

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF TULARE**

Mateo, Yesenia
Plaintiff/Petitioner,

vs.

Snowdrop Holdings, LLC
Defendant/Respondent.

Jud. Officer: **Nathan Ide**
Clerk: **Skye Woods**
Bailiff: **A Gonzales**
CSR:
Interpreter:
Language:

Minutes: **1) Motion Hearing PAGA Approval**
2) Case Mangement Conference
Date: **March 9, 2026**

Case No. **VCU316517**
Department 07

Related Cases:

Appearances: ☐ No Appearances

☐ Party: _____

☐ Remote Appearance

☐ Party: _____

☐ Remote Appearance

☐ Party: _____

☐ Remote Appearance

☐ Other: _____

☐ Remote Appearance

☐ Court makes interpreter findings on the record pursuant to GC 68561(g)/GC 68561(f)

☒ No court reporter was available for today's proceedings. ☒ Not Reported ☐ ER Number

☒ Attorney: Haig Hogdonian obo Plaintiff, via Zoom

☒ Remote Appearance

☒ Attorney: Joshua Klein obo Defendant via Zoom

☒ Remote Appearance

☐ Attorney: _____

☐ Remote Appearance

Motion: Motion for Approval of PAGA Settlement

☒ Case called at 8:47 a.m.

☒ Oral argument requested by Plaintiff and Defendant

☒ Case Management Conference is vacated.

☒ Comments heard from the Court.

ORDER: The Court adopts the Tentative Ruling as the Order of the Court as follows:

TENTATIVE RULING:

To grant the motion as modified below; to set the final compliance hearing as to distribution of the net settlement fund to the LWDA and Aggrieved Employees for October 26, 2026, at 8:30 am, in Dept. 7.

1. Sufficiency of Amount of Settlement (Proposed Net Distribution to Aggrieved Employees: \$26,675.75)

The gross settlement amount is \$169,999.

Plaintiff estimates approximately 345 aggrieved employees, consisting of all current and former hourly-paid or non-exempt employees who worked for Defendant within the State of California at any time during the period from October 23, 2023, through December 20, 2025.

Plaintiff brings claims under the PAGA statute for violations of Labor Code sections 201, 202, 203, 204, 210, 218.5, 221, 226(a), 226.3, 226.7, 246, 432.5, 510, 512(a), 551, 552, 558, 1174(d), 1194, 1197, 1197.1, 1198, 2800, and 2802. (Labor Code § 2699.)

In deciding whether to grant approval of the proposed PAGA settlement, the primary issues to be decided is whether the settlement is fair, adequate, and reasonable. (Moniz v. Adecco USA, Inc. (2021) 72 Cal.App.5th 56, 77.) "Because many of the factors used to evaluate class action settlements bear on a settlement's fairness—including the strength of the plaintiff's case, the risk, the stage of the proceeding, the complexity and likely duration of further litigation, and the settlement amount—these factors can be useful in evaluating the fairness of a PAGA settlement." (Id.) "Given PAGA's purpose to protect the public interest, we also agree with the LWDA and federal district courts that have found it appropriate to review a PAGA settlement to ascertain whether a settlement is fair in view of PAGA's purposes and policies." (Id. citing O'Connor v. Uber Technologies, Inc. (N.D. Cal. 2016) 201 F.Supp.3d 1110, 1133.)

Plaintiff's counsel estimates \$34,500 (345 employees x \$100 penalty for initial violation) on the low end and \$207,000 (345 employees x \$100 penalty for initial violation x 6 theories of recovery.) The motion adequately sets forth the relative strength and value of the PAGA claim as well as the risks, expense, complexity and likely duration of further litigation.

Plaintiffs' deductions from the gross settlement of \$169,999 are proposed as follows:

Proposed Attorney Fees (35%): \$ 59,499.65

Proposed Attorney Costs (incurred): \$ 18,282.93

Proposed Enhancement Award to Plaintiff: \$ 10,000.00

Proposed Administrative Costs \$ 6,000.00

Proposed Net Settlement Fund \$ 76,216.42

Proposed LWDA Share (65% of Net Settlement Fund) \$49,540.67

Proposed Aggrieved Employee Share (35% of Net Settlement Fund): \$26,675.75

The Court finds the gross settlement amount fair, adequate, and reasonable under Moniz as noted above.

2. Notice

There is no notice period. The proposed notice adequately informs the aggrieved employees of adequate details regarding the case and distribution of their portion of the net settlement fund.

3. Enhancement Awards to Class Representative

An enhancement payment of \$10,000 is proposed to as to Plaintiff.

The Court has, in past cases, approved enhancement awards of \$5,000 routinely. While Plaintiff has provided a declaration detailing the involvement in this case from inception to settlement, the Court does not find that these efforts should result in an enhancement award greater than the typical amount awarded by this Court.

The enhancement award of \$5,000 is approved.

4. Attorneys' Fees and Costs

Attorneys' fees of 35% of the gross settlement fund of \$169,999 or \$59,499.65 and approval of costs of \$18,282.93 are sought by Plaintiff's counsel.

Counsel has utilized the percentage of common fund methodology as well as provided adequate lodestar information to evaluate the reasonableness of the fee request.

Here, Counsel indicates that the firm has spent 195.2 hours on this case at rates of \$900 to \$600 per hour, creating a base lodestar of \$152,470. (Declaration of Han ¶¶31, 33.) The fees requested are therefore approved without a multiplier.

Counsel has also provided the current costs expended in amounts of \$18,282.93. (Declaration of Han ¶35.)

5. Claims Administrator

The claims administrator is designated as Phoenix Class Action Administration Solutions, who has submitted a bid for \$6,000 to administer the settlement. The Court approves the claims administrator.

6. Unclaimed Settlement Proceeds

The court approves the distribution of unclaimed settlement proceeds to the California Secretary of State's Unclaimed Property Division in the name of the Aggrieved Employee, in accordance with Code of Civil Procedure section 384.

7. Release

The Court finds the proposed limited release of PAGA claims reasonable and within the law under a PAGA only settlement as to the aggrieved employees. (Arias v. Sup. Ct., (2009) 46 CA4th 969, 986-987.) Further, the Court notes that the "Plaintiff's Release" term is supported by adequate consideration in the form of the enhancement and release payment, which the Court has approved above as \$5,000.

8. LWDA Notice

The Court finds confirmation from the LWDA of receipt of proof of submission of the proposed settlement agreement. (Lab. Code, § 2699, subd. (l)(2).) (Declaration of Hong ¶3– Ex. 1.)

Therefore, the Court grants the motion and approves the deduction from the gross settlement fund of \$169,999 as follows:

Approved Attorney Fees (35%): \$ 59,499.65

Approved Attorney Costs (incurred): \$ 18,282.93

Approved Enhancement Award to Plaintiff: \$ 5,000.00

Approved Administrative Costs \$ 6,000.00

Approved Net Settlement Fund \$ 81,216.42

Approved LWDA Share (65% of Net Settlement Fund) \$ 52,790.67

Approved Aggrieved Employee Share (35% of Net Settlement Fund): \$ 28,425.75

The Court, therefore, grants the motion as modified, and sets a final compliance hearing as to distribution of the net settlement fund to the LWDA and Aggrieved Employees for October 26, 2026, at 8:30 am, in Dept. 7.

If no one requests oral argument, under Code of Civil Procedure section 1019.5(a) and California Rules of Court, rule 3.1312(a), no further written order is necessary. The minute order adopting this tentative ruling will become the order of the court and service by the clerk will constitute notice of the order.

Visalia Division
221 S Mooney Blvd, Room 201
Visalia, CA 93291
559.730.5000

Skye Woods, Deputy

Case No. VCU316517

**PROOF OF SERVICE
1013A(3) CCP**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

I am employed in the County of Los Angeles, State of California. I am over the age of 18 and not a party to the within action. My business address is 751 N. Fair Oaks Avenue, Suite 101, Pasadena, CA 91103 and my electronic service address is mhong@justicelawcorp.com

On March 20, 2026, I served the foregoing document described as

**ORDER GRANTING APPROVAL OF PRIVATE ATTORNEYS GENERAL
ACT (LABOR CODE § 2698, ET SEQ.) SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT**

for the following case: **Yesenia Mateo v. Snowdrop Holdings, LLC**
LWDA/Court Case No.: **LWDA Case No.: CM-1057840-24**
Court Case No.: VCU316517
Tulare County Superior Court

on interested parties in this action by electronically submitting as follows:

State of California
Labor & Workforce Development Agency
800 Capitol Mall, MIC-55
Sacramento, California 95814

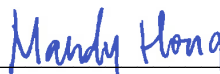
[X] BY ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

Pursuant to California Senate Bill No. 836, I caused the documents described above to be electronically submitted by and through the procedure stated on the website of the State of California Labor and Workforce Development Agency.

[X] STATE

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the above is true and correct.

Executed on March 20, 2026, at Pasadena, California.


Mandy Hong