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RAYMON GAVALDON

**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO**

RAYMON GAVALDON, individually, and on
behalf of the State of California and other
aggrieved persons,

Plaintiff,

v.

VICEROY IMPROVEMENT LLC, an Oregon
limited liability company; DABELLA
EXTERIORS, LLC, an Oregon limited liability
company; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No.: **25CV004523**

**PAGA REPRESENTATIVE ACTION
COMPLAINT:**

1. Civil Penalties Under PAGA [Cal. Lab. Code § 2699, et seq.]

1 Plaintiff RAYMON GAVALDON (“Plaintiff”), on information and belief, alleges as
2 follows:

3 **INTRODUCTION & PRELIMINARY STATEMENT**

4 1. Plaintiff brings this action individually, and on behalf of the State of California and
5 other aggrieved persons, against Defendants VICEROY IMPROVEMENT LLC and DABELLA
6 EXTERIORS, LLC, and DOES 1 through 10 (collectively referred to as “Defendants”) for civil
7 penalties under the Private Attorneys General Act of 2004, California Labor Code §§ 2698 *et seq.*
8 (“PAGA”) stemming from Defendants’ failure to pay for all hours worked (including minimum,
9 straight time, and overtime wages), failure to provide Employee with legally compliant meal
10 periods, failure to authorize and permit Employee to take rest periods, failure to pay all earned
11 wages twice per month, failure to maintain accurate records of hours worked and meal periods
12 failure to reimburse for business expenses, failure to furnish accurate wage statements, and failure
13 to timely pay final pay.

14 2. For over 50 years, California’s courts and Legislature have recognized that this
15 State’s wage-and-hour laws serve a compelling public interest of fostering a stable job market.
16 Wages are not ordinary debts. Because of the economic position of the average worker and his or
17 her family, it is essential to the public welfare that employers obey the wage-and-hour laws so that
18 employees are promptly paid the minimum/overtime wages that the Legislature has required for
19 employees. So fundamental are California’s wage-and-hour laws that the Legislature has
20 criminalized certain types of violations. In extending extra protection to deter violations of these
21 underlying statutes—since Plaintiff is not seeking general and/or special damages, restitution, or
22 other damages other than civil penalties—California has enacted PAGA to permit an individual to
23 bring an action for PAGA penalties only, which is the precise and sole nature of this action.

24 3. All California employees during the relevant period who are or were harmed by
25 Defendants’ illegal practices are “Aggrieved Employees.” The Aggrieved Employees worked for
26 Defendants as hourly-paid or non-exempt employees within the applicable period.

27 4. Plaintiff brings this action against Defendants seeking only to recover penalties on
28 behalf of Plaintiff individually, on behalf of certain Aggrieved Employees that worked for

Defendants, and on behalf of the State of California. Plaintiff does not seek to recover anything other than penalties as permitted by California Labor Code Section 2699 at this time. To the extent that statutory violations are mentioned for wage violations, Plaintiff does not seek underlying general and/or special damages for those violations, but simply penalties as permitted by California Labor Code Section 2699, declaratory relief, and injunctive relief for Plaintiff individually, and certain Aggrieved Employees as permitted by the PAGA.

5. Defendants own/owned and operate/operated an industry, business, and establishment within the State of California, including Sacramento County. As such and based upon all the facts and circumstances incident to Defendants' businesses in California, Defendants are subject to the California Labor Code, Wage Orders issued by the Industrial Welfare Commission ("IWC"), and the California Business & Professions Code.

6. On information and belief, Defendants were on actual and constructive notice of the improprieties alleged herein and intentionally refused to rectify their unlawful conduct. Defendants' violations, as alleged above, during all relevant times herein were willful and deliberate.

7. At all relevant times, Defendants were and are legally responsible for all of the unlawful conduct, policies, acts and omissions as described in each and all of the foregoing paragraphs as the employer of Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees. Further, Defendants are responsible for each of the unlawful acts or omissions complained of herein under the doctrine of "respondeat superior."

THE PARTIES

A. Plaintiff

8. Plaintiff Raymon Gavaldon is a California resident who worked for Defendants in Sacramento, California as an hourly-paid, non-exempt employee from approximately April 2023 to August 2024.

B. Defendants

9. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and based upon that information and belief alleges, that Defendants are, and at all times herein mentioned, were:

(a) Business entities conducting business in numerous counties throughout the State of California, including Sacramento County; and,

(b) The former employers of Plaintiff, and the current and/or former employers of Aggrieved Employees, because Defendants suffered and permitted Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees to work; and/or controlled their wages, hours, or working conditions; and or engaged Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees, thereby creating a common law employment relationship.

10. Plaintiff does not know the true names or capacities of the persons or entities sued herein as Does 1-10, inclusive, and therefore sues said Defendants by such fictitious names. Each of the Doe Defendants were in some manner legally responsible for the damages suffered by Plaintiff and certain Aggrieved Employees as alleged herein. Plaintiff will amend this complaint to set forth the true names and capacities of these Defendants when they have been ascertained, together with appropriate charging allegations, as may be necessary.

11. At all times mentioned herein, the Defendants named as Does 1-10, inclusive, and each of them, were residents of, doing business in, availed themselves of the jurisdiction of, and/or injured a significant number of the Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees in the State of California.

12. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that at all relevant times each Defendant, directly or indirectly, or through agents or other persons, employed Plaintiff and the other employees and exercised control over their wages, hours, and working conditions. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that, at all relevant times, each Defendant was the principal, agent, partner, joint venturer, joint employer, officer, director, controlling shareholder, subsidiary, affiliate, parent corporation, successor in interest and/or predecessor in interest of some or all of the other Defendants, and was engaged with some or all of the other Defendants in a joint enterprise for profit, and bore such other relationships to some or all of the other Defendants so as to be liable for their conduct with respect to the matters alleged below. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that each Defendant acted pursuant to and within the scope of the relationships alleged above, that each Defendant knew or should have known about, and authorized, ratified, adopted, approved, controlled, aided and abetted the conduct of all other

Defendants.

ALLEGATIONS COMMON TO ALL CAUSES OF ACTION

13. Plaintiff worked for Defendants in Sacramento County, California as an hourly-paid, non-exempt employee from approximately April 2023 to August 2024. At all times, Defendants paid Plaintiff an hourly wage and classified Plaintiff as non-exempt from overtime.

14. Throughout Plaintiff's employment, Defendants committed numerous labor code violations under state law. As discussed below, Plaintiff's experience working for Defendants was typical and illustrative.

A. Failure to Pay for All Hours Worked, Including Minimum, Straight Time, and Overtime Wages

15. Under California law, an employer must pay for all hours worked by an employee. "Hours worked" is the time during which an employee is subject to the control of an employer and includes all the time the employee is suffered or permitted to work, whether or not required to do so.

16. Labor Code § 510 provides that employees in California shall not be employed more than eight hours in any workday or forty (40) hours in a workweek unless they receive additional compensation beyond their regular wages in amounts specified by law.

17. Labor Code §§ 1194 and 1198 also provide that employees in California shall not be employed more than eight hours in any workday unless they receive additional compensation beyond their regular wages in amounts specified by law. Additionally, Labor Code § 1198 states that the employment of an employee for longer hours than those fixed by the IWC is unlawful.

18. Throughout the statutory period, Defendants, at times, failed to pay Plaintiff and certain Aggrieved Employees for all hours worked, including minimum wages, straight time, and overtime wages. Defendants, at times, required Plaintiff and certain Aggrieved Employees to work "off-the-clock," uncompensated, by, for example, requiring Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees perform work during uncompensated meal periods and rest periods, requiring Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees to perform work before clocking in and/or after clocking out. Some of this unpaid work should have been paid at the overtime rate. In failing to pay for all hours worked,

Defendants also failed, at times, to maintain accurate records of the hours Plaintiff and certain Aggrieved Employees worked.

B. Failure to Provide Meal Periods

19. Under California law, employers have an affirmative obligation to relieve employees of all duty in order to take their first 30-minute, duty-free meal periods no later than the end of the fifth hour of work in a workday, and to allow employees to take their second 30-minute meal period no later than the end of the tenth hour of work in a workday. Further, employees are entitled to be paid one hour of additional wages for each workday they were not provided with a required meal period(s).

20. Despite these legal requirements, Defendants wrongfully failed, at times, to provide Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees, or some of them, with their legally mandated 30-minute, uninterrupted, and duty-free meal period in a manner required by law. Defendants also continued to assert control over Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees, or some of them, by, among other things, requiring, pressuring, or encouraging them to perform work tasks which could not be completed without working in lieu of taking mandatory meal periods, or by denying Plaintiff and certain Aggrieved Employees permission to take a meal period under the conditions required by law, and without properly compensating Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees, or some of them, for meal periods that were not provided as required by law. Defendants also did not inform Plaintiff of his right to, nor permitted Plaintiff to take all his second meal periods when Plaintiff worked at least ten hours per day in a workday and otherwise unlawfully pressured Plaintiff to waive such breaks. Defendants also prevented Plaintiff from clocking out unless they confirmed that they took compliant meal periods even when they did not. Accordingly, Defendants failed, at times, to provide meal periods to Plaintiff and certain Aggrieved Employees in compliance with California law.

21. Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees, or some of them, are thus entitled to be paid one hour of additional wages for each workday he or she was not provided with all required meal period(s). Defendants, however, at times, failed to pay Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees, or some of them, the additional wages to which they were entitled for meal periods that were not provided.

1 **C. Failure to Pay All Earned Wages Twice Per Month**

2 22. Based on Defendants' failure to pay Plaintiff and certain Aggrieved Employees for
3 all wages as discussed above, Defendants also violated Labor Code § 204.

4 23. Labor Code § 204 requires employers to pay employees all earned wages two times
5 per month. Throughout the period applicable to this cause of action, employees were entitled to be
6 paid twice a month at their regular rates, including all meal period premium wages owed, rest
7 period premium wages owed, and wages owed for overtime hours worked. However, Defendants,
8 at times, failed and refused to pay the employees all wages due, and failed, at times, to pay those
9 wages twice a month, in that employees were not paid all wages for all meal periods not provided
10 by Defendants, all wages for all rest periods not authorized and permitted by Defendants, and all
11 wages for all hours worked. As a result, Defendants owe employees the legally required wages not
12 paid, and Plaintiff and certain Aggrieved Employees suffered damages in those amounts.

13 **D. Failure to Maintain Accurate Records of Hours Worked and Meal Periods**

14 24. Plaintiff seeks penalties under California Labor Code § 1174(d). Pursuant to
15 California Labor Code § 1174.5, any person, including any entity, employing labor who willfully
16 fails to maintain accurate and complete records required by California Labor Code § 1174 is subject
17 to a penalty under § 1174.5. Pursuant to the applicable IWC Order § 7(A)(3), every employer shall
18 keep time records showing when the employee begins and ends each work period. Meal periods
19 and total hours worked daily shall also be recorded.

20 25. Defendants, however, at times, failed to maintain accurate records of hours worked
21 and all meal periods taken or missed by Plaintiff and certain Aggrieved Employees. Moreover,
22 Defendants deliberately altered, falsified, and manipulated these records.

23 26. Defendants' failure to provide and maintain records required by the California Labor
24 Code and applicable IWC Wage Orders deprived Plaintiff and certain Aggrieved Employees the
25 ability to know, understand and question the accuracy and frequency of meal periods, and the
26 accuracy of their hours worked stated in Defendants' records. Therefore, Plaintiff and certain
27 Aggrieved Employees had no way to dispute the resulting failure to pay wages, all of which
28 resulted in an unjustified economic enrichment to Defendants. As a direct result, Plaintiff and

Aggrieved Employees, or some of them, have suffered and continue to suffer, substantial losses related to the use and enjoyment of such wages, lost interest on such wages and expenses and attorney's fees in seeking to compel Defendants to fully perform Defendants' obligation under state law, all to their respective damage in amounts according to proof at trial. As a result of Defendants' knowing failure to comply with the California Labor Code and applicable IWC Wage Orders, Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees, or some of them, have also suffered an injury in that they were prevented from knowing, understanding, and disputing the wage payments paid to them.

E. Failure to Furnish Accurate Itemized Wage Statements

27. Labor Code § 226(a) provides that every employer shall furnish each of his or her employees an accurate itemized wage statement in writing showing nine pieces of information, including: (1) gross wages earned, (2) total hours worked by the employee, (3) the number of piece-rate units earned and any applicable piece rate if the employee is paid on a piece-rate basis, (4) all deductions, provided that all deductions made on written orders of the employee may be aggregated and shown as one item, (5) net wages earned, (6) the inclusive dates of the period for which the employee is paid, (7) the name of the employee and the last four digits of his or her social security number or an employee identification number other than a social security number, (8) the name and address of the legal entity that is the employer, and (9) all applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the corresponding number of hours worked at each hourly rate by the employee. An employee is presumed to suffer an injury if this information is missing. (Labor Code § 226(e)(2)(B)(iii).)

28. The statute further provides: "An employee suffering injury as a result of a knowing and intentional failure by an employer to comply with subdivision (a) is entitled to recover the greater of all actual damages or fifty dollars (\$50) for the initial pay period in which a violation occurs and one hundred dollars (\$100) per employee for each violation in a subsequent pay period, not to exceed an aggregate penalty of four thousand dollars (\$4,000), and is entitled to an award of costs and reasonable attorney's fees." (Labor Code § 226(e)(1).)

29. Throughout the statutory period, Defendants failed, at times, to furnish Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees, or some of them, with accurate, itemized wage statements showing all

1 applicable hourly rates, and all gross and net wages earned (including correct hours worked, correct
2 wages for meal periods that were not provided in accordance with California law, and correct
3 wages for rest periods that were not authorized and permitted to take in accordance with California
4 law). For example, Defendants' paystubs did not list the accurate legal employing entity's name,
5 address, and the remaining paid sick leave balance. Because Defendants violated Labor Code §
6 226, Plaintiff and similarly Aggrieved Employees, or some of them, suffered injury and damage to
7 their statutorily protected rights. Accordingly, Plaintiff and similarly Aggrieved Employees, or
8 some of them, are entitled to recover damages from Defendants including the greater of their actual
9 damages caused by Defendants' failure to comply with Labor Code § 226(a), or an aggregate
10 penalty not exceeding four thousand dollars (\$4,000) dollars per employee, or as otherwise
11 permitted by PAGA based upon all bases of liability.

12 **F. Refusal to Make Payment**

13 30. Labor Code § 216 declares unlawful employers' refusal to pay wages due and payable
14 and/or denial of the validity of any claim to wages due. Defendants, at times, violated and continue,
15 at times, to violate Labor Code § 216 by failing to pay Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees, or some
16 of them, for all hours worked at the proper wage rate and by failing to pay Plaintiff and Aggrieved
17 Employees, or some of them, an additional hour of pay for each meal and/or rest period not
18 provided or that was invalid. *Gould v. Maryland Sound Industries, Inc.* (1995) 31 Cal.App.4th
19 1137, 1154-1155. These violations subject Defendants to civil penalties under Labor Code § 225.5,
20 with each violation resulting in a separate penalty for each affected employee and pay period during
21 which the statute's provisions were violated.

22 **G. Statutory Wage Violations**

23 31. Labor Code § 223 makes it unlawful for employers to secretly pay wages lower than
24 required by statute while purporting to pay legal wages. Within the applicable period, Defendants,
25 at times, willfully and systematically denied Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees, or some of
26 them, minimum and straight time wage compensation for all hours worked which resulted in the
27 payment of less than statutorily required wages owed to them. Defendants, at times, acted with the
28

1 intent to deprive some or all of them of statutory wages, including, but not limited to, overtime
2 wages and minimum wages, to which they were entitled under California law.

3 32. Defendants, at times, paid Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees, or some of them,
4 lower wages than those to which they were entitled, while purporting that Plaintiff and all
5 Aggrieved Employees were properly paid. As a result, Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees, or some
6 of them, are entitled to recover penalties, attorneys' fees, costs, and interest thereon, pursuant to
7 Labor Code § 2699(f)-(g).

8 **H. Failure to Indemnify for Necessary Expenditures**

9 33. Labor Code § 2802(a) provides that employers shall indemnify their employees for
10 all necessary business expenditures or losses that have been incurred by the employees in direct
11 discharge of his or her duties. Throughout the period applicable to this cause of action, Defendants
12 wrongfully required Plaintiff and certain Aggrieved Employees to pay expenses that they incurred
13 in direct discharge of their duties for Defendants. Plaintiff and similarly Aggrieved Employees, or
14 some of them, paid out-of-pocket for necessary employment-related expenses. Plaintiff and
15 similarly Aggrieved Employees, or some of them, incurred substantial expenses as a direct result
16 of performing their job duties for Defendants, but Defendants failed, at times, to indemnify
17 Plaintiff and certain Aggrieved Employees for these employment-related expenses.

18 34. As a result, Defendants are liable to Plaintiff and certain Aggrieved Employees for
19 the civil penalties provided for in Labor Code §§ 2802 and 2699(f)(2) for failing to indemnify
20 Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees for necessary business expenditures.

21 **I. Failure to Timely Pay All Wages at Termination**

22 35. Labor Code §§ 201 and 202 provide that if an employer discharges an employee,
23 the wages earned and unpaid at the time of discharge are due and payable immediately, and that if
24 an employee voluntarily leaves his or her employment, his or her wages shall become due and
25 payable not later than seventy-two (72) hours thereafter, unless the employee has given seventy-
26 two (72) hours previous notice of his or her intention to quit, in which case the employee is entitled
27 to his or her wages at the time of quitting.
28

36. Within the applicable period, the employment of Plaintiff and many other Aggrieved Employees ended, i.e., was terminated by quitting or being discharged, and the employment of others will be terminated. However, during the relevant time period, Defendants at times failed, and continue to fail, to pay Plaintiff and certain terminated Aggrieved Employees, without abatement, all wages required to be paid by Labor Code sections 201 and 202 either at the time of discharge, or within seventy-two (72) hours of their leaving Defendants' employment. These unpaid wages include wages for unpaid work time (including minimum, straight time, and overtime wages), missed meal period premium wages, and missed rest period premium wages.

37. Defendants' conduct violates Labor Code §§ 201 and 202. Labor Code § 203 provides that if an employer willfully fails to pay wages owed, in accordance with sections 201 and 202, then the wages of the employee shall continue as a penalty wage from the due date, and at the same rate until paid or until an action is commenced; but the wages shall not continue for more than thirty (30) days.

38. Accordingly, Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees, or some of them, are entitled to recover from Defendants their additionally accruing wages for each day they were not paid, at their regular hourly rate of pay, up to thirty (30) days maximum pursuant to Labor Code § 203.

J. Failure to Provide Reporting Time Pay

39. Reporting time pay constitutes wages. (*Murphy v. Kenneth Cole Productions, Inc.* (2007) 40 Cal. 4th 1094). Thus, failure to pay all reporting time pay due at the time of employment termination may be the basis for waiting time penalties pursuant to Labor Code § 203. The IWC's purpose in adopting reporting time pay requirements was two-fold: "to compensate employees" and "encourag[e] proper notice and scheduling." *Id.* at pp. 1111-1112. In *Ward v. Tilly's, Inc.* (2019) 31 Cal.App.5th 1167, the court held physical reporting was not required in order to come within the reporting time pay provision. Reporting time pay may be triggered by various situations, including physically appearing at the workplace at the shift's start, presenting themselves for work by logging onto a computer remotely, appearing at a client's job site, setting out on a trucking route, or as in *Tilly's* - by telephoning the store two hours prior to the start of a shift.

40. However, exceptions to the requirement for reporting time pay found in IWC Orders 1-16, Section 5(C) includes: when operations cannot begin or continue due to threats to employees or property, or when civil authorities recommend that work not begin or continue; or when public utilities fail to supply electricity, water, or gas, or there is a failure in the public utilities, or sewer system; or when the interruption of work is caused by an Act of God or other cause not within the employer's control, for example, an earthquake.

41. The reporting time pay provisions do not apply to employees on paid standby status or when an employee has a regularly scheduled shift of less than two hours, such as a relief cashier who works only during a one-hour period in the middle of the day.

42. Accordingly, Defendants failed to pay reporting time pay, as required, to Plaintiff and the Aggrieved Employees, when it sent them home without having an opportunity to work at least half of their usual shifts.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

**(By All Plaintiffs Against All Defendants for Civil Penalties Under the Private Attorneys
General Act of 2004, Cal. Lab. Code § 2698 et seq.)**

43. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and re-alleges all preceding paragraphs as though fully set forth herein.

44. At all times herein mentioned, Defendants were subject to the Labor Code of the State of California and the applicable IWC Orders.

45. California Labor Code § 2699(a) specifically provides for a private right of action to recover penalties for violations of the Labor Code: “Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any provision of this code that provides for a civil penalty to be assessed and collected by the Labor and Workforce Development Agency or any of its departments, divisions, commissions, boards, agencies, or employees, for a violation of this code, may, as an alternative, be recovered through a civil action brought by an aggrieved employee on behalf of herself or himself and other current or former employees pursuant to the procedures specified in Section 2699.3.”

46. Plaintiff gave written notice by online filing pursuant to California Labor Code § 2699.3 to the Labor and Workforce Development Agency and by certified mail to Defendants of

the specific provisions of the Labor Code that Defendants have violated against Plaintiff and certain current and former Aggrieved Employees, or some of them, including the facts and theories to support the violations. Plaintiff also paid the filing fee. Plaintiff's PAGA case number is LWDA-CM-1052500-24 (*Raymon Gavaldon v. Viceroy Improvement LLC, et al.*). The Labor and Workforce Development Agency has not indicated that it intends to investigate Defendants' Labor Code violations discussed in the notice. Plaintiff hereby commences a civil action to recover penalties under Labor Code § 2699 pursuant to § 2699.3 for the violations of the Labor Code described in this Complaint. These penalties include, but are not limited to, penalties under California Labor Code §§ 210, 226.3, 1174.5, 1197.1, and 2699.

47. Based on the conduct described in this Complaint, Plaintiff is entitled to an award of civil penalties individually, on behalf of the State of California and certain similarly Aggrieved Employees of Defendants. The exact amount of the applicable penalties, in all, is in an amount to be shown according to proof at trial. These penalties are in addition to all other remedies permitted by law.

48. In addition, Plaintiff seeks an award of reasonable attorneys' fees and costs pursuant to Labor Code § 2699(g)(1), which states, "Any employee who prevails in any action shall be entitled to an award of reasonable attorney's fees and costs."

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

Plaintiff, individually, and on behalf of the State of California, and on behalf of all similarly Aggrieved Employees, prays for relief and judgment against Defendants, jointly and severally, as follows:

1. That the Court declare, adjudge and decree that Defendants violated the California Labor Code by failing to pay for all hours worked (including minimum, straight time, and overtime wages), failing to provide Employee with legally compliant meal periods, failing to authorize and permit Employee to take rest periods, failing to pay all earned wages twice per month, failing to maintain accurate records of hours worked and meal periods, failing to reimburse for business expenses, failing to furnish accurate wage statements, and failing to timely pay final pay.

2. An award of civil penalties on behalf of Plaintiff, individually, and on behalf of the

1 State of California, and all similarly Aggrieved Employees pursuant to PAGA;

2 3. Pre-judgment and post-judgment interest at the maximum rate allowed;

3 4. Attorneys' fees and costs reasonably incurred;

4 5. Injunctive and declaratory relief to the extent allowed by PAGA; and,

5 6. Such other and further relief that the Court deems proper.

6
7 Respectfully submitted,

8 Dated: February 24, 2025

WILSHIRE LAW FIRM

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10 *m. desario*

11 By: _____

Molly DeSario, Esq.

James Yoo, Esq.

Ruby Carrera, Esq.

Pavel Rukavishnikov, Esq.

14 Attorneys for Plaintiff