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Attorneys for Plaintiff JUANA VAZQUEZ,
on behalf of herself and current and former aggrieved employees

**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES- CENTRAL DISTRICT**

JUANA VAZQUEZ, on behalf of herself and
current and former aggrieved employees

Plaintiff,

vs.

POMONA VALLEY HOSPITAL MEDICAL
CENTER; and DOES 1 to 100, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No.: **24STCV09353**

PAGA ACTION

**PLAINTIFF JUANA VAZQUEZ'S
COMPLAINT FOR:**

- CIVIL PENALTIES PURSUANT
TO THE PRIVATE ATTORNEYS
GENERAL ACT OF 2004
("PAGA"), LABOR CODE
SECTIONS 2698, ET SEQ.**

COMES NOW Plaintiff JUANA VAZQUEZ ("Plaintiff"), who alleges and complains
against Defendants POMONA VALLEY HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER; and DOES 1 to 100,
inclusive (collectively "Defendants") as follows:

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This is a Private Attorneys General Act of 2004, Labor Code §§ 2698, *et seq.*
("PAGA") representative action brought by Plaintiff on behalf of the State of California, herself
and other current and former aggrieved employees of Defendants who worked as hourly non-
exempt employees in California during the relevant time period seeking civil penalties associated
with Defendants' violation of the Labor Code based on Defendants' failure to pay wages for all
hours worked at the employees' minimum wage rate or overtime rate, failure to provide all legally

1 required and legally compliant meal and rest periods, failure to timely pay earned wages during
2 employment, secret payment of wages lower than designated by statute, failure to provide
3 complete and accurate wage statements, failure to timely pay all unpaid wages following
4 separation of employment. Plaintiff seeks on a representative basis, following notice to the Labor
5 and Workforce Development Agency, civil penalties, reasonable attorneys' fees pursuant to Labor
6 Code section 2699(g)(1) and costs brought on behalf of Plaintiff, the State of California, and
7 others aggrieved.

8 **II. JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

9 2. This Court has jurisdiction over the claims of Plaintiff and all other current and
10 former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees because Plaintiff's lawsuit seeks
11 civil penalties on behalf of herself, all other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly
12 non-exempt employees, and the State of California in excess of twenty-five thousand dollars
13 (\$25,000); Defendants employed Plaintiff and all other current and former aggrieved California-
14 based hourly non-exempt employees; and the injuries to Plaintiff and all other current and former
15 aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees occurred in locations throughout
16 California, including but not limited to Los Angeles County at 1798 North Garey Avenue,
17 Pomona, California 91767.

18 **III. PARTIES**

19 3. Plaintiff brings this action as a representative of the Labor and Workforce
20 Development Agency on behalf of herself and other current and former employees subject to
21 violations of the Labor Code. The named Plaintiff and the persons on whose behalf this action is
22 filed include current, former and/or future employees of Defendants who work, worked, or will
23 work for Defendants as direct employees as well as temporary employees employed through temp
24 agencies as hourly non-exempt employees in California. At all times mentioned herein, the
25 currently named Plaintiff is and was domiciled and a resident and citizen of California and was
26 employed by Defendants in an hourly position at Defendants' location in Pomona from
27 approximately October 2019 to present.

28 4. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that Defendant POMONA

1 VALLEY HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER is authorized to do business within the State of
2 California and is doing business in the State of California and/or that Defendants DOES 1-50 are,
3 and at all times relevant hereto were persons acting on behalf of Defendant POMONA VALLEY
4 HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER in the establishment of, or ratification of, the aforementioned
5 illegal wage and hour practices or policies. Defendant POMONA VALLEY HOSPITAL
6 MEDICAL CENTER operates in Los Angeles County and employed Plaintiff and aggrieved
7 employees in Los Angeles County, including but not limited to, at 1798 North Garey Avenue,
8 Pomona, California 91767.

9 5. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that Defendants DOES 1
10 through 50 are corporations, or are other business entities or organizations of a nature unknown to
11 Plaintiff that employed Plaintiff and aggrieved California non-exempt employees, permitted
12 Plaintiff and aggrieved employees to work, and exercised control over the wages, hours and
13 working conditions of employment of Plaintiff and aggrieved employees.

14 6. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that Defendants DOES 51
15 through 100 are individuals unknown to Plaintiff. Each of the individual defendants is sued
16 individually and in his or her capacity as an agent, shareholder, owner, representative, manager,
17 supervisor, independent contractor and/or employee of each defendant who violated or caused to
18 be violated the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Labor Code and/or any provision of
19 the Industrial Welfare Commission's wage orders regulating hours and days of work.

20 7. Plaintiff is unaware of the true names of Defendants DOES 1 through 100. Plaintiff
21 sues said defendants by said fictitious names, and will amend this complaint when the true names
22 and capacities are ascertained or when such facts pertaining to liability are ascertained, or as
23 permitted by law or by the Court. Plaintiff is informed and believes that each of the fictitiously
24 named defendants is in some manner responsible for the events and allegations set forth in this
25 complaint.

26 8. Plaintiff makes the allegations in this complaint without any admission that, as to
27 any particular allegation, Plaintiff bears the burden of pleading, proving, or persuading and
28 Plaintiff reserves all of Plaintiff's right to plead in the alternative.

1 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

2 **CIVIL PENALTIES PURSUANT TO THE PRIVATE ATTORNEYS GENERAL ACT OF**
3 **2004, LABOR CODE SECTIONS 2698, ET SEQ.**

4 **(Against all Defendants by Plaintiff)**

5 9. Plaintiff incorporates all paragraphs above as though fully set forth herein.

6 10. During Plaintiff's employment and continuing through the present, Plaintiff alleges
7 Defendants violated Labor Code sections 201, 202, 203, 204, 223, 226, 226.7, 510, 512, 1194,
8 1197, 1198 and the applicable Wage Orders.

9 11. Specifically, Defendants have committed the following violations of California
10 Labor Code:

11 12. **Failure to pay wages for all hours worked at the legal minimum wage:**
12 Defendants employed many of their employees, including Plaintiff, as hourly non-exempt
13 employees. In California, an employer is required to pay hourly employees for all "hours worked,"
14 which includes all time that an employee is under control of the employer and all time the
15 employee is suffered and permitted to work. This includes the time an employee spends, either
16 directly or indirectly, performing services which inure to the benefit of the employer.

17 13. Labor Code sections 1194 and 1197 require an employer to compensate employees
18 for all "hours worked" at least at a minimum wage rate of pay as established by the IWC and the
19 Wage Orders.

20 14. In this case, Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based
21 hourly non-exempt employees worked more minutes per shift than Defendants credited them with
22 having worked. Specifically, Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and other current and former
23 aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees all wages at the applicable minimum
24 wage for all hours worked due to Defendants' policies, practices, and/or procedures including, but
25 not limited to,

26 (a) Requiring Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly
27 non-exempt employees to remain on duty with their pagers on them in order to take and respond to
28 pages from Defendant's management personnel while off-the-clock during meal breaks. Plaintiff

1 and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees were not
2 paid for this time resulting in Defendant's failure to pay minimum wage for all the hours Plaintiff
3 and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees worked.

4 15. Therefore, Defendants suffered, permitted, and required Plaintiff and other current
5 and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees to be subject to Defendants'
6 control without paying wages for that time. This resulted in Plaintiff and other current and former
7 aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees working time for which they were not
8 compensated any wages, in violation of Labor Code sections 1194 and 1197 and the applicable
9 Wage Order.

10 16. **Failure to pay wages for overtime hours worked at the overtime rate of pay:**
11 Defendants employed many of their employees, including Plaintiff, as hourly non-exempt
12 employees. In California, an employer is required to pay hourly employees for all "hours worked,"
13 which includes all time that an employee is under control of the employer and all time the
14 employee is suffered and permitted to work. This includes the time an employee spends, either
15 directly or indirectly, performing services that inure to the benefit of the employer.'

16 17. Labor Code sections 510 and 1194 require an employer to compensate employees a
17 higher rate of pay for hours worked in excess of eight (8) hours in a workday, in excess of forty
18 (40) hours in a workweek, and on any seventh consecutive day of work in a workweek:

19 Any work in excess of eight (8) hours in one workday, any work in excess of forty (40)
20 hours in any one (1) workweek, and the first eight (8) hours worked on the seventh day of
21 work in any one (1) workweek, shall be compensated at the rate of no less than one-and-
22 one-half (1.5) times the regular rate of pay for an employee. Any work in excess of twelve
23 (12) hours in one (1) day shall be compensated at the rate of no less than twice the regular
24 rate of pay for an employee. In addition, any work in excess of eight (8) hours on any
25 seventh day of a workweek shall be compensated at the rate of no less than twice the
26 regular rate of pay of an employee.

27 Labor Code section 510.

28 18. In this case, Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff and other current and former
aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees overtime wages for all overtime hours
worked due to Defendants' policies, practices, and/or procedures including, but not limited to,

(a) Requiring Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly

1 non-exempt employees to remain on duty with their pagers on them in order to take and respond to
2 pages from Defendant's management personnel while off-the-clock during meal breaks. Plaintiff
3 and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees were not
4 paid for this time resulting in Defendant's failure to pay minimum wage for all the hours Plaintiff
5 and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees worked.

6 19. The foregoing policies, practices, and/or procedures resulted in time during each
7 workday that Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt
8 employees were under the control of Defendants but were not compensated. To the extent that the
9 foregoing uncompensated time occurred when Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved
10 California-based hourly non-exempt employees worked more than eight (8) hours in a workday,
11 more than forty (40) hours in a workweek, and/or seven (7) days in a workweek, Defendants failed
12 to pay them at their overtime rate of pay for overtime hours worked, in violation of Labor Code
13 sections 510, 1194 and 1198, and the applicable Wage Order.

14 20. **Failure to pay wages to hourly non-exempt employees for workdays that**
15 **Defendants failed to provide legally required and compliant meal periods:** Plaintiff and other
16 current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees regularly worked
17 shifts of more than five (5) hours in length and shifts of more than ten (10) hours in length.

18 21. California law requires an employer to authorize or permit an employee an
19 uninterrupted meal period of no less than thirty (30) minutes in which the employee is relieved of
20 all duties and the employer relinquishes control over the employee's activities prior to the
21 employee's sixth hour of work. Labor Code sections 226.7, 512, and 1198; Wage Order 5 at §11;
22 *Brinker Rest. Corp. v. Super Ct. (Hohnbaum)* (2012) 53 Cal.4th 1004. An employer may not
23 employ an employee for a work period of more than ten (10) hours per day without providing the
24 employee with a second such meal period of not less than thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of
25 the eleventh hour of work. *Id.* If the employee is not relieved of all duty during a meal period, the
26 meal period shall be considered an "on duty" meal period and counted as time worked. A paid "on
27 duty" meal period is only permitted when: (1) the nature of the work prevents an employee from
28 being relieved of all duty; and (2) the parties have a written agreement agreeing to on-duty meal

1 periods.

2 22. If an employer fails to provide an employee a meal period in accordance with the
3 law, the employer must pay the employee one (1) hour of pay at the employee's regular rate of pay
4 for each workday that a legally required and compliant meal period was not provided. Labor Code
5 sections 226.7 and 1198; Wage Order 5 at §11.

6 23. In this case, Defendants failed to authorize or permit legally required and compliant
7 meal periods to Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-
8 exempt employees due to Defendants' policies, practices, and/or procedures, including but not
9 limited to,

10 (a) Requiring Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly
11 non-exempt employees to remain on-duty with their pagers on them in order to take and respond
12 to pages Defendant's management personnel while off-the-clock during meal breaks resulting in
13 meal breaks that were not duty-free.

14 24. Additionally, Plaintiff alleges that Defendants maintained a policy, practice, and/or
15 procedure of failing to compensate Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-
16 based hourly non-exempt employees one (1) hour of pay at their regular rate of pay for each
17 workday that Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt
18 employees did not receive legally required and compliant meal periods, in violation of Labor Code
19 section 226.7.

20 25. Defendants' foregoing policies, practices, and/or procedures resulted in Plaintiff
21 and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees not
22 receiving wages to compensate them for workdays during which Defendants did not provide them
23 with meal periods in compliance with California law.

24 26. **Failure to pay wages to hourly non-exempt employees for workdays that**
25 **Defendants failed to provide legally required and compliant rest periods:** Plaintiff and other
26 current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees regularly worked
27 shifts of more than three-and-a-half (3.5) hours.

28 27. California law requires every employer to authorize and permit an employee a rest

1 period of ten (10) net minutes for every four (4) hours worked or major fraction thereof. Labor
2 Code section 226.7; Wage Order 5 at §12. Under California law, “[e]mployees are entitled to 10
3 minutes’ rest for shifts from three and one-half to six hours in length, 20 minutes for shifts of more
4 than six hours up to 10 hours, 30 minutes for shifts of more than 10 hours up to 14 hours, and so
5 on.” *Brinker Restaurant Corp. v. Sup. Ct. (Hohnbaum)* (2012) 53 Cal.4th 1004, 1029; Labor Code
6 section 226.7; Wage Order 5 at §12. Rest periods, insofar as practicable, shall be in the middle of
7 each work period. Wage Order 5 at §12. Additionally, the rest period requirement “obligates
8 employers to permit – and authorizes employees to take – off-duty rest periods.” *Augustus v. ABM*
9 *Security Services, Inc.*, (2016) 5 Cal.5th 257, 269. That is, during rest periods employers must
10 relieve employees of all duties and relinquish control over how employees spend their time. *Id.*

11 28. If the employer fails to authorize or permit a required rest period, the employer
12 must pay the employee one (1) hour of pay at the employee’s regular rate of pay for each workday
13 the employer did not authorize or permit a legally required rest period. Labor Code section 226.7;
14 Wage Order 5 at § 12.

15 29. In this case, Defendants failed to authorize or permit all legally required and
16 compliant rest periods to Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly
17 non-exempt employees due to Defendants’ policies, practices, and/or procedures including, but not
18 limited to,

19 (a) Requiring Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly
20 non-exempt employees to remain on Defendant’s premises during their rest breaks. Defendant’s
21 continued exercise of direction and control over how Plaintiff and other current and former
22 aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees spent their rest breaks resulted in rest
23 breaks that were not duty free as required.

24 30. Additionally, Plaintiff alleges that Defendants maintained a policy, practice, and/or
25 procedure of failing to compensate Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-
26 based hourly non-exempt employees with one (1) hour of pay at their regular rate of pay for each
27 workday they did not receive legally required and compliant rest periods, in violation of Labor
28 Code section 226.7.

1 31. Defendants' foregoing policies, practices, and/or procedures resulted in Plaintiff
2 and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees not
3 receiving wages to compensate them for workdays in which Defendants did not provide them with
4 rest periods in compliance with California law.

5 32. **Failure to timely pay earned wages during employment:** In California, wages
6 must be paid at least twice during each calendar month on days designated in advance by the
7 employer as regular paydays, subject to some exceptions. Labor Code section 204(a). Wages
8 earned between the 1st and 15th days, inclusive, of any calendar month must be paid between the
9 16th and the 26th day of that month and wages earned between the 16th and the last day,
10 inclusive, of any calendar month must be paid between the 1st and 10th day of the following
11 month. *Id.* Other payroll periods such as those that are weekly, biweekly, or semimonthly, must be
12 paid within seven (7) calendar days following the close of the payroll period in which wages were
13 earned. Labor Code section 204(d).

14 33. As a derivative of Plaintiff's claims above, Plaintiff alleges that Defendants failed
15 to timely pay Plaintiff's and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-
16 exempt employees' earned wages (including minimum wages, overtime wages, meal period
17 premium wages and/or rest period premium wages), in violation of Labor Code section 204.
18 Defendants' aforementioned policies, practices, and/or procedures resulted in their failure to pay
19 Plaintiff's and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees'
20 their earned wages within the applicable time frames outlined in Labor Code section 204.

21 34. **Secret payment of lower wages than designated by statute:** Labor Code section
22 223 provides that, where any statute or contract requires an employer to maintain the designated
23 wage scale, it shall be unlawful to secretly pay a lower wage while purporting to pay the wage
24 designated by statute or contract. By engaging in the unlawful conduct alleged herein, including
25 by failing to: pay overtime wages at the applicable legal overtime rate, meal break premiums and
26 lawful sick pay at the employees' regular rate of pay, as established by Labor Code sections 226.7,
27 246, 510, 1194 and sections 11 and 12 of the applicable IWC Wage Orders, as incorporated by
28 Labor Code section 1198, the Defendant secretly paid a lower wage than designated by statute

1 while purporting to pay the wages designated by statute, in violation of Labor Code section 223.

2 **35. Failure to provide complete and accurate wage statements:** Labor Code section
3 226, subdivision (a). Labor Code section 226(a) provides, *inter alia*, that, upon paying an
4 employee his or her wages, the employer must “furnish each of his or her employees ... an
5 itemized statement in writing showing (1) gross wages earned, (2) total hours worked by the
6 employee, except for any employee whose compensation is solely based on a salary and who is
7 exempt from payment of overtime under subdivision (a) of Section 515 or any applicable order of
8 the Industrial Welfare Commission, (3) the number of piece-rate units earned and any applicable
9 piece rate if the employee is paid on a piece-rate basis, (4) all deductions, provided, that all
10 deductions made on written orders of the employee may be aggregated and shown as one item, (5)
11 net wages earned, (6) the inclusive dates of the pay period for which the employee is paid, (7) the
12 name of the employee and his or her social security number, (8) the name and address of the legal
13 entity that is the employer, and (9) all applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and
14 the corresponding number of hours worked at each hourly rate by the employee.”

15 **36.** As a derivative of Plaintiff’s allegations above, Defendants’ failure to pay Plaintiff
16 and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees all wages
17 earned (including minimum wages, overtime wages, meal period premium wages, and/or rest
18 period premium wages) rendered Plaintiff’s and other current and former aggrieved California-
19 based hourly non-exempt employees’ wage statements inaccurate, in violation of Labor Code
20 section 226(a)(1, 2, 5 & 9).

21 **37. Failure to pay employees all wages due at time of termination/resignation:** An
22 employer is required to pay all unpaid wages timely after an employee’s employment ends. The
23 wages are due immediately upon termination (Labor Code section 201) or within seventy-two (72)
24 hours of resignation (Labor Code section 202).

25 **38.** As a derivative of Plaintiff’s allegations above, because Defendants failed to pay
26 Plaintiff and other current and former aggrieved California-based hourly non-exempt employees
27 all their earned wages (including minimum wages, overtime wages, meal period premium wages,
28 and/or rest period premium wages), Defendants failed to pay those employees timely after each

1 employee's termination and/or resignation, in violation of Labor Code sections 201, 202, and 203.

2 39. Labor Code sections 2699, subdivisions (a) and (g) authorize an aggrieved
3 employee, on behalf of himself or herself and other current or former employees, to bring a civil
4 action to recover civil penalties against all Defendants pursuant to the procedures specified in
5 Labor Code section 2699.3.

6 40. Plaintiff has complied with the procedures for bringing suit specified in Labor
7 Code section 2699.3. On February 8, 2024, Plaintiff filed a PAGA Claim Notice with the LWDA
8 and provided notice to Defendants by certified mail which provided notice of the specific
9 provisions of the Labor Code alleged to have been violated, including the facts and theories to
10 support the violations alleged.

11 41. Pursuant to Labor Code section 2699.3, the LWDA must give written notice by
12 certified mail to the parties that it intends to investigate the alleged violations of the Labor Code
13 within 60 days of the date of the complainant's written notice. The LWDA failed to provide the
14 parties notice within 60 days of the date of Plaintiff's PAGA Claim Notice that the LWDA intends
15 to investigate Plaintiff's claims.

16 42. Pursuant to Labor Code sections 2699(a) and (f), Plaintiff is entitled to recover civil
17 penalties for Defendants' violations of Labor Code sections 201, 202, 203, 204, 223, 226, 226.7,
18 510, 512, 1194, 1197, and 1198., During Plaintiff's employment and continuing through the
19 present, preceding Plaintiff sending the initial PAGA Claim Notice to the LWDA to the present, in
20 the following amounts:

21 a. For violations of Labor Code sections 201, 202, 203, 226.7, and 1198; one
22 hundred dollars (\$100) for each aggrieved employee per pay period for the initial violation and
23 two hundred dollars (\$200) for each aggrieved employee per pay period for each subsequent
24 violation [penalty amounts established by Labor Code section 2699(f)(2)].

25 b. For violations of Labor Code section 510 and 512, fifty dollars (\$50) for
26 each employee for each pay period for the initial violation, and for each subsequent violation, one
27 hundred dollars (\$100) for each underpaid employee for each pay period [penalty amounts
28 established by Labor Code section 558].

1 c. For violations of Labor Code section 204, one hundred dollars (\$100) for
2 each failure to pay each employee in any initial violation, and for each subsequent violation, or
3 any willful or intentional violation, two hundred dollars (\$200) for each failure to pay each
4 employee, plus 25 percent of the amount unlawfully withheld [penalty amounts established by
5 Labor Code section 210].

6 d. For violations of Labor Code section 223, one hundred dollars (\$100) for
7 each failure to pay each employee in any initial violation, and for each subsequent violation, or
8 any willful or intentional violation, two hundred dollars (\$200) for each failure to pay each
9 employee, plus 25 percent of the amount unlawfully withheld [penalty amounts established by
10 Labor Code section 225.5].

11 43. Pursuant to Labor Code section 2699(g), Plaintiff is entitled to an award of
12 reasonable attorneys' fees and costs in connection with her claims for civil penalties.

13 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

14 **WHEREFORE, PLAINTIFF, ON BEHALF OF HERSELF AND ON OTHER**
15 **AGGRIEVED EMPLOYEES, PRAYS AS FOLLOWS:**

16 **ON THE FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION:**

17 1. That Defendants be found to have violated the provisions of the Labor Code and
18 the IWC Wages Orders as to the Plaintiff and aggrieved employees;

19 2. For any and all legally applicable penalties during the relevant statute of limitations
20 subject to any permissible tolling, including but not limited to those recoverable under the
21 California Labor Code, including but not limited to sections 210, 225.5, 226.3, 558, 2699(f);

22 3. For attorneys' fees and costs of suit, including but not limited to those recoverable
23 under California Labor Code section 2699(g); and

24 4. For such and other further relief, in law and/or equity, as the Court deems just or
25 appropriate

1 Dated: April 15, 2024

Respectfully submitted,
LAVI & EBRAHIMIAN, LLP

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3 By:



Joseph Lavi, Esq.

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Cassandra Castro, Esq.

Attorneys for Plaintiff

JUANA VAZQUEZ

on behalf of herself and current and former
aggrieved employees

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