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11 **SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

12 **COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

13
14 JAMES HERNANDEZ, an individual, on
15 behalf of himself and on behalf of all persons
16 similarly situated,

17 Plaintiffs,

18 vs.

19 VERIZON CORPORATE SERVICES
20 GROUP INC., a Corporation; VERIZON
21 CORPORATE RESOURCES GROUP LLC, a
22 Limited Liability Company; and Does 1
23 through 50, Inclusive,

24 Defendants.

CASE NO.: **24STCV20608**

**[PROPOSED] PRELIMINARY
APPROVAL ORDER**

Hearing Date: January 2, 2026 _____
Hearing Time:

Judge: Hon. Elihu M. Berle
Dept: SS-6

Date Filed: August 15, 2024
Trial Date: Not set

25 This matter came before the Honorable Elihu M. Berle of the Superior Court of the State of
26 California, in and for the County Los Angeles, on January 2, 2026, for hearing on the unopposed
27 motion by Plaintiff James Hernandez ("Plaintiff") for preliminary approval of the Class Action
28 and PAGA Settlement with Defendants Verizon Corporate Services Group, Inc. and Verizon
Corporate Resources Group LLC (collectively, "Defendants"). The Court, having considered the

1 briefs, argument of counsel and all matters presented to the Court and good cause appearing,
2 hereby GRANTS Plaintiff's Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlement.

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4 **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:**

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

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

13 3. The Gross Settlement Amount that Defendants shall pay is Nine Hundred Fifty
14 Thousand Dollars (\$950,000). It appears to the Court on a preliminary basis that the settlement
15 amount and terms are fair, adequate and reasonable as to all potential Class Members when
16 balanced against the probable outcome of further litigation and the significant risks relating to
17 certification, liability and damages issues. It further appears that investigation and research have
18 been conducted such that counsel for the Parties are able to reasonably evaluate their respective
19 positions. It further appears to the Court that the Settlement will avoid substantial additional costs
20 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 has been reached as the result of
22 serious and non-collusive, arm's-length negotiations.

23 4. The Court preliminarily finds that the Settlement appears to be within the range of
24 reasonableness of a settlement that could ultimately be given final approval by this Court. The
25 Court has reviewed the monetary recovery that is being granted as part of the Settlement and
26 preliminarily finds that the monetary settlement awards made available to the Class is fair,
27 adequate, and reasonable when balanced against the probable outcome of further litigation and the
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1 significant risks relating to certification, liability, and damages issues.

2 5. The Agreement specifies for an attorneys' fees award not to exceed one-third of the
3 Gross Settlement Amount, an award of litigation expenses incurred, not to exceed \$30,000, and a
4 proposed Class Representative Service Payment to the Plaintiff in an amount not to exceed
5 \$10,000. The Court will not approve the amount of attorneys' fees and costs, nor the amount of
6 any service award, until the Final Approval Hearing. Plaintiff will be required to present evidence
7 supporting these requests, including lodestar, prior to final approval.

8 6. The Court recognizes that Plaintiff and Defendants stipulate and agree to
9 representative treatment and certification of a class for settlement purposes only. This stipulation
10 will not be deemed admissible in this, or any other proceeding should this Settlement not become
11 final. For settlement purposes only, the Court conditionally certifies the Class which consists of
12 "all individuals who are or previously were employed by Defendants in California and classified
13 as non-exempt employees at any time during the Class Period." The "Class Period" is August 15,
14 2020 through September 25, 2025.

15 7. 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 will 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 adjudication of this controversy; and
23 (f) counsel for the Class is qualified to act as Class Counsel and the Plaintiff is an adequate
24 representative of the Class.

25 8. The Court provisionally appoints Plaintiff as the representatives of the Class. The
26 Court provisionally appoints Norman B. Blumenthal, Kyle R. Nordrehaug, and Aparajit Bhowmik
27 of Blumenthal Nordrehaug Bhowmik De Blouw LLP and Ryan Stygar of Centurion Trial
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1 Attorneys, APC as Class Counsel for the Class.

2 9. The Agreement provides for a PAGA Penalties out of the Gross Settlement
3 Amount of \$20,000, which shall be allocated \$13,000 to the Labor & Workforce Development
4 Agency (“LWDA”) as the LWDA’s 65% share of the settlement of civil penalties paid under this
5 Agreement pursuant to the PAGA and \$7,000 to the Aggrieved Employees. “Aggrieved
6 Employees” are all individuals who are or previously were employed by Defendants in California
7 and classified as non-exempt employees at any time during the PAGA Period (June 23, 2023
8 through September 25, 2025). Pursuant to Labor Code section 2699, the LWDA was provided
9 notice of the Agreement and these settlement terms. The Court finds the PAGA Penalties to be
10 reasonable.

11 10. The Court hereby approves, as to form and content, the Class Notice attached to the
12 Agreement as Exhibit A. The Court finds that the Class Notice appears to fully and accurately
13 inform the Class of all material elements of the proposed Settlement, of the Class Members’ right
14 to be excluded from the Class by submitting a written opt-out request, and of each member’s right
15 and opportunity to object to the Settlement. The Court further finds that the distribution of the
16 Class Notice substantially in the manner and form set forth in the Agreement and this Order meets
17 the requirements of due process, is the best notice practicable under the circumstances, and shall
18 constitute due and sufficient notice to all persons entitled thereto. The Court orders the mailing of
19 the Class Notice by first class mail pursuant to the terms set forth in the Agreement. If a Class
20 Notice Packet is returned because of an incorrect address, the Administrator will promptly search
21 for a more current address for the Class Member and re-mail the Class Notice Packet to any new
22 address for the Class Member no later than seven (7) days after the receipt of the undelivered
23 Class Notice.

24 11. The Court hereby appoints Apex Class Action LLC as the Administrator. No later
25 than fifteen (15) days after this Order, Defendants will provide the Class Data to the
26 Administrator. The Administrator will perform address updates and verifications as necessary
27 prior to the first mailing. Using best efforts to mail it as soon as possible, and in no event later
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1 than fourteen (14) days after receiving the Class Data, the Administrator will mail the Class Notice
2 Packet to all Class Members via first-class regular U.S. Mail to their last known address.

3 12. The Court hereby preliminarily approves the proposed procedure for exclusion
4 from the Settlement. Any Class Member may individually choose to opt out of and be excluded
5 from the Class as provided in the Class Notice by following the instructions for requesting
6 exclusion from the Class that are set forth in the Class Notice. All requests for exclusion must be
7 postmarked or received no later than sixty (60) calendar days after the date of the mailing of the
8 Class Notice ("Response Deadline"). If a Class Notice Packet is re-mailed, the Response Deadline
9 for requests for exclusion will be extended an additional fourteen (14) days. A Request for
10 Exclusion may also be faxed or emailed to the Administrator as indicated in the Class Notice.
11 Any such person who chooses to opt out of and be excluded from the Class will not be entitled to
12 any recovery under the Class Settlement and will not be bound by the Class Settlement or have
13 any right to object, appeal or comment thereon. Class Members who have not requested exclusion
14 shall be bound by all determinations of the Court, the Agreement and the Judgment. A request for
15 exclusion may only opt out that particular individual, and any attempt to effect an opt-out of a
16 group, class, or subclass of individuals is not permitted and will be deemed invalid.

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

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

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

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

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

10 **IT IS SO ORDERED.**

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12 Dated: _____

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14 HON. ELIHU M. BERLE
15 JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
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