

CLASS ACTION AND PAGA SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

This Class Action and PAGA Settlement Agreement (“**Agreement**”) is made by and between plaintiffs Shiristika Prasad and Pritika Prasad (“**Plaintiffs**”) and defendant Vacuum Process Engineering, Inc. (“**VPEI**”) (together, “**the Parties**”).

1. DEFINITIONS

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

- 1.1. “**Action**” means *Shiristika Prasad, et al v. Vacuum Process Engineering, Inc.*, Case No. 24CV010094, initiated on May 25, 2024, and pending in Superior Court of the State of California, County of Sacramento.
- 1.2. “**Administrator**” means APEX Class Actions, the neutral entity the Parties have agreed to appoint to administer the Settlement.
- 1.3. “**Administration Expenses Payment**” means the amount the Administrator will be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount to reimburse its reasonable fees and expenses in accordance with the Administrator’s “not to exceed” bid submitted to the Court in connection with Preliminary Approval.
- 1.4. “**Aggrieved Employees**” means all persons who are or previously were employed by VPEI in California and who were classified as a non-exempt employee at any time between February 13, 2023, through the date of Preliminary Approval of the Court (“**PAGA Period**”).
- 1.5. “**Class**” means all persons who are or previously were employed by VPEI in California and who were classified as a non-exempt employee at any time between May 22, 2020, through the date of Preliminary Approval of the Court (“**Class Period**”).
- 1.6. “**Class Counsel**” means Nicole Barvie, Esq. of Barvie Law, APC.
- 1.7. “**Class Counsel Fees Payment**” and “**Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment**” mean the amounts to be paid to Class Counsel for fees and expenses, respectively, as approved by the Court, to compensate Class Counsel for their legal work in connection with the Action, including their pre-filing investigation, their filing of the Action, all related litigation activities, all Settlement work, all post-Settlement compliance procedures, and related litigation expenses billed in connection with the Action.

- 1.8. **“Class Data”** means Class Member identifying information in VPEI’s possession including the Class Member’s name, last-known mailing address, Social Security number, email address (if known and available to VPEI), and number of Workweeks and PAGA Pay Periods.
- 1.9. **“Class Member”** means a member of the Class, as either a Participating Class Member or Non-Participating Class Member (including a Non- Participating Class Member who qualifies as an Aggrieved Employee).
- 1.10. **“Class Member Address Search”** means the Administrator’s investigation and search for current Class Member mailing addresses using all reasonably available sources, methods and means including, but not limited to, the National Change of Address database, skip traces, and direct contact by the Administrator with Class Members by use of available email addresses, phone numbers, social security numbers, credit reports, LinkedIn and Facebook.
- 1.11. **“Class Notice”** means the COURT APPROVED NOTICE OF CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT AND HEARING DATE FOR FINAL COURT APPROVAL, to be mailed to Class Members in English in the form, without material variation, attached as Exhibit A and incorporated by reference into this Agreement.
- 1.12. **“Class Notice Packet”** means the Class Notice to be provided to the Class Members by the Administrator in the form set forth as Exhibit A to this Agreement (other than formatting changes to facilitate printing by the Administrator).
- 1.13. **“Class Period”** means the period of time from May 22, 2020, through the date of Preliminary Approval of the Court.
- 1.14. **“Class Representatives”** means the named Plaintiffs in the Operative Complaint in the Action seeking Court approval to serve as a Class Representatives.
- 1.15. **“Class Representative Service Payments”** means the service payments made to the named Plaintiffs as Class Representatives in order to compensate for initiating the Action, performing work in support of the Action, undertaking the risk of liability for VPEI’s expenses, and for the general release of all claims by the Plaintiffs.
- 1.16. **“Court”** means the Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento.
- 1.17. **“Defendant”** means Vacuum Process Engineering, Inc.

- 1.18. **“Defense Counsel”** means Peterson Watts Law Group, LLP.
- 1.19. **“Effective Date”** means the date by when both of the following have occurred (a) the Court enters a Judgment on its Order Granting Final Approval of the Settlement; and (b) the Judgment is final. The Judgment is final as of the latest of the following occurrences: (a) if no Participating Class Member objects to the Settlement, the day the Court enters Judgment; (b) if one or more Participating Class Members objects to the Settlement, the day after the deadline for filing a notice of appeal from the Judgment; or if a timely appeal from the Judgment is filed, the day after the appellate court affirms the Judgment and issues a remittitur.
- 1.20. **“Final Approval”** means the Court’s order granting final approval of the Settlement substantially in the form attached hereto as Exhibit C to this Agreement and incorporated by reference into this Agreement.
- 1.21. **“Final Approval Hearing”** means the Court’s hearing on the Motion for Final Approval of the Settlement to determine whether to approve finally and implement the terms of this Agreement and enter the Judgment.
- 1.22. **“Gross Settlement Amount”** means Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000.00) which is the total amount to be paid by VPEI as provided by this Agreement except as provided in Paragraph 9 below. The Gross Settlement Amount will be used to pay Individual Class Payments, Individual PAGA Payments, the LWDA PAGA Payment, Class Counsel Fees Payment, Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment, Class Representative Service Payment and the Administration Expenses Payment. This Gross Settlement Amount is an all-in amount without any reversion to VPEI, and excludes any employer payroll taxes, if any, due on the portion of the Individual Class Payments allocated to wages which shall not be paid from the Gross Settlement and shall be the separate additional obligation of VPEI.
- 1.23. **“Individual Class Payment”** means the Participating Class Member’s pro rata share of the Net Settlement Amount calculated according to the number of Workweeks worked during the Class Period.
- 1.24. **“Individual PAGA Payment”** means an Aggrieved Employee’s pro rata share of 25% of the PAGA Penalties calculated according to the number of PAGA Pay Periods worked by the Aggrieved Employee during the PAGA Period.
- 1.25. **“Judgment”** means the judgment entered by the Court based upon Final Approval substantially in the form attached hereto as Exhibit C to this Agreement and incorporated by reference into this Agreement.

- 1.26. **“LWDA”** means the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency, the agency entitled, under Labor Code § 2699(i).
- 1.27. **“LWDA PAGA Payment”** means the 75% of the PAGA Penalties paid to the LWDA under Labor Code § 2699(i).
- 1.28. **“Net Settlement Amount”** means the Gross Settlement Amount less the following payments in the amounts approved by the Court: Individual PAGA Payments, the LWDA PAGA Payment, Class Representative Service Payment, Class Counsel Fees Payment, Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment, and the Administration Expenses Payment. The Net Settlement Amount is to be paid to Participating Class Members as Individual Class Payments.
- 1.29. **“Non-Participating Class Member”** means a Class Member who opts out of the Class Settlement by submitting a valid and timely Request for Exclusion to the Administrator.
- 1.30. **“PAGA Pay Period”** means any Pay Period during which an Aggrieved Employee worked for VPEI for at least one day during the PAGA Period.
- 1.31. **“PAGA Period”** means the period of time from February 13, 2023, through the date of Preliminary Approval of the Court.
- 1.32. **“PAGA”** means the Private Attorneys General Act (Labor Code §§ 2698. et seq.).
- 1.33. **“PAGA Notice”** means the Plaintiffs’ February 13, 2024, letter to VPEI and the LWDA providing notice pursuant to Labor Code § 2699.3(a).
- 1.34. **“PAGA Penalties”** means the total amount of PAGA civil penalties to be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount (\$40,000), allocated 25% to the Aggrieved Employees (\$10,000.00) and 75% to LWDA (\$30,000.00) in settlement of PAGA claims.
- 1.35. **“Participating Class Member”** means a Class Member who does not submit a valid and timely Request for Exclusion.
- 1.36. **“Plaintiffs”** means Shiristika Prasad and Pritika Prasad, the named plaintiffs in the Action.
- 1.37. **“Preliminary Approval”** means the Court’s Order Granting Preliminary Approval of the Settlement, substantially in the form attached hereto as Exhibit B to this

Agreement and incorporated by this reference herein.

- 1.38. **“Released Class Claims”** means all claims that were alleged, or reasonably could have been alleged, based facts stated in the Operative Complaint which occurred during the Class Period. Except as expressly set forth in this Agreement, Participating Class Members do not release any other claims, including claims for vested benefits, wrongful termination, violation of the Fair Employment and Housing Act, unemployment insurance, disability, social security, workers’ compensation, or claims based on facts occurring outside the Class Period.
- 1.39. **“Released PAGA Claims”** means all claims for PAGA penalties that were alleged, or reasonably could have been alleged, based on the facts stated in the Operative Complaint and the PAGA Notice, which occurred during the PAGA Period. The Released PAGA Claims do not include other PAGA claims, underlying wage and hour claims, claims for wrongful termination, discrimination, unemployment insurance, disability and worker’s compensation, or claims outside the PAGA Period.
- 1.40. **“Released Parties”** means: VPEI and each of its former and present directors, officers, shareholders, owners, attorneys, insurers, predecessors, successors, assigns and subsidiaries.
- 1.41. **“Request for Exclusion”** means a Class Member’s submission of a written request to be excluded from the Class Settlement signed by the Class Member.
- 1.42. **“Response Deadline”** means 45 calendar days after the Administrator mails Class Notice Packet to Class Members and Aggrieved Employees and shall be the last date on which Class Members may: (a) submit Requests for Exclusion from the Settlement, or (b) submit his or her Objection to the Settlement. Class Members to whom Class Notice Packets are resent after having been returned undeliverable to the Administrator shall have an additional 14 calendar days beyond the Response Deadline has expired.
- 1.43. **“Settlement”** means the disposition of the Action and all related claims effectuated by this Agreement and the Judgment.
- 1.44. **“Workweek”** means any week during the Class Period in which a Class Member worked for VPEI as a Class Member for at least one day.

2. RECITALS

- 2.1. On May 25, 2024, Plaintiffs commenced this Action by filing a Complaint against

VPEI in the Superior Court of the State of California, County of Sacramento. Plaintiffs' Complaint asserted claims that VPEI violated California laws as follows:

- (a) Violated Business and Professions Code § 17200 et seq.;
- (b) Failed to pay overtime wages in violation of Labor Code § 510, et seq.;
- (c) Failed to provide required meal periods in violation of Labor Code §§ 226.7 & 512 and the applicable IWC Wage Order;
- (d) Failed to provide required rest periods in violation of Labor Code §§ 226.7 & 512 and the applicable IWC Wage Order;
- (e) Failed to reimburse employees for required expenses in violation of Labor Code § 2802.
- (f) Failed to provide accurate itemized wage statements in violation of Labor Code § 226; and,
- (g) Failed to provide wages when due in violation of Labor Code §§ 201, 202 and 203;
- (h) Violated the Private Attorney General Act, Labor Code §§ 2698, et seq. ("PAGA");
- (i) Unlawful Discrimination Based on Religion In Violation of Fair Employment and Housing Act ("FEHA")¹;
- (j) Harassment Based on Religion In Violation of FEHA;
- (k) Failure to Accommodate Religious Beliefs In Violation of FEHA;
- (l) Retaliation In Violation of FEHA;
- (m) Unlawful Discrimination Based on Sex/Gender In Violation of FEHA; and
- (n) Failure to Prevent Discrimination and Retaliation Based on Religion In Violation of FEHA.

¹ Causes of action (a) through (h) were Class claims, whereas causes of action (i) through (n) were individual claims brought by the named Plaintiffs.

2.2. The Complaint is the operative complaint in the Action (the “Operative Complaint”).

2.3. VPEI denies the allegations in the Operative Complaint, denies any failure to comply with the laws identified in in the Operative Complaint, and denies any and all liability for the causes of action alleged.

2.4. On April 24, 2025, the Parties participated in an all-day mediation presided over by Tagore Subramaniam, Esq., a respected mediator of wage and hour representative and class actions. Following the mediation, each side, represented by its respective counsel, were able to agree to settle the Action based upon a mediator’s proposal which was memorialized in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding. This Agreement replaces and supersedes the Memorandum of Understanding and any other agreements, understandings, or representations between or among the Parties.

2.5. Prior to mediation, Plaintiffs obtained sufficient documents and information to sufficiently investigate the claims such that Plaintiffs’ investigation was sufficient to satisfy the criteria for court approval set forth in *Dunk v. Foot Locker Retail, Inc.* (1996) 48 Cal.App.4th 1794, 1801 and *Kullar v. Foot Locker Retail, Inc.* (2008) 168 Cal.App.4th 116, 129-130 (“***Dunk/Kullar***”).

2.6. This Agreement represents a compromise and settlement of highly disputed claims. Nothing in this Agreement is intended or will be construed as an admission by VPEI that the claims in the Action of Plaintiffs or the Class have merit or that VPEI bears any liability to Plaintiffs or the Class on those claims or any other claims, or as an admission by Plaintiffs that VPEI’s defenses in the Action have merit. The Parties agree to certification of the Class for purposes of this Settlement only. If for any reason the settlement does not become effective, VPEI reserves the right to contest certification of any class for any reason and reserves all available defenses to the claims in the Action.

2.7. The Parties, Class Counsel, and Defense Counsel represent that they are not aware of any other pending matter or action asserting claims that will be extinguished or affected by the Settlement.

3. MONETARY TERMS

3.1. Gross Settlement Amount. Except as otherwise provided by Paragraph 9 below, VPEI promises to pay \$500,000.00 and no more as the Gross Settlement Amount. This amount is all-inclusive of all payments contemplated in this resolution, excluding any employer-side payroll taxes on the portion of the Individual Class Payments allocated to wages which shall be separately paid by VPEI to the Administrator. VPEI has no obligation to pay the Gross Settlement Amount (or any payroll taxes) prior to the deadline stated in Paragraph 4.3 of this Agreement. The Administrator will disburse the entire Gross

Settlement Amount without asking or requiring Participating Class Members or Aggrieved Employees to submit any claim as a condition of payment. None of the Gross Settlement Amount will revert to VPEI.

3.2. Payments from the Gross Settlement Amount. Subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement, the Administrator will make the following payments out of the Gross Settlement Amount, in the amounts specified by the Court in the Final Approval.

- (a) To Plaintiffs: Class Representative Service Payment to the Class Representative of not more than \$10,000.00 (in addition to any Individual Class Payment and any Individual PAGA Payment each Class Representative is entitled to receive as a Participating Class Member). VPEI will not oppose Plaintiffs' request for a Class Representative Service Payment that does not exceed this amount. As part of the motion for Class Counsel Fees Payment and Class Litigation Expenses Payment, Plaintiffs will seek Court approval for any Class Representative Service Payments no later than 16 court days prior to the Final Approval Hearing. If the Court approves a Class Representative Service Payment less than the amount requested, the Administrator will retain the remainder in the Net Settlement Amount. The Administrator will pay the Class Representative Service Payment using IRS Form 1099. Plaintiffs assume full responsibility and liability for employee taxes owed on the Class Representative Service Payment.
- (b) To Class Counsel: A Class Counsel Fees Payment of not more than one-third (1/3) / 33.3% of the Gross Settlement Amount, which is currently estimated to be \$166,666.67, and a Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment of not more than \$25,000.00. VPEI will not oppose requests for these payments provided they do not exceed these amounts. Plaintiffs and/or Class Counsel will file a motion for Class Counsel Fees Payment and Class Litigation Expenses Payment no later than 16 court days prior to the Final Approval Hearing. If the Court approves a Class Counsel Fees Payment and/or a Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment less than the amounts requested, the Administrator will allocate the remainder to the Net Settlement Amount. Released Parties shall have no liability to Class Counsel or any other Plaintiffs' Counsel arising from any claim to any portion any Class Counsel Fee Payment and/or Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment. The Administrator will pay the Class Counsel Fees Payment and Class Counsel Expenses Payment using one or more IRS 1099 Forms. Class Counsel assumes full responsibility and liability for taxes owed on the Class Counsel Fees Payment and the Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment and holds VPEI harmless, and indemnifies VPEI, from any dispute or controversy regarding any division or sharing of any of these payments.

- (c) To the Administrator: An Administration Expenses Payment not to exceed \$6,000.00 except for a showing of good cause and as approved by the Court. To the extent the Administration Expenses Payment is less or the Court approves payment less than \$6,000.00, the Administrator will retain the remainder in the Net Settlement Amount for distribution to Participating Class Members.
- (d) To the LWDA and Aggrieved Employees: PAGA Penalties in the amount of \$40,000.00 to be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount, with 75% (\$30,000.00) allocated to the LWDA PAGA Payment and 25% (\$10,000.00) allocated to the Individual PAGA Payments.
 - i. The Administrator will calculate each Individual PAGA Payment by (a) dividing the amount of the Aggrieved Employees' 25% share of PAGA Penalties (\$10,000.00) by the total number of PAGA Pay Periods worked by all Aggrieved Employees during the PAGA Period and (b) multiplying the result by each Aggrieved Employee's PAGA Pay Periods. Aggrieved Employees assume full responsibility and liability for any taxes owed on their Individual PAGA Payment.
 - ii. If the Court approves PAGA Penalties of less than the amount requested, the Administrator will allocate the remainder to the Net Settlement Amount. The Administrator will report the Individual PAGA Payments on IRS 1099 Forms.
- (e) To Each Participating Class Member: An Individual Class Payment calculated by (1) dividing the Net Settlement Amount by the total number of Workweeks worked by all Participating Class Members during the Class Period, and (2) multiplying the result by each Participating Class Member's Workweeks.
 - i. Tax Allocation of Individual Class Payments. 25% of each Participating Class Member's Individual Class Payment will be allocated to settlement of wage claims (the "**Wage Portion**"). The Wage Portions are subject to tax withholding and will be reported on an IRS W-2 Form. 75% of each Participating Class Member's Individual Class Payment will be allocated to settlement of claims for non-wages, expense reimbursement, interest and penalties (the "**Non-Wage Portion**"). The Non-Wage Portions are not subject to wage withholdings and will be reported on IRS 1099 Forms. Participating Class Members assume full responsibility and liability for any employee taxes owed on their Individual Class Payment.
 - ii. Effect of Non-Participating Class Members on Calculation of Individual Class Payments. Non-Participating Class Members will not receive any Individual Class Payments. The Administrator will retain amounts equal to their Individual Class Payments in the Net Settlement Amount for distribution to Participating Class Members on a pro rata basis.

4. SETTLEMENT FUNDING

- 4.1. Class Workweeks and Aggrieved Employee Pay Periods. Based on its records, VPEI has represented that, as of May 12, 2025, the Class consists of 132 Class Members who collectively worked a total of 16,084 Workweeks, and 120 Aggrieved Employees who worked a total of 4,727 PAGA Pay Periods.
- 4.2. Class Data. Not later than 15 days after the Court grants Preliminary Approval of the Settlement, VPEI will deliver the Class Data to the Administrator, in the form of a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. To protect Class Members' privacy rights, the Administrator must maintain the Class Data in confidence, use the Class Data only for purposes of this Settlement and for no other purpose, and restrict access to the Class Data to Administrator employees who need access to the Class Data to effect and perform under this Agreement. VPEI has a continuing duty to immediately notify Class Counsel if it discovers that the Class Data omitted Class Member identifying information and to provide corrected or updated Class Data as soon as reasonably feasible. Without any extension of the deadline by which VPEI must send the Class Data to the Administrator, the Parties and their counsel will expeditiously use best efforts, in good faith, to reconstruct or otherwise resolve any issues related to missing or omitted Class Data.
- 4.3. Funding of the Gross Settlement Amount. VPEI shall fully fund the Gross Settlement Amount and also fund the amounts necessary to fully pay VPEI share of payroll taxes by transmitting the funds to the Administrator no later than 14 business days after the Effective Date.

5. PAYMENTS FROM THE GROSS SETTLEMENT AMOUNT

- 5.1. Within 14 days after VPEI funds the Gross Settlement Amount, the Administrator will mail checks for all Individual Class Payments, all Individual PAGA Payments, the LWDA PAGA Payment, the Administration Expenses Payment, the Class Counsel Fees Payment, the Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment, and the Class Representative Service Payment.
- 5.2. The Administrator will issue checks for the Individual Class Payments and/or Individual PAGA Payments and send them to the Class Members via First Class U.S. Mail, postage prepaid. The face of each check shall prominently state the "void date", which is 180 days after the date of mailing, when the check will be voided. The Administrator will cancel all checks not cashed by the void date. The Administrator will send checks for Individual Class Payments to all Participating Class Members (including those for whom Class Notice was returned undelivered). The Administrator will send checks for Individual PAGA Payments to all Aggrieved Employees including Non-Participating Class Members who qualify as Aggrieved Employees (including those for whom Class Notice

was returned undelivered). The Administrator may send Participating Class Members a single check combining the Individual Class Payment and the Individual PAGA Payment. Before mailing any checks, the Administrator must update the recipients' mailing addresses using the National Change of Address Database. If a Participating Class Member's or Aggrieved Employee's check is not cashed within 120 days after its last mailing to the affected individual, the Administrator will also send the individual a notice informing him or her that unless the check is cashed by the void date, it will expire and become non-negotiable, and offer to replace the check if lost or misplaced but not cashed.

- 5.3. The Administrator must conduct a Class Member Address Search for all other Class Members whose checks are returned undelivered without USPS forwarding address. Within 7 days of receiving a returned check the Administrator must re-mail checks to the USPS forwarding address provided or to an address ascertained through the Class Member Address Search. The Administrator need not take further steps to deliver checks to Class Members whose re-mailed checks are returned as undelivered. The Administrator shall promptly send a replacement check to any Class Member whose original check was lost or misplaced, requested by the Class Member prior to the void date.
- 5.4. For any Class Member whose Individual Class Payment check or Individual PAGA Payment check is uncashed and cancelled after the void date, the Administrator shall transmit the funds represented by such checks to the California Controller's Unclaimed Property Fund in the name of the Class Member thereby leaving no "unpaid residue" subject to the requirements of California Code of Civil Procedure § 384(b).
- 5.5. The payment of Individual Class Payments and Individual PAGA Payments shall not obligate VPEI to confer any additional benefits or make any additional payments to Class Members (such as 401(k) contributions or bonuses) beyond those specified in this Agreement.
6. **RELEASE OF CLAIMS.** Effective on the date when VPEI fully funds the entire Gross Settlement Amount and funds all employer payroll taxes owed on the Wage Portion of the Individual Class Payments, Plaintiffs, Participating Class Members, Aggrieved Employees and the LWDA will release claims against all Released Parties as follows:
 - 6.1. Plaintiffs' Release. Plaintiffs and their respective former and present spouses, representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns generally, release and discharge Released Parties from all claims, transactions, or occurrences that occurred during the Class Period, including, but not limited to: (a) all claims that were, or reasonably could have been, alleged, based on the facts contained, in the Operative Complaint and (b) all PAGA claims that were, or reasonably could have been, alleged based on facts contained in the Operative Complaint, Plaintiffs' PAGA Notice ("Plaintiffs' Release"). Plaintiffs' Release does not extend to any claims or actions to

enforce this Agreement, or to any claims for vested benefits, unemployment benefits, disability benefits, social security benefits, or workers' compensation benefits that arose at any time, or based on occurrences outside the Class Period. Plaintiffs acknowledge that Plaintiffs may discover facts or law different from, or in addition to, the facts or law that Plaintiffs now know or believe to be true but agree, nonetheless, that Plaintiffs' Release shall be and remain effective in all respects, notwithstanding such different or additional facts or Plaintiffs' discovery of them.

- (a) Plaintiffs' Waiver of Rights Under Civil Code § 1542. For purposes of Plaintiffs' Release, Plaintiffs expressly waive and relinquish the provisions, rights, and benefits, if any, of Section 1542 of the California Civil Code, which reads:

A general release does not extend to claims that the creditor or releasing party does not know or suspect to exist in his or her favor at the time of executing the release, and that if known by him or her would have materially affected his or her settlement with the debtor or Released Party.

- 6.2. Release by Participating Class Members. All Participating Class Members, on behalf of themselves and their respective former and present representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns, release Released Parties from the Released Class Claims.

- 6.3. Release of PAGA Claims. All Aggrieved Employees and the LWDA are deemed to release, on behalf of themselves and their respective former and present representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns, the Released Parties from the Released PAGA Claims.

7. **MOTION FOR PRELIMINARY APPROVAL**. The Parties agree to jointly prepare and file a motion for preliminary approval ("**Motion for Preliminary Approval**") that complies with the Court's procedures and instructions.

- 7.1. VPEI's Responsibilities. Within 14 days of the full execution of this Agreement, Defense Counsel will prepare and deliver to Class Counsel a signed Declaration disclosing all facts relevant to actual or potential conflicts of interest VPEI has with the Administrator, if any. The Declaration shall aver that VPEI is not aware of any other pending matter or action asserting claims that will be extinguished or adversely affected by the Settlement. The Declaration shall aver as to the number of Class Members and the number of Workweeks for the Class during the Class Period. Lastly, the Declaration shall also aver as to the number of Aggrieved Employees and the number of Pay Periods for the PAGA Period.

- 7.2. Plaintiffs' Responsibilities. Plaintiffs will prepare and deliver to Defense Counsel all documents necessary for obtaining Preliminary Approval, including: (i) a draft of the

notice, and memorandum in support, of the Motion for Preliminary Approval that includes an analysis of the Settlement under *Dunk/Kullar* and a request for approval of the PAGA Settlement under Labor Code § 2699(f)(2); (ii) a draft proposed Order Granting Preliminary Approval and Approval of PAGA Settlement; (iii) a draft proposed Class Notice; (iv) a signed declaration from the Administrator attaching its “not to exceed” bid for administering the Settlement and attesting to its willingness to serve; competency; operative procedures for protecting the security of Class Data; amounts of insurance coverage for any data breach, defalcation of funds or other misfeasance; all facts relevant to any actual or potential conflicts of interest with Class Members; and the nature and extent of any financial relationship with Plaintiffs, Class Counsel or Defense Counsel; (v) a signed declaration from Plaintiffs confirming willingness and competency to serve and disclosing all facts relevant to any actual or potential conflicts of interest with Class Members, and/or the Administrator; (v) a signed declaration from each Class Counsel firm attesting to its competency to represent the Class Members; its timely transmission to the LWDA of all necessary PAGA documents (initial notice of violations (Labor Code § 2699.3(a)), Operative Complaint (Labor Code § 2699(l)(1)), and this Agreement (Labor Code § 2699(l)(2)); (vi) a redlined version of the Parties’ Agreement showing all modifications made to the Model Agreement ready for filing with the Court; and (vii) all facts relevant to any actual or potential conflict of interest with Class Members, the Administrator. In their Declarations, Plaintiffs and Class Counsel shall aver that they are not aware of any other pending matter or action asserting claims that will be extinguished or adversely affected by the Settlement.

- 7.3. Responsibilities of Counsel. Class Counsel and Defense Counsel are jointly responsible for expeditiously finalizing and filing the Motion for Preliminary Approval no later than 30 days after the full execution of this Agreement; obtaining a prompt hearing date for the Motion for Preliminary Approval; and for appearing in Court to advocate in favor of the Motion for Preliminary Approval. Class Counsel is responsible for delivering the Court’s Preliminary Approval to the Administrator.
- 7.4. Duty to Cooperate. If the Parties disagree on any aspect of the proposed Motion for Preliminary Approval and/or the supporting declarations and documents, Class Counsel and Defense Counsel will expeditiously work together on behalf of the Parties by meeting in person or by telephone, and in good faith, to resolve the disagreement. If the Court does not grant Preliminary Approval or conditions Preliminary Approval on any material change to this Agreement, Class Counsel and Defense Counsel will expeditiously work together on behalf of the Parties by meeting in person or by telephone, and in good faith, to modify the Agreement and otherwise satisfy the Court’s concerns.

8. SETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION

- 8.1. Selection of Administrator. The Parties have jointly selected APEX Class Action to serve as the Administrator and verified that, as a condition of appointment, APEX Class Action agrees to be bound by this Agreement and to perform, as a fiduciary, all duties specified in this Agreement in exchange for payment of Administration Expenses. The Administrator's duties will include preparing, printing, and mailing the Class Notice Packet to all Class Members; conducting a National Change of Address search to update Class Member addresses before mailing the Class Notice Packets; re-mailing Class Notice Packets that are returned to the Class Member's new address; setting up a toll-free telephone number and email and a fax number to receive communications from Class Members; receiving and reviewing for validity completed Requests for Exclusion; providing the Parties with weekly status reports about the delivery of Class Notice Packets and receipt of Requests for Exclusion, objections and disputes; calculating Individual Class Payments and Individual PAGA Payments; issuing the checks to effectuate the payments due under the Settlement; issuing the tax reports required under this Settlement; and otherwise administering the Settlement pursuant to this Agreement. The Parties and their Counsel represent that they have no interest or relationship, financial or otherwise, with the Administrator other than a professional relationship arising out of prior experiences administering settlements.
- 8.2. Employer Identification Number. The Administrator shall have and use its own Employer Identification Number for purposes of calculating payroll tax withholdings and providing reports state and federal tax authorities.
- 8.3. Qualified Settlement Fund. The Administrator shall establish a settlement fund that meets the requirements of a Qualified Settlement Fund ("QSF") under US Treasury Regulation section 468B-1.
- 8.4. Notice to Class Members
- (a) No later than three (3) business days after receipt of the Class Data, the Administrator shall notify Class Counsel that the list has been received and state the number of Class Members, PAGA Members, Workweeks, and Pay Periods in the Class Data.
 - (b) Using best efforts to perform as soon as possible, and in no event later than 14 days after receiving the Class Data, the Administrator will send to all Class Members identified in the Class Data, via first-class United States Postal Service ("USPS") mail, the Class Notice substantially in the form attached to this Agreement as Exhibit A. The first page of the Class Notice shall prominently estimate the dollar amounts of any Individual Class Payment and/or Individual PAGA Payment payable to the Class Member, and the number of Workweeks and PAGA Pay Periods (if applicable) used

to calculate these amounts. Before mailing Class Notices, the Administrator shall update Class Member addresses using the National Change of Address database.

- (c) Not later than 7 days after the Administrator's receipt of any Class Notice returned by the USPS as undelivered, the Administrator shall re-mail the Class Notice using any forwarding address provided by the USPS. If the USPS does not provide a forwarding address, the Administrator shall conduct a Class Member Address Search, and re-mail the Class Notice to the most current address obtained. The Administrator has no obligation to make further attempts to locate or send Class Notice to Class Members whose Class Notice is returned by the USPS a second time.
- (d) The deadlines for Class Members' written objections, Challenges to Workweeks and/or Pay Periods, and Requests for Exclusion will be extended an additional 14 days beyond the Response Deadline provided in the Class Notice for all Class Members whose notice is re-mailed. The Administrator will inform the Class Member of the extended deadline with the re-mailed Class Notice.
- (e) If the Administrator, the Parties, Defense Counsel, or Class Counsel is contacted by or otherwise discovers any person who believes they should have been included in the Class Data and should have received Class Notice, the Parties will expeditiously meet and confer in person or by telephone, and in good faith, in an effort to agree on whether to include the person(s) as Class Members. If the Parties agree, such persons will be Class Members entitled to the same rights as other Class Members, and the Administrator will send, via email or overnight delivery, a Class Notice requiring them to exercise options under this Agreement not later than 14 days after receipt of Class Notice, or the deadline dates in the Class Notice, which ever are later.

8.5. Requests for Exclusion (Opt-Outs)

- (a) Class Members who wish to exclude themselves (opt-out of) the Class Settlement must send the Administrator, by fax, email, or mail, a signed written Request for Exclusion not later than the Response Deadline (plus an additional 14 days for Class Members whose Class Notice is re-mailed). A Request for Exclusion is a letter from a Class Member or his/her representative that reasonably communicates the Class Member's election to be excluded from the Settlement and includes the Class Member's name, address and email address or telephone number. To be valid, a Request for Exclusion must be timely faxed, emailed, or postmarked by the Response Deadline.
- (b) The Administrator may not reject a Request for Exclusion as invalid because it fails to contain all the information specified in the Class Notice. The Administrator shall accept any Request for Exclusion as valid if the Administrator can reasonably

ascertain the identity of the person as a Class Member and the Class Member's desire to be excluded. The Administrator's determination shall be final and not appealable or otherwise susceptible to challenge. If the Administrator has reason to question the authenticity of a Request for Exclusion, the Administrator may demand additional proof of the Class Member's identity. The Administrator's determination of authenticity shall be final and not appealable or otherwise susceptible to challenge.

- (c) Every Class Member who does not submit a timely and valid Request for Exclusion is deemed to be a Participating Class Member under this Agreement, entitled to all benefits and bound by all terms and conditions of the Settlement, including the Participating Class Members' Releases under Paragraph 6.2 of the Agreement, regardless whether the Participating Class Member actually receives the Class Notice or objects to the Settlement.
- (d) Every Class Member who submits a valid and timely Request for Exclusion is a Non-Participating Class Member and shall not receive an Individual Class Payment or have the right to object to the class action components of the Settlement. Because future PAGA claims are subject to claim preclusion upon entry of the Judgment, Non-Participating Class Members who are Aggrieved Employees are deemed to release the claims identified in Paragraph 6.3 of this Agreement and are eligible for an Individual PAGA Payment. If a Class Member submits both a Request for Exclusion and an objection, only the Request for Exclusion will be accepted; the objection will be void.

8.6. Challenges to Calculation of Workweeks. Each Class Member shall have until the Response Deadline (plus an additional 14 days for Class Members whose Class Notice is re-mailed) to challenge the number of Class Workweeks and PAGA Pay Periods (if any) allocated to the Class Member in the Class Notice. The Class Member may challenge the allocation by communicating with the Administrator via fax, email or mail. The Administrator must encourage the challenging Class Member to submit supporting documentation. In the absence of any contrary documentation, the Administrator is entitled to presume that the Workweeks contained in the Class Notice are correct so long as they are consistent with the Class Data. The Administrator's determination of each Class Member's allocation of Workweeks and/or Pay Periods shall be final and not appealable or otherwise susceptible to challenge. The Administrator shall promptly provide copies of all challenges to calculation of Workweeks and/or Pay Periods to Defense Counsel and Class Counsel, and the Administrator's determination as to the challenges.

8.7. Objections to Settlement

- (a) Only Participating Class Members may object to the class action components of the Settlement and/or this Agreement, including contesting the fairness of the Settlement,

and/or amounts requested for the Class Counsel Fees Payment, Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment, and/or Class Representative Service Payment.

- (b) Participating Class Members may send written objections to the Administrator, by fax, email, or mail. In the alternative, or in addition to a written objection, Participating Class Members may appear in Court (or engage an attorney to appear in Court) to present verbal objections at the Final Approval Hearing. A Participating Class Member who elects to send a written objection to the Administrator must do so not later than the Response Deadline (plus an additional 14 days for Class Members whose Class Notice was re-mailed).
- (c) Non-Participating Class Members have no right to object to any of the class action components of the Settlement. If a Class Member submits both a Request for Exclusion and an objection, only the Request for Exclusion will be accepted; the objection will be void.

8.8. Administrator Duties. The Administrator has a duty to perform or observe all tasks to be performed or observed by the Administrator contained in this Agreement or otherwise.

- (a) Email Address and Toll-Free Number. The Administrator will maintain and monitor an email address and a toll-free telephone number to receive Class Member calls, faxes, and emails.
- (b) Request for Exclusion (Opt-Outs) and Exclusion List. The Administrator will promptly review on a rolling basis Requests for Exclusion to ascertain their validity. Not later than 7 days after the expiration of the deadline for submitting Requests for Exclusion, the Administrator shall email a list to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel containing (i) the names and other identifying information of Class Members who have timely submitted valid Requests for Exclusion (“**Exclusion List**”); (ii) the names and other identifying information of Class Members who have submitted invalid Requests for Exclusion; (iii) copies of all Requests for Exclusion from Settlement submitted (whether valid or invalid).
- (c) Workweek and/or Pay Period Challenges. The Administrator has the authority to address and make final decisions consistent with the terms of this Agreement on all Class Member challenges over the calculation of Workweeks and/or Pay Periods. The Administrator’s decision shall be final and not appealable or otherwise susceptible to challenge.
- (d) Weekly Reports. The Administrator must, on a weekly basis, provide written reports to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel that, among other things, tally the number of: Class Notices mailed or re-mailed, Class Notices returned undelivered, Requests for

Exclusion (whether valid or invalid) received, objections received, challenges to Workweeks and/or Pay Periods received and/or resolved, and checks mailed for Individual Class Payments and Individual PAGA Payments (“**Weekly Report**”). The Weekly Reports must include the Administrator’s assessment of the validity of Requests for Exclusion and attach copies of all Requests for Exclusion and objections received.

- (e) Administrator’s Declaration. Not later than 7 days before the date by which Plaintiffs are required to file the Motion for Final Approval of the Settlement, the Administrator will provide to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel, a signed declaration suitable for filing in Court attesting to its due diligence and compliance with all of its obligations under this Agreement, including, but not limited to, its mailing of Class Notice, the Class Notices returned as undelivered, the re-mailing of Class Notices, attempts to locate Class Members, the total number of Requests for Exclusion from Settlement it received (both valid or invalid), the number of written objections and attach the Exclusion List. The Administrator will supplement its declaration as needed or requested by the Parties and/or the Court. Class Counsel is responsible for filing the Administrator’s declaration(s) in Court.
- (f) Final Report by Administrator. Within 10 days after the Administrator disburses all funds of the Gross Settlement Amount, the Administrator will provide Class Counsel and Defense Counsel with a final report detailing its disbursements by employee identification number only of all payments made under this Agreement. At least 7 days before any deadline set by the Court, the Administrator will prepare, and submit to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel, a signed declaration suitable for filing in Court attesting to its disbursement of all payments required under this Agreement. Class Counsel is responsible for filing the Administrator's declaration in Court. If a second declaration attesting to the distribution of uncashed checks is required, the Administrator shall provide this second declaration at least 7 days before any deadline for a second declaration and Class Counsel shall be responsible for filing the second declaration with the Court.

9. **CLASS SIZE MODIFICATION AND ESCALATOR CLAUSE**. Based on its records, VPEI provided figures as to the Class size as set forth in paragraph 4.1 above. In regard hereto, a declaration will be provided as set forth in paragraph 7.1 above. If the workweek number increases by more than 10% of the estimate stated herein in paragraph 4.1, VPEI may elect to (a) purchase the additional workweeks pro rata, or (b) cut off the release period as of the date the 10% cushion exhausted. VPEI shall notify Class Counsel of its election prior to the filing of Plaintiffs’ Motion for Preliminary Approval.

10. VPEI'S RIGHT TO WITHDRAW. If the number of valid Requests for Exclusion identified in the Exclusion List exceeds 10% of the total of all Class Members, VPEI may, but is not obligated, elect to withdraw from the Settlement. The Parties agree that, if VPEI withdraws, the Settlement shall be void ab initio, have no force or effect whatsoever, and that neither of the Parties will have any further obligation to perform under this Agreement; provided, however, VPEI will remain responsible for paying all Administration Expenses incurred as of the date VPEI makes this election to withdraw. VPEI must notify Class Counsel and the Court of its election to withdraw not later than 7 days after the Administrator sends the final Exclusion List to Defense Counsel. Invalid Requests for Exclusion will have no effect on this threshold for an election.

11. MOTION FOR FINAL APPROVAL. Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, not later than 16 court days before the calendared Final Approval Hearing, Plaintiffs will file in Court, a motion for final approval of the Settlement that includes a request for approval of the PAGA settlement under Labor Code § 2699(l), a Proposed Final Approval Order and a proposed Judgment (collectively "**Motion for Final Approval**"). Plaintiffs shall provide drafts of these documents to Defense Counsel not later than 7 days prior to filing the Motion for Final Approval. Class Counsel and Defense Counsel will expeditiously meet and confer and in good faith, to resolve any disagreements concerning the Motion for Final Approval.

11.1. Response to Objections. Each of the Parties retains the right to respond to any objection raised by a Participating Class Member, including the right to file responsive documents in Court no later than 5 court days prior to the Final Approval Hearing, or as otherwise ordered or accepted by the Court.

11.2. Duty to Cooperate. If the Court does not grant Final Approval or conditions Final Approval on any material change to the Settlement (including, but not limited to, the scope of release to be granted by Class Members), the Parties will expeditiously work together in good faith to address the Court's concerns by revising the Agreement as necessary to obtain Final Approval. The Court's decision to award less than the amounts requested for a Class Representative Service Payment, Class Counsel Fees Payment, Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment and/or Administration Expenses Payment shall not constitute a material modification to the Agreement within the meaning of this paragraph.

11.3. Continuing Jurisdiction of the Court. The Parties agree that, after entry of Judgment, the Court will retain jurisdiction over the Parties, Action, and the Settlement under Code of Civil Procedure § 664.6 solely for purposes of (a) enforcing this Agreement and/or Judgment, (b) addressing settlement administration matters, and (c) addressing such post-Judgment matters as are permitted by law.

11.4. Waiver of the Right to Appeal. Provided the Judgment is consistent with the terms and conditions of this Agreement, specifically including the Class Counsel Fees Payment and

Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment set forth in this Settlement, the Parties, their respective counsel, and all Participating Class Members who did not object to the Settlement as provided in this Agreement, waive all rights to appeal from the Judgment, including all rights to post-judgment and appellate proceedings, the right to file motions to vacate judgment, motions for new trial, extraordinary writs, and appeals. The waiver of appeal does not include any waiver of the right to oppose such motions, writs or appeals. If an objector appeals the Judgment, the Parties' obligations to perform under this Agreement will be suspended until such time as the appeal is finally resolved and the Judgment becomes final, except as to matters that do not affect the amount of the Net Settlement Amount.

11.5. Appellate Court Orders to Vacate, Reverse, or Materially Modify Judgment. If the reviewing Court vacates, reverses, or modifies the Judgment in a manner that requires a material modification of this Agreement (including, but not limited to, the scope of release to be granted by Class Members), this Agreement shall be null and void. The Parties shall nevertheless expeditiously work together in good faith to address the appellate court's concerns and to obtain Final Approval and entry of Judgment, sharing, on an equal basis, any additional Administration Expenses reasonably incurred at the time of remittitur. An appellate decision to vacate, reverse, or modify the Court's award of the Class Representative Service Payment or any payments to Class Counsel shall not constitute a material modification of the Judgment within the meaning of this paragraph, as long as the Gross Settlement Amount remains unchanged.

12. AMENDED JUDGMENT. If any amended judgment is required under Code of Civil Procedure § 384, the Parties will work together in good faith to jointly submit and a proposed amended judgment.

13. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

13.1. No Admission of Liability, Class Certification or Representative Manageability for Other Purposes. This Agreement represents a compromise and settlement of highly disputed claims. Nothing in this Agreement is intended or should be construed as an admission by VPEI that any of the allegations in the Operative Complaint have merit or that VPEI has any liability for any claims asserted; nor should it be intended or construed as an admission by Plaintiffs that VPEI's defenses in the Action have merit. The Parties agree that class certification and representative treatment is for purposes of this Settlement only. If, for any reason the Court does not grant Preliminary Approval, Final Approval or Judgment pursuant to this Agreement, VPEI reserves the right to contest certification of any class for any reasons, and VPEI reserves all available defenses to the claims in the Action, and Plaintiffs reserve the right to move for class certification on any grounds available and to contest VPEI's defenses. The Settlement, this Agreement and Parties'

willingness to settle the Action will have no bearing on, and will not be admissible in connection with, any litigation (except for proceedings to enforce or effectuate the Settlement and this Agreement).

- 13.2. Confidentiality Prior to Preliminary Approval. Plaintiffs, Class Counsel, VPEI, and Defense Counsel separately agree that, until the Motion for Preliminary Approval of Settlement is filed, they and each of them will not disclose, disseminate and/or publicize, or cause or permit another person to disclose, disseminate or publicize, any of the terms of the Agreement directly or indirectly, specifically or generally, to any person, corporation, association, government agency, or other entity except: (a) to the Parties' attorneys, accountants, or spouses, all of whom will be instructed to keep this Agreement confidential; (b) counsel in a related matter; (c) to the extent necessary to report income to appropriate taxing authorities; (d) in response to a court order or subpoena; or (e) in response to an inquiry or subpoena issued by a state or federal government agency. Each of the Parties agrees to immediately notify each other of any judicial or agency order, inquiry, or subpoena seeking such information. Plaintiffs, Class Counsel, VPEI, and Defense Counsel separately agree not to, directly or indirectly, initiate any conversation or other communication, before the filing of the Motion for Preliminary Approval, any with third party regarding this Agreement or the matters giving rise to this Agreement except to respond only that "the matter was resolved," or words to that effect. This paragraph does not restrict Class Counsel's communications with Class Members in accordance with Class Counsel's ethical obligations owed to Class Members.
- 13.3. No Solicitation. The Parties separately agree that they and their respective counsel and employees have not and will not solicit any Class Member to opt out of or object to the Settlement, or appeal from the Judgment. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to restrict Class Counsel's ability to communicate with Class Members in accordance with Class Counsel's ethical obligations owed to Class Members.
- 13.4. Integrated Agreement. Upon execution by all Parties and their counsel, this Agreement together with its attached exhibits shall constitute the entire agreement between and among the Parties relating to the Settlement, superseding any and all oral representations, warranties, covenants, or inducements made to or by either of the Parties.
- 13.5. Attorney Authorization. Class Counsel and Defense Counsel separately warrant and represent that they are authorized by Plaintiffs and VPEI, respectively, to take all appropriate action required or permitted to be taken by such Parties pursuant to this Agreement to effectuate its terms, and to execute any other documents reasonably required to effectuate the terms of this Agreement including any amendments to this Agreement.

- 13.6. Cooperation. The Parties and their counsel will cooperate with each other and use their best efforts, in good faith, to implement the Settlement by, among other things, modifying the Settlement Agreement, submitting supplemental evidence and supplementing points and authorities as requested by the Court. If the Parties are unable to agree upon the form or content of any document necessary to implement the Settlement, or on any modification of the Agreement that may become necessary to implement the Settlement, the Parties will seek the assistance of a mediator and/or the Court for resolution.
- 13.7. Prior Assignments. Each of the Parties separately represents and warrants that it/they have not directly or indirectly assigned, transferred, encumbered, or purported to assign, transfer, or encumber to any person or entity any portion of any liability, claim, demand, action, cause of action, or right released and discharged in this Settlement.
- 13.8. Tax Advice. **Neither Plaintiffs, Class Counsel, VPEI, nor Defense Counsel is/are providing any advice regarding taxes or taxability, nor shall anything in this Settlement be relied upon as such within the meaning of United States Treasury Department Circular 230 (31 CFR Part 10, as amended) or otherwise.**
- 13.9. Modification of Agreement. This Agreement, and all parts of it, may be amended, modified, changed, or waived only by an express written instrument signed by all Parties or their representatives, and approved by the Court.
- 13.10. Agreement Binding on Successors. This Agreement will be binding upon, and inure to the benefit of, the successors of each of the Parties.
- 13.11. Applicable Law. All terms and conditions of this Agreement and its exhibits will be governed by and interpreted according to the internal laws of the state of California, without regard to conflict of law principles.
- 13.12. Cooperation in Drafting. The Parties have cooperated in the drafting and preparation of this Agreement. This Agreement will not be construed against any Party on the basis that the Party was the drafter or participated in the drafting.
- 13.13. Confidentiality. To the extent permitted by law, all agreements made, and orders entered during Action and in this Agreement relating to the confidentiality of information shall survive the execution of this Agreement.
- 13.14. Use and Return of Class Data. Information provided to Class Counsel pursuant to California Evidence Code § 1152, and all copies and summaries of the Class Data provided to Class Counsel by VPEI/Defense Counsel in connection with the mediation, other settlement negotiations, or in connection with the Settlement, may be used only with respect to this Settlement, and no other purpose, and may not be used in any way that

violates any existing contractual agreement, statute, or rule of court. Not later than 90 days after the date when the Court discharges the Administrator's obligation to provide a Declaration confirming the final pay out of all Settlement funds, Plaintiffs shall destroy all paper and electronic versions of Class Data received from VPEI/Defense Counsel.

13.15. Headings. The descriptive heading of any section or paragraph of this Agreement is inserted for convenience of reference only and does not constitute a part of this Agreement.

13.16. Calendar Days. Unless otherwise noted, all reference to "days" in this Agreement shall be to calendar days. If any date or deadline set forth in this Agreement falls on a weekend or federal legal holiday, such date or deadline shall be on the first business day thereafter.

13.17. Notice. All notices, demands or other communications between or among the Parties in connection with this Agreement will be in writing and deemed to have been duly given as of the third business day after mailing by United States mail, or the day sent by email or messenger, addressed as follows:

To Plaintiffs and the Class:

Nicole Barvie, Esq.
Barvie Law, APC
550 W B Street, Fourth Floor
San Diego, CA 92101
Tel.: (858) 225-0928
Fax: (858) 357-8592
E-Mail: nicole@barielaw.com

To VPEI:

Jeremy S. Millstone, Esq., Of Counsel
Peterson Watts Law Group, LLP
2267 Lava Ridge Court, Suite 210
Roseville CA 95661
Tel.: (916) 780-8222
Fax: (916) 780-8775
E-Mail: jmillstone@petersonwatts.com

13.18. Execution in Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts by facsimile, electronically (i.e. DocuSign), or email which for purposes of this Agreement shall be accepted as an original. All executed counterparts and each of them will be deemed to be one and the same instrument if counsel for the Parties will

exchange between themselves signed counterparts. Any executed counterpart will be admissible in evidence to prove the existence and contents of this Agreement.

13.19. Stay of Litigation. The Parties agree that upon the execution of this Agreement the litigation shall be stayed, except to effectuate the terms of this Agreement. The Parties further agree that upon the signing of this Agreement that pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure § 583.330 to extend the date to bring a case to trial under Code of Civil Procedure § 583.310 for the entire period of this settlement process from the mediation on April 24, 2025, until the earlier of the Effective Date or the date this Agreement shall no longer be of any force or effect.

13.20. Fair Settlement. The Parties, Class Counsel, and Defense Counsel believe and warrant that this Agreement reflects a fair, reasonable, and adequate settlement of the Action and have arrived at this Agreement through arms-length negotiations, taking into account all relevant factors, both current and potential.

14. EXECUTION BY PARTIES AND COUNSEL

The Parties and their counsel hereby execute this Agreement.

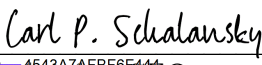
Dated: 05 / 14 / 2025	 _____ Plaintiff Shiristika Prasad
Dated: 05 / 14 / 2025	 _____ Plaintiff Pritika Prasad
Dated: 5/15/2025	Signed by:  _____ Carl Schallansky, CEO For Vacuum Process Engineering, Inc.

EXHIBIT A

[NOTICE OF PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF CLASS ACTION AND HEARING DATE FOR
FINAL COURT APPROVAL]

EXHIBIT "A"

**NOTICE OF PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF CLASS ACTION
AND HEARING DATE FOR FINAL COURT APPROVAL**

***Prasad, et al. v. Vacuum Process Engineering, Inc., Superior Court of the State of
California,
County of Sacramento, Case No. 24CV010094***

***The Superior Court for the State of California authorized this Notice. Read it carefully!
It's not junk mail, spam, an advertisement, or solicitation by a lawyer. You are not being sued.***

**YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS MAY BE AFFECTED WHETHER YOU ACT OR DO NOT
ACT. PLEASE READ THIS NOTICE CAREFULLY.**

You may be eligible to receive money from an employee class action lawsuit ("Action") against Defendant Vacuum Process Engineering, Inc. ("VPEI") for alleged wage and hour violations. The Action was filed by Plaintiffs Shiristika Prasad and Pritika Prasad ("Plaintiffs") and seeks payment of (1) wages and other relief by a Class of all individuals who are or previously were employed by VPEI in California who were classified as hourly, non-exempt employees at any time during the Class Period (May 22, 2020, through [date of preliminary approval]) ("Class Members"), and (2) penalties under the California Private Attorney General Act ("PAGA") for all individuals who are or previously were employed by VPEI in California who were classified as a non-exempt employee at any time during the PAGA Period (February 13, 2023, through [the date of Preliminary Approval of the Court]) ("Aggrieved Employees").

The Parties proposed Settlement Agreement has two parts: (1) a Class Settlement requiring VPEI to fund Individual Class Payment payments to Class Members, and (2) a PAGA Settlement requiring VPEI to fund the PAGA Penalties and pay them to the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency ("LWDA") and to Aggrieved Employees.

Based on VPEI's records, and the Parties' current assumptions, **your Individual Class Payment is estimated to be <<\$ [redacted]>> (less withholding) and your share of the PAGA Penalties is estimated to <<be \$ [redacted]>>.** The actual amount you may receive likely will be different and will depend on several factors. If no amount is stated for your share of the PAGA Penalties, then according to VPEI'S records you are not eligible for share of the PAGA Penalties because you did not work during the PAGA Period.

The above estimates are based on VPEI's records showing that **you worked << [redacted]>> workweeks** during the Class Period and **you worked << [redacted]>> pay periods** during the PAGA Period. If you believe that you worked more workweeks and/or pay periods during either period, you can submit a challenge by the deadline date. See Section 5 of this Notice below.

The Court has already preliminarily approved the proposed Settlement Agreement and approved this Notice. The Court has not yet decided whether to grant final approval. Your legal rights are

affected whether you act or do not act. Read this Notice carefully. You will be deemed to have carefully read and understood it. At the Final Approval Hearing, the Court will decide whether to finally approve the Settlement Agreement and how much of the settlement will be paid to Plaintiffs and Plaintiffs' attorneys ("**Class Counsel**"). The Court will also decide whether to enter a judgment that requires (1) VPEI to make payments under the Settlement Agreement, and (2) Class Members and Aggrieved Employees to give up their rights to assert certain claims against VPEI.

If you worked for VPEI during the Class Period and/or the PAGA Period, you have two options under the Settlement Agreement:

- (1) **Do Nothing.** You need not do anything to participate in the settlement and be eligible for an Individual Class Payment and/or a share of the PAGA Penalties. As a Participating Class Member, though, you will give up your right to assert Class Period wage claims and PAGA Period penalty claims against VPEI as described below in Section 4 below.
- (2) **Opt-Out of the Class Settlement.** You can exclude yourself from the Class Settlement (i.e., opt-out) by submitting the written Request for Exclusion or otherwise notifying the Settlement Administrator in writing. If you opt-out, you will not receive an Individual Class Payment, however, you preserve your right to personally pursue wage claims against VPEI during the Class Period. If you are an Aggrieved Employee, you remain eligible for a share of the PAGA Settlement. You cannot opt-out of the PAGA portion of the proposed Settlement Agreement.

VPEI will not retaliate against you for any actions you take with respect to the proposed Settlement Agreement.

SUMMARY OF YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS AND OPTIONS IN THIS SETTLEMENT:	
You Don't Have to Do Anything to Participate in the Settlement	If you do nothing, you will be a Participating Class Member, eligible for an Individual Class Payment and a share of the PAGA Penalties (if any). In exchange, you will give up your right to assert the wage claims against VPEI that are covered by the Settlement Agreement (Released Class Claims). Additional information is set forth below.
You Can Opt-out of the Class Settlement but not the PAGA Settlement The Response Deadline is .	If you don't want to fully participate in the proposed Settlement Agreement, you can opt-out by sending the Settlement Administrator a written Request for Exclusion. If you request exclusion, you will receive no money from the Class Settlement and you will not be bound by the Settlement Agreement. Once excluded, you will be a Non-Participating Class Member and no longer eligible for an Individual Class Payment. Non-Participating Class Members cannot object to any portion of the proposed

	Settlement Agreement. See Section 7 of this Notice. However, you cannot opt-out of the PAGA portion of the proposed Settlement Agreement. If you are also an Aggrieved Employee and exclude yourself, you will still be paid your share of the PAGA Settlement and will remain bound by the release of the Released PAGA Claims regardless of whether you submit a request for exclusion.
Participating Class Members Can Object to the Class Settlement but not the PAGA Settlement Written Objections Must be Submitted by the Response Deadline ()	All Class Members who do not opt-out (“Participating Class Members”) can object to any aspect of the proposed Settlement Agreement. The Court’s decision whether to finally approve the Settlement Agreement will include a determination of how much will be paid to Class Counsel and Plaintiffs who pursued the Action on behalf of the Class. You are not personally responsible for any payments to Class Counsel or Plaintiffs, but every dollar paid to Class Counsel and Plaintiffs reduces the overall amount paid to Participating Class Members. You can object to the amounts requested by Class Counsel or Plaintiffs if you think they are unreasonable. See Section 8 of this Notice.
You Can Participate in the Final Approval Hearing	The Court’s Final Approval Hearing is scheduled to take place on at [a.m./p.m.], at the Sacramento County Superior Court, located at 720 9th Street, Sacramento, CA 95814, in Department 54 before Judge Christopher E. Kruger. This hearing may change as explained below in Section 9. You don’t have to attend but you do have the right to appear (or engage an attorney to appear on your behalf at your own cost), in person, by telephone or by using the Court’s virtual appearance platform. Participating Class Members can verbally object to the Settlement Agreement at the Final Approval Hearing. See Section 9 of this Notice
You Can Challenge the Calculation of Your Workweeks / Pay Periods Written Challenges Must be Submitted by the Response Deadline ()	The amount of your Individual Class Payment and your share of the PAGA Settlement (if any) depend on how many workweeks you worked at least one day during the Class Period and how many pay periods you worked at least one day during the PAGA Period, respectively. The number of Class Period workweeks and number of PAGA Period pay periods you worked according to VPEI’s records is stated on the first page of this Notice. If you disagree with either of these numbers, you must challenge it by . See Section 5 of this Notice.

1. Why did I get this Notice?

A proposed class action settlement (the “**Settlement**”) of the above-captioned action pending in the Superior Court of the State of California, in and for the County of Sacramento (the “**Court**”), has been reached between Plaintiffs and VPEI and has been granted preliminary approval by the Court. You may be entitled to receive money from this Settlement.

You have received this Notice because you have been identified as a member of the Class, which is defined as:

All persons who are or previously were employed by Defendant [VPEI] in California and who were classified as a non-exempt employee at any time during the “Class Period.” The “Class Period” is May 22, 2020, through [Preliminary Approval Date].

2. What is this class action lawsuit about?

On May 25, 2024, Plaintiffs Shiristika Prasad and Pritika Prasad filed a class action complaint against VPEI in the Superior Court of the State of California, County of Sacramento, Case No. 24CV010094 (the “**Action**”). Plaintiffs Shiristika Prasad and Pritika Prasad asserted the following class claims: unfair competition, failure to pay minimum wages, failure to pay overtime wages, failure to provide required meal periods and unpaid premiums, failure to provide required rest periods and unpaid premiums, failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements, failure to reimburse employees for required expenses, and failure to provide wages when due. Plaintiffs Shiristika Prasad and Pritika Prasad also alleged a representative action for violation of the Private Attorneys General Act (Labor Code §§ 2698. et seq.) (“**PAGA**”).

VPEI denies the company has done anything wrong and dispute all the claims in the Action. VPEI contends that: Plaintiffs and Class Members were properly compensated for wages under California law and were provided with meal and rest periods in compliance with California law; that VPEI did not fail to pay to Plaintiffs or any Class Members any wages allegedly due at the time of their termination, did not fail to reimburse Class Members for required expenses, and complied with California wage statement requirements; that VPEI did not violate California Business and Professions Code section 17200 *et seq.*; that VPEI is not liable for any of the penalties sought or that could be sought in the Action; and that this Action cannot be maintained as a class or representative action.

The Court granted preliminary approval of the Settlement Agreement on <<INSERT PRELIMINARY APPROVAL DATE>>. At that time, the Court also preliminarily approved the Plaintiffs to serve as the Class Representatives, and the law firm Barvié Law, APC to serve as Class Counsel.

The Court has not ruled on the merits of Plaintiffs’ claims. However, to avoid additional expense, inconvenience, and interference with VPEI’s business operations, the Parties concluded that it is in their best interests and the interests of the Class to settle the Action now on the terms summarized in this Class Notice. The proposed Settlement Agreement was entered into after mediation and arm’s-length negotiations between the Parties. The Plaintiffs and Class Counsel

think the proposed Settlement Agreement is in the best interest of all Class Members. The proposed Settlement Agreement reflects a compromise of disputed claims and should not be construed as an admission of liability on the part of VPEI, which expressly denies all liability.

3. What are the terms of the Settlement?

Gross Settlement Amount. VPEI has agreed to pay an “all in” amount of Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000.00) (the “Gross Settlement Amount”) to fund the settlement of the Action. The Gross Settlement Amount includes all payments of Individual Class Payments to Class Members, Class Counsel Fees Payment, Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment, Class Representative Service Payments, the Administration Expenses Payment, and the PAGA Penalties for civil penalties under PAGA. Any employer-side payroll taxes on the portion of the Individual Class Payments allocated to wages shall be separately paid by VPEI. Within thirty (30) days of the Judgment becoming Final, VPEI will fund the Gross Settlement Amount by depositing the money with the Settlement Administrator. “Final” means the date the Judgment is entered, unless there are objections in which case “Final” means when the Judgment is no longer subject to appeal. Fifteen (15) days after the Settlement is funded, the Settlement Administrator will mail checks for the Individual Class Payments to Participating Class Members

Court Approved Deductions from Gross Settlement Amount. The proposed payments, subject to Court approval, will be deducted from the Gross Settlement Amount before payments of Individual Class Payments are made to Class Members who do not request exclusion (“Participating Class Members”). At the Final Approval Hearing, Plaintiffs and/or Class Counsel will ask the Court to approve the following deductions from the Gross Settlement, the amounts of which will be decided by the Court at the Final Approval Hearing:

- **Administration Expenses Payment.** Payment to the Settlement Administrator, estimated not to exceed \$6,000, for expenses, including expenses of notifying the Class Members of the proposed Settlement Agreement, processing opt-outs, and distributing settlement checks and tax forms.
- **Attorneys’ Fees and Costs.** Payment to Class Counsel of reasonable attorneys’ fees not to exceed one-third (1/3) of the Gross Settlement Amount, which presently equals \$166,666.66, and an additional amount to reimburse actual litigation costs incurred by the Plaintiffs not to exceed \$25,000. Class Counsel has been prosecuting the Action on behalf of Plaintiffs and the Class on a contingency fee basis (that is, without being paid any money to date) and has been paying all litigation costs and expenses. The amounts stated are what Class Counsel will be requesting and the final amounts to be paid will be decided at the Final Approval Hearing.
- **Class Representative Service Payments.** A Class Representative Service Payment in an amount not more than \$10,000 to each (a total of \$20,000) of the named Plaintiffs as service award, or such lesser amount as may be approved by the Court, to compensate each of them for their service on behalf of the Class in initiating and prosecuting the Action, and for the risks they undertook. The amounts stated are what Plaintiffs will be

requesting. The final amounts to be paid will be decided at the Final Approval Hearing.

- **PAGA Penalties.** A payment of \$40,000 relating to Plaintiffs' claim under PAGA, \$30,000 of which will be paid to the State of California's Labor and Workforce Development Agency ("LWDA"), with the remaining will \$10,000 to be distributed to the Aggrieved Employees as Individual PAGA Payments. The Settlement Administrator will calculate each Individual PAGA Payment by (a) dividing the amount of the Aggrieved Employees' twenty-five percent (25%) share of PAGA Penalties (\$10,000) by the total number of PAGA Pay Periods worked by all Aggrieved Employees, and (b) multiplying the result by each Aggrieved Employee's PAGA Pay Periods. Aggrieved Employees assume full responsibility and liability for any taxes owed on their Individual PAGA Payment. "PAGA Pay Period" means any pay period during which an Aggrieved Employee worked for VPEI for at least one day during the PAGA Period, which is February 13, 2023, through [date of preliminary approval].

Participating Class Members have the right to object to any of these deductions. The Court will consider all objections.

Calculation of Payments to Class Members. After all payments of the court-approved Attorneys' Fees and Costs, the Class Representative Service Payments, the PAGA Penalties, and the Administration Expenses Payment are deducted from the Gross Settlement Amount, the remaining portion, the "Net Settlement Amount," shall be distributed as Individual Class Payments to the Participating Class Members. The Net Settlement Amount is estimated to be at least \$ [redacted]. The Settlement Administrator will pay an Individual Class Payment from the Net Settlement Amount to each Participating Class Member. The Individual Class Payment for each Participating Class Member will be calculated by (a) dividing the Net Settlement Amount by the total number of Workweeks worked by all Participating Class Members during the Class Period, and (b) multiplying the result by each Participating Class Member's Workweeks. "Workweek" means any week during the Class Period in which a Class Member worked for VPEI for at least one day. The number of Workweeks will be based on VPEI's records; however, Class Members may challenge the number of Workweeks as explained below.

If the proposed Settlement Agreement is approved by the Court and you do not exclude yourself, you will automatically be mailed a check for your Individual Class Payment to the same address as this Class Notice. You do not have to do anything to receive a payment. If your address has changed, you must contact the Settlement Administrator and provide your correct address to ensure you receive your payment.

Tax Matters. Twenty-five percent (25%) of each Participating Class Member's Individual Class Payment is in settlement of wage claims (the "**Wage Portion**"). Accordingly, the Wage Portion is subject to wage withholdings, and shall be reported on IRS Form W-2. Seventy-five percent (75%) of each Participating Class Member's Individual Class Payment is in settlement of claims for alleged statutory damages, expense reimbursement, non-taxable penalties, and interest due to employees (collectively the "**Non-Wage Portion**"). The Non-Wage Portion shall not be subject to wage withholdings, and shall be reported on IRS Form 1099. The employee portion of all

applicable income and payroll taxes will be the responsibility of the Participating Class Members. Neither Class Counsel nor VPEI's counsel intend anything contained in this Class Notice to constitute advice regarding taxes or taxability. The tax issues for each Participating Class Member are unique to him/her, and each Participating Class Member may wish to consult a tax advisor concerning the tax consequences of the payments to be received under the Settlement.

Conditions of Settlement. Your receipt of the Individual Class Payment is conditioned upon the Court entering an order granting final approval of the proposed Settlement Agreement and entering judgment.

The Proposed Settlement Will be Void if the Court Denies Final Approval. It is possible the Court will decline to grant Final Approval of the proposed Settlement Agreement or decline to enter a Judgment. It is also possible the Court will enter a Judgment that is reversed on appeal. Plaintiffs and VPEI have agreed that, in either case, the proposed Settlement Agreement will be void: VPEI will not pay any money and Class Members will not release any claims against VPEI.

Need to Promptly Cash Payment Checks. The front of every check issued will show the date when the check expires (the void date). If you don't cash it by the void date, your check will be automatically cancelled, the Settlement Administrator shall transmit the funds represented by such checks to the California Controller's Unclaimed Property Fund in the name of the Class Member thereby leaving no "unpaid residue" subject to the requirements of California Code of Civil Procedure Section 384, subd. (b).

4. What Do I Release Under the Settlement?

Released Class Claims. As of the Effective Date and upon full finding of the Gross Settlement Amount by VPEI, all Participating Class Members, on behalf of themselves and their respective former and present representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns, release the Released Parties from all claims that were alleged, or reasonably could have been alleged based upon the facts alleged, in the Operative Complaint which occurred during the Class Period, including, any and all claims, actions, and causes of action, arising during the Class Period, for: (1) failure to pay wages, including minimum wages, for all time worked pursuant to California Labor Code sections 1194, 1197, and 1197.1 and the IWC Wage Orders; (2) failure to pay overtime wages pursuant to California Labor Code sections 510, 1194, and 1198 and the IWC Wage Orders; (3) failure to provide meal periods pursuant to California Labor Code sections 226.7 and 512 and the IWC Wage Orders, or to properly provide meal period premium payments; (4) failure to provide rest periods pursuant to California Labor Code sections 226.7 and 512 and the IWC Wage Orders, or to provide rest period premium payments; (5) failure to pay all wages owed at termination pursuant to California Labor Code sections 201-203 and the IWC Wage Orders; (6) failure to pay all wages in a timely manner during employment pursuant to California Labor Code section 204 and the IWC Wage Orders; (7) failure to furnish accurate itemized wage statements pursuant to California Labor Code section 226(a) and the IWC Wage Orders; (8) failure to reimburse all necessary business expenses pursuant to California Labor

Code sections 2800 and 2802 and the IWC Wage Orders; and (9) violations of California Business & Professions Code sections 17200, *et seq.* Except as set forth in this paragraph, Participating Class Members do not release any other claims, including claims for vested benefits, wrongful termination, violation of the Fair Employment and Housing Act, unemployment insurance, disability, social security, workers' compensation, or claims based on facts occurring outside the Class Period.

This means that, if you do not timely and formally exclude yourself from the proposed Settlement Agreement, you cannot sue, continue to sue, or be part of any other lawsuit against VPEI or any other Released Party about the Released Class Claims resolved by the proposed Settlement Agreement. It also means that all of the Court's orders in the Actions will apply to you and legally bind you.

Released PAGA Claims. As of the Effective Date and upon full funding of the Gross Settlement Amount by VPEI, Aggrieved Employees and the State of California and LWDA are deemed to release, on behalf of themselves and their respective former and present representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns, the Released Parties from all PAGA claims pled or that could have been pled based on the factual allegations contained in the Operative Complaint and PAGA Notices sent by Plaintiffs that occurred during the PAGA Period, including PAGA claims for violations of California Labor Code sections 201, 202, 203, 204, 226, 226(a), 226.2, 226.3, 226.7, 227.3, 232, 234, 246 *et. seq.* 510, 512(a) 558, 1182.12, 1194, 1194.2, 1197, 1197.1, 1197.5, 1198, and 2802. Except as set forth in this paragraph, the Released PAGA Claims do not include other PAGA claims, underlying wage and hour claims, claims for wrongful termination, discrimination, unemployment insurance, disability and worker's compensation, and claims outside of the PAGA Period.

Released Parties. The Released Parties are: VPEI and each of the company's former and present directors, officers, shareholders, owners, attorneys, insurers, predecessors, successors, assigns and subsidiaries.

5. How much will my payment be?

VPEI's records reflect that you worked << [redacted] >> Workweeks during the Class Period (May 22, 2020, through [Date of preliminary approval]).

Based on this information, your estimated Individual Class Payment from the Net Settlement Amount is << [redacted] >>.

VPEI's records reflect that you worked << [redacted] >> PAGA Pay Periods during the during the PAGA Period (February 13, 2023, through [date of preliminary approval]). Based on this information your estimated Individual PAGA Payment is << [redacted] >>.]

If you wish to challenge the information set forth above, then you must submit a written, signed dispute challenging the information along with supporting documents, to the Settlement Administrator at the address provided in this Class Notice no later than the Response Deadline,

which is _____ (i.e., 45 days after the mailing of the Class Notice or an additional 14 days in the case of re-mailing). You may also fax the dispute to _____ or email the dispute to _____ by no later than the Response Deadline. Any dispute should include credible written evidence and will be resolved by the Settlement Administrator.

6. How can I get a payment?

To receive money as a result of the proposed Settlement Agreement, you do not have to do anything. A check for your Individual Class Payment will be mailed automatically to the same address as this Class Notice. If your address is incorrect or has changed, you must notify the Settlement Administrator. The Settlement Administrator is: _____ (800) _____.

The Court will hold a Final Approval Hearing on _____ at _____ to decide whether to approve the proposed Settlement Agreement and fix the amounts to be paid as attorneys' fees and costs to Class Counsel and as service payment to Plaintiffs. If the Court approves the proposed Settlement Agreement and there are no objections or appeals, payments will be mailed approximately two months after this hearing. If there are objections or appeals, resolving them can take time, perhaps more than a year. Please be patient.

7. What if I don't want to be a part of the Settlement?

If you do not wish to participate, you may exclude yourself from the Class portion of the proposed Settlement Agreement (i.e., "opt out"). **If you opt out, you will not receive an Individual Class Payment, and you will not be bound by the proposed Settlement Agreement, which means you will retain the right to sue VPEI for the Released Class Claims.** However, Aggrieved Employees who opt out will still be paid their allocation of the PAGA Settlement and will remain bound by the release of the Released PAGA Claims regardless whether they submit a request for exclusion. **The PAGA Settlement amount is \$40,000, of which \$10,000 will be distributed to the Aggrieved Employees to be allocated based on their respective PAGA Pay Periods. Your share of the PAGA Settlement, if any, is set forth in Section 5 above.**

To opt out of the proposed Settlement Agreement, you must submit to the Settlement Administrator a written, signed and dated request to opt-out postmarked no later than the Response Deadline which is _____. You may also fax your request to opt out to _____ or email the dispute to _____ by no later than the Response Deadline. The request to opt-out should state in substance that you wish to be excluded from the class settlement in the *Prasad, et al. v. Vacuum Process Engineering, Inc.* lawsuit. The request to opt-out should state the Class Member's full name, mailing address, and email address or telephone number. Please include the name and number of the case, which is the *Prasad, et al. v. Vacuum Process Engineering, Inc.*, Case No. 24CV010094. The request to opt-out must be completed and signed by you. No other person may opt-out for a living member of the Class.

The address for the Settlement Administrator is [REDACTED].
Written requests for exclusion that are postmarked after [REDACTED] or are incomplete or unsigned will be rejected, and those Class Members will remain bound by the proposed Settlement Agreement and the release described above.

8. How do I Object to the Settlement?

Only Participating Class Members have the right to object to the proposed Settlement Agreement. Before deciding whether to object, you may wish to see what Plaintiffs and VPEI are asking the Court to approve. At least sixteen (16) court days before the Final Approval Hearing, scheduled for [REDACTED], Class Counsel and Plaintiffs will file in Court (1) a Motion for Final Approval that includes, among other things, the reasons why the proposed Settlement is fair, and (2) a Motion for Fees, Litigation Expenses, and Service Awards stating (i) the amount Class Counsel is requesting for attorneys' fees and litigation expenses; and (ii) the amount Plaintiffs are requesting as Class Representative Service Payment. Upon reasonable request, Class Counsel (whose contact information is below) will send you copies of these documents at no cost to you.

A Participating Class Member who disagrees with any aspect of the proposed Settlement Agreement, the Motion for Final Approval, and/or Motion for Fees, Litigation Expenses, and Service Awards may wish to object, for example, that the proposed Settlement Agreement is unfair, or that the amounts requested by Class Counsel or Plaintiffs are too high or too low. **The Response Deadline for sending written objections to the Administrator is [REDACTED]** (i.e., 45 days after the date of the Notice or an additional 14 days after the Notice in the case of re-mailing). You may also fax the dispute to [REDACTED] or email the dispute to [REDACTED] by no later than this Response Deadline. Be sure to tell the Settlement Administrator what you object to, why you object, and any facts that support your objection. Make sure you identify the Action, *Prasad, et al. v. Vacuum Process Engineering, Inc.*, Case No. 24CV010094, and include your name, current address, email or telephone number, and approximate dates of your employment with VPEI, and sign the objection. The Settlement Administrator's contact information is as follows:

Settlement Administrator:

Name of Company: _____

Email Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____

Alternatively, a Participating Class Member can object (or personally engage a lawyer to object at your own cost) by attending the Final Approval Hearing. You (or your attorney) should be ready to tell the Court what you object to, why you object, and any facts that support your objection. You also have the option to appear at the hearing by audio or video. Instructions on how to do so are available on the Court's website at <https://www.saccourt.ca.gov/>. Check the Court's website

for the most current information. See Section 9 of this Notice (immediately below) for specifics regarding the Final Approval Hearing.

The addresses for Parties' counsel are as follows:

CLASS COUNSEL:

Nicole Barvié, Esq.
Barvié Law, APC.
550 W B Street, Fourth Floor
San Diego, California 92101
Tel.: (858) 255-0928
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Roseville, CA 95661
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Fax.: (916) 780-8775
E-Mail: jmillstone@petersonwatts.com

9. Can I Attend the Final Approval Hearing?

The Court will hold a Final Approval Hearing at _____ (Pacific Standard Time) on _____, in Department 54 of the Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento, 720 9th Street, Sacramento, CA 95814, before Judge Christopher E. Krueger. At this hearing the Court will consider whether the Settlement is fair, reasonable, and adequate. The purpose of this hearing is for the Court to determine whether to grant final approval to the proposed Settlement Agreement and to fix the amounts to be paid as attorneys' fees and costs to Class Counsel and as service payments to Plaintiffs. If there are objections, the Court will consider them. **You are not required to attend** the Final Approval Hearing.

10. How Can I Get More Information?

You may call the Settlement Administrator at _____ or write to *Prasad, et al. v. Vacuum Process Engineering, Inc.*, Settlement Administrator, c/o _____.

This Class Notice summarizes the proposed settlement. More details are in the proposed Settlement Agreement. You may receive a copy of the proposed Settlement Agreement, the Judgment, the motion for attorneys' fees, costs and service awards, the motion for final approval, and/or other relevant documents by contacting Class Counsel. You may get more details by examining the Court's file on the Internet via the New Portal page for the California Superior Court

for the County of Sacramento (<https://www.saccourt.ca.gov/indexes/new-portal-info.aspx>) and entering the Case No. 24CV010094.

PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE COURT ABOUT THIS NOTICE.

IMPORTANT:

- **What if Your Address Changes** - To receive your check, you should immediately notify the Settlement Administrator if you move or otherwise change your mailing address.
- **What if You Fail To Cash a Check** - Settlement checks will be null and void 180 days after issuance if not deposited or cashed, and this expiration date is printed on the check. In such event, the Settlement Administrator shall direct all unclaimed funds to be paid to the California Controller's Unclaimed Property Fund in the name of the Class Member.
- **What if You Lose Your Check** - If your check is lost or misplaced, you should contact the Settlement Administrator immediately to request a replacement.

EXHIBIT B

[ORDER GRANTING PRELIMINARY APPROVAL]

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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO

SHIRISTIKA PRASAD, an individual, and
PRITIKA PRASAD, an individual, on behalf
of themselves, and on behalf of all persons
similarly,

Plaintiffs,

v.

VACUUM PROCESS ENGINEERING, INC.,
a California Corporation, and DOES 1 through
50, Inclusive,

Defendant.

CASE NO.: 24CV010094

**[PROPOSED] PRELIMINARY
APPROVAL ORDER**

Hearing Date: _____
Hearing Time: _____

Judge: Hon. Christopher E. Krueger
Dept.: 54

Action Filed: May 22, 2024
Trial Date: Not yet set

This matter came before the Honorable Christopher E. Kruger of the Superior Court of the State of California, in and for the County of Sacramento, on _____[DATE], for hearing on the unopposed motion by Plaintiffs Shiristika Prasad and Pritika Prasad (“**Plaintiffs**”) for preliminary approval of the Settlement with Defendant Vacuum Process Engineering, Inc. (“**VPEI**”). The Court, having considered the briefs, argument of counsel and all matters presented

1 to the Court and good cause appearing, hereby GRANTS Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary
2 Approval of Class Action Settlement.

3 **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:**

4 1. The Court preliminarily approves the proposed Class Action and PAGA Settlement
5 Agreement ("**Settlement Agreement**") attached as Exhibit 1 to the Declaration of Nicole Barvie
6 in Support of Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlement. This is
7 based on the Court's determination that the Gross Settlement Amount set forth in the Settlement
8 Agreement is within the range of possible final approval, pursuant to the provisions of Section 382
9 of the California Code of Civil Procedure and California Rules of Court, rule 3.769.

10 2. This Order incorporates by reference the definitions in the Settlement Agreement,
11 and all terms defined therein shall have the same meaning in this Order as set forth in the
12 Settlement Agreement.

13 3. The Gross Settlement Amount VPEI shall pay is Five Hundred Thousand Dollars
14 (\$500,000.00). It appears to the Court on a preliminary basis that the settlement amount and terms
15 are fair, adequate, and reasonable as to all potential Class Members when balanced against the
16 probable outcome of further litigation and the significant risks relating to certification, liability,
17 and damages issues. It further appears that investigation and research have been conducted such
18 that counsel for the Parties are able to reasonably evaluate their respective positions. It further
19 appears to the Court that approval of the Settlement Agreement will avoid substantial additional
20 costs by all Parties, as well as avoid the delay and risks that would be presented by the further
21 prosecution of the Action. It further appears that the Settlement Agreement has been reached as
22 the result of serious and non-collusive, arms-length negotiations.

23 4. The Court preliminarily finds that the Gross Settlement Amount in the Settlement
24 Agreement appears to be within the range of reasonableness of a settlement that could ultimately
25 be given final approval by this Court. The Court has reviewed the monetary recovery that is being
26 granted as part of the Settlement Agreement and preliminarily finds that the monetary settlement
27 award made available to the Class is fair, adequate, and reasonable when balanced against the
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PRELIMINARY APPROVAL ORDER

1 probable outcome of further litigation and the significant risks relating to certification, liability,
2 and damages issues.

3 5. The Settlement Agreement specifies for an attorneys' fees award not to exceed one-
4 third of the Gross Settlement Amount, an award of litigation expenses incurred, not to exceed
5 \$25,000.00, and a proposed Class Representative Service Payment to each of the Plaintiffs in an
6 amount not to exceed \$10,000 to each. The Court will not approve the amount of attorneys' fees
7 and costs nor the amount of any service award, until the Final Approval Hearing. Plaintiffs will be
8 required to present evidence supporting these requests, including lodestar, prior to final approval.

9 6. The Court recognizes that Plaintiffs and VPEI stipulate and agree to representative
10 treatment and certification of a class for settlement purposes only. This stipulation will not be
11 deemed admissible in this or any other proceeding should this Settlement Agreement not become
12 final. For settlement purposes only, the Court conditionally certifies the following Class: "all
13 persons who are or previously were employed by VPEI in California and who were classified as a
14 non-exempt employee at any time between May 22, 2020, through [the date of Preliminary
15 Approval of the Court] (the "Class Period").

16 7. The Court concludes that, for settlement purposes only, the Class meets the
17 requirements for certification under section 382 of the California Code of Civil Procedure in that:
18 (a) the Class is ascertainable and so numerous that joinder of all members of the Class is
19 impracticable; (b) common questions of law and fact predominate, and there is a well-defined
20 community of interest amongst the members of the Class with respect to the subject matter of the
21 litigation; (c) the claims of the Plaintiffs are typical of the claims of the members of the Class; (d)
22 the Plaintiffs will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the members of the Class; (e) a
23 class action is superior to other available methods for the efficient adjudication of this controversy;
24 and (f) counsel for the Class is qualified to act as counsel for the Class and the Plaintiffs are
25 adequate representatives of the Class.

26 8. The Court provisionally appoints Plaintiffs as the representatives of the Class. The
27 Court provisionally appoints Barvie Law, APC, as Class Counsel for the Class.

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PRELIMINARY APPROVAL ORDER

1 9. The Settlement Agreement provides for the payment of \$40,000 PAGA Penalties
2 out of the Gross Settlement Amount, which shall be allocated \$30,000 to the Labor & Workforce
3 Development Agency (“**LWDA**”) as the LWDA’s 75% share and \$10,000 to “Aggrieved
4 Employees,” i.e., all persons who are or previously were employed by VPEI in California and who
5 were classified as a non-exempt employee at any time between February 13, 2023, through [the
6 date of Preliminary Approval of the Court] (the “**PAGA Period**”). Pursuant to Labor Code section
7 2699, subdivision (l)(2), the LWDA will be provided notice of the proposed Settlement
8 Agreement and settlement terms. The Court finds the \$40,000 PAGA Penalties to be reasonable.

9 10. The Court hereby approves, as to form and content, the Class Notice attached to the
10 Agreement as Exhibit A. The Court finds that the Class Notice appears to fully and accurately
11 inform the Class of all material elements of the proposed Settlement Agreement, of the Class
12 Members’ right to be excluded from the Class by submitting a written opt-out request, and of each
13 member’s right and opportunity to object. The Court further finds that the distribution of the Class
14 Notice substantially in the manner and form set forth in the proposed Settlement Agreement and
15 this Order meets the requirements of due process, is the best notice practicable under the
16 circumstances, and shall constitute due and sufficient notice to all persons entitled thereto. The
17 Court orders the mailing of the Class Notice by first class mail in English pursuant to the terms set
18 forth in the proposed Settlement Agreement. If a Class Notice Packet is returned because of an
19 incorrect address, the Settlement Administrator will promptly search for a more current address for
20 the Class Member and re-mail the Class Notice Packet to any new address for the Class Member
21 no later than fourteen (14) business days after the receipt of the undelivered Class Notice. The
22 Settlement Administrator will also email a copy of the re-mailed Class Notice to the Class
23 Member if there is an available email address in the Class Data.

24 11. The Court hereby appoints APEX Class Actions as the Settlement Administrator.
25 No later than fourteen (14) days after this Order, VPEI will provide to the Settlement
26 Administrator an electronic database containing the Class Data, who shall perform address updates
27 and verifications as necessary prior to the first mailing. Using best efforts to mail it as soon as
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PRELIMINARY APPROVAL ORDER

1 possible, and in no event later than fourteen (14) days after receiving the Class Data, the
2 Settlement Administrator will mail the Class Notice Packet to all Class Members via first-class
3 regular U.S. Mail to their last known address.

4 12. The Court hereby preliminarily approves the proposed procedure in the Settlement
5 Agreement for exclusion. Any Class Member may individually choose to opt out of and be
6 excluded from the Class as provided in the Class Notice by following the instructions for
7 requesting exclusion from the Class that are set forth in the Class Notice. All requests for
8 exclusion must be postmarked or received no later than forty-five (45) calendar days after the date
9 of the mailing of the Class Notice (“**Response Deadline**”). If a Class Notice Packet is re-mailed,
10 the Response Deadline for requests for exclusion will be extended an additional fourteen (14)
11 days. A Request for Exclusion may also be faxed or emailed to the Settlement Administrator as
12 indicated in the Class Notice. Any such person who chooses to opt out of and be excluded from
13 the Class will not be entitled to any recovery under the Class Settlement and will not be bound by
14 the Class Settlement or have any right to object, appeal or comment thereon. Class Members who
15 have not requested exclusion shall be bound by all determinations of the Court, the Settlement
16 Agreement, and the Judgment. A request for exclusion may only opt out that particular individual.
17 Any attempt to effect an opt-out of a group, class, or subclass of individuals is not permitted and
18 will be deemed invalid.

19 13. Any Class Member who has not opted out may appear at the final approval hearing
20 and may object or express his/her views regarding the proposed Settlement Agreement, and may
21 present evidence and file briefs or other papers that may be proper and relevant to the issues to be
22 heard and determined by the Court as provided in the Notice. Class Members will have until the
23 Response Deadline to submit their written objections to the Settlement Administrator. Written
24 objections may also be faxed or emailed to the Settlement Administrator as indicated in the Class
25 Notice. If a Class Notice Packet is re-mailed, the Response Deadline for written objections will be
26 extended an additional fourteen (14) days. Alternatively, Class Members may appear at the Final
27 Approval Hearing to make an oral objection.

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PRELIMINARY APPROVAL ORDER

1 14. A final approval hearing shall be held before this Court on _____
2 _____ at _____ in Department 54 at the Sacramento County Superior Court to hear
3 the motion for final approval and the motion for attorneys' fees and costs, and to determine all
4 necessary matters concerning the proposed Settlement Agreement, including: whether the
5 proposed settlement of the Action on the terms and conditions provided for in the Settlement
6 Agreement is fair, adequate, and reasonable and should be finally approved by the Court; whether
7 the Final Approval Order and Judgment should be entered herein; whether the plan of allocation
8 contained in the proposed Settlement Agreement should be approved as fair, adequate and
9 reasonable to the Class Members; and to finally approve attorneys' fees and costs, service award,
10 and the fees and expenses of the Settlement Administrator. All papers in support of the motion for
11 final approval and the motion for attorneys' fees, costs and service award shall be filed with the
12 Court and served on all counsel no later than sixteen (16) court days before the hearing and both
13 motions shall be heard at this final approval hearing.

14 15. Neither the Settlement Agreement nor any exhibit, document, or instrument
15 delivered thereunder shall be construed as a concession or admission by VPEI in any way that the
16 claims asserted have any merit or that this Action was properly brought as a class or representative
17 action, and shall not be used as evidence of, or used against VPEI as, an admission or indication in
18 any way, including with respect to any claim of any liability, wrongdoing, fault or omission by
19 VPEI or with respect to the truth of any allegation asserted by any person. Whether or not the
20 proposed Settlement Agreement is finally approved, neither the proposed Settlement Agreement
21 nor any exhibit, document, statement, proceeding or conduct related to the proposed Settlement
22 Agreement nor any reports or accounts thereof shall in any event be construed as, offered or
23 admitted in evidence as, received as, or deemed to be evidence for any purpose adverse to the
24 VPEI, including, but not limited to, evidence of a presumption, concession, indication, or
25 admission by VPEI of any liability, fault, wrongdoing, omission, concession, or damage.

26 16. In the event the proposed Settlement Agreement does not become effective in
27 accordance with its terms, or the proposed Settlement Agreement is not finally approved, or is
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PRELIMINARY APPROVAL ORDER

terminated, canceled or fails to become effective for any reason, this Order shall be rendered null and void and shall be vacated, and the Parties shall revert to their respective positions as of before entering into the proposed Settlement Agreement, and expressly reserve their respective rights regarding the prosecution and defense of this Action, including all available defenses, affirmative defenses, and/or arguments that any claim in the Action could not be certified as a class action and/or managed as a representative action. In such an event, the Court's orders regarding the proposed Settlement Agreement, including this Order, shall not be used or referred to in litigation for any purpose. Nothing in this paragraph is intended to alter the terms of the proposed Settlement Agreement with respect to its effect if the proposed Settlement Agreement is not approved.

17. The Court reserves the right to adjourn or continue the date of the final approval hearing and all dates provided for in the proposed Settlement Agreement without further notice to Class Members, and retains jurisdiction to consider all further applications arising out of or connected with the proposed Settlement Agreement.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: _____

HON. CHRISTOPHER E. KRUEGER
JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA

PRELIMINARY APPROVAL ORDER

EXHIBIT C

[FINAL APPROVAL ORDER AND JUDGMENT]

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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO

SHIRISTIKA PRASAD, an individual, and
PRITIKA PRASAD, an individual, on behalf
of themselves, and on behalf of all persons
similarly,

Plaintiffs,

v.

VACUUM PROCESS ENGINEERING, INC.,
a California Corporation, and DOES 1 through
50, Inclusive,

Defendant.

CASE NO.: 24CV010094

**[PROPOSED] FINAL APPROVAL
ORDER AND JUDGMENT**

Hearing Date: _____
Hearing Time: _____

Judge: Hon. Christopher E. Krueger
Dept.: 54

Action Filed: May 22, 2025
Trial date: None Set

1 The unopposed motion of Plaintiffs Shiristika Prasad and Plaintiff Pritika Prasad
2 (collectively "**Plaintiffs**") for an order finally approving the Class Action and PAGA Settlement
3 Agreement ("**Settlement Agreement**") with Defendant Vacuum Process Engineering, Inc.
4 ("**VPEI**"), attorneys' fees and costs, service payments, and the expenses of the Settlement
5 Administrator duly came on for hearing on _____ before the Honorable Christopher
6 E. Krueger.

7 **I.**

8 **FINDINGS**

9 Based on the oral and written argument and evidence presented in connection with the
10 motion, the Court makes the following findings:

11 1. All terms used herein shall have the same meaning as defined in the Settlement
12 Agreement.

13 2. This Court has jurisdiction over the subject matter of this litigation pending before
14 the Superior Court for the State of California, in and for the County of Sacramento, and over all
15 Parties to this litigation, including the Class.

16 3. Based on a review of the papers submitted by Plaintiffs and a review of the
17 applicable law, the Court finds that the Gross Settlement Amount of Five Hundred Thousand
18 Dollars (\$500,000) and the terms set forth in the Settlement Agreement are fair, reasonable, and
19 adequate.

20 4. The Court further finds that the Settlement was the result of arm's length
21 negotiations conducted after Class Counsel had adequately investigated the claims and became
22 familiar with the strengths and weaknesses of those claims. In particular, the amount of the
23 Settlement, and the assistance of an experienced mediator in the settlement process, among other
24 factors, support the Court's conclusion that the Settlement Agreement is fair, reasonable, and
25 adequate.

26 **Preliminary Approval of the Settlement**

27 5. On _____, the Court granted preliminary approval of the Settlement
28

1 Agreement. At this same time, the Court approved conditional certification of the Class for
2 settlement purposes only.

3 **Notice to the Class**

4 6. In compliance with the Preliminary Approval Order, the Court-approved Class
5 Notice was mailed by first class mail to members of the Class at their last-known addresses on or
6 about _____. Mailing of the Class Notice to their last-known addresses was the best
7 notice practicable under the circumstances and was reasonably calculated to communicate actual
8 notice of the litigation and the proposed settlement to the Class. The Class Notice given to the
9 Class Members fully and accurately informed the Class Members of all material elements of the
10 proposed Settlement Agreement and of their opportunity to object to or comment thereon or to
11 seek exclusion; was valid, due, and sufficient notice to all Class Members; and complied fully
12 with the laws of the State of California, the United States Constitution, due process and other
13 applicable law. The Class Notice fairly and adequately described the proposed Settlement and
14 provided Class Members adequate instructions and a variety of means to obtain additional
15 information.

16 7. The Response Deadline for opting out or submitting written objections to the
17 proposed Settlement was _____, which for re-mailings was extended by fourteen (14)
18 days. There was an adequate interval between notice and the deadline to permit Class Members to
19 choose what to do and to act on their decision. A full and fair opportunity has been afforded to the
20 Class Members to participate in this hearing, and all Class Members and other persons wishing to
21 be heard have had a full and fair opportunity to be heard. Class Members also have had a full and
22 fair opportunity to exclude themselves from the proposed Settlement and Class. Accordingly, the
23 Court determines that all Class Members who did not timely and properly submit a request for
24 exclusion are bound by the Settlement and this Final Approval Order and Judgment.

25 ///

26 ///

Fairness of the Settlement

8. The proposed Settlement Agreement is entitled to a presumption of fairness. *Dunk v. Ford Motor Co.* 48 Cal.App.4th 1794, 1801 (1996).

a. The settlement was reached through arm's-length bargaining between the Parties during an all-day mediation before Tagore Subramaniam, an experienced mediator of wage and hour class actions. There has been no collusion between the Parties.

b. Plaintiffs' and their counsel's investigation and discovery have been sufficient to allow the Court and counsel to act intelligently.

c. Counsel for all Parties are experienced in similar employment class action litigation. Plaintiffs' counsel recommended approval of the proposed Settlement Agreement.

d. The percentage of objectors and requests for exclusion is small. _____ objections were received. _____ requests for exclusion were received.

e. The participation rate was high. _____ Class Members will be mailed a settlement payment, representing _____ % of the overall Class _____.

9. The consideration to be given to the Class Members under the terms of the proposed Settlement Agreement is fair, reasonable, and adequate considering the strengths and weaknesses of the claims asserted in this action and is fair, reasonable, and adequate compensation for the release of Class Members' claims, given the uncertainties and significant risks of the litigation and the delays which would ensue from continued prosecution of the action.

10. The proposed Settlement Agreement is approved as fair, adequate, and reasonable and in the best interests of the Class Members.

Attorneys' Fees and Costs

11. An award of \$166,666.67 for attorneys' fees, representing one-third of the Gross Settlement Amount, and up to \$25,00.00 for actual litigation costs and expenses, is reasonable, in light of the contingent nature of Class Counsel's fee, the hours worked by Class Counsel, and the results achieved by Class Counsel. The requested award has been supported by Class Counsel's lodestar and billing statement.

1 **Class Representative Service Payments**

2 12. The proposed Settlement Agreement provides for a Class Representative Service
3 Payments of not more than \$10,000 to each of the two Plaintiffs, subject to the Court's approval.
4 The Court finds that Class Representative Service Payments in the amount of \$10,000 to each
5 Plaintiff is reasonable in light of the risks and burdens undertaken by the Plaintiffs in this
6 litigation, for their time and effort in bringing and prosecuting this matter on behalf of the Class,
7 and for their execution of a general release.

8 **Settlement Administration Expenses**

9 13. The Settlement Administrator shall calculate and administer the payments to be
10 made to the Class Members, transmit payment for attorneys' fees and costs to Class Counsel,
11 transmit the Class Representative Service Payments to the Plaintiffs, issue all required tax
12 reporting forms, calculate withholdings, and perform the other remaining duties set forth in the
13 proposed Settlement Agreement. The Settlement Administrator has documented \$6,000 in fees
14 and expenses, and this amount is reasonable in light of the work performed.

15 **PAGA Penalties**

16 14. The proposed Settlement Agreement provides for \$40,000 PAGA Penalties out of
17 the Gross Settlement Amount, to be allocated \$30,000 to the Labor & Workforce Development
18 Agency ("LWDA") as its 75% share and \$10,000 to be distributed to the Aggrieved Employees as
19 their 25% share. The Aggrieved Employees' 25% share (\$10,000) to be allocated by (a) dividing
20 the amount of the Aggrieved Employees' share (\$10,000) by the total number of PAGA Pay
21 Periods worked by all Aggrieved Employees, and (b) multiplying the result by each Aggrieved
22 Employee's PAGA Pay Periods. "Aggrieved Employees" are all individuals who are or previously
23 were employed by VPEI in California who were classified as a non-exempt employee any time
24 during the PAGA Period. The PAGA Period is from February 13, 2023, through
25 [REDACTED]. Pursuant to Labor Code section 2699, subdivision (l)(2), the LWDA was
26 provided notice of the proposed Settlement Agreement and settlement terms and has not indicated
27 any objection thereto. The Court finds the \$40,000 PAGA Penalties to be reasonable.

II.
ORDERS

Based on the foregoing findings, and good cause appearing, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. The Class is certified for the purposes of settlement only. The Class is hereby defined as follows: All persons who are or previously were employed by VPEI in California and who were classified as a non-exempt employee at any time during the Class Period. The “Class Period” is May 22, 2020, through [REDACTED].

2. All persons who meet the foregoing definition are members of the Class, except for those individuals who filed a valid request for exclusion (“opt out”) from the Class. [INSERT REFERENCE TO IDENTIFY ANY OPT OUTS].

3. The proposed Settlement Agreement is hereby finally approved as fair, reasonable, adequate, and in the best interest of the Class.

4. Class Counsel are awarded attorneys’ fees in the amount of \$166,666.67 and costs in the amount of \$[REDACTED]. Class Counsel shall not seek or obtain any other compensation or reimbursement from VPEI, Plaintiffs, or members of the Class.

5. The payment of Class Representative Service Payments in the amount of \$10,000 to each of the Plaintiffs is approved.

6. The payment of \$6,000 to the Settlement Administrator for its fees and expenses is approved.

7. The PAGA Penalties of \$40,000 is approved. The Aggrieved Employees’ 25% share (\$10,000) shall be distributed to Aggrieved Employees in accordance with the Settlement Agreement.

8. Pursuant to Labor Code section 2699, subdivision (1)(2), Class Counsel shall submit a copy of this Final Approval Order and Judgment to the LWDA within 10 days after its entry.

9. Neither the Settlement Agreement nor this Final Approval Order and Judgment constitutes an admission by VPEI, or a finding by the Court, of the validity of any claims in the

FINAL APPROVAL ORDER AND JUDGMENT

1 Action, any wrongdoing by VPEI, or that this Action is appropriate for class or representative
2 treatment (other than for settlement purposes). Neither this Final Approval Order and Judgment,
3 the Settlement Agreement, nor any document referred to herein, nor any action taken to carry out
4 the Settlement Agreement is, may be construed as, or may be used as an admission by or against
5 VPEI of any fault, wrongdoing, or liability whatsoever. The entering into or carrying out of the
6 Settlement Agreement, and any negotiations or proceedings related thereto, shall not in any event
7 be construed as, or deemed to be evidence of, an admission or concession with regard to the
8 denials or defenses by VPEI. Notwithstanding these restrictions, VPEI may file in the Action or in
9 any other proceeding this Final Approval Order and Judgment, the Settlement Agreement, or any
10 other papers and records on file in the Action as evidence to support a defense of *res judicata*,
11 collateral estoppel, release, or other theory of claim or issue preclusion or similar defense as to the
12 Released Class Claims and/or Released PAGA Claims.

13 10. Notice of entry of this Final Approval Order and Judgment shall be given to all
14 Parties by Class Counsel on behalf of Plaintiffs and all Class Members. It shall not be necessary to
15 send notice of entry of this Final Approval Order and Judgment to individual Class Members.

16 11. If the Settlement Agreement does not become final and effective in accordance
17 with its terms, then this Final Approval Order and Judgment, and all orders entered in connection
18 herewith, shall be rendered null and void and shall be vacated, and the Parties shall revert to their
19 respective positions as of before entering into the Settlement Agreement, and expressly reserve
20 their respective rights regarding the prosecution and defense of this Action, including all available
21 defenses and affirmative defenses, and arguments that any claim in the Action could not be
22 certified as a class action and/or managed as a representative action.

23 **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, ADJUDICATED AND DECREED THAT:**

24 1. Except as set forth in the Settlement Agreement and this Final Approval Order and
25 Judgment, Plaintiffs and all members of the Class shall take nothing in the Action.

26 2. The Court shall retain jurisdiction to construe, interpret, implement, and enforce the
27 Settlement Agreement, to hear and resolve any contested challenge to a claim for settlement
28

FINAL APPROVAL ORDER AND JUDGMENT

benefits, and to supervise and adjudicate any dispute arising from or in connection with the distribution of settlement benefits.

3. All Parties shall bear their own attorneys' fees and costs, except as otherwise provided in the Settlement Agreement and in this Final Approval Order and Judgment.

4. Effective on the date when VPEI fully funds the entire Gross Settlement Amount and all employer payroll taxes owed on the Wage Portion of the Individual Class Payments, Plaintiffs, Participating Class Members, Aggrieved Employees, and the LWDA will release claims against all Released Parties as follows: All Participating Class Members, on behalf of themselves and their respective former and present representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns, release Released Parties from all claims that were alleged, or reasonably could have been alleged based upon the facts alleged, in the Operative Complaint which occurred during the Class Period, including, any and all claims, actions, and causes of action, arising during the Class Period, for: (a) failure to pay wages, including minimum wages, for all time worked pursuant to California Labor Code sections 1194, 1197, and 1197.1 and the IWC Wage Orders; (b) failure to pay overtime wages pursuant to California Labor Code sections 510, 1194, and 1198 and the IWC Wage Orders; (c) failure to provide meal periods pursuant to California Labor Code sections 226.7 and 512 and the IWC Wage Orders, or to properly provide meal period premium payments; (d) failure to provide rest periods pursuant to California Labor Code sections 226.7 and 512 and the IWC Wage Orders, or to provide rest period premium payments; (e) failure to pay all wages owed at termination pursuant to California Labor Code sections 201-203 and the IWC Wage Orders; (f) failure to pay all wages in a timely manner during employment pursuant to California Labor Code section 204 and the IWC Wage Orders; (g) failure to furnish accurate itemized wage statements pursuant to California Labor Code section 226(a) and the IWC Wage Orders; (h) failure to reimburse all necessary business expenses pursuant to California Labor Code sections 2800 and 2802 and the IWC Wage Orders; and (i) violations of California Business & Professions Code sections 17200, *et seq.* Except as set forth in this paragraph, Participating Class Members do not release any other claims, including claims for vested benefits, wrongful

FINAL APPROVAL ORDER AND JUDGMENT

1 termination, violation of the Fair Employment and Housing Act, unemployment insurance,
2 disability, social security, workers' compensation, or claims based on facts occurring outside the
3 Class Period.

4 5. All Aggrieved Employees and the State of California and LWDA are deemed to
5 release, on behalf of themselves and their respective former and present representatives, agents,
6 attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns, the Released Parties from PAGA claims
7 pled or that could have been pled based on the factual allegations contained in the Operative
8 Complaint and PAGA Notices sent by Plaintiffs that occurred during the PAGA Period, including
9 PAGA claims for violations of California Labor Code sections 201, 202, 203, 204, 226, 226(a),
10 226.2, 226.3, 226.7, 227.3, 232, 234, 246 et. seq. 510, 512(a) 558, 1182.12, 1194, 1194.2, 1197,
11 1197.1, 1197.5, 1198, and 2802. Except as set forth in this paragraph, the Released PAGA Claims
12 do not include other PAGA claims, underlying wage and hour claims, claims for wrongful
13 termination, discrimination, unemployment insurance, disability and worker's compensation, and
14 claims outside of the PAGA Period.

15 6. Plaintiffs and their respective former and present spouses, representatives, agents,
16 attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns generally release and discharge Released
17 Parties from all claims, transactions, or occurrences that occurred during the Class Period,
18 including, but not limited to: (a) all claims that were, or reasonably could have been, alleged,
19 based on the facts contained, in the Operative Complaint and (b) all PAGA claims that were, or
20 reasonably could have been, alleged based on facts contained in the Operative Complaint,
21 Plaintiff's PAGA Notice ("**Plaintiffs' Release**").

22 7. Plaintiffs' Waiver of Rights Under Civil Code Section 1542. For purposes of
23 Plaintiffs' Release, Plaintiffs expressly waive and relinquishes the provisions, rights, and benefits,
24 if any, of section 1542 of the California Civil Code, which reads:

25 A general release does not extend to claims that the creditor or releasing party
26 does not know or suspect to exist in his or her favor at the time of executing
27 the release, and that if known by him or her would have materially affected his
28 or her settlement with the debtor or Released Party.

8. For any Class Member whose Individual Class Payment check or Individual PAGA Payment check is uncashed and cancelled after the void date, the Settlement Administrator shall transmit the funds represented by such checks to the California Controller's Unclaimed Property Fund in the name of the Class Member thereby leaving no "unpaid residue" subject to the requirements of California Code of Civil Procedure Section 384, subd. (b).

9. The Court hereby enters judgment in the entire Action as of the filing date of this Order and Judgment, pursuant to the terms set forth in the Settlement Agreement. Without affecting the finality of this Order and Judgment in any way, the Court hereby retains continuing jurisdiction over the interpretation, implementation, and enforcement of the Settlement Agreement and all orders entered in connection therewith pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure section 664.6.

LET JUDGMENT BE FORTHWITH ENTERED ACCORDINGLY. IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: _____

HON. CHRISTOPHER E. KRUEGER
JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA

FINAL APPROVAL ORDER AND JUDGMENT

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