court in
5 this matter; and such documentary evidence and oral argument as may be presented at the hearing.

6
7 Dated: October 22, 2025

JUSTICE LAW CORPORATION

8 By: 
9 Douglas Han
10 *Attorneys for Plaintiff*
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION	10
II.	BACKGROUND	10
III.	INVESTIGATION/ LITIGATION HISTORY	11
a.	Discovery, Investigation, and the Parties' Staunchly Conflicting Positions	11
b.	The Parties Were Able to Reach an Agreement	11
i.	The Parties Attended Mediation Which Led to the Settlement	11
ii.	The Settlement Was Reached as a Result of Arm's-Length Negotiations	12
iii.	The Settlement Is the Result of Thorough Investigation and Discovery	12
c.	Terms of the Settlement	13
i.	Deductions from the Settlement	13
ii.	Calculating Settlement Payments	13
iii.	Notice to the Class	13
iv.	Distribution of Funds	14
v.	Release of Claims	14
d.	Counsel for Both Parties Are Experienced in Similar Litigation	15
IV.	ARGUMENT	15
a.	Class Action Settlements Are Subject to Court Review	15
b.	The Settlement Is a Reasonable Compromise of Claims	16
i.	The Settlement Amount of \$585,000 Is Fair and Reasonable	17
ii.	The PAGA Penalties of \$40,000 Is Reasonable	18
c.	Discount Analysis Justifies the Settlement	18
d.	Conditional Certification of the Class Is Appropriate	20
i.	The Class Is Ascertainable and Sufficiently Numerous	20
ii.	Class Members Share a Well-defined Community of Interest	21
1.	Common Issues Predominate	21

2.	Plaintiff’s Claims Are Typical of the Class Claims.....	21
3.	Plaintiff Is Adequate to Represent the Class.....	22
4.	Class Action Is Superior for the Fair and Efficient Adjudication of this Controversy	22
e.	The Settlement Is Fair, Reasonable, and Adequate	23
f.	Notice to the Class Complies with Rules of Court, Rule 3.769(f).....	23
V.	CONCLUSION.....	23

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

Cases	Page(s)
<i>Acosta v. TransUnion, LLC</i>	
(C.D. Cal. 2007) 240 F.R.D. 564	19
<i>Aguiar v. Cintas Corp. No. 2</i>	
(2006) 144 Cal.App.4th 121	17
<i>Amaro v. Anaheim Arena Management, LLC</i>	
(2021) 69 Cal.App.5th 521	15
<i>Bartold v. Glendale Federal Bank</i>	
(2000) 81 Cal.App.4th 816	20
<i>In re Beef Industry Antitrust Litigation</i>	
(5th Cir. 1979) 607 F.2d 167	16
<i>Boyd v. Bechtel Corp.</i>	
(N.D.Cal. 1979) 485 F.Supp.610	12
<i>Brinker Restaurant Corp. v. Superior Court</i>	
(2012) 53 Cal.4th 1004	21
<i>Capitol People First v. Department of Developmental Services</i>	
(2007) 155 Cal.App.4th 676	21
<i>Classen v. Weller</i>	
(1983) 145 Cal.App.3d 27	21
<i>Detroit v. Grinnell Corp.</i>	
(2d Cir. 1974) 495 F.2d 448.....	19
<i>Dunbar v. Albertson's Inc.</i>	
(2006) 141 Cal.App.4th 1422	17
<i>Dunk v. Ford Motor Co.</i>	
(1996) 48 Cal.App.4th 1794	15, 23
///	
///	

Cases	Page(s)
<i>Espinoza v. Galardi South Enters.</i>	
(S.D.Fla. Jan. 11, 2016, No. 14-21244-CIV-GOODMAN) 2016 U.S.Dist.LEXIS	
2904...	21
<i>In re General Motors Corp. Engine Interchange Litigation</i>	
(7th Cir. 1979) 594 F.2d 1106	19
<i>Ghazaryan v. Diva Limousine, Ltd.</i>	
(2008) 169 Cal.App.4th 1524	20
<i>Green v. Obledo</i>	
(1981) 29 Cal.3d 126	15
<i>Harris v. Superior Court</i>	
(2007) 154 Cal.App.4th 164	17
<i>Hicks v. Kaufman & Broad Home Corp.</i>	
(2001) 89 Cal.App.4th 908	20
<i>Hopson v. Hanesbrands Inc.</i>	
(N.D. Cal. Apr. 3, 2009) No. 08-00844, 2009 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 33900	18
<i>Iowa Beef Processors, Inc. v. Meat Price Investigators Ass’n</i>	
(1981) 452 U.S. 905	16
<i>Jones v. JGC Dallas LLC</i>	
(N.D.Tex. Nov. 29, 2012, Civil Action No. 3:11-CV-2743-O) 2012 U.S.Dist.LEXIS	
185042	21
<i>Kullar v. Foot Locker Retail, Inc.</i>	
(2008) 168 Cal.App.4th 116	16
<i>Linder v. Thrifty Oil Co.</i>	
(2000) 23 Cal.4th 429	20
<i>Linney v. Cellular Alaska P’ship</i>	
(9th Cir. 1998) 151 F.3d 1234	19
///	

Cases	Page(s)
<i>Munoz v. BCI Coca-Cola Bottling Co. of Los Angeles</i>	
(2010) 186 Cal.App.4th 399	16
<i>Nordstrom Com. Cases</i>	
(2010) 186 Cal.App.4th 576	18
<i>Sav-On Drug Stores, Inc. v. Superior Court</i>	
(2004) 34 Cal.4th 319	17, 20, 21
<i>Thurman v. Bayshore Transit Mgmt.</i>	
(2012) 203 Cal.App.4th 1112	18
<i>Vasquez v. Superior Court</i>	
(1971) 4 Cal.3d 800	15
<i>Walsh v. IKON Office Solutions, Inc.</i>	
(2007) 148 Cal.App.4th 1440	17
Rules	
Federal Rule 23	15
Rules of Court, Rule 3.769	15
Rules of Court, Rule 3.769 (f)	23
Rules of Court, Rule 3.769 (g).....	15
Statutes	
Business & Professions Code § 17200	17
Code of Civil Procedure § 382.....	20, 23
Code of Civil Procedure § 877.6.....	16
Code of Civil Procedure § 1542.....	14
Labor Code § 201.....	18
Labor Code § 202.....	18
Labor Code § 203.....	18
Labor Code § 204.....	18
Labor Code § 210.....	18

	Statutes	Page(s)
1		
2	Labor Code § 218.5.....	18
3	Labor Code § 221.....	18
4	Labor Code § 226(a)	18
5	Labor Code § 226.3.....	18
6	Labor Code § 226.7.....	18
7	Labor Code § 246.....	18
8	Labor Code § 432.5.....	18
9	Labor Code § 510.....	18
10	Labor Code § 512(a)	18
11	Labor Code § 551.....	18
12	Labor Code § 552.....	18
13	Labor Code § 558.....	18
14	Labor Code § 1174(d).....	18
15	Labor Code § 1194.....	18
16	Labor Code § 1197.....	18
17	Labor Code § 1197.1.....	18
18	Labor Code § 1198.....	18
19	Labor Code § 2698.....	10, 11
20	Labor Code § 2800.....	18
21	Labor Code § 2802.....	18

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1 **I. INTRODUCTION**

2 This motion seeks preliminary approval of a non-reversionary proposed wage-and-hour
3 class action settlement by Plaintiff on behalf of himself and all current and former hourly-paid or
4 non-exempt employees of Defendants Avalon Transportation, LLC and Virgin Fish, Inc.
5 (“Defendant”) within the State of California at any time during the period from December 14,
6 2019, through September 10, 2025, excluding exclusively non-chauffeur drivers (“Class,” “Class
7 Members,” and “Class Period”). At the time of this filing, the number of Class Members is
8 estimated to be two hundred thirty-seven (237), which was confirmed by Defendant. (Declaration
9 of Douglas Han In Support of Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlement (“Han
10 Decl.”), ¶¶ 8, 9.)

11 **II. BACKGROUND**

12 On December 13, 2023, then-plaintiff Dale Payne provided written notice to the California
13 Labor and Workforce Development Agency (“LWDA”) and Defendant. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶
14 10; Exhibit 3.)

15 On December 14, 2023, then-plaintiff Dale Payne filed a wage-and-hour class action
16 lawsuit in the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, alleging eight (8) causes of
17 action. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 11.)

18 On January 2, 2024, an amended written notice to the LWDA and Defendant was provided
19 that added Plaintiff as a named representative. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 12; Exhibit 4.)

20 On March 7, 2024, a First Amended Complaint was filed that replaced then-plaintiff Dale
21 Payne with Plaintiff Kamil Al-Adahli as the named plaintiff and added a cause of action for
22 violation of Labor Code section 2698 (PAGA). (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 13; Exhibit 5.)

23 On April 11, 2024, Plaintiff filed a Second Amended Complaint that removed the cause of
24 action for violation of Labor Code section 2698 (PAGA). (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 14.)

25 After engaging in discovery, investigations, and negotiation, on June 12, 2025, the Parties
26 attended mediation with the mediator Chris Barnes that eventually resulted in the settlement of
27 this matter via a mediator’s proposal. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 15.)

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1 In line with the settlement, on July 7, 2025, Plaintiff filed a Third Amended Complaint
2 revising the “class” definition and re-adding the cause of action for violation of Labor Code section
3 2698 (PAGA). (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 16; Exhibit 6.)

4 **III. INVESTIGATION/ LITIGATION HISTORY**

5 **a. Discovery, Investigation, and the Parties’ Staunchly Conflicting Positions**

6 After initiating this lawsuit, the Parties engaged in discovery. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 18.)
7 Plaintiff drafted and propounded form interrogatories, special interrogatories, requests for
8 admissions, and requests for production of documents, and Defendant responded to the formal
9 discovery requests. (*Ibid.*) The Parties then met and conferred and agreed to engage in the informal
10 exchange of information and then eventually attended mediation. (*Ibid.*)

11 Prior to the mediation, Defendant produced documents relating to its policies, practices,
12 and procedures. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 19.) As part of Defendant’s production, Plaintiff reviewed
13 time records, pay records, and information relating to the size and scope of the Class. (*Ibid.*)
14 Putative class members were also located and interviewed to attain a better understanding of the
15 extent and frequency of the alleged day-to-day violations. (*Ibid.*)

16 Based on the information provided by Defendant and interviews with putative class
17 members, Plaintiff contends – and Defendant denies – Defendant: (1) failed to provide employees
18 with legally mandated meal and rest breaks; (2) failed to pay employees for all hours worked; (3)
19 failed to reimburse employees for necessary business expenses; (4) issued noncompliant wage
20 statements; and (5) is liable for waiting time penalties. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶¶ 21-27.)

21 **b. The Parties Were Able to Reach an Agreement**

22 **i. The Parties Attended Mediation Which Led to the Settlement**

23 The Parties attended mediation with an experienced mediator. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 28.)
24 Under the auspices of the mediator, the Parties reached a settlement via a mediator’s proposal, the
25 terms of which were memorialized in the Settlement Agreement. (*Id.* at ¶ 28; Exhibits 2, 7.)

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1 **ii. The Settlement Was Reached as a Result of Arm’s-Length Negotiations**

2 The Settlement Agreement was reached because of arm’s-length negotiations. (Han Decl.,
3 *supra*, at ¶ 31.) Though cordial and professional, the settlement negotiations have always been
4 adversarial and non-collusive in nature. (*Ibid.*) At the mediation, the Parties’ counsel conducted
5 extensive arm’s-length settlement negotiations until an agreement was ultimately reached. (*Ibid.*)

6 Plaintiff and Class Counsel recognize the expense and length of additional proceedings
7 necessary to continue the litigation through trial and any possible appeals. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶
8 32.) Plaintiff and Class Counsel also considered the uncertainty and risk of further litigation,
9 potential outcome, and difficulties and delays inherent in such litigation. (*Ibid.*) Based on the
10 foregoing, Plaintiff and Class Counsel believe that the Settlement is a fair, adequate, and
11 reasonable settlement and is in the best interests of the Class Members. (*Ibid.*)

12 **iii. The Settlement Is the Result of Thorough Investigation and Discovery**

13 The Parties investigated and evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of the claims and
14 defenses before reaching the Settlement and engaged in research and discovery to support the
15 Settlement. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 33.) The Settlement was only possible following significant
16 investigation and evaluation of the relevant policies and practices, permitting Class Counsel to
17 engage in a comprehensive analysis of liability and potential damages. (*Ibid.*) This case has
18 reached the stage where the Parties understand “the strength of the case; the reasonableness of the
19 settlement in light of the attendant risks of litigation, and in light of the best possible recovery”
20 sufficient to support the reasonableness, adequacy, and fairness of the Settlement. (Han Decl.,
21 *supra*, at ¶ 33; *Boyd v. Bechtel Corp.* (N.D.Cal. 1979) 485 F.Supp. 610, 617.)

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1 **c. Terms of the Settlement**

2 **i. Deductions from the Settlement**

3 The Parties agreed that (subject to the Court’s approval) this matter be settled and
4 compromised for the non-reversionary sum of \$585,000 (“Gross Settlement Amount”) which
5 includes: (1) Class Counsel Fees Payment up to \$204,750 (35% of the Gross Settlement Amount);
6 (2) Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment up to \$25,000; (3) Class Representative Service
7 Payment up to \$10,000; (4) Administration Expenses Payment up to \$10,000; and (5) PAGA
8 Penalties up to \$40,000. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 29.)

9 **ii. Calculating Settlement Payments**

10 After all Court-approved deductions from the Gross Settlement Amount, it is estimated
11 that \$295,250 (“Net Settlement Amount”) will be paid to the Participating Class Members – with
12 a gross *average* Individual Class Payment estimated at \$1,245.78. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 30.)

13 The Participating Class Members will receive a proportionate share of the Net Settlement
14 Amount using the formula set forth in the Settlement Agreement. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 28;
15 Exhibit 2, *supra*, at § C(2)(e).) The Individual Class Payments will be allocated twenty percent
16 (20%) to the settlement of wage claims and eighty percent (80%) to the settlement of claims for
17 interests and penalties. (*Ibid.*)

18 The portion of the PAGA Penalties that is to be paid to each Aggrieved Employee shall be
19 determined using the formula set forth in the Settlement Agreement. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 28;
20 Exhibit 2, *supra*, at § C(2)(d).) The Aggrieved Employees’ portion of the PAGA Penalties will be
21 allocated as one hundred percent (100%) penalties. (*Ibid.*)

22 **iii. Notice to the Class**

23 No later than fourteen (14) calendar days after the Court grants Preliminary Approval of
24 the Settlement, Defendant will deliver the Class Data to the Administrator. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶
25 28; Exhibit 2, *supra*, at § G(4)(a).) No later than fourteen (14) calendar days after receiving the
26 Class Data, the Administrator will send the Class Notice with a translation to all Class Members
27 identified in the Class Data via first-class United States Postal Service mail. (*Id.* at § G(4)(c).)

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1 **iv. Distribution of Funds**

2 The Gross Settlement Amount will be funded and distributed pursuant to the timeline and
3 manner set forth in the Settlement. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 28; Exhibit 2, *supra*, at §§ D(2), D(3).)
4 The uncashed settlement checks will be canceled and transmitted to the California Controller's
5 Unclaimed Property Fund in the name of the Class Member. (*Id.* at §§ D(3)(a), D(3)(c).)

6 **v. Release of Claims**

7 Effective on the date when Defendant fully funds the Gross Settlement Amount and funds
8 all employer payroll taxes owed on the Wage Portion of the Individual Class Payments, all the
9 Participating Class Members, on behalf of themselves and their respective former and present
10 representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors and assigns, release Released
11 Parties from the Released Class Claims. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 28; Exhibit 2, *supra*, at § E(2).)

12 Effective on the date when Defendant fully funds the Gross Settlement Amount and funds
13 all employer payroll taxes owed on the Wage Portion of the Individual Class Payments, all the
14 Participating and Non-Participating Class Members, who are Aggrieved Employees, are deemed
15 to release, on behalf of themselves and their former and present representatives, agents, attorneys,
16 heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns, the Released Parties from the Released PAGA
17 Claims. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 28; Exhibit 2, *supra*, at § E(3).)

18 Effective on the date when Defendant fully funds the Gross Settlement Amount and funds
19 all employer payroll taxes owed on the Wage Portion of the Individual Class Payments, Plaintiff
20 and his former and present spouses, representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators,
21 successors, and assigns generally release and discharge the Released Parties from the Plaintiff's
22 Release. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 28; Exhibit 2, *supra*, at § E(1).) Plaintiff expressly waives and
23 relinquishes the provisions, rights, and benefits, if any, of section 1542 of the Civil Code. (*Ibid.*)

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1 With regards to class action releases, “[A] court may release not only those claims alleged
2 in the complaint and before the court, but also claims which ‘could have been alleged by reason of
3 or in connection with any matter or fact set forth or referred to in’ the complaint.” (Amaro v.
4 Anaheim Arena Management, LLC (2021) 69 Cal.App.5th 521, 537.) The scope of the releases in
5 this case are acceptable because they are limited to the scope of the allegations in the operative
6 complaints. Moreover, the released claims are “based on the identical factual predicate as that
7 underlying the claims in the settled class action.” (Ibid.) In other words, the released claims do
8 not “go beyond the scope of the allegations in the operative complaint” (Ibid.)

9 **d. Counsel for Both Parties Are Experienced in Similar Litigation**

10 The Parties’ counsel are experienced in wage-and-hour employment law and class actions.
11 (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶¶ 2-7; Exhibit 1.) Class Counsel have prosecuted numerous cases on behalf
12 of employees for Labor Code violations and are experienced and qualified to evaluate the class
13 claims, settlement versus trial on a fully informed basis, and viability of the defenses. (Ibid.) This
14 experience instructed Class Counsel on the risks and uncertainties of further litigation and guided
15 their determination to endorse the Settlement Agreement.¹ (Ibid.)

16 **IV. ARGUMENT**

17 **a. Class Action Settlements Are Subject to Court Review**

18 Rules of Court, rule 3.769 requires court approval for class action settlements.² “Before
19 final approval, the court must conduct an inquiry into the fairness of the proposed settlement.”
20 (Rules of Court, rule 3.769(g).) Rule 3.769 further requires a noticed motion for preliminary
21 approval of class settlements:

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24 ¹ The final factor mentioned in *Dunk* – the number of objectors – is not determinable until
25 the Class Notice has been provided to the Class, and they have had an opportunity to respond. This
26 information will be provided to the Court in conjunction with the Motion for Final Approval.

27 ² The California Supreme Court has authorized California’s trial courts to use Federal Rule
28 23 and cases applying it for guidance in considering class issues. (*Vasquez v. Superior Court*
(1971) 4 Cal.3d 800, 821; *Green v. Obledo* (1981) 29 Cal.3d 126, 145-146.) Where appropriate,
the Parties cite Federal Rule 23 and federal case law in addition to California law.

(a) A settlement or compromise of an entire class action, or a cause of action in a class action, or as to a party, requires the approval of the court after hearing.

...
(c) Any party to a settlement agreement may serve and file a written notice of motion for preliminary approval of the settlement. The settlement agreement and proposed notice to class members must be filed with the motion, and the proposed order must be lodged with the motion.

Courts have discretion to approve settlements that are fair, not collusive, and consider “all the normal perils of litigation as well as the additional uncertainties inherent in complex class actions.” (*In re Beef Industry Antitrust Litigation* (5th Cir. 1979) 607 F.2d 167, 179, cert. den. *sub nom. Iowa Beef Processors, Inc. v. Meat Price Investigators Ass’n* (1981) 452 U.S. 905.)

b. The Settlement Is a Reasonable Compromise of Claims

An understanding of the amount in controversy is an important factor in whether the settlement “of the class members’ claims is reasonable in light of the strengths and weaknesses of the claims and the risks of the particular litigation.” (*Kullar v. Foot Locker Retail, Inc.* (2008) 168 Cal.App.4th 116, 129; see also *Munoz v. BCI Coca-Cola Bottling Co. of Los Angeles* (2010) 186 Cal.App.4th 399, 409.) The most important factor in this regard is ““the strength of the case for plaintiffs on the merits, balanced against the amount offered in settlement.”” (*Kullar*, at p. 130; see also *Munoz*, at p. 409.)

Kullar’s instruction to the court is not to “decide the merits of the case or to substitute its evaluation of the most appropriate settlement for that of the attorneys.” (*Kullar v. Foot Locker Retail, Inc., supra*, 168 Cal.App.4th at p. 133.) *Kullar* does not require a statement of the maximum amount the class could recover if plaintiff prevailed on all his claims, provided there is a record that allows “an understanding of the amount that is in controversy and the realistic range of outcomes of the litigation.” (*Munoz v. BCI Coca-Cola Bottling Co. of Los Angeles, supra*, 186 Cal.App.4th at p. 409.) “[A]s the court does when it approves a settlement as in good faith under Code of Civil Procedure § 877.6, the court must at least satisfy itself that the class settlement is within the ‘ballpark’ of reasonableness.” (*Kullar*, at p. 133.)

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1 **i. The Settlement Amount of \$585,000 Is Fair and Reasonable**

2 The Settlement Agreement was only possible following significant investigation and
3 evaluation of the relevant policies and procedures, as well as the data produced, as referenced in
4 Section III above, permitting Class Counsel to engage in a comprehensive analysis of liability and
5 potential damages. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 33.)

6 The claims are predicated on the alleged: (1) failure to pay overtime wages; (2) failure to
7 pay minimum wages; (3) failure to provide meal and rest breaks and pay applicable premium
8 wages; (4) failure to timely pay wages; (5) failure to issue compliant wage statements; (6) failure
9 to reimburse business expenses; (7) violation of PAGA; and (8) violation of Business &
10 Professions Code section 17200. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 34.) Defendant vehemently denies the
11 theories of liability. (*Id.* at ¶ 35.)

12 While Plaintiff believes that the case is suitable for certification, uncertainties with respect
13 to certification are always present. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 36.) As the California Supreme Court
14 ruled in *Sav-On Drug Stores, Inc. v. Superior Court* (2004) 34 Cal.4th 319, class certification is
15 always a matter of the trial court's sound discretion. (*Ibid.*) Decisions following *Sav-On Drug*
16 *Stores, Inc.* have reached different conclusions regarding certification of wage-and-hour claims.³
17 (*Ibid.*) Thus, the calculations for potential damages were discounted.

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25 ³ (See e.g. *Harris v. Superior Court* (2007) 154 Cal.App.4th 164 [reversing decertification
26 of class claiming misclassification and ordering summary adjudication in favor of employees],
27 review granted Nov. 28, 2007, (2007) 171 P.3d 545 [not cited as precedent, but rather for
28 illustrative purposes only]; *Walsh v. IKON Office Solutions, Inc.* (2007) 148 Cal.App.4th 1440
[affirming decertification of class claiming misclassification]; *Aguilar v. Cintas Corp. No. 2* (2006)
144 Cal.App.4th 121 [reversing denial of certification]; *Dunbar v. Albertson's Inc.* (2006) 141
Cal.App.4th 1422 [affirming denial of certification].)

1 **ii. The PAGA Penalties of \$40,000 Is Reasonable**

2 The provisions of the Labor Code potentially triggering PAGA penalties include Labor
3 Code sections 201, 202, 203, 204, 210, 218.5, 221, 226(a), 226.3, 226.7, 246, 432.5, 510, 512(a),
4 551, 552, 558, 1174(d), 1194, 1197, 1197.1, 1198, 2800, and 2802. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 44.)
5 Defendant asserted that, regardless of the results of the underlying causes of action, PAGA
6 penalties are not mandatory but permissive and discretionary. (*Ibid.*) Defendant also maintained
7 that it had a strong argument that it would be unjust to award maximum PAGA penalties given the
8 law’s current unsettled state. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 44; *Thurman v. Bayshore Transit Mgmt.*
9 (2012) 203 Cal.App.4th 1112 [reducing penalties by 30% under this authority].) Furthermore,
10 Defendant argued that when limited to the initial violation, the PAGA penalties would be limited
11 to about **\$17,100** (171 employees x \$100 penalty for initial violation) on the low end and **\$102,600**
12 (171 employees x \$100 penalty for initial violation x 6 theories of recovery) on the high end. (Han
13 Decl., *supra*, at ¶¶ 45-47.)

14 Plaintiff recognized that the risk that any PAGA award could be reduced. (Han Decl.,
15 *supra*, at ¶ 48.) Many of the causes of action brought were also duplicative of the statutory claims.
16 (*Ibid.*) Allocating \$40,000 to PAGA civil penalties was reasonable given that Defendant is also
17 paying an additional \$545,000 in the class settlement. (*Ibid.*) When PAGA penalties are negotiated
18 in good faith and “there is no indication that [the] amount was the result of self-interest at the
19 expense of other Class Members,” such amounts are reasonable.⁴ (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 48.)

20 Considering the defenses, supporting evidence, and position that the case is not suitable for
21 class treatment, the Settlement Agreement is reasonable, adequate, and fair.

22 **c. Discount Analysis Justifies the Settlement**

23 Excluding the civil penalties, which could be completely discretionary, the total estimated
24 potential exposure, assuming certification and prevailing at trial, would be about **\$4,026,110.46**
25 on the low end and around **\$4,534,434.47** on the high end. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 49.)

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27 ⁴ (*Hopson v. Hanesbrands Inc.* (N.D.Cal. Apr. 3, 2009, No. CV-08-0844 EDL) 2009
28 U.S.Dist.LEXIS 33900, at *24; see e.g. *Nordstrom Com. Cases* (2010) 186 Cal.App.4th 576, 579,
“[T]rial court did not abuse its discretion in approving a settlement which does not allocate any
damages to the PAGA claims”.)

Category	Potential Exposure	Certification Risk	Merits Risk	Realistic Exposure
Rest Break Premiums	\$609,741.19	75%	65%	\$53,352.35
Meal Break Premiums	\$1,284,586.33	65%	65%	\$157,361.83
Overtime/Minimum Wage: Off-the-Clock Work	\$1,016,223.34 to \$1,524,547.35	55%	55%	\$205,785.23 to \$308,720.84
Unreimbursed Business Expenses	\$231,540	25%	75%	\$43,413.75
Wage Statement Penalty	\$436,050	55%	55%	\$88,300.13
Waiting Time Penalty	\$447,969.60	55%	55%	\$90,713.84
MAXIMUM TOTAL EXPOSURE	\$4,026,110.46 to \$4,534,434.47⁵			\$638,927.13 to \$741,862.74⁶

The realistic recovery for this case is about **\$638,927.13** on the low end and **\$741,862.74** on the high end. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 56.) The Gross Settlement Amount is about thirteen percent (12.90%) of the maximum potential exposure and around seventy-nine percent (78.86%) of the maximum realistic exposure at trial, which is a reasonable settlement. (*Ibid.*)

The only question at preliminary approval is whether the settlement is within the range of possible approval. (*In re General Motors Corp. Engine Interchange Litigation* (7th Cir. 1979) 594 F.2d 1106, 1124; *Acosta v. TransUnion, LLC* (C.D. Cal. 2007) 240 F.R.D. 564, 575.) “The fact that a proposed settlement may only amount to a fraction of the potential recovery does not, in and of itself, mean that the proposed settlement is grossly inadequate and should be disapproved.” (*Detroit v. Grinnell Corp.* (2d Cir. 1974) 495 F.2d 448, 455; see also *Linney v. Cellular Alaska P’ship* (9th Cir. 1998) 151 F.3d 1234, 1242, “[I]t is the very uncertainty of outcome in litigation and avoidance of wasteful and expensive litigation that induce consensual settlements. The proposed settlement is not to be judged against a hypothetical or speculative measure of what might have been achieved by the negotiators”). This settlement is in line with the realistic exposure if Plaintiff prevailed at trial and provides a significant recovery for the Class Members.

⁵ (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶¶ 37-43.)

⁶ (*Id.* at ¶¶ 50-55.)

1 **d. Conditional Certification of the Class Is Appropriate**

2 Code of Civil Procedure section 382 “authorizes class actions ‘when the question is one of
3 a common or general interest, of many persons, or when the parties are numerous, and it is
4 impracticable to bring them all before the court.’” (*Sav-On Drug Stores, Inc. v. Superior Court*,
5 *supra*, 34 Cal.4th at p. 326.) California courts certify class actions if plaintiff identifies “both [1]
6 an ascertainable class and [2] a well-defined community of interest among class members.” (*Ibid.*)

7 The Class is ascertainable and numerous as to make it impracticable to join all Class
8 Members, and there are common questions of law and fact that predominate over any questions
9 affecting any individual Class Member. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 57.) Plaintiff contends that his
10 claims are typical of the claims of the Class, and Class Counsel will fairly and adequately protect
11 the interests of the Class. (*Ibid.*) Plaintiff asserts that the prosecution of separate actions by
12 individual Class Members would create the risk of inconsistent or varying adjudications. (*Ibid.*)

13 **i. The Class Is Ascertainable and Sufficiently Numerous**

14 “Ascertainability is required in order to give notice to putative class members as to whom
15 the judgment in the action will be res judicata.” (*Hicks v. Kaufman & Broad Home Corp.* (2001)
16 89 Cal.App.4th 908, 914.) “A class is ascertainable if it identifies a group of unnamed plaintiffs
17 by describing a set of common characteristics sufficient to allow a member of that group to identify
18 himself or herself as having a right to recover based on the description.” (*Bartold v. Glendale*
19 *Federal Bank* (2000) 81 Cal.App.4th 816, 828.) The proposed class must also be sufficiently
20 numerous. (*Linder v. Thrifty Oil Co.* (2000) 23 Cal.4th 429, 435.)

21 This case involves approximately two hundred thirty-seven (237) Class Members, meaning
22 that the Class is sufficiently numerous. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 58; *Ghazaryan v. Diva Limousine*,
23 *Ltd.* (2008) 169 Cal.App.4th 1524, 1531, n.5 [finding a proposed class of “as many as 190 current
24 and former employees” is sufficiently numerous].)

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1 **ii. Class Members Share a Well-defined Community of Interest**

2 The community of interest requirement “embodies three factors: (1) predominant common
3 questions of law or fact; (2) class representatives with claims or defenses typical of the class; and
4 (3) class representatives who can adequately represent the class.” (*Sav-On Drug Stores, Inc. v.*
5 *Superior Court, supra*, 34 Cal.4th at p. 326.) “[T]he community of interest requirement for
6 certification *does not mandate that class members have uniform or identical claims.*” (*Capitol*
7 *People First v. Department of Developmental Services* (2007) 155 Cal.App.4th 676, 692 (emphasis
8 in original).) The courts focus on the defendant’s internal policies and “pattern and practice . . . in
9 order to assess whether that common behavior toward similarly situated plaintiffs renders class
10 certification appropriate.” (*Ibid.*) The application of each of these factors is discussed below.

11 **1. Common Issues Predominate**

12 The “common issues” requirement “involves analysis of whether the proponent’s ‘theory
13 of recovery’ is likely to prove compatible with class treatment.” (*Capitol People First v.*
14 *Department of Developmental Services, supra*, 155 Cal.App.4th at p. 690.) In other words, courts
15 determine whether the elements necessary to establish liability are susceptible to common proof,
16 even if the class members must individually prove their damages. (*Brinker Restaurant Corp. v.*
17 *Superior Court* (2012) 53 Cal.4th 1004, 1024). These types of claims are regularly granted class
18 certification when the plaintiff can present evidence of common policies. (See e.g. *Jones v. JGC*
19 *Dallas LLC* (N.D.Tex. Nov. 29, 2012, Civil Action No. 3:11-CV-2743-O) 2012 U.S.Dist.LEXIS
20 185042 [certified collective action involving 190 dancers]; *Espinoza v. Galardi South Enters.*
21 (S.D.Fla. Jan. 11, 2016, No. 14-21244-CIV-GOODMAN) 2016 U.S.Dist.LEXIS 2904 [court
22 certified class of dancers on state law claims].)

23 Plaintiff asserts that common issues of fact and law predominate as to each of the claims
24 alleged. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 59.) Plaintiff contends that all Class Members were subject to the
25 same or similar employment practices, policies, and procedures described in detail above. (*Ibid.*)

26 **2. Plaintiff’s Claims Are Typical of the Class Claims**

27 Typical claims rely on legal theories and facts that are substantially like those of other class
28 members. (*Classen v. Weller* (1983) 145 Cal.App.3d 27, 46.)

1 Plaintiff is a former employee of Defendant and alleges that he and the Class Members were
2 employed by the same company and injured by the common policies and practices related to the
3 claims described above. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 60; Declaration of Kamil Al-Ahdali Re Adequacy
4 In Support of Motion for Preliminary Approval (“Al-Ahdali Decl.”), ¶¶ 2-9, 13-16.) Plaintiff seeks
5 relief for these claims and derivative claims on behalf of the Class. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 60; Al-
6 Ahdali Decl., *supra*, at ¶¶ 2-9, 13-16.) Thus, the claims arise from the same employment practices
7 and are based on the same legal theories applicable to the Class. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 60; Al-
8 Ahdali Decl., *supra*, at ¶¶ 2-9, 13-16.)

9 **3. Plaintiff Is Adequate to Represent the Class**

10 Plaintiff has proven to be an adequate class representative. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 61; Al-
11 Ahdali Decl., *supra*, at ¶¶ 10-12, 17-21.) Plaintiff conducted himself diligently and responsibly in
12 representing the Class, understands the fiduciary obligations, and actively participated in the
13 prosecution of this case. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 61; Al-Ahdali Decl., *supra*, at ¶¶ 10-12, 17-21.)
14 Plaintiff spent time in meetings and conferences with Class Counsel to provide them with a
15 complete understanding of the work experience and environment. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 61; Al-
16 Ahdali Decl., *supra*, at ¶¶ 10-12, 17-21.) Plaintiff has no interest adverse to the interests of the
17 other Class Members. (Han Decl., *supra*, at ¶ 61; Al-Ahdali Decl., *supra*, at ¶¶ 10-12, 17-21.)

18 **4. Class Action Is Superior for the Fair and Efficient Adjudication** 19 **of this Controversy**

20 A class action is superior to other available means for the fair and efficient adjudication of
21 this controversy. Plaintiff contends that the joinder of all Class Members is impractical and that
22 class treatment will permit many similarly situated persons to prosecute their common claims for
23 settlement purposes simultaneously in a single forum without the duplication of effort and expense
24 that numerous individual actions would necessitate. Because several Class Members are also
25 current employees, Plaintiff believes that the fear of retaliation further supports the superiority of
26 class-wide relief as this fear often discourages current employees from seeking legal redress.

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1 **e. The Settlement Is Fair, Reasonable, and Adequate**

2 In deciding whether to approve a proposed class action settlement under Code of Civil
3 Procedure section 382, the Court must find a proposed settlement is “fair, adequate and
4 reasonable.” (*Dunk v. Ford Motor Co.* (1996) 48 Cal.App.4th 1794, 1801.) A proposed class action
5 settlement is presumed fair under the following circumstances: (1) parties reached settlement after
6 arm’s-length negotiations; (2) investigation and discovery were sufficient to allow counsel and the
7 court to act intelligently; (3) counsel is experienced in similar litigation; and (4) percentage of
8 objectors is small. (*Id.* at p. 1802.) All these elements are present here.

9 **f. Notice to the Class Complies with Rules of Court, Rule 3.769(f)**

10 Rules of Court, rule 3.769(f), provides:

11 If the court has certified the action as a class action, notice of the final approval
12 hearing must be given to class members in the manner specified by the court. The
13 notice must contain an explanation of the proposed settlement and procedures for
14 class members to follow in filing written objections to it and in arranging to appear
at the settlement hearing and state any objections to the proposed settlement.

15 The Class Notice meets all these requirements. The Class Notice advises the Class
16 Members of their right to participate in the Settlement, how and when to object to or request
17 exclusion from the Settlement, and date, time, and location of the Final Approval Hearing.

18 **V. CONCLUSION**

19 Plaintiff submits the Settlement is in the best interests of the Class. Under the applicable
20 class action criteria and guidelines, the Settlement should be preliminarily approved, Class should
21 be conditionally certified for settlement purposes, and Class Notice should be approved.

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23 Dated: October 22, 2025

JUSTICE LAW CORPORATION

24 By: 
25 Douglas Han
26 Attorneys for Plaintiff
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