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Superior Court of California

County of Fresno

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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

FOR THE COUNTY OF FRESNO

JONATHAN SILVA, on behalf of himself and
all others similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

v.

EFUEL, LLC, a California Corporation; and
DOES 1-50, inclusive.

Defendant.

CASE NO.: 23CECG05063

**FIRST AMENDED CLASS AND PAGA
ACTION COMPLAINT:**

- (1) FAILURE TO PAY ALL OVERTIME WAGES;
- (2) MEAL PERIOD VIOLATIONS;
- (3) REST PERIOD VIOLATIONS;
- (4) FAILURE TO PAY ALL SICK TIME;
- (5) WAGE STATEMENT VIOLATIONS;
- (6) WAITING TIME PENALTIES;
- (7) FAILURE TO REIMBURSE NECESSARY BUSINESS EXPENSES;
- (8) UNFAIR COMPETITION; and
- (9) PAGA PENALTIES

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

1 Plaintiff Jonathan Silva (“Plaintiff”), on behalf of himself and all other similarly situated non-
2 exempt employees, alleges and complains of Defendant Efuel, LLC (“Defendant”) and DOES 1 to
3 50 (hereinafter “Defendants”) and each of them, as follows:

4 **INTRODUCTION**

5 1. Defendant is an on-site fueling company that supplies diesel fuel to transportation
6 companies throughout the Northern California region.

7 2. Plaintiff brings this class and PAGA representative action lawsuit against Defendant
8 for alleged violations of the California Labor Code and Business and Professions Code.

9 3. As set forth below, Plaintiff alleges that Defendant failed to pay all overtime
10 compensation and sick pay wages at the proper legal rates by failing to properly calculate the “regular
11 rate of pay.” In addition, Plaintiff alleges that Defendant’s meal and rest period policies and practices
12 failed to allow and permit non-exempt employees to take all compliant and timely meal and rest
13 periods or pay premium wages at the “regular rate of pay” in lieu thereof. Plaintiff further alleges that
14 Defendant failed to provide non-exempt employees with accurate written itemized wage statements
15 in violation of Labor Code § 226(a), failed to reimburse business expenses, and failed to timely pay
16 all final wages upon separation of employment in violation of Labor Code §§ 201-203.

17 4. Based on these alleged Labor Code violations, Plaintiff now brings this class action
18 and PAG representative action to recover unpaid wages, restitution, penalties, and other related relief
19 for himself and all other similarly situated non-exempt employees.

20 **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

21 5. Plaintiff, on behalf of himself and all similarly situated employees hereby brings this
22 class action for recovery of unpaid wages and penalties under California Labor Code §§ 201-203,
23 204, 210, 221, 226(a), 226(e), 226.3, 226.7, 227.3, 246, 510, 512, 516, 1174, 1174.4, 1199, 2802-
24 2804, 2698 *et seq.* and applicable Industrial Welfare Commission Wage Orders (“Wage Orders”), in
25 addition to seeking declaratory relief and restitution pursuant to California Business and Professions
26 Code § 17200, *et seq.*

27 6. This class action is brought pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure § 382.

28 7. This Court has jurisdiction over Defendant’s violations of the California Labor Code

1 and applicable Wage Orders because the amount in controversy exceeds this Court's jurisdictional
2 minimum.

3 8. Venue is proper in this judicial district pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure
4 §§ 395(a) and 395.5, Defendant operates in California within the County of Fresno, and Defendant is
5 within the jurisdiction of this Court for purposes of service of process.

6 **PARTIES**

7 9. At all relevant times herein, Plaintiff, who is over 18, was and currently is a California
8 resident residing in the State of California. Defendant employed Plaintiff as a non-exempt employee
9 in the County of Fresno.

10 10. Plaintiff is informed and believes and alleges that Defendant is authorized to do
11 business within the County of Fresno and is and/or was the legal employer of Plaintiff and the Class
12 Members during the applicable statutory periods. Plaintiff was, and is, a victim of Defendant's
13 policies and/or practices complained of herein and has been deprived of the rights guaranteed to him
14 by California Labor Code §§ 201-203, 204, 210, 226, 226(a), 226(e), 226.3, 226.7, 227.3, 246, 510,
15 512, 516, 1174, 1174.4, 1199, 2802-2804, 2698 *et seq.* and the California Business and Professions
16 Code § 17200 *et seq.*, and applicable Wage Orders.

17 11. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that during the four years
18 preceding the filing of the Complaint and continuing to the present, Defendant did (and continues to
19 do) business in the State of California, County of Fresno.

20 12. Plaintiff does not know the true names or capacities, whether individual, partner, or
21 corporate, of the Defendants sued herein as DOES 1 to 50, inclusive, and for that reason, said
22 Defendants are sued under such fictitious names, and Plaintiff will seek leave from this Court to
23 amend this Complaint when such true names and capacities are discovered. Plaintiff is informed and
24 believes, and thereon alleges, that each of said fictitious Defendants, whether individual, partners, or
25 corporate, were responsible in some manner for the acts and omissions alleged herein and proximately
26 caused Plaintiff and the Classes to be subject to the unlawful employment practices alleged herein.

27 13. Plaintiff is informed, and believes, and thereon alleges, that at all times mentioned
28 herein, Defendant was and is the employer of Plaintiff and all members of the Classes. At all times

1 herein mentioned, each of said Defendants participated in the doing of the acts hereinafter alleged to
2 have been done by the named Defendants; and furthermore, the Defendant, and each of them, were
3 the agents, servants, and employees of each and every one of the other Defendants, as well as the
4 agents of all Defendants, and at all times herein mentioned were acting within the course and scope
5 of said agency and employment. Defendants, and each of them, approved of, condoned, and/or
6 otherwise ratified each and every one of the acts or omissions complained of herein.

7 14. At all times mentioned herein, Defendants, and each of them, were members of and
8 engaged in a joint venture, partnership, and common enterprise and acting within the course and
9 scope of and in pursuance of said joint venture, partnership, and common enterprise. Further, Plaintiff
10 alleges that all Defendants were joint employers for all purposes of Plaintiff and all members of the
11 Classes.

12 **COMMON FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

13 15. Defendant is an on-site fueling company that supplies diesel fuel to transportation
14 companies throughout the Northern California region.

15 16. Defendant employed plaintiff as a non-exempt employee titled "Driver." Plaintiff
16 began working for Defendant on or about November 2021 and remains employed. Plaintiff and other
17 non-exempt employees (including, but not limited to, Apprentice Mechanic, Accounts Payable
18 Specialist, Accounts Payable Clerk, Driver, Customer Service Representative, and all other non-
19 exempt positions) were responsible for all Defendant's business in California. However, in these
20 roles, Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees were often not afforded all protections and rights
21 conferred under the California Labor Code and applicable wage orders.

22 17. At all relevant times, Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees regularly worked
23 various shifts, many of which were in excess of 8.0 hours in a workday and 40.0 hours in a workweek.
24 Plaintiff alleges that other non-exempt employees were also subjected to the same policies,
25 procedures, practices, working conditions, and corresponding wage and hour violations to which she
26 was subjected during his employment.

27 18. First, at all relevant times, Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees worked regular
28 shifts that lasted longer than 8.0 hours in a workday and more than 40 hours in a workweek. However,

1 Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees were not properly paid at the correct overtime rate for all
2 overtime hours worked due to Defendant's uniform failure to include all forms of
3 compensation/remuneration, including, but not limited to, commissions, incentives, non-
4 discretionary bonuses, and all other forms of remuneration in calculating the "regular rate of pay" for
5 purposes of overtime compensation. In addition, when Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees
6 worked 12 hours in a workday, they were not properly paid with twice the "regular rate of pay."

7 19. Under the California Labor Code (as well as the FLSA), courts have consistently held
8 that regularly paid non-discretionary bonuses and other forms of pay must be included in determining
9 an employee's "regular rate of pay" for purposes of calculating overtime. (See *Haber v. The*
10 *Americana Corp.* 378 F. 2d 854, 855-856 (9th Cir. 1967) [holding that regularly paid efficiency
11 bonuses must be included in calculating the "regular rate"]; *Wang v. Chinese Daily News, Inc.* 435 F.
12 Supp. 2d 1042, 1055-1057 (C.D. Cal. 2006) [granting summary judgment to Plaintiff under California
13 and federal law on the grounds, that Defendant improperly calculated overtime by excluding annual
14 bonuses paid to employees from the "regular rate of compensation"]; see *Walling v. Youngerman-*
15 *Reynolds Hardwood Co.* (1945) 65 S.Ct. 1242, 1245. ("The regular rate by its very nature must reflect
16 all payments which the parties have agreed shall be received regularly during the workweek,
17 exclusive of overtime payments. It is not an arbitrary label chosen by the parties; it is an actual fact.
18 Once the parties have decided upon the amount of wages and the mode of payment the determination
19 of the regular rate becomes a matter of mathematical computation, the result of which is unaffected
20 by any designation of a contrary 'regular rate' in the contracts."); see also 29 CFR §§ 778.110
21 ("production bonus") and 778.111 ("piece-rate").)

22 20. Labor Code § 510 requires an employer to compensate an employee who works more
23 than eight (8.0) hours in one workday, forty (40) hours in a workweek, and for the first eight (8.0)
24 hours worked on the seventh consecutive day, no less than one and one-half times (1 1/2) the regular
25 rate of pay. In addition, Labor Code § 510 obligates employers to compensate employees at no less
26 than twice the regular rate of pay when an employee works more than twelve (12) hours in a workday
27 or more than eight (8.0) hours on the seventh consecutive day of work. Pursuant to Section 3 of the
28 applicable Wage Orders, non-exempt employees shall not be employed more than eight (8.0) hours

1 in any workday or more than 40.0 hours in any workweek unless the employee receives one and one-
2 half (1 1/2) times such employee's regular rate of pay for all hours worked over 40 hours in the
3 workweek.

4 21. By their policy of requiring Plaintiff and the other non-exempt employees to work in
5 excess of eight (8.0) hours in a workday and/or forty (40.0) hours in a workweek without
6 compensating them at the lawful rate of one-half (1 1/2) their regular rate of pay, Defendant willfully
7 violated the provisions of Labor Code § 510 and the applicable Wage Orders.

8 22. Furthermore, at all relevant times, Defendant also failed in its obligation to provide
9 Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees the legally required paid sick days at the legal rate pursuant
10 to Labor Code §§ 246(a),(b), which requires that "[a]n employee who, on or after July 1, 2015, works
11 in California for the same employer for 30 or more days within a year from the commencement of
12 employment is entitled to paid sick days. . . at the rate of not less than one hour per every 30 hours
13 worked, beginning at the commencement of employment." Labor Code § 246(l)(1) provides that paid
14 sick time for non-exempt employees must be "calculated in the same manner as the regular rate of
15 pay for the workweek in which the employee uses paid sick time, whether or not the employee
16 actually works overtime in that workweek."

17 23. Additionally, Labor Code § 246(l)(2) states that the paid sick time must be "calculated
18 by dividing the employee's total wages, not including overtime premium pay, by the employee's total
19 hours worked in the full pay periods of the prior 90 days of employment." Finally, Labor Code §246(i)
20 requires employers to "provide an employee with written notice that sets forth the amount of paid
21 sick leave available, or paid time off leave an employer provides in lieu of sick leave, for use on either
22 the employee's itemized wage statement described in Section 226 or in a separate writing provided
23 on the designated pay date with the employee's payment of wages."

24 24. Here, at all relevant times, Defendant failed in its obligation to provide Plaintiff and
25 other non-exempt employees the legally required paid sick days at the legal rate, including all forms
26 of compensation, pursuant to Labor Code § 246(a), (b). As such, Defendant paid sick time below the
27 "regular rate of pay" as required by Labor Code § 246(l) (1-2).

28 ///

1 25. Furthermore, at all relevant times, Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees were
2 denied compliant and timely 30-minute off-duty meal periods as mandated by California law. Due to
3 Defendant's uniform meal period policies/practices, operational requirements, and work demands,
4 Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees often could not take timely and uninterrupted net 30-
5 minute first meal periods before the end of the fifth hour of work. Further, Plaintiff and other non-
6 exempt employees often could not take a second 30-minute uninterrupted and timely meal period for
7 shifts in excess of 10.0 hours.

8 26. In addition, for each missed or non-compliant meal period, Defendant failed and
9 continues to fail to maintain a mechanism by which non-exempt employees were paid meal period
10 premiums at the "regular rate of pay" pursuant to *Ferra v. Loews Hollywood Hotel, LLC* (2021) 11
11 5th 858 and Labor Code § 226.7.

12 27. Accordingly, due to Defendant's uniform meal period policies/practices, non-exempt
13 employees were also regularly denied legally compliant meal periods in violation of Labor Code §§
14 226.7, 510, 516, and applicable Wage Orders

15 28. Moreover, at all relevant times, Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees were not
16 provided with all uninterrupted 10-minute rest periods for every four hours worked, or a major
17 fraction thereof, due to Defendant's uniform rest period policies/practices, operational requirements,
18 and work demands. As a result, other non-exempt employees were and are often unable to take a net
19 10-minute duty-free rest period for every major fraction of four hours worked. This includes a second
20 rest period for shifts in excess of six hours and a third rest period for shifts in excess of 10 hours in a
21 workday. In addition, Defendant had the unlawful policy/ practice of making Plaintiff and other non-
22 exempt employees remain on premises during their rest periods.

23 29. By not relieving all non-exempt employees of all duties during rest periods, Defendant
24 failed to provide legally compliant rest periods. See *Augustus v. ABM Security Services, Inc.* (2016)
25 2 Cal. 5th 257, 269 [concluding that "during rest periods employers must relieve employees of all
26 duties and relinquish control over how employees spend their time."] (Emphasis added). In *Augustus*,
27 the California Supreme Court expressly rejected the employer's assertion that it could provide an on-
28 duty rest period to employees who worked as security guards and further explained: "that employers

1 [must] relinquish any control over how employees spend their break time and relieve their employees
2 of all duties.” *Id.* at 273. Each time non-exempt employees could not take a compliant rest period,
3 Defendant failed and continues to fail to adequately pay rest period premium payments at the “regular
4 rate of pay” as required by Labor Code § 226.7.

5 30. Accordingly, due to Defendant’s uniform rest period policies/practices, non-exempt
6 employees were regularly denied legally compliant rest breaks in violation of Labor Code §§ 226.7,
7 512, and applicable Wage Orders.

8 31. As a result of Defendant’s failure to pay Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees for
9 all hours they were subject to the control of Defendant, including all overtime, sick pay wages, and
10 Defendant’s failure to pay for meal and rest period premiums at the “regular rate of pay,” Defendant
11 issued wage statements which failed to identify the gross wages earned accurately, the total hours
12 worked, the net wages earned, and the correct corresponding number of hours worked at each hourly
13 rate, in violation of Labor Code § 226(a)(1, 2, 5, and 9).

14 32. Labor Code § 226.3 provides that “[a]ny employer who violates subdivision (a) of
15 Section 226 shall be subject to a civil penalty in the amount of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) per
16 employee per violation in an initial violation and one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per employee for
17 each violation in a subsequent citation, for which the employer fails to provide the employee a wage
18 deduction statement or fails to keep the required in subdivision (a) of Section 226.”

19 33. Thus, for the violations of Labor Code section 226 described above, Plaintiff and other
20 non-exempt employees may also recover Labor Code § 226.3 penalties for Defendant violations of
21 Labor Code § 226(a). Consequently, because Defendant failed to comply with Labor Code § 226(a),
22 Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees would be entitled to recover penalties under Labor Code
23 §§ 226(e).

24 34. Moreover, because Defendant failed to pay all overtime, sick pay wages, and meal and
25 rest period premiums at the “regular rate of pay,” Defendant also failed and continues to fail to pay
26 the non-exempt employees all wages owed at their time of separation from employment in violation
27 of Labor Code §§ 201-203. Thus, Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees would be entitled to
28 recover penalties under Labor Code §§ 201-203.

35. Finally, at all relevant times, Defendant required Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees to incur necessary business expenses for work-related purposes but did not reimburse non-exempt employees adequately for these necessary expenditures in violation of Labor Code §§ 2802-2804. See *Cochran v. Schwan's Home Service, Inc.*, (2014) 228 Cal.App.4th 1137, 1144 “[i]f an employee is required to make work-related calls on a personal cell phone, then he or she is incurring an expense for the purposes of section 2802. It does not matter whether the phone bill is paid for by a third person, or at all...To show liability under section 2802, an employee need only show that he or she was required to use a personal cell phone to make work-related calls, and he or she was not reimbursed”].

36. Here, Defendant's uniformly failed to reimburse non-exempt employees for the necessary costs incurred, discharging their duties, including, but not limited to, the costs of personal cell phones. Accordingly, due to Defendant's uniform failure to adequately reimburse for necessary business expenditures in violation of Labor Code §§ 2800-2802 and applicable Wage Orders.

CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS

37. Plaintiff brings this action on behalf of himself and the following Classes pursuant to § 382 of the Code of Civil Procedure:

All current and former non-exempt hourly employees who work or worked for Defendant in California during the four years immediately preceding the filing of the Complaint through the date of trial. (the “Class”);

All current and former non-exempt hourly employees who worked for Defendant in California and worked overtime during at least one shift during the four years immediately preceding the filing of the Complaint through the date of trial. (“the Overtime Subclass”);

All current and former employees who work or worked for Defendant in California during the one year immediately preceding the filing of the Complaint through the date of trial. (“the Wage Statement Subclass”)

All former employees who work or worked for Defendant in California and who left their employment during the three years immediately preceding the filing of the Complaint through the date of trial. (“the Waiting Time Penalty Subclass”)
(collectively “the Classes”)

1 38. **Numerosity/Ascertainability:** The members of the Classes are so numerous that
2 joinder of all members would be unfeasible and impossible. The membership of the Classes is
3 unknown to Plaintiff at this time; however, it is estimated that the Classes consist of at least one
4 hundred (100) individuals. The identity of such membership is readily ascertainable via inspection of
5 Defendant's employment and payroll records.

6 39. **Common Questions of Law and Fact Predominate/Well-Defined Community of**
7 **Interest:** There are common questions of law and fact as to Plaintiff and all other similarly situated
8 non-exempt employees, which predominate over questions affecting only individual members
9 including, without limitation to:

10 1. Whether Defendant failed to pay overtime and sick pay wages at the "regular rate of
11 pay" to the members of the Class;

12 2. Whether Defendant provided legally compliant meal and rest periods or proper
13 compensation at the "regular rate of pay" in lieu thereof to members of the Class;

14 3. Whether Defendant allowed and permitted Plaintiff and the Class to take legally
15 compliant meal periods or pay premium wages at the "regular rate of pay" in lieu thereof;

16 4. Whether Defendant allowed and permitted Plaintiff and the Class to take legally
17 compliant rest periods or pay premium wages at the "regular rate of pay" in lieu thereof;

18 5. Whether Defendant allowed and permitted Plaintiff and the Class to leave the work
19 premises during meal and rest periods;

20 6. Whether Defendant furnished legally compliant wage statements to members of the
21 Wage Statement Subclass pursuant to Labor Code § 226(a);

22 7. Whether the timing and amount of payment of final wages to members of the Waiting
23 Time Penalty Subclass at the time of separation from employment were unlawful; and

24 8. Whether Defendant failed to reimburse Class Members for all necessary business
25 expenses in violation of Labor Code §§ 2802-2804.

26 40. **Predominance of Common Questions:** Common questions of law and fact
27 predominate over questions that affect only individual members of the Classes. The common
28 questions of law set forth above are numerous and substantial and stem from Defendant's policies

1 and/or practices applicable to each individual class member, such as without limitation, Defendant's
2 failure to pay for all hours worked, and failure to adequately calculate the "regular rate of pay" for
3 purposes of overtime pay and sick pay, Defendant's failure to provide all compliant meal and rest
4 periods or premiums at the "regular rate of pay" in lieu thereof, Defendant's failure to provide
5 accurate itemized wage statements, and Defendant's failure to pay for all wages due upon separation
6 of employment. As such, the common questions predominate over individual questions concerning
7 each class member's showing as to his or her eligibility for recovery or the amount of his or her
8 damages.

9 41. **Typicality:** The claims of Plaintiff are typical of the claims of the Classes because
10 Plaintiff was employed by Defendant as a non-exempt employee in California during the statute(s)
11 of limitation applicable to each cause of action pled in the Complaint in this action. As alleged herein,
12 Plaintiff, like the members of the Classes, was deprived of overtime wages, sick pay wages, was
13 deprived of meal and rest period premium wages, was subject to Defendant's uniform meal and rest
14 period policies/practices, was not provided accurate itemized wage statements and was not timely
15 paid all wages owed upon separation of employment.

16 42. **Adequacy of Representation:** Plaintiff is fully prepared to take all necessary steps to
17 represent fairly and adequately the interests of the members of the Classes. Moreover, Plaintiff's
18 attorneys are ready, willing, and able to fully and adequately represent the members of the Classes.
19 Plaintiff's attorneys have prosecuted and are actively litigating several wage-and-hour class actions
20 in state and federal courts and are committed to vigorously prosecuting this action on behalf of the
21 members of the Classes.

22 43. **Superiority:** The California Labor Code is broadly remedial in nature and serves an
23 important public interest in establishing minimum working conditions and standards in California.
24 These laws and labor standards protect the average working employee from exploitation by
25 employers who have the responsibility to follow the laws and who may seek to take advantage of
26 superior economic and bargaining power in setting onerous terms and conditions of employment. The
27 nature of this action and the format of laws available to Plaintiff and members of the Classes make
28 the class action format a particularly efficient and appropriate procedure to redress the violations

1 alleged herein. If each employee were required to file an individual lawsuit, Defendant would
2 necessarily gain an unconscionable advantage since they could exploit and overwhelm the limited
3 resources of each individual plaintiff with their vastly superior financial and legal resources.

4 44. Moreover, requiring each member of the Classes to pursue an individual remedy would
5 also discourage the assertion of lawful claims by employees who would be disinclined to file an action
6 against their former and/or current employer for real and justifiable fear of retaliation and permanent
7 damages to their careers at subsequent employment. Further, the prosecution of separate actions by
8 the individual class members, even if possible, would create a substantial risk of inconsistent or
9 varying verdicts or adjudications with respect to the individual class members against Defendant
10 herein; and which would establish potentially incompatible standards of conduct for Defendant;
11 and/or legal determinations with respect to individual class members which would, as a practical
12 matter, be dispositive of the interest of the other class members not parties to adjudications or which
13 would substantially impair or impede the ability of the class members to protect their interests.
14 Further, the claims of the individual members of the class are not sufficiently large to warrant
15 vigorous individual prosecution, considering all of the concomitant costs and expenses attending
16 thereto. As such, the Classes identified in Paragraph 37 are maintainable as Classes under § 382 of
17 the Code of Civil Procedure.

18 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

19 **FAILURE TO PAY ALL OVERTIME WAGES**

20 **(AGAINST ALL DEFENDANT)**

21 45. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates all previous paragraphs by reference.

22 46. This cause of action is brought pursuant to Labor Code §§ 204, 210, 510, 558, 1194,
23 and 1198, which provide that non-exempt employees are entitled to overtime wages for all overtime
24 hours worked and provide a private right of action for the failure to pay all overtime compensation
25 for overtime work performed.

26 47. At all times relevant herein, Defendant was required to properly pay Plaintiff and
27 members of the Overtime Subclass for all overtime hours worked pursuant to California Labor Code
28 § 1194 and the applicable Wage Orders.

1 48. Section 3 of the applicable Wage Order requires an employer to pay an employee “one
2 and one-half (1 1/2) times the employee’s regular rate of pay” for work in excess of 8 hours per
3 workday and/or in excess of 40 hours of work in the workweek. The same section also requires an
4 employer to pay an employee double the employee’s regular rate of pay for work in excess of twelve
5 hours each workday and/or for work in excess of 8 hours on the seventh consecutive day of work in
6 the workweek. Defendant caused Plaintiff to work overtime and hours but did not compensate
7 Plaintiff or members of the Overtime Subclass at one and one-half times their “regular rate of pay”
8 for such hours.

9 49. Defendant failed to conform their pay practices to the requirements of the law. At all
10 relevant times herein, Defendant failed to conform their pay practices to the requirements of the law.
11 This unlawful conduct includes but is not limited to Defendant’s failure to include all forms of
12 compensation, including, but not limited to, non-discretionary bonuses and other incentive pay in
13 calculating the “regular rate of pay,” which resulted in these individuals not being paid for all
14 overtime hours worked. In addition, when Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees worked 12 hours
15 in a workday, they were not properly paid with twice the regular rate of pay.

16 50. The foregoing policies and practices are unlawful and create an entitlement to recovery
17 by Plaintiff and the members of the Overtime Subclass in a civil action for the unpaid amount of
18 overtime wages, including interest thereon, statutory penalties, attorney’s fees, and costs of suit
19 according to Labor Code §§ 204, 210, 510, 1194, and 1198, the applicable Wage Orders, and Code
20 of Civil Procedure § 1021.5.

21 **SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION**

22 **MEAL PERIOD VIOLATIONS**

23 **(AGAINST ALL DEFENDANT)**

24 51. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates all previous paragraphs by reference.

25 52. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based thereon alleges, that Defendant failed in
26 their affirmative obligation to provide all of their hourly non-exempt employees, including Plaintiff
27 and members of the Class, with all required meal periods in accordance with the mandates of the
28 California Labor Code and applicable Wage Orders, for the reasons set forth in the Common

1 Allegations section of this Complaint.

2 53. Despite Defendant's violations, Defendant has not paid an additional hour of pay at
3 the "regular rate of pay" to Plaintiff and members of the Class at their respective regular rates of pay
4 for each violation, in accordance with California Labor Code § 226.7.

5 54. As a result, Defendant is responsible for paying premium compensation for meal
6 period violations, including interest thereon, statutory penalties, and costs of suit pursuant to the
7 applicable Wage Orders, Labor Code §§ 226.7, 512, and Civil Code §§ 3287(b) and 3289.

8 **THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION**

9 **REST PERIOD VIOLATIONS**

10 **(AGAINST ALL DEFENDANT)**

11 55. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates all previous paragraphs by reference.

12 56. Section 12 of the applicable Wage Orders and Labor Code §§ 226.7 and 516 establish
13 the right of non-exempt employees to be provided with a rest period of at least ten (10) minutes for
14 each four (4) hour period worked, or major fraction thereof.

15 57. Due to their unlawful rest period policy/practices and operational requirements/work
16 demands, Defendant did not authorize and permit Plaintiff and Class members to take all rest periods
17 to which they were legally entitled. In addition, Defendant had the unlawful policy/ practice of
18 making Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees remain on premises during their rest periods.

19 58. Despite Defendant's violations, Defendant has not paid an additional hour of pay at
20 the "regular rate of pay" to Plaintiff and members of the Class at their respective regular rates of pay
21 for each violation, in accordance with California Labor Code § 226.7.

22 59. The foregoing violations create an entitlement to recovery by Plaintiff and members
23 of the Class in a civil action for the unpaid amount of rest period premiums owing, including interest
24 thereon, statutory penalties, and costs of suit pursuant to the applicable Wage Orders, Labor Code §§
25 226.7 and 516, and Civil Code §§ 3287(b) and 3289.

26 **FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

27 **FAILURE TO PAY ALL SICK TIME**

28 **(AGAINST ALL DEFENDANT)**

1 60. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates all previous paragraphs by reference.

2 61. This cause of action is brought pursuant to Labor Code §§ 246, 558, 1194.2, 1197.1,
3 1198, and 1199 which provide that “[a]n employee who, on or after July 1, 2015, works in California
4 for the same employer for 30 or more days within a year from the commencement of employment is
5 entitled to paid sick days. . . at the rate of not less than one hour per every 30 hours worked, beginning
6 at the commencement of employment.”

7 62. At all times relevant herein, Defendant was required to properly pay Plaintiff and
8 Class members for all sick time pursuant to California Labor Code § 246 and the applicable Wage
9 Orders.

10 63. Labor Code § 246(l)(1) provides that paid sick time for non-exempt employees must
11 be “calculated in the same manner as the regular rate of pay for the workweek in which the employee
12 uses paid sick time, whether or not the employee actually works overtime in that workweek.”
13 Additionally, Labor Code § 246(l)(2) states that the paid sick time must be “calculated by dividing
14 the employee’s total wages, not including overtime premium pay, by the employee’s total hours
15 worked in the full pay periods of the prior 90 days of employment.” Finally, Labor Code §246(i)
16 requires employers to “provide an employee with written notice that sets forth the amount of paid
17 sick leave available, or paid time off leave an employer provides in lieu of sick leave, for use on either
18 the employee’s itemized wage statement described in Section 226 or in a separate writing provided
19 on the designated pay date with the employee’s payment of wages.”

20 64. Defendant failed in their obligation to provide Plaintiff and the Class the legally
21 required paid sick days at the legal rate pursuant to Labor Code §§ 246(a),(b). Plaintiff and the
22 members of the Class were not paid at the correct “regular rate of pay.”

23 65. The foregoing policies and practices are unlawful and create entitlement to recovery
24 by Plaintiff and the members of the Class in a civil action for the unpaid amount of wages, including
25 interest thereon, statutory penalties, attorney’s fees, and costs of suit according to Labor Code §§ 246
26 1192, 1194 *et seq.*, 1197, 1198, the applicable Wage Orders, and Code of Civil Procedure § 1021.5.

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1 **FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

2 **FAILURE TO PROVIDE ACCURATE ITEMIZED WAGE STATEMENTS**
3 **(AGAINST ALL DEFENDANT)**

4 66. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates all previous paragraphs by reference.

5 67. Labor Code 226(a) states in pertinent part the following:

6 “(a) An employer, semimonthly or at the time of each payment of wages,
7 shall furnish to his or his employee, either as a detachable part of the check,
8 draft, or voucher paying the employee’s wages, or separately if wages are
9 paid by personal check or cash, an accurate itemized statement in writing
10 showing (1) gross wages earned, (2) total hours worked by the employee,
11 (3) the number of piece-rate units earned and any applicable piece rate if the
12 employee is paid on a piece-rate basis, (4) all deductions, provided that all
13 deductions made on written orders of the employee may be aggregated and
14 shown as one item, (5) net wages earned, (6) the inclusive dates of the
15 period for which the employee is paid, (7) the name of the employee and
16 only the last four digits of his or his social security number or an employee
17 identification number other than a social security number, (8) the name and
18 address of the legal entity that is the employer, and (9) all applicable hourly
19 rates in effect during the pay period and the corresponding number of hours
20 worked at each hourly rate by the employee.”

21 68. As set forth above, during the Class Period, Defendant issued and continues to issue
22 wage statements to its employees, including Plaintiff and members of the Wage Statement Subclass,
23 which are inadequate under Labor Code Section 226(a).

24 69. As a result of Defendant’s failure to pay Plaintiff and the Wage Statement Subclass
25 for all overtime wages, sick pay, and missed meal and rest period premiums at the appropriate legal
26 rate, Defendant failed to include the required information on Plaintiff and the Wage Statement
27 Subclass’ wage statements, including, but not limited to, the gross wages earned, the net wages earned
28 in violation of Labor Code section 226(a)(1,2,5, and 9).

70. Defendant’s failure to comply with section 226(a) of the Labor Code was knowing
and intentional.

71. As a result of Defendant’s issuance of inaccurate itemized wage statements to Plaintiff
and members of the Wage Statement Subclass in violation of section 226(a) of the California Labor
Code, Plaintiff and members of the Wage Statement Subclass are each entitled to recover an initial

1 penalty of \$50, and subsequent penalties of \$100, up to an amount not exceeding an aggregate penalty
2 of \$4,000 per Plaintiff and per every member of the Wage Statement Subclass from Defendant
3 pursuant to section 226(e) of the Labor Code, costs and reasonable attorneys' fees.

4 **SIXTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

5 **WAITING TIME PENALTIES**

6 **(AGAINST ALL DEFENDANT)**

7 72. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates all previous paragraphs by reference.

8 73. The actionable period for this cause of action is three years prior to the filing of this
9 Complaint through the present and ongoing until the violation is corrected or the class is certified.

10 74. Labor Code §§ 201 and 202 require Defendant to pay all compensation due and owing
11 to Plaintiff and the Waiting Time Subclass during the actionable period for this cause of action at or
12 around the time their employment is or was terminated or ended.

13 75. Labor Code § 203 provides that if an employer willfully fails to pay compensation
14 promptly upon discharge or resignation, as required by Labor Code sections 201 and 202, the
15 employer is liable for penalties for continued compensation up to thirty (30) workdays.

16 76. Defendant willfully failed to pay the Waiting Time Subclass for all hours worked,
17 including all overtime wages, sick pay wages, vested vacation pay, and their meal and rest period
18 premiums at the "regular rate of pay," prior to or upon termination or separation from employment
19 with Defendant as required by Labor Code §§ 201 and 202.

20 77. As a result, Defendant is liable to the Waiting Time Subclass for waiting time
21 penalties amounting to thirty (30) days wages for Plaintiff and the Waiting Time Subclass pursuant
22 to Labor Code § 203. *See, e.g.,* DLSE Manual, 4.3.4 (Failure to pay any sort of wages due upon
23 termination entitles an employee to recover waiting time penalties).

24 **SEVENTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

25 **FAILURE TO REIMBURSE FOR NECESSARY BUSINESS EXPENDITURES**

26 **(AGAINST ALL DEFENDANT)**

27 78. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates all previous paragraphs by reference.

79. Labor Code 2802(a) states in pertinent part the following: “(a) An employer shall indemnify his or his employee for all necessary expenditures or losses incurred by the employee in direct consequence of the discharge of his or his duties, or of his or his obedience to the directions of the employer, even though unlawful, unless the employee, at the time of obeying the directions, believed them to be unlawful.”

80. As set forth above, Plaintiff and Class members must be compensated for all necessary business expenditures incurred in the discharge of their duties, including for the use of personal cell phones, work tools, and uniforms. (See *Cochran v. Schwan's Home Service, Inc.* (2014) 228 Cal.App.4th 1137 (“We hold that when employees must use their personal cell phones for work-related calls, Labor Code section 2802 requires the employer to reimburse them. Whether the employees have cell phone plans with unlimited minutes or limited minutes, the reimbursement owed is a reasonable percentage of their cell phone bills.”); *Ritchie v. Blue Shield of California*, 2014 WL 6982943, at *21 (N.D. Cal. 2014) (certifying class of cell phone reimbursement claim and adopting the logic of *Cochran*)).

81. At all relevant times, Defendant has failed to comply with Labor Code Section 2802 and the applicable Wage Orders by failing to reimburse Plaintiff and the Class for all necessary business expenditures.

EIGHT CAUSE OF ACTION

UNFAIR COMPETITION

(AGAINST ALL DEFENDANT)

82. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates all previous paragraphs by reference.

83. Defendant has engaged and continues to engage in unfair and/or unlawful business practices in California in violation of California Business and Professions Code § 17200 *et seq.* by failing to pay for all overtime wages, double time, and sick pay wages at the proper rates, by failing to provide all legally required meal and rest periods or pay premium payments at the “regular rate of pay” in lieu thereof, by failing to reimburse for all necessary business expenses adequately, and by failing to pay all earned wages at the time of separation from employment.

/ / /

1 84. Defendant's utilization of these unfair and/or unlawful business practices deprived
2 Plaintiff and continues to deprive members of the Classes of compensation to which they are legally
3 entitled, constitutes unfair and/or unlawful competition, and provides an unfair advantage over
4 Defendant's competitors who have been and/or are currently employing workers and attempting to
5 do so in honest compliance with applicable wage and hour laws.

6 85. Because Plaintiff is a victim of Defendant's unfair and/or unlawful conduct alleged
7 herein, Plaintiff, for himself and on behalf of the members of the Classes, seeks full restitution of
8 monies, as necessary and according to proof, to restore any and all monies withheld, acquired and/or
9 converted by Defendant pursuant to Business and Professions Code §§ 17203 and 17208.

10 86. The acts complained of herein occurred within the last four years immediately
11 preceding the filing of the Complaint in this action.

12 87. Plaintiff was compelled to retain the services of counsel to file this court action to
13 protect his interests and those of the Classes, to obtain restitution and injunctive relief on behalf of
14 Defendant's current hourly non-exempt employees, and to enforce important rights affecting the
15 public interest. Plaintiff has thereby incurred the financial burden of attorneys' fees and costs, which
16 he is entitled to recover under Code of Civil Procedure § 1021.5.

17 **NINTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

18 **PRIVATE ATTORNEYS GENERAL ACT PENALTIES**

19 **(AGAINST ALL DEFENDANTS)**

20 88. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates all previous paragraphs by reference.

21 89. Defendants have committed several Labor Code violations against Plaintiff and other
22 non-exempt employees. Plaintiff, an "aggrieved employee" within the meaning of Labor Code § 2698
23 *et seq.*, acting on behalf of herself and other non-exempt employees, brings this representative action
24 against Defendants to recover the civil penalties due to Plaintiff, other similarly non-exempt
25 employees, and the State of California according to proof pursuant to Labor Code § 2699 (a) and (f)
26 including, but not limited to (1) \$100 for each initial violation and (2) \$200 for each subsequent
27 violation per employee per pay period for those violations of the Labor Code for which no civil
28 penalty is specifically provided based on the following Labor Code violations:

1 a. Failing to provide Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees all overtime and sick
2 pay compensation at the appropriate premium rate in violation of Labor Code § 204, 210, 510, 1194,
3 and 1198;

4 b. Failing to provide Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees with all of their
5 statutorily mandated meal or rest periods or compensation at the “regular rate of pay” in lieu thereof
6 in violation of Labor Code §§ 204, 510, 558, 1194 and 1198;

7 c. Failing to reimburse Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees with all incurred
8 expenses in violation of Labor Code § 2802;

9 d. Failing to timely compensate Plaintiff and other non-exempt employees with all
10 earnings at their separation of employment in violation of Labor Code §§ 201-203; and

11 e. Failing to furnish Plaintiff and non-exempt employees with complete, accurate,
12 itemized wage statements in violations of Labor Code § 226(a).

13 90. On or about December 8, 2023, Plaintiff notified Defendant Efuel, LLC via certified
14 mail and the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency (“LWDA”) via its website of
15 Defendant’s violations of the California Labor Code § 2698 *et seq.*, with respect to violations of the
16 California Labor Code identified in Paragraph 87(a)-(e). Now that sixty-five days have passed since
17 Plaintiff notified Defendant and the LWDA of these violations, Plaintiff will have exhausted his
18 administrative requirements for bringing a claim under the Private Attorneys General Act with respect
19 to these violations.

20 91. Plaintiff was compelled to retain the services of counsel to file this court action to
21 protect their interests and the interests of other non-exempt employees and to assess and collect the
22 civil penalties owed by Defendants. Plaintiff has incurred attorneys’ fees and costs, which she is
23 entitled to receive under California Labor Code § 2698 *et seq.*

24 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

25 **WHEREFORE**, Plaintiff prays for judgment for himself and all others on whose behalf this
26 suit is brought against Defendant, as follows:

- 27 1. For an order certifying the proposed Classes;
28 2. For an order appointing Plaintiff as representative of the Classes;

- 1 3. For an order appointing Counsel for Plaintiff as Counsel for the Classes;
- 2 4. Upon the First Cause of Action, for compensatory, consequential, general, and
- 3 special damages according to proof pursuant to Labor Code §§ 204, 210, 510, 1194, and 1198 and
- 4 reasonable attorneys' fees and costs;
- 5 5. Upon the Second Cause of Action, for compensatory, consequential, general, and
- 6 special damages according to proof pursuant to Labor Code §§ 204, 210, 510, 1194, and 1198 and
- 7 reasonable attorneys' fees and costs;
- 8 6. Upon the Second Cause of Action, for compensatory, consequential, general, and
- 9 special damages according to proof pursuant to Labor Code §§ 226.7 and 512;
- 10 7. Upon the Third Cause of Action, for compensatory, consequential, general, and
- 11 special damages according to proof pursuant to Labor Code §§ 226.7 and 516;
- 12 8. Upon the Fourth Cause of Action, for compensatory, consequential, general, and
- 13 special damages according to proof pursuant to Labor Code §§ 246, 558, 1194.2, 1198, and 1199;
- 14 9. Upon the Fifth Cause of Action, penalties pursuant to Labor Code § 226(a), and
- 15 reasonable costs and attorney's fees;
- 16 10. Upon the Sixth Cause of Action, for statutory waiting time penalties pursuant to
- 17 Labor Code §§ 201-203;
- 18 11. Upon the Seventh Cause of Action, for unreimbursed expenses, interest, and
- 19 attorney's fees and costs pursuant to Labor Code §§ 2802-2804;
- 20 12. Upon the Eight Cause of Action, for restitution to Plaintiff and members of the
- 21 Classes of all money and/or property unlawfully acquired by Defendant by means of any acts or
- 22 practices declared by this Court to be in violation of Business and Professions Code § 17200 *et seq.*;
- 23 13. Upon the Ninth Cause of Action, for civil penalties due to Plaintiff, other non-
- 24 exempt aggrieved employees, and the State of California according to proof pursuant to Labor Code
- 25 § 2699 (a) and (f) including, but not limited to (1) \$100 for each initial violation and \$200 for each
- 26 subsequent violation per employee per pay period for those violations of the Labor Code for which
- 27 no civil penalty is specifically provided under the Labor Code;
- 28 14. Prejudgment interest on all due and unpaid wages pursuant to California Labor Code

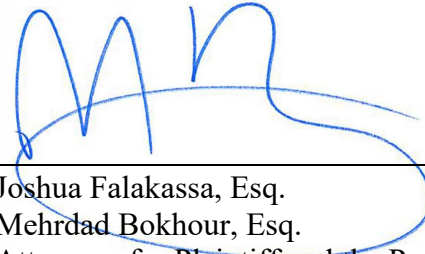
1 § 218.6 and Civil Code §§ 3287 and 3289;

2 15. On all causes of action, for attorneys' fees and costs as provided by Labor Code §§
3 218.5, 226, 1194, Code of Civil Procedure § 1021.5; and

4 16. For such other relief that the Court may deem just and proper.
5

6 Dated: February 16, 2024

FALAKASSA LAW, P.C.
BOKHOUR LAW GROUP, P.C.

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8
9 By: 

10 Joshua Falakassa, Esq.

11 Mehrdad Bokhour, Esq.

12 Attorneys for Plaintiff and the Putative Classes
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