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11 SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
12 COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
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14 BARTOLO NARANJO, an individual, on
15 behalf of himself and on behalf of all persons
16 similarly situated,

17 Plaintiff,

18 vs.

19 APEM, INC., a Corporation; IDEC
20 CORPORATION, a Corporation; and DOES 1
21 through 50, inclusive,

22 Defendants.
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CASE NO.: **24CU029650C**

**[PROPOSED] PRELIMINARY
APPROVAL ORDER**

Hearing Date: May 29, 2026

Hearing Time: 10:15 a.m.

Judge: Hon. Wendy M. Behan

Dept.: 66

Date Action Filed: December 19, 2024

Trial Date: Not set

PRELIMINARY APPROVAL ORDER

1 This matter, having come before the Honorable Wendy M. Behan of the Superior Court of
2 the State of California, in and for the County San Diego, on May 29, 2026, for the motion by
3 Plaintiff Bartolo Naranjo (“Plaintiff”) for preliminary approval of the class settlement with
4 Defendants APEM, Inc. and IDEC Corporation (“Defendants”). The Court, having considered the
5 briefs, argument of counsel and all matters presented to the Court and good cause appearing,
6 hereby GRANTS Plaintiff’s Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlement.

7 **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:**

8 1. The Court preliminarily approves the Class Action and PAGA Settlement
9 Agreement (“Agreement”) attached as Exhibit #1 to the Declaration of Kyle Nordrehaug in
10 Support of Plaintiff’s Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlement. This is based
11 on the Court’s determination that the Settlement set forth in the Agreement is within the range of
12 possible final approval, pursuant to the provisions of Section 382 of the California Code of Civil
13 Procedure and California Rules of Court, rule 3.769.

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

16 3. The Gross Settlement Amount is One Million Nine Hundred Fifty Thousand
17 Dollars (\$1,950,000). It appears to the Court on a preliminary basis that the settlement amount
18 and terms are fair, adequate and reasonable as to all potential Class Members when balanced
19 against the probable outcome of further litigation and the significant risks relating to certification,
20 liability and damages issues. It further appears that investigation and research have been
21 conducted such that counsel for the Parties are able to reasonably evaluate their respective
22 positions. It further appears to the Court that settlement at this time will avoid substantial
23 additional costs by all Parties, as well as avoid the delay and risks that would be presented by the
24 further prosecution of the Action. It further appears that the Settlement has been reached as the
25 result of serious and non-collusive, arms-length negotiations. The Court therefore preliminarily
26 finds that the Settlement is fair, adequate, and reasonable when balanced against the probable
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1 outcome of further litigation and the significant risks relating to certification, liability, and
2 damages issues.

3 4. The Agreement specifies an attorneys' fees award not to exceed one-third of the
4 Gross Settlement Amount, an award of litigation expenses incurred, not to exceed \$31,000, and
5 proposed Class Representative Service Payment to the Plaintiff in an amount not to exceed
6 \$15,000. The Court will not approve the amount of attorneys' fees and costs, nor the amount of
7 any service award, until the Final Approval Hearing.

8 5. The Court recognizes that Plaintiff and Defendants stipulate and agree to
9 certification of a class for settlement purposes only. This stipulation will not be deemed
10 admissible in this or any other proceeding should this Settlement not become final. For settlement
11 purposes only, the Court conditionally certifies the following Class: "all individuals who are or
12 previously were employed by Defendants who were classified as non-exempt in the State of
13 California at any time during the Class Period." The Class Period is December 19, 2020 through
14 December 9, 2025.

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

25 7. The Court provisionally appoints Plaintiff as the representative of the Class. The
26 Court provisionally appoints Blumenthal Nordrehaug Bhowmik De Blouw LLP as Class Counsel
27 for the Class.

1 8. The Court hereby approves, as to form and content, the Court Approved Notice of
2 Proposed Settlement of Class Action and Hearing Date for Final Court Approval (“Class Notice”)
3 attached to the Agreement as Exhibit A. The Court finds that the Class Notice appears to fully and
4 accurately inform the Class of all material elements of the proposed Settlement, of the Class
5 Members’ right to be excluded from the Class by submitting a written opt-out request, and of each
6 Class Member’s right and opportunity to object to the Settlement. The Court further finds that the
7 distribution of the Class Notice substantially in the manner and form set forth in the Agreement
8 and this Order meets the requirements of due process, is the best notice practicable under the
9 circumstances, and shall constitute due and sufficient notice to all persons entitled thereto. The
10 Court orders the mailing of the Class Notice by first class mail, pursuant to the terms set forth in
11 the Agreement.

12 9. The Court hereby appoints ILYM Group, Inc. as the Administrator. No later than
13 fifteen (15) days after preliminary approval of the Settlement by the Court, Defendants shall
14 provide to the Administrator an electronic spreadsheet with the Class Data. The Administrator
15 will perform address updates and verifications as necessary prior to the mailing of the Class
16 Notice. Using best efforts to mail it as soon as possible, and in no event later than 14 days after
17 receiving the Class Data, the Administrator will mail the Class Notice Packets to all Class
18 Members via first-class U.S. Mail. Before mailing Class Notices, the Administrator shall update
19 Class Member addresses using the National Change of Address database.

20 10. The Court hereby preliminarily approves the proposed procedure for exclusion
21 from the Settlement. Any Class Member may individually choose to opt out of and be excluded
22 from the Class as provided in the Class Notice by following the instructions for requesting
23 exclusion from the Class that are set forth in the Class Notice. All Requests for Exclusion must be
24 postmarked by no later than the Response Deadline, which is sixty (60) calendar days after the
25 date of the mailing of the Class Notice and be received by the Administrator. If the Class Notice
26 Packet is re-mailed, the Response Deadline will be extended an additional 14 days. Any such
27 person who chooses to opt out of and be excluded from the Class will not be entitled to any
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1 recovery under the Settlement and will not be bound by the class portion of the Settlement or have
2 any right to object, appeal or comment thereon. Class Members who have not requested exclusion
3 shall be bound by all determinations of the Court, the Agreement and the Judgment. A Request
4 for Exclusion may only opt out that particular individual, and any attempt to effect an opt out of a
5 group, class, or subclass of individuals is not permitted and will be deemed invalid. Subject to the
6 Court's final approval of the Settlement, the Aggrieved Employees will be paid their allocation of
7 the PAGA Penalties and will remain bound by the release of the Released PAGA Claims.

8 11. Any Class Member who has not opted out ("Participating Class Member") may
9 appear at the final approval hearing and may object or express their views regarding the
10 Settlement and may present evidence and file briefs or other papers that may be proper and
11 relevant to the issues to be heard and determined by the Court as provided in the Notice.
12 Participating Class Members will have until the Response Deadline, which is sixty (60) calendar
13 days from the date of the mailing of the Class Notices, to submit their written objections to the
14 Administrator in accordance with the instructions in the Class Notice. If the Class Notice Packet
15 is re-mailed, the Response Deadline for written objections will be extended an additional 14 days.
16 Alternatively, Participating Class Members may appear at the Final Approval Hearing to make an
17 oral objection.

18 12. A Final Approval Hearing shall be held before this Court on October 16, 2026,
19 10:15 a.m. in Department 66 at the San Diego County Superior Court to determine all necessary
20 matters concerning the Settlement, including: whether the proposed settlement of the Action on
21 the terms and conditions provided for in the Agreement is fair, adequate and reasonable and
22 should be finally approved by the Court; whether the Final Approval Order and Judgment should
23 be entered herein; whether the plan of allocation contained in the Agreement should be approved
24 as fair, adequate and reasonable to the Class Members; and to finally approve attorneys' fees and
25 costs, the service award, and the expenses of the Administrator. All papers in support of the
26 motion for final approval and for attorneys' fees, costs and service awards, to be heard at the Final
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1 Approval Hearing, shall be filed with the Court and served on all counsel no later than sixteen (16)
2 court days before the hearing.

3 13. Neither the Settlement nor any exhibit, document, or instrument delivered
4 thereunder shall be construed as a concession or admission by Defendants in any way that the
5 claims asserted have any merit or that this Action was properly brought as a class or representative
6 action, and shall not be used as evidence of, or used against Defendants as, an admission or
7 indication in any way, including with respect to any claim of any liability, wrongdoing, fault or
8 omission by Defendants or with respect to the truth of any allegation asserted by any person.
9 Defendants have denied that they have done anything wrong and dispute all the claims in this
10 Action. Whether or not the Settlement is finally approved, neither the Settlement, nor any exhibit,
11 document, statement, proceeding or conduct related to the Settlement, nor any reports or accounts
12 thereof, shall in any event be construed as, offered or admitted in evidence as, received as or
13 deemed to be evidence for any purpose adverse to the Defendants, including, but not limited to,
14 evidence of a presumption, concession, indication or admission by Defendants of any liability,
15 fault, wrongdoing, omission, concession or damage.

16 14. In the event the Settlement does not become effective in accordance with the terms
17 of the Agreement, or the Settlement is not finally approved, or is terminated, canceled or fails to
18 become effective for any reason, this Order shall be rendered null and void and shall be vacated,
19 and the Parties shall revert to their respective positions as of before entering into the Agreement,
20 and expressly reserve their respective rights regarding the prosecution and defense of this Action,
21 including all available defenses and affirmative defenses, and arguments that any claim in the
22 Action could not be certified as a class action and/or managed as a representative action. In such
23 an event, the Court's orders regarding the Settlement, including this Order, shall not be used or
24 referred to in litigation for any purpose.

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

3 16. The Action is stayed and all trial and related pre-trial dates, if any, are vacated,
4 subject to further orders of the Court at the Final Approval Hearing.

5 **IT IS SO ORDERED.**

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7 Dated: _____

8 HON. WENDY M. BEHAN
9 JUDGE, SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA

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PRELIMINARY APPROVAL ORDER