

JCL LAW FIRM, APC

Jean-Claude Lapuyade (State Bar #248676)
Sydney Castillo Johnson (State Bar #343881)
5440 Morehouse Drive, Suite 3600
San Diego, CA 92121
Telephone: (619) 599-8292
Facsimile: (619) 599-8291
jlapuyade@jcl-lawfirm.com
scastillo@jcl-lawfirm.com

ZAKAY LAW GROUP, APLC

Shani O. Zakay (State Bar #277924)
5440 Morehouse Drive, Suite 3600
San Diego, CA 92121
Telephone: (619) 255-9047
Facsimile: (858) 404-9203
shani@zakaylaw.com

Attorneys for Plaintiff

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

JONATHAN CHEUNG, an individual, on
behalf of himself and on behalf of all persons
similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

vs.

SIGNATURE COMMERCIAL
SOLUTIONS, LLC, a Florida Limited
Liability Company; and DOES 1-50,
Inclusive;

Defendants.

Case No. 22STCV13034

**DECLARATION OF JEAN-CLAUDE
LAPUYADE, ESQ. IN SUPPORT OF
PLAINTIFF'S MOTION FOR
PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF CLASS
ACTION AND PAGA SETTLEMENT**

Date: December 19, 2023

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Judge: Hon. Holly J. Fujie

Dept.: 56

1 I, Jean-Claude Lapuyade, Esq., declare as follows:

2 1. I am over eighteen years of age and if called as a witness, I could and would competently
3 testify to the following facts from my own personal knowledge. I am an attorney-at-law and the owner
4 of the law firm of JCL LAW FIRM, APC (hereinafter "Class Counsel"). I am counsel of record for
5 Plaintiff JONATHAN CHEUNG (hereafter "Plaintiff" or "Class Representative") in this wage and hour
6 class action filed against Defendant Signature Commercial Solutions, LLC ("Defendants").

7 2. This declaration is being submitted in support of Plaintiff's Motion for Final Approval of
8 Class Action Settlement.

9 3. Attached hereto as **Exhibit "1"** is a true and correct copy of the fully executed Class
10 Action and PAGA Settlement Agreement (hereinafter "Settlement Agreement"). Attached thereto as
11 **Exhibit A** is a true and correct copy of the Notice of Class Action and PAGA Settlement ("Class
12 Notice").

13 4. Attached hereto as **Exhibit "2"** is a true and correct copy of the conformed July 31, 2023,
14 Preliminary Approval Order.

15 5. Attached hereto as **Exhibit "3"** is a true and correct copy of the July 6, 2023, proof of
16 filing the proposed Settlement with the LWDA.

17 6. Attached hereto as **Exhibit "4"** is true and correct copy of the November 20, 2023, proof
18 of filing this motion seeking final approval of this Settlement with the LWDA.

19 7. Attached hereto as **Exhibit "5"** is a true and correct copy of the JCL Law Firm, APC's
20 "Firm Resume" detailing the credentials and a summary of cases on which Counsel has been appointed
21 Class Counsel.

22 **I. INTRODUCTION**

23 8. An objective evaluation of the proposed settlement of Seven Hundred Fifty Thousand
24 Dollars and Zero Cents (\$750,000.00) ("Gross Settlement Amount") confirms that the relief negotiated
25 on behalf of the Participating Class Members is fair, reasonable, and valuable. The Settlement is a
26 product of informed, adversarial, and non-collusive negotiations, between experienced counsel, and
27 presided over by Tripper Ortman, Esq. After deducting any Court-approved attorneys' fees and costs,
28 class representative incentive payments, administration costs, and the payments to the Labor &

1 Workforce Development Agency (“LWDA”), the net settlement fund shall be distributed to
2 Participating Class Members based on the number of Workweeks they worked while employed by
3 Defendant during the Class Period. *The Class greeted news of the Settlement with unanimous*
4 *approval.*¹ There are zero opt-outs and zero objections to the Settlement. The unanimous approval by
5 the Class evidences the clear fairness and reasonableness of the Settlement.

6 9. This Settlement provides substantial recovery for Defendant’s alleged wage and hour
7 violations. Plaintiff estimates that the Settlement, if approved, would result in a Net Settlement Amount
8 of approximately \$393,000.00. This will result in an average Individual Class Payment of **\$452.24**, a
9 high payment of **\$2,181.15**, and low payment of **\$10.34**.

10 10. The relief offered by the Settlement is immediate and is particularly impressive when
11 viewed against the difficulties encountered by plaintiffs pursuing similar wage and hour cases (*see*
12 *infra*). Indeed, by settling now rather than proceeding to trial, the Class will not have to wait (possibly
13 years) for relief, nor will they have to bear the risks associated with prolonged and uncertain litigation.

14 11. As discussed below, the proposed Settlement satisfies all criteria for final settlement
15 approval under California law and falls well within the range of reasonableness. Accordingly, the Class
16 Representative and Class Counsel respectfully request this Court grant final approval of the Agreement
17 and, entry of the proposed Final Approval Order and Judgment.

18 II. OVERVIEW OF THE LITIGATION

19 12. Defendant offers technical, professional, and industrial staffing services for accounting
20 and finance, administrative, architectural, automotive, aviation, call center, and clinical research
21 industries in California, including Los Angeles, where Plaintiff worked. Plaintiff worked for Defendant
22 from July of 2021 until December of 2021. Throughout his employment, Plaintiff was subject to
23 Defendant’s written policies and procedures contained in, among other documents, the “Signature
24 Consultants Employee Handbook.”

25 13. Generally, Plaintiff claims that Defendant failed to pay for all time worked, failed to
26 provide compliant meal and rest periods, failed to reimburse for mandatory business expenses, failed to
27 furnish accurate itemized wage statements, and failed to pay all wages upon separation. Defendant
28

¹ Nineteen (19) Notices were deemed undeliverable. ILYM Dec. at ¶¶ 12.

1 denies liability for each of Plaintiff's claims. Further, Defendant asserts that it fully complied with all
2 applicable employment laws and raised several other significant defenses to Plaintiff's claims, including
3 but not limited to, facially compliant meal and rest period policies, compliant wage statements, and
4 timely paid all wages due upon separation of employment.

5 14. On February 8, 2022, Plaintiff served Defendant and the Labor and Workforce
6 Development Agency ("LWDA") with a Notice of Violations ("PAGA Notice"). Plaintiff's PAGA
7 Notice set forth the facts and theories supporting Defendant's alleged violations of various provisions
8 of the California Labor Code and applicable Industrial Welfare Commissions ("IWC") Wage Order and
9 of his intent to pursue claims under California Labor Code Private Attorneys General Act, Cal. Lab.
10 Code Sections 2698 *et seq* ("PAGA").

11 15. On April 18, 2023, Plaintiff filed a class action complaint in the Los Angeles County
12 Superior Court, Case No. 21STCV13034 ("Action"). The operative Third Amended Complaint alleges
13 nine causes of action including, unfair competition, failure to pay minimum wages, failure to pay
14 overtime wages, failure to provide compliant meal and rest periods, failure to provide accurate itemized
15 wage statements, failure to provide wages when due, failure to reimburse required business expenses
16 and violations of the PAGA.

17 16. After Plaintiff commenced written discovery, the Parties agreed to mediate this action.
18 To prepare for mediation, the Parties agreed to informally produce additional documents and data points
19 subject to the mediation privilege, including but not limited to, the Class Members' time data and certain
20 payroll data points. As discussed *infra*, Plaintiff's counsel retained the forensic consultants at Berger
21 Consulting Group ("BCG") to analyze Defendant's time and payroll data.

22 17. On April 17, 2023, the Parties participated in a full day mediation with highly regarded
23 wage and hour and PAGA mediator Tripper Ortman. The mediation concluded with a settlement after
24 both sides agreed to a Mediator's proposal which was subsequently memorialized in the form of a
25 Memorandum of Understanding. Thereafter, the Parties drafted and negotiated a long-form settlement
26 agreement, which is the subject of the instant motion.

27 18. The Court preliminarily approved an initial Gross Settlement Amount of Seven Hundred,
28 Fifty Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents (\$750,000.00) based on a total of an estimated 42,609

1 Workweeks worked by the Class during the Class Period. The Gross Settlement Amount shall be used:
2 (1) to satisfy the Individual Class Payments; (2) to satisfy the Class Representative Service Payment;
3 (3) to satisfy the Class Counsel Fees Payment and the Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment
4 (collectively hereinafter “Class Counsel Fees and Expenses Payment”); (4) to satisfy the PAGA
5 Penalties; and (5) to satisfy the Administration Expenses Payment incurred in this action.

6 19. As explained in further detail below, the Settlement is fair, adequate, and reasonable to
7 the class and should be granted final approval. This is evidenced by the unanimous approval of the
8 Settlement by the Class, the absence of any objections to the Settlement and the average Individual
9 Class Payment of **\$452.24**.

10 **III. THE SETTLEMENT IS FAIR, REASONABLE AND ADEQUATE**

11 **A. Adequate Investigation**

12 20. Months before filing the Action, Class Counsel began its pre-filing investigation into the
13 Plaintiff’s complaints. Class Counsel’s investigation started with several lengthy interviews with
14 Plaintiff. As part of the interview process, the Plaintiff produced documents related to his employment,
15 including portions of Defendant’s handbooks, compensation policies and time and payroll records. At
16 the conclusion of the interviews, Class Counsel determined that Plaintiff’s complaints justified further
17 inquiry.

18 21. Class Counsel subsequently requested Plaintiff’s employee files from Defendant. In
19 response, Defendant produced hundreds of pages of documents, including but not limited, copies of
20 Plaintiff’s hiring documents and payroll and time records. Class Counsel reviewed and analyzed the
21 documents and determined the documents appeared to substantiate Plaintiff’s claim that Defendant’s
22 failed to, among other things, provide accurate wage statements and to provide compliant meal and rest
23 periods.

24 22. To prepare for mediation, Defendant produced the time and payroll records for the Class
25 Members, aggregate workweek and pay period data for the Class Members, aggregate meal premiums
26 paid to the Class Members, average hourly rate for the Class Members, and copies of applicable
27 handbooks, policies, and agreements. In total, Class Counsel reviewed more than 400 pages of
28 documents and nearly 600,000 unique cells of time and payroll data.

1 23. Class Counsel then retained the statisticians and economists at BCG to evaluate the Class
2 Members' payroll and time data. BCG provides data analysis and damage modeling consulting
3 services, specializing in wage and hour class actions. BCG's team of financial and data analysts are
4 credentialed and experienced experts in their fields and have provided their expertise on thousands of
5 cases.

6 24. BCG analyzed Defendant's time and payroll data to assist in the development of various
7 damage models. Among other things, BCG determined the approximate amounts of unpaid wages,
8 amount of unpaid overtime wages, number of workweeks, pay periods, average length of shifts and
9 average number of hours worked per week. BCG also estimated the number of missed, late, or truncated
10 meal and rest periods, the amounts of unpaid wages, the amount of unpaid overtime, the amount of
11 unreimbursed business expenses, and the amount of missed meal and rest period premiums paid during
12 the Class Period.

13 25. Overall, Class Counsel thoroughly investigated the claims at issue, including: (1)
14 determining Plaintiff's suitability as a putative class representative through interviews, background
15 investigations, and analysis of his employment files; (2) evaluating all of Plaintiff's potential claims;
16 (3) researching similar wage and hour class actions as to the claims brought, the nature of the positions,
17 and the type of employer; (4) analyzing the Settlement Class's time and payroll records; (5) analyzing
18 Defendant's labor policies and practices; (6) researching settlements in similar cases as well as
19 outstanding issues which could affect settlement approval; (7) evaluating Plaintiff's claims and
20 estimating Defendant's liability for purposes of settlement; (8) drafting the mediation brief; and (9)
21 participating in the mediation. This investigation allowed Class Counsel to fully assess the nature and
22 magnitude of the claims being settled, as well as the impediments to recovery, such as to make an
23 independent assessment of the reasonableness of the terms to which the Parties have agreed.

24 26. Class Counsel only agreed to enter the Settlement following this thorough investigation
25 and evaluation of Plaintiff's claims. Based on its investigation of the facts, applicable law, and
26 marketplace for similar settlements, and considering the risk of significant delay and uncertainty
27 associated with litigation, and the various defenses asserted by Defendant, Class Counsel firmly believe
28

1 this Agreement to be in the best interests of the Class Members. Because the Settlement's terms are
2 fair, reasonable, and adequate, the Court should preliminarily approve the Settlement.

3 **B. The Parties Settled Following Mediation**

4 27. On April 18, 2023, the Parties conducted a full day mediation with Tripper Ortman, Esq.,
5 an experienced wage and hour mediator. Mediator Ortman helped to manage the Parties' expectations
6 and provided a useful, neutral analysis of the issues and risks to both sides. The Parties made substantial
7 progress with Mediator Ortman's assistance. Namely, the Parties exchanged information regarding
8 their respective claims and defenses, including their respective evaluations of the damages. After more
9 than eight hours of arm's length and adversarial negotiations, the mediation concluded a settlement.
10 The amount of the service awards was not negotiated until after the parties agreed to the Gross
11 Settlement Amount and many other terms.

12 **C. Class Counsel is Experienced in Similar Litigation**

13 28. Plaintiff is represented by competent and experienced counsel to pursue his claims. I
14 established the JCL Law Firm, APC ("Firm"), in 2010. The Firm is a boutique plaintiff firm representing
15 aggrieved employees and consumers throughout California in wage and hour class actions and complex
16 multi-party product liability matters. The Firm currently consists of myself, Jean-Claude Lapuyade,
17 Esq. (Partner/Owner), Sydney Castillo-Johnson, Esq. (Associate Attorney), Monnett De La Torre, Esq.
18 (Associate Attorney), Perssia Razma (Associate Attorney), Tesla Stone (Paralegal), Laura Gonzalez
19 Mendez (Paralegal), and Jennifer Hemming (Paralegal), Madelyn Uchiyama (Legal Assistant), Sara
20 Christensen (Legal Assistant), and Jovana Martin (Intake Coordinator).

21 29. I am qualified to represent the Plaintiff, the Class Members, the State of California, and
22 the Aggrieved Employees. I have extensive experience with wage and hour class and representative
23 actions litigation like this matter, and employment matters in general. Additionally, I have extensive
24 complex mass tort litigation experience and complex construction product liability experience. I can,
25 will and have adequately represented the interests of the Plaintiff, the Class Members, the State of
26 California, and the Aggrieved Employees throughout this action.

27
28 ///

1 30. I have represented consumers and employees in California class actions, and complex
2 multi-party product liability actions exclusively for more than 14 years. I have been in practice as a
3 plaintiffs' civil litigation attorney since April 2007.

4 31. I am qualified to represent the Plaintiff, the State of California, and the Aggrieved
5 Employees. I have extensive experience with wage and hour class and representative actions litigation
6 like this matter, and employment matters in general. My credentials are reflected in the JCL Law Firm,
7 APC, Firm Resume, a true and correct copy of which is attached hereto as **Exhibit "5."** Some of the
8 major cases the Firm has undertaken are also set forth in **Exhibit "5."**

9 32. Since 2010, I have successfully tried two (2) cases to conclusion, each resulting in a
10 favorable verdict for the firm's clients.

11 33. Finally, I have published appellate experience in *William Blanchette et al., v. The*
12 *Superior Court of Imperial County, (GHA Enterprises)*, 8 Cal.App.5th 521.

13 34. Consequently, I have been named to the prestigious Thomson Reuters, Super Lawyers,
14 Rising Star in 2015, 2016, 2017 and, again, in 2018. According to Thomson Reuters, the Super Lawyers,
15 Rising Star list recognizes the top 2.5% of eligible attorneys. (see
16 https://www.superlawyers.com/about/selection_process.html.)

17 **D. Strength of Plaintiff's Case**

18 35. Here, the Settlement is clearly within the "ballpark" of reasonableness because the
19 Settlement provides a sizeable recovery to the Participating Class Member and need not necessarily
20 obtain 100 percent of the damages sought to be fair, reasonable, and ultimately, meaningful. *Wershba*,
21 91 Cal.App.4th at 250. While the Gross Settlement Amount of Seven Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars
22 and Zero Cents (\$750,000.00) represents a discount on Defendant's potential exposure if Plaintiff
23 established liability on all claims and was awarded the full amount of the estimated damages at trial,
24 this compromise is reasonable because (1) the formidable defenses raised by Defendant presented a risk
25 that could award significantly less in damages than Plaintiff's estimate and (2) any theoretical post-trial
26 recovery may require many more years of litigation, resulting in added fees and costs without any
27 guarantee of recovery for the Class.

28 ///

1 36. As detailed at the time of preliminary approval, the Gross Settlement Amount is fair and
2 reasonable considering the nature and magnitude of the claims being settled and the various potential
3 impediments to recovery. Class Counsel developed varied economic damages models measuring
4 Defendant's liability exposure while accounting for the uncertainties of continued litigation. The
5 various models were informed by Class Counsel's investigation, including the analysis of a significant
6 sample of time and payroll data. Detailed in greater depth during the preliminary approval process,
7 Class Counsel projected a range of Defendant's liability exposure for the claims asserted on behalf of
8 the Class. The Gross Settlement Amount represents roughly 11% of Defendant's *class-wide* liability
9 exposure as estimated by Class Counsel at the time of mediation.

10 37. The calculation methodology used to compensate the Participating Class Member for the
11 alleged damages was negotiated at the time of the Settlement. More importantly, the methodology is
12 fair, objective, and impartial. The calculation methodology is based on the number of Workweeks each
13 Participating Class Member worked for Defendant during the Class Period. The number of Workweeks
14 for the Participating Class Member is established through Defendant's data and documented
15 compensation records. The Settlement Administrator is responsible for calculating the Individual Class
16 Payments by dividing the Net Settlement Amount by the total number of Workweeks worked by all
17 Participating Class Members during the Class Period and multiplying the result by each Participating
18 Class Member's Workweeks. Agreement, ¶ 3.2.4. This process establishes an objectively fair and
19 reasonable procedure to compensate the Class.

20 38. Clearly the goal of this litigation to obtain redress for the class has been met by this
21 Settlement. Given the amount of the Settlement, the risks of litigation and the arm's length negotiations
22 between experienced counsel, the settlement is fair and reasonable, and is therefore entitled to final
23 approval.

24 **E. Risks of Continued Litigation**

25 39. Although Class Counsel believes strongly in Plaintiff's claims, it would be misguided to
26 ignore the asserted defenses. If successful on any one of its defenses, Defendant could defend the action
27 or, at least, drastically undercut Plaintiff's claims.

28 ///

1 40. With respect to the most immediate challenge, i.e., class certification, the risks attendant
2 to the certification of similar wage and hour claims are demonstrated by *Magadia v. Wal-Mart*
3 *Associates, Inc.* (9th Cir. 2021) 999 F.3d 668. There, the Ninth Circuit, vacated reversed and remanded
4 a \$110 million judgement against an employer for, *inter alia*, inaccurately paying overtime, and directed
5 the trial court to enter judgement in favor of the employer. *See also O’Conner v. Uber Technologies,*
6 *Inc.* (9th Cir. 2018) 904 F.3d 1087 (decertification of wage and hour misclassification action); *see also*
7 *Duran v. U.S. Bank National Association* (2014) 59 Cal.4th 1, 31 (reversing a trial verdict in favor
8 plaintiffs in a wage and hour class action)); *Tien v. Tenet Healthcare Corp.* (2012) 209 Cal.App.4th
9 1077, 1088 (“[T]he reason, if any, that employees might not take their breaks were predominantly
10 individualized questions of fact not susceptible to class treatment.”); *Ali v. U.S.A. Cab Ltd.* (2009) 176
11 Cal.App.4th 1333, 1341 (affirming denial of certification because employees’ declarations attesting to
12 having taken meal and rest breaks demonstrated that individualized inquiries were required to show
13 harm); *Campbell v. Best Buy Stores, L.P.*, (C.D. Cal. 2013) 2013 WL 5302217 at *11-13 (following
14 *Brinker* and denying certification of proposed off-the-clock and rest and meal break classes due to lack
15 of uniform policy); *Brown v. Fed Express Corp.* (C.D. Cal. 2008) 249 F.R.D. 580, 587-88 (denying
16 certification of driver meal and rest period claims based on the predominance of individual issues).
17 Collectively, the examples cited above illustrate the uncertain nature of class litigation. Consequently,
18 the uncertainty of obtaining certification through a contested motion is a significant risk factor favoring
19 settlement.

20 41. Although Plaintiff is confident about the strength of his claims, Plaintiff nevertheless
21 recognizes that Defendant has factual and legal defenses that, if successful, would potentially defeat or
22 impair the value of the lawsuit. Legally, the fast-changing landscape of wage and hour litigation can
23 drastically affect the value of Plaintiff’s claims and, in fact, already has.

24 42. As demonstrated by the decisions in *Magadia, supra*, 999 F.3d 668, *O’Conner v. Uber*
25 *Technologies* (N.D. Cal. 2018) 82 F.Supp.3d 1133 and *Duran v. U.S. Bank National Assn.* (2014) 59
26 Cal.4th 1, the complexities and duration of further litigation cannot be overstated. There is little doubt
27 that if Defendant faced a large adverse judgement, Defendant undoubtedly has the resources to post a
28 bond and appeal. A post-judgment appeal by Defendant would have required many more years to

1 resolve, assuming the judgment was affirmed. If the judgment was not affirmed in total, then the case
2 could have dragged on for years after the appeal. The benefits of a guaranteed recovery today outweigh
3 an uncertain result three or more years in the future.

4 43. Class Representative and Class Counsel recognize the expense and length of a trial
5 against Defendant through possible appeals which could take another three years. In arriving at their
6 informed belief that the present settlement is fair and adequate, Class Counsel accounted for the
7 uncertain outcome and risk inherent in complex actions such as this one. Class Counsel is also mindful
8 of and recognize the inherent problems of proof under, and alleged defenses to, the claims asserted in
9 the litigation. Moreover, post-trial motions and appeals would have been inevitable. Costs would have
10 increased, and recovery would have been delayed if not denied, thereby reducing the benefits of an
11 ultimate victory. Class Representative and Class Counsel believe that the Settlement confers substantial
12 monetary and non-monetary benefits upon the Class. Based upon their evaluation, Class Representative
13 and Class Counsel have determined that the Settlement set forth in the Agreement is in the best interest
14 of the Class, is fair, reasonable, and adequate, and should be granted final approval. With respect to the
15 most immediate challenge, i.e., class certification, the risks attendant to the certification of similar wage
16 and hour claims are demonstrated by *Magadia v. Wal-Mart Associates, Inc.* (9th Cir. 2021) 999 F.3d
17 668. There, the Ninth Circuit, vacated reversed and remanded a \$110 million judgement against an
18 employer for, *inter alia*, inaccurately paying overtime, and directed the trial court to enter judgement in
19 favor of the employer. (*See also O'Conner v. Uber Technologies, Inc.* (9th Cir. 2018) 904 F.3d 1087
20 (decertification of wage and hour misclassification action); *see also Duran v. U.S. Bank National*
21 *Association* (2014) 59 Cal.4th 1, 31 (reversing a trial verdict in favor plaintiffs in a wage and hour class
22 action)); *Tien v. Tenet Healthcare Corp.* (2012) 209 Cal.App.4th 1077, 1088 (“[T]he reason, if any, that
23 employees might not take their breaks were predominantly individualized questions of fact not
24 susceptible to class treatment.”); *Ali v. U.S.A. Cab Ltd.* (2009) 176 Cal.App.4th 1333, 1341 (affirming
25 denial of certification because employees’ declarations attesting to having taken meal and rest breaks
26 demonstrated that individualized inquiries were required to show harm); *Campbell v. Best Buy Stores,*
27 *L.P.*, (C.D. Cal. 2013) 2013 WL 5302217 at *11-13 (following *Brinker* and denying certification of
28 proposed off-the-clock and rest and meal break classes due to lack of uniform policy); *Brown v. Fed*

1 *Express Corp.* (C.D. Cal. 2008) 249 F.R.D. 580, 587-88 (denying certification of driver meal and rest
2 period claims based on the predominance of individual issues).) Collectively, the examples cited above
3 illustrate the uncertain nature of class litigation. Consequently, the uncertainty of obtaining certification
4 through a contested motion is a significant risk factor favoring settlement.

5 **IV. THE PENALTIES UNDER PAGA ARE REASONABLE**

6 44. Here, Plaintiff and Defendant negotiated a good faith PAGA Penalties payment in the
7 amount of \$60,000 which is 8% of the Gross Settlement Amount. As illustrated above, this amount
8 falls well within the range of approved PAGA settlements. Seventy-Five percent (75%) of the PAGA
9 Penalties (\$45,000) will be paid to the LWDA ("LWDA PAGA Payment") with the remaining twenty-
10 five percent (25%) of the PAGA Penalties (\$15,000) to be distributed to the Aggrieved Employees
11 ("Individual PAGA Payment"), which is within the range of PAGA penalties approved by courts and
12 should be approved. .

13 45. Further on July 6, 2023, Class Counsel gave the LWDA notice of this Settlement and
14 proposed allocation by filing a copy of the Settlement and the Motion for Preliminary Approval with
15 the LWDA. On November 20, 2023, Plaintiff gave the LWDA notice of this motion seeking final
16 approval of this settlement.

17 I declare under the penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing
18 is true and correct. Executed this 20th day of November 2023, at San Diego, California.

19 **JCL LAW FIRM, APC**

20 By: 
21 Jean-Claude Lapuyade

EXHIBIT 1

CLASS ACTION AND PAGA SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT AND CLASS NOTICE

This Class Action and PAGA Settlement Agreement (“Agreement”) is made by and between plaintiff Jonathan Cheung (“Plaintiff”) and defendant Signature Commercial Solutions, LLC (“Defendant”). The Agreement refers to Plaintiff and Defendant collectively as “Parties,” or individually as “Party.”

1. DEFINITIONS.

- 1.1. “Action” means the Plaintiff’s lawsuit alleging wage and hour violations against Defendant captioned *Jonathan Cheung v. Signature Commercial Solutions, LLC*, initiated on April 19, 2022 and pending in Superior Court of the State of California, County of Los Angeles, Case No. 22STCV13034.
- 1.2. “Administrator” means ILYM Group, Inc., the neutral entity the Parties have agreed to appoint to administer the Settlement.
- 1.3. “Administration Expenses Payment” means the amount the Administrator will be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount to reimburse its reasonable fees and expenses in accordance with the Administrator’s “not to exceed” bid submitted to the Court in connection with Preliminary Approval of the Settlement.
- 1.4. “Class” means all of Defendant’s current and former non-exempt employees, employed within the State of California at any time during the Class Period.
- 1.5. “Class Counsel” means JCL Law Firm, ACP, and Zakay Law Group, APLC, the attorneys representing Plaintiff in the Action.
- 1.6. “Class Counsel Fees Payment” and “Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment” mean the amounts allocated to Class Counsel for reimbursement of reasonable attorneys’ fees and expenses, respectively, incurred to prosecute the Action. The Fees portion shall be paid to Class Counsel in an amount of up to 1/3 of the Gross Settlement Amount. Class Counsel Fees Payment shall be divided between Class Counsel as follows: 50% to Zakay Law Group, APLC and 50% to JCL Law Firm, APC. The Litigation Expenses portion means the amount to reimburse Class Counsel for their litigation expenses of an estimated \$25,000, subject to proof and as approved by the Court.
- 1.7. “Class Data” means Class Member identifying information in Defendant’s possession including the Class Member’s name, last-known mailing address, Social Security number, and number of Class Period Workweeks and PAGA Workweeks.
- 1.8. “Class Member” or “Settlement Class Member” means a member of the Class, as either a Participating Class Member or Non-Participating Class Member (including a Non-Participating Class Member who qualifies as a PAGA Member).
- 1.9. “Class Member Address Search” means the Administrator’s investigation and search for current Class Member mailing addresses using all reasonably available sources, methods and means including, but not limited to, the National Change of Address database, skip traces, and direct contact by the Administrator with Class Members.

- 1.10. “Class Notice” means the COURT APPROVED NOTICE OF CLASS ACTION AND PAGA SETTLEMENT AND HEARING DATE FOR FINAL COURT APPROVAL, to be mailed to Class Members in the form, without material variation, attached as **Exhibit “A”** and incorporated by reference into this Agreement.
- 1.11. “Class Period” means the period from April 19, 2018 to May 17, 2023.
- 1.12. “Class Representative” means the named Plaintiff in the operative complaint in the Action seeking Court approval to serve as a Class Representative.
- 1.13. “Class Representative Service Payment” means the payment to the Class Representative for initiating the Action and providing services in support of the Action and for a general release of all claims.
- 1.14. “Court” means the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles.
- 1.15. “Defendant” means named defendant Signature Commercial Solutions, LLC.
- 1.16. “Defense Counsel” means Littler Mendelson P.C.
- 1.17. “Effective Date” means the date by when both of the following have occurred: (a) the Court enters a Judgment on its Order Granting Final Approval of the Settlement; and (b) the Judgment is final; and (c) 90 days have passed and the period of time to appeal has lapsed. The Judgment is final as of the latest of the following occurrences: (a) if no Participating Class Member objects to the Settlement, 90 days after the day the Court enters Judgment and the time to appeal lapses; or (b) if a timely appeal or other collateral attack from the Judgment is filed, the day after the appellate court affirms the Judgment and issues a remittitur.
- 1.18. “Final Approval” means the Court’s order granting final approval of the Settlement.
- 1.19. “Final Approval Hearing” means the Court’s hearing on the Motion for Final Approval of the Settlement.
- 1.20. “Final Judgment” means the Judgment entered by the Court upon granting Final Approval of the Settlement.
- 1.21. “Funding Date” means the date on which Defendant shall fund the Maximum Settlement Amount to the Administrator.
- 1.22. “Gross Settlement Amount” means \$750,000.00. The Gross Settlement Amount will be used to pay Individual Class Payments, Individual PAGA Payments, the LWDA PAGA Payment, Class Counsel Fees, Class Counsel Expenses, Class Representative Service Payment and the Administrator’s Expenses.
- 1.23. “Individual Class Payment” means the Participating Class Member’s pro rata share of the Net Settlement Amount calculated according to the number of Workweeks worked during the Class Period.
- 1.24. “Individual PAGA Payment” means the PAGA Member’s pro rata share of \$15,000 (25% of the PAGA Penalties) calculated according to the number of Workweeks worked during the PAGA Period.

- 1.25. “Judgment” means the judgment entered by the Court based upon the Final Approval.
- 1.26. “LWDA” means the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency, the agency entitled, under Labor Code section 2699, subd. (i).
- 1.27. “LWDA PAGA Payment” means \$45,000 (75% of the PAGA Penalties) paid to the LWDA under Labor Code section 2699, subd. (i).
- 1.28. “Net Settlement Amount” means the Gross Settlement Amount, less the following payments in the amounts approved by the Court: Individual PAGA Payments, the LWDA PAGA Payment, Class Representative Service Payment, Class Counsel Fees Payment, Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment, and the Administration Expenses Payment. The remainder is to be paid to Participating Class Members as Individual Class Payments.
- 1.29. “Non-Participating Class Member” means any Class Member who opts out of the Settlement by sending the Administrator a valid and timely Request for Exclusion.
- 1.30. “PAGA Members” means all current and former non-exempt employees of Defendant within the State of California at any time during the PAGA Period.
- 1.31. “PAGA Workweek” means any workweek during which an PAGA Member worked for Defendant for at least one day during the PAGA Period.
- 1.32. “PAGA Period” means the period from February 8, 2021 to May 17, 2023.
- 1.33. “PAGA” means the Private Attorneys General Act (Labor Code §§ 2698, *et seq.*).
- 1.34. “PAGA Member” means all Defendant’s current and former non-exempt employees, employed within the State of California at any time during the PAGA Period.
- 1.35. “PAGA Notice” means Plaintiff’s February 8, 2022 letter to Defendant and the LWDA providing notice pursuant to Labor Code section 2699.3, subd. (a).
- 1.36. “PAGA Penalties” means the total amount of PAGA civil penalties to be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount, allocated 25% to the PAGA Members (\$15,000.00) and 75% to LWDA (\$45,000.00) in settlement of PAGA claims.
- 1.37. “Participating Class Member” means a Class Member who does not submit a valid and timely Request for Exclusion from the Settlement.
- 1.38. “Plaintiff” means Jonathan Cheung, the named plaintiff in the Action.
- 1.39. “Preliminary Approval” means the Court’s Order Granting Preliminary Approval of the Settlement.
- 1.40. "Preliminary Approval Order" means the proposed Order Granting Preliminary Approval and Approval of PAGA Settlement.
- 1.41. “Released Class Claims” means the Class claims being released as described in Paragraph 5.2 below.
- 1.42. “Released PAGA Claims” means the PAGA claims being released as described in Paragraph 5.3 below.

- 1.43. “Released Parties” means: Defendant and its past, current and future parents, predecessors, successors, all affiliates, subsidiaries, entities, divisions, partners, joint venturers, related entities and those acting in concert with them and each of their current and former officers, directors, members, agents, employees, and stockholders and agents.
- 1.44. “Request for Exclusion” means a Class Member’s submission of a written request to the Claims Administrator to be excluded from the Class Settlement signed by the Class Member.
- 1.45. "Response Deadline" means forty-five (45) days after the Administrator mails Notice to Class Members and PAGA Members, and shall be the last date on which Class Members may: (a) fax, email, or mail Requests for Exclusion from the Settlement to the Settlement Administrator, or (b) fax, email, or mail his or her Objection to the Settlement to the Settlement Administrator. Class Members to whom Notice Packets are re-sent after having been returned undeliverable to the Administrator shall have an additional 14 calendar days beyond the Response Deadline has expired.
- 1.46. “Settlement” means the disposition of the Action effected by this Agreement and the Judgment.
- 1.47. “Workweek” means any week during the Class Period in which a Class Member worked for Defendant for at least one day.

2. RECITALS.

- 2.1. Plaintiff filed this lawsuit on April 19, 2022, alleging a single cause of action pursuant to PAGA for the following: (1) Failure to provide compliant meal and rest periods; (2) Failure to pay all minimum, regular and overtime wages; (3) Failure to correctly calculate the regular rate of pay; (4) Failure to maintain true and accurate records; (5) Failure to reimburse for required business expenses; (6) Failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements; and (7) Failure to timely pay wages due during, and upon termination of employment.
- 2.2. On July 11, 2022, Plaintiff filed a First-Amended Complaint bringing one class action cause of action for Unfair Competition (pursuant to Cal. Bus & Prof. Code § 17200).
- 2.3. On August 23, 2022, Plaintiff filed a Second-Amended Complaint, which included PAGA claims asserted in the original Complaint, and added the class action claim for Unfair Competition.
- 2.4. Pursuant to Labor Code section 2699.3, subd.(a), Plaintiff gave written notice to Defendant and the LWDA by sending the PAGA Notice.
- 2.5. On April 18, 2023 the Parties participated in an all-day mediation presided over by Tripper Ortman, which led to this Agreement to settle the Action.
- 2.6. On June 16, 2023, the Parties filed a stipulation for leave to file a Third Amended Complaint (the Operative Complaint). The Third Amended Complaint will be filed for the purposes of incorporating alleged violations of the California Labor Code on a class-wide basis.

- 2.7. Prior to mediation and negotiating the Settlement, Plaintiff obtained, through informal discovery, documents relating to Defendant's wage-and-hour policies, practices, and procedures, including those regarding meal and rest periods and the recording of time. Plaintiff also reviewed time and pay records and information relating to the size and scope of the Class, as well as data permitting Plaintiff to understand the number of workweeks in the Class Period and in the PAGA Period. Plaintiff and his counsel have satisfied themselves that the investigation was sufficient to satisfy the criteria for court approval set forth in *Dunk v. Foot Locker Retail, Inc.* (1996) 48 Cal.App.4th 1794, 1801 and *Kullar v. Foot Locker Retail, Inc.* (2008) 168 Cal.App.4th 116, 129-130 (“*Dunk/Kullar*”).
- 2.8. The Court has not granted class certification.
- 2.9. The Parties, Class Counsel and Defense Counsel represent that they are not aware of any other pending matter or action asserting claims that will be extinguished or affected by the Settlement.

3. MONETARY TERMS.

- 3.1. Gross Settlement Amount. Except as otherwise provided by Paragraph 9 below, Defendant promises to pay \$750,000 and no more as the Gross Settlement Amount and to separately pay any and all remaining employer payroll taxes owed on the Wage Portions (defined below) of the Individual Class Payments pursuant to this Agreement. Defendant has no obligation to pay the Gross Settlement Amount (or any payroll taxes) prior to the deadline stated in Section 4 of this Agreement. The Administrator will disburse the entire Gross Settlement Amount without asking or requiring Participating Class Members or PAGA Members to submit any claim as a condition of payment. None of the Gross Settlement Amount will revert to Defendant.
- 3.2. Payments from the Gross Settlement Amount. The Administrator will make and deduct the following payments from the Gross Settlement Amount, in the amounts specified by the Court in the Final Approval:
 - 3.2.1. To Plaintiff: Class Representative Service Payment and payment for general release to the Class Representative of not more than \$10,000.00 (in addition to any Individual Class Payment and any Individual PAGA Payment the Class Representative is entitled to receive as a Participating Class Member). Defendant will not oppose Plaintiff's request for a Class Representative Service Payment that does not exceed this amount. As part of the motion for Class Counsel Fees Payment and Class Litigation Expenses Payment, Plaintiff will seek Court approval for any Class Representative Service Payments no later than 16 court days prior to the Final Approval Hearing. Plaintiff will execute a general release of all claims, whether known, or unknown as of the date of preliminary approval. In addition, the release shall include a waiver pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure section 1542, although whether or not a separate settlement agreement is entered into the general release and section 1542 waiver in this Agreement shall be operative and effective. Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) shall be deemed in payment of the Enhancement Payment and (\$5,000) shall be deemed payment for the general release. The general release will not include, however, claims that cannot be waived and released as a matter of law. If the Court approves the Class Representative Service Payment portion less than the amount requested, the

Administrator will retain the remainder in the Net Settlement Amount. The Administrator will pay the Class Representative Service Payment using IRS Form 1099. Plaintiff assumes full responsibility and liability for employee taxes owed on the Class Representative Service Payment.

- 3.2.2. To Class Counsel: A Class Counsel Fees Payment of not more than One-Third of the Gross Settlement Amount which is currently estimated to be \$250,000.00 and a Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment of not more than \$25,000.00. These fees shall be the sole payments for Class Counsel's work on this case, including carrying out the settlement process and defending the settlement on appeal or other collateral attack, if any. Other than the payments in this Paragraph, the Parties shall bear their own fees and costs. Defendant will not oppose requests for these payments provided that they do not exceed these amounts. Plaintiff and/or Class Counsel will file a motion for Class Counsel Fees Payment and Class Litigation Expenses Payment no later than 16 court days prior to the Final Approval Hearing. If the Court approves a Class Counsel Fees Payment and/or a Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment less than the amounts requested, the Administrator will allocate the remainder to the Net Settlement Amount. Released Parties shall have no liability to Class Counsel or any other Plaintiff's Counsel arising from any claim to any portion of any Class Counsel Fee Payment and/or Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment. The Administrator will pay the Class Counsel Fees Payment and Class Counsel Expenses Payment using one or more IRS 1099 Forms. Class Counsel assumes full responsibility and liability for taxes owed on the Class Counsel Fees Payment and the Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment and holds Defendant harmless, and indemnifies Defendant, from any dispute or controversy regarding any division or sharing of any of these Payments.
- 3.2.3. To the Administrator: An Administrator Expenses Payment not to exceed \$12,000.00 except for a showing of good cause and as approved by the Court. To the extent the Administration Expenses are less or the Court approves payment less than \$12,000.00, the Administrator will retain the remainder in the Net Settlement Amount.
- 3.2.4. To Each Participating Class Member: An Individual Class Payment calculated by (a) dividing the Net Settlement Amount by the total number of Workweeks worked by all Participating Class Members during the Class Period and (b) multiplying the result by each Participating Class Member's Workweeks.
- 3.2.4.1. Tax Allocation of Individual Class Payments. 34% of each Participating Class Member's Individual Class Payment will be allocated to settlement of wage claims (the "Wage Portion"). The Wage Portions are subject to tax withholding and will be reported on an IRS W-2 Form. 66% of each Participating Class Member's Individual Class Payment will be allocated to settlement of claims for interest and penalties (the "Non-Wage Portion"). The Non-Wage Portions are not subject to wage withholdings and will be reported on IRS 1099 Forms. Participating Class Members assume full responsibility and liability for any employee taxes owed on their

Individual Class Payment.

- 3.2.4.2. Effect of Non-Participating Class Members on Calculation of Individual Class Payments. Non-Participating Class Members will not receive any Individual Class Payments. The Administrator will retain amounts equal to their Individual Class Payments in the Net Settlement Amount for distribution to Participating Class Members on a pro rata basis.
- 3.2.4.3. The Parties acknowledge and agree that the formula used to calculate workweeks and Individual Class Payments and PAGA Penalties does not imply that all of the elements of damages covered by the release are not being taken into account. The above formula was devised as a practical and logistical tool to simplify the payment process.
- 3.2.5. To the LWDA and PAGA Members: PAGA Penalties in the amount of \$60,000.00 to be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount, with 75% (\$45,000.00) allocated to the LWDA PAGA Payment and 25% (\$15,000.00) allocated to the Individual PAGA Payments.
 - 3.2.5.1. The Administrator will calculate each Individual PAGA Payment by (a) dividing the amount of the PAGA Members' 25% share of PAGA Penalties \$15,000.00 by the total number of PAGA Period Workweeks worked by all PAGA Members during the PAGA Period and (b) multiplying the result by each PAGA Member's PAGA Period Workweeks. PAGA Members assume full responsibility and liability for any taxes owed on their Individual PAGA Payment.
 - 3.2.5.2. If the Court approves PAGA Penalties of less than the amount requested, the Administrator will allocate the remainder to the Net Settlement Amount. The Administrator will report the Individual PAGA Payments on IRS 1099 Forms.

4. SETTLEMENT FUNDING AND PAYMENTS.

- 4.1. Class Workweeks and PAGA Member Workweeks. Based on a review of its records to date, Defendant estimates there are 846 Class Members who collectively worked a total of 42,609 Workweeks, and 502 PAGA Members who worked a total of 21,493 PAGA Workweeks.
- 4.2. Class Data. Not later than 15 days after the Court grants Preliminary Approval of the Settlement, Defendant will simultaneously deliver the Class Data to the Administrator, in the form of a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. To protect Class Members' / PAGA Members' privacy rights, the Administrator must maintain the Class Data in confidence, use the Class Data only for purposes of this Settlement and for no other purpose, and restrict access to the Class Data to Administrator employees who need access to the Class Data to effect and perform under this Agreement. The Claims Administrator (along with any of its agents) shall represent and warrant that it will: (a) provide reasonable and appropriate administrative, physical and technical safeguards for any personally identifiable information ("PII"), which it receives from Defendant; (b) not disclose the PII to Class Counsel, Named Plaintiff, any party or third parties, including agents or subcontractors,

without Defendants' consent; (c) not disclose or otherwise use the PII other than to carry out its duties as set forth herein; (d) promptly provide Defendants with notice if PII is subject to unauthorized access, use, disclosure, modification, or destruction; and (e) continue to protect the PII upon termination of its services. Defendant has a continuing duty to immediately notify Class Counsel if it discovers that the Class Data omitted class member identifying information and to provide corrected or updated Class Data as soon as reasonably feasible. Without any extension of the deadline by which Defendant must send the Class Data to the Administrator, the Parties and their counsel will expeditiously use best efforts, in good faith, to reconstruct or otherwise resolve any issues related to missing or omitted Class Data.

- 4.3. Funding of Gross Settlement Amount. Defendant shall fully fund the Gross Settlement Amount, and also fund the amounts necessary to fully pay Defendant's share of payroll taxes by transmitting the funds to the Administrator no later than 14 days after the Effective Date.
- 4.4. Payments from the Gross Settlement Amount. Within 14 days after Defendant funds the Gross Settlement Amount, the Administrator will mail checks for all Individual Class Payments, all Individual PAGA Payments, the LWDA PAGA Payment, the Administration Expenses Payment, the Class Counsel Fees Payment, the Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment, and the Class Representative Service Payment. Disbursement of the Class Counsel Fees Payment, the Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment and the Class Representative Service Payment shall not precede disbursement of Individual Class Payments and Individual PAGA Payments.
 - 4.4.1. The Administrator will issue checks for the Individual Class Payments and/or Individual PAGA Payments and send them to the Class Members via First Class U.S. Mail, postage prepaid. The face of each check shall prominently state the date (not less than 180 days after the date of mailing) when the check will be voided. The Administrator will cancel all checks not cashed by the void date. The Administrator will send checks for Individual Settlement Payments to all Participating Class Members (including those for whom Class Notice was returned undelivered). The Administrator will send checks for Individual PAGA Payments to all PAGA Members including Non-Participating Class Members who qualify as PAGA Members (including those for whom Class Notice was returned undelivered). The Administrator may send Participating Class Members a single check combining the Individual Class Payment and the Individual PAGA Payment. Before mailing any checks, the Settlement Administrator must update the recipients' mailing addresses using the National Change of Address Database.
 - 4.4.2. The Administrator must conduct a Class Member Address Search for all other Class Members whose checks are returned undelivered without USPS forwarding address. Within 7 days of receiving a returned check the Administrator must re-mail checks to the USPS forwarding address provided or to an address ascertained through the Class Member Address Search. The Administrator need not take further steps to deliver checks to Class Members whose re-mailed checks are returned as undelivered. The Administrator shall promptly send a replacement check to any Class Member whose original check was lost or misplaced, requested by the Class Member prior to the void date.
 - 4.4.3. For any Class Member whose Individual Class Payment check or Individual PAGA Payment check is uncashed and canceled after the void date, the

Administrator shall transmit the funds represented by such checks to the California State Controller's Unclaimed Property Fund. The Claims Administrator shall provide weekly reports of the objections, opt outs and other relevant information during the opt out period. Consistent with the terms of this Settlement, the Settlement Administrator shall timely provide such reports, statements, and declarations as are requested by the Parties for purposes of seeking Final Approval of the Settlement. Upon completion of administration of the Settlement, the Settlement Administrator shall provide written certification of such completion to counsel for all Parties and the Court, if requested by the Parties.

- 4.4.4. The payment of Individual Class Payments and Individual PAGA Payments shall not obligate Defendant to confer any additional benefits or make any additional payments to Class Members (such as 401(k) contributions or bonuses) beyond those specified in this Agreement.

5. RELEASES OF CLAIMS.

Effective on the date when Defendant fully funds the entire Gross Settlement Amount and funds all employer payroll taxes owed on the Wage Portion of the Individual Class Payments, Plaintiff, Class Members, and Class Counsel will release claims against all Released Parties as follows:

- 5.1. Plaintiff's Release. Plaintiff and his respective former and present spouses, representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns generally, release and discharge Released Parties from all claims whether known or unknown, under federal law or state law. The Parties understand and agree that Plaintiff is not, by way of this release, releasing any claims which cannot be released as a matter of law. ("Plaintiff's Release.") Plaintiff's Release does not extend to any claims or actions to enforce this Agreement, or to any claims for vested benefits, unemployment benefits, disability benefits, social security benefits, or workers' compensation benefits that arose at any time, or based on occurrences after the end of the Class Period. Plaintiff acknowledges that Plaintiff may discover facts or law different from, or in addition to, the facts or law that Plaintiff now knows or believes to be true but agrees, nonetheless, that Plaintiff's Release shall be and remain effective in all respects, notwithstanding such different or additional facts or Plaintiff's discovery of them.

- 5.1.1. Plaintiff's Waiver of Rights Under California Civil Code Section 1542. For purposes of Plaintiff's Release, Plaintiff expressly waives and relinquishes the provisions, rights, and benefits, if any, of section 1542 of the California Civil Code, which reads:

A general release does not extend to claims that the creditor or releasing party does not know or suspect to exist in his or her favor at the time of executing the release, and that if known by him or her would have materially affected his or her settlement with the debtor or Released Party.

- 5.2. Release by Participating Class Members: All Participating Class Members, on behalf of themselves and their respective former and present representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns, shall be deemed to have fully, finally and forever release, discharge, compromise, relinquish and discharge Released Parties, as defined in

section 1.43, from the Released Class Claims during the Class Period. The “Released Class Claims” means all claims that were alleged, or reasonably could have been alleged, based on the facts stated in the operative Complaint that occurred during the Class Period, including any and all claims involving any allegations that Defendant: failed to pay all wages due (including minimum wages, regular wages, sick pay, vacation, paid time off and overtime wages); failed to provide legally-compliant meal and rest breaks and failed to pay premium pay for missed, late, interrupted or short meal and rest breaks; failed to timely pay all earned wages and compensation; failed to provide timely final pay; failed to provide accurate itemized wage statements; failed to reimburse for necessary business expenses; and engaged in unfair business practices due to the underlying violations at any time during the Class Period. This includes any claims for injunctive relief, declaratory relief, restitution, fraudulent business practices or punitive damages alleged or other damages or penalties or which could have been alleged under the facts, allegations and/or claims pleaded as part of the Action. This further includes any and all other claims under California common law, the California Labor Code including but not limited to the Fair Labor Standards Act, California Industrial Welfare Commission Wage Orders, and the California Business and Professions Code alleged in or that could have been alleged under the facts, allegations and/or claims pleaded in the Action. This expressly excludes PAGA Claims, which are separately released below. The release shall release claims against Defendant and the Released Parties. Defendant, including its past or present successors and predecessors in interest, acquirers, subsidiaries, affiliates, parents, related entities, officers, directors, shareholders, exempt and/or managerial employees, agents, principals, representatives, accountants, auditors, consultants, insurers and reinsurers. Except as set forth in Section 5.3 of this Agreement. Participating Class Members do not release any other claims, including claims for vested benefits, wrongful termination, violation of the Fair Employment and Housing Act, unemployment insurance, disability, social security, workers’ compensation, or claims based on facts occurring outside the Class Period.

- 5.3. PAGA Release by LWDA, State of California, and PAGA Members: The LWDA, the State of California, and all PAGA Members, to the extent they have any interest or seek to bring a separate PAGA claim, are deemed to release, discharge, compromise, and relinquish on behalf of themselves and their respective former and present representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns, the Released Parties, as defined in section 1.43, from the Released PAGA Claims. The “Released PAGA Claims” include all claims for PAGA penalties that were alleged, or reasonably could have been alleged, based on the facts stated in the Operative Complaint, and the PAGA Notice including, any and all claims for PAGA penalties involving any allegations that Defendant failed to pay all wages due (including minimum, regular, sick pay, vacation, paid time off and overtime wages), failed to provide legally-compliant meal and rest breaks and failed to pay premium pay for missed, late, interrupted or short meal and rest breaks, failed to timely pay all earned wages and compensation, failed to provide timely final pay, failed to provide accurate itemized wage statements, and failed to reimburse for necessary business expenses, at any time during the PAGA Period.

6. MOTION FOR PRELIMINARY APPROVAL.

Plaintiff will prepare and file a motion for preliminary approval (“Motion for Preliminary Approval”) that complies with the Court’s current checklist for Preliminary Approvals, and will provide Defendant to review and provide comments on within 5 days before filing.

- 6.1. Defendant's Declaration in Support of Preliminary Approval. Within 14 days of the full

execution of this Agreement, Defendant will prepare and deliver to Class Counsel a signed Declaration from Defendant and Defense Counsel disclosing all facts relevant to any actual or potential conflicts of interest with the Administrator. In their Declarations, Defense Counsel and Defendant shall aver that they are not aware of any other pending matter or action asserting claims that will be extinguished or adversely affected by the Settlement.

- 6.2. Plaintiff's Responsibilities. Plaintiff will prepare and deliver to Defense Counsel for comment all documents necessary for obtaining Preliminary Approval, including: (i) a draft of the notice, and memorandum in support, of the Motion for Preliminary Approval that includes an analysis of the Settlement under *Dunk/Kullar* and a request for approval of the PAGA Settlement under Labor Code Section 2699, subd. (f)(2)); (ii) a draft proposed Order Granting Preliminary Approval and Approval of PAGA Settlement; (iii) a draft proposed Class Notice; (iv) a signed declaration from the Administrator attaching its "not to exceed" bid for administering the Settlement and attesting to its willingness to serve; competency; operative procedures for protecting the security of Class Data; amounts of insurance coverage for any data breach, defalcation of funds or other misfeasance; all facts relevant to any actual or potential conflicts of interest with Class Members; and the nature and extent of any financial relationship with Plaintiff, Class Counsel or Defense Counsel; (v) a signed declaration from Plaintiff confirming willingness and competency to serve and disclosing all facts relevant to any actual or potential conflicts of interest with Class Members, and/or the Administrator (vi) a signed declaration from each Class Counsel firm attesting to its competency to represent the Class Members; its timely transmission to the LWDA of all necessary PAGA documents (initial notice of violations (Labor Code section 2699.3, subd. (a)), Operative Complaint (Labor Code section 2699, subd. (l)(1)), this Agreement (Labor Code section 2699, subd. (l)(2)); and (vii) all facts relevant to any actual or potential conflict of interest with Class Members, the Administrator. In their Declarations, Plaintiff and Class Counsel Declaration shall aver that they are not aware of any other pending matter or action asserting claims that will be extinguished or adversely affected by the Settlement.
- 6.3. Responsibilities of Counsel. Class Counsel is responsible for expeditiously finalizing and filing the Motion for Preliminary Approval and Defendant shall cooperate in said efforts no later than 30 days after the full execution of this Agreement; obtaining a prompt hearing date for the Motion for Preliminary Approval; and for appearing in Court to advocate in favor of the Motion for Preliminary Approval. Class Counsel is responsible for delivering the Court's Preliminary Approval to the Administrator.
- 6.4. Duty to Cooperate. If the Parties disagree on any aspect of the proposed Motion for Preliminary Approval and/or the supporting declarations and documents, Class Counsel and Defense Counsel will expeditiously work together on behalf of the Parties by meeting in person or by telephone, and in good faith, to resolve the disagreement. If the Court does not grant Preliminary Approval or conditions Preliminary Approval on any material change to this Agreement, Class Counsel and Defense Counsel will expeditiously work together on behalf of the Parties by meeting in person or by telephone, and in good faith, to modify the Agreement and otherwise satisfy the Court's concerns.

7. SETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION.

- 7.1. Selection of Administrator. The Parties have jointly selected ILYM Group, Inc. to serve as the Administrator and verified that, as a condition of appointment, ILYM Group, Inc. agrees to be bound by this Agreement and to perform, as a fiduciary, all duties specified in

this Agreement in exchange for payment of Administration Expenses. The Parties and their Counsel represent that they have no interest or relationship, financial or otherwise, with the Administrator other than a professional relationship arising out of prior experiences administering settlements.

- 7.2. Employer Identification Number. The Administrator shall have and use its own Employer Identification Number for purposes of calculating payroll tax withholdings and providing reports to state and federal tax authorities.
- 7.3. Qualified Settlement Fund. The Administrator shall establish a settlement fund that meets the requirements of a Qualified Settlement Fund (“QSF”) under US Treasury Regulation section 468B-1.
- 7.4. Notice to Class Members.
 - 7.4.1. No later than three 3 business days after receipt of the Class Data, the Administrator shall notify Class Counsel that the list has been received and state the number of Class Members, PAGA Members, and Workweeks in the Class Data.
 - 7.4.2. Using best efforts to perform as soon as possible, and in no event later than 14 days after receiving the Class Data, the Administrator will send to all Class Members identified in the Class Data, via first-class United States Postal Service (“USPS”) mail, the Class Notice substantially in the form attached to this Agreement as **Exhibit “A.”** The first page of the Class Notice shall prominently estimate the dollar amounts of any Individual Class Payment and/or Individual PAGA Payment payable to the Class Member, and the number of Workweeks and PAGA Workweeks (if applicable) used to calculate these amounts. Before mailing Class Notices, the Administrator shall update Class Member addresses using the National Change of Address database.
 - 7.4.3. Not later than 3 business days after the Administrator’s receipt of any Class Notice returned by the USPS as undelivered, the Administrator shall re-mail the Class Notice using any forwarding address provided by the USPS. If the USPS does not provide a forwarding address, the Administrator shall conduct a Class Member Address Search, and re-mail the Class Notice to the most current address obtained. The Administrator has no obligation to make further attempts to locate or send Class Notice to Class Members whose Class Notice is returned by the USPS a second time.
 - 7.4.4. The deadlines for Class Members’ written objections, Challenges to Workweeks, and Requests for Exclusion will be extended an additional 14 days beyond the 45 days otherwise provided in the Class Notice for all Class Members whose notice is re-mailed. The Administrator will inform the Class Member of the extended deadline with the re-mailed Class Notice.
 - 7.4.5. If the Administrator, Defendant or Class Counsel is contacted by or otherwise discovers any persons who believe they should have been included in the Class Data and should have received Class Notice, the Parties will expeditiously meet and confer via email, in person, or by telephone, and in good faith in an effort to agree on whether to include them as Class Members. If the Parties agree, such persons will be Class Members entitled to the same rights as other Class

Members, and the Administrator will send, via email or overnight delivery, a Class Notice requiring them to exercise options under this Agreement not later than 14 days after submission of Class Notice, or the deadline dates in the Class Notice, whichever are later.

7.5. Requests for Exclusion (Opt-Outs).

- 7.5.1. Class Members who wish to exclude themselves (opt-out of) the Class Settlement must send the Administrator, by fax, email, or mail, a signed written Request for Exclusion not later than 45 days after the Administrator mails the Class Notice (plus an additional 14 days for Class Members whose Class Notice is re-mailed). A Request for Exclusion is a letter from a Class Member or his/her representative that reasonably communicates the Class Member's election to be excluded from the Settlement and includes the Class Member's name, address and email address or telephone number. To be valid, a Request for Exclusion must be timely faxed, emailed, or postmarked by the Response Deadline.
- 7.5.2. The Administrator may not reject a Request for Exclusion as invalid because it fails to contain all the information specified in the Class Notice. The Administrator shall accept any Request for Exclusion as valid if the Administrator can reasonably ascertain the identity of the person as a Class Member and the Class Member's desire to be excluded. The Administrator's determination shall be final and not appealable or otherwise susceptible to challenge. If the Administrator has reason to question the authenticity of a Request for Exclusion, the Administrator may demand additional proof of the Class Member's identity. The Administrator's determination of authenticity shall be final and not appealable or otherwise susceptible to challenge.
- 7.5.3. Every Class Member who does not submit a timely and valid Request for Exclusion is deemed to be a Participating Class Member under this Agreement, entitled to all benefits and bound by all terms and conditions of the Settlement, including the Participating Class Members' Releases under Paragraph 5.2 of this Agreement, regardless whether the Participating Class Member actually receives the Class Notice or objects to the Settlement.
- 7.5.4. Every Class Member who submits a valid and timely Request for Exclusion is a Non-Participating Class Member and shall not receive an Individual Class Payment or have the right to object to the class action components of the Settlement. Because future PAGA claims are subject to claim preclusion upon entry of the Judgment, Non-Participating Class Members who are PAGA Members are deemed to release the claims identified in Paragraph 5.3 of this Agreement and are eligible for an Individual PAGA Payment.

7.6. Challenges to Calculation of Workweeks. Each Class Member shall have 45 days after the Administrator mails the Class Notice (plus an additional 14 days for Class Members whose Class Notice is re-mailed) to challenge the number of Class Workweeks and PAGA Workweeks (if any) allocated to the Class Member in the Class Notice. The Class Member may challenge the allocation by communicating with the Administrator via fax, email or mail. The Administrator must encourage the challenging Class Member to submit supporting documentation. In the absence of any contrary documentation, the Administrator is entitled to presume that the Workweeks contained in the Class Notice are correct so long as they are consistent with the Class Data. The Administrator's

determination of each Class Member's allocation of Workweeks shall be final and not appealable or otherwise susceptible to challenge. The Administrator shall promptly provide copies of all challenges to calculation of Workweeks to Defense Counsel and Class Counsel and the Administrator's determination of the challenges.

7.7. Objections to Settlement.

7.7.1. Only Participating Class Members may object to the class action components of the Settlement and/or this Agreement, including contesting the fairness of the Settlement, and/or amounts requested for the Class Counsel Fees Payment, Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment and/or Class Representative Service Payment.

7.7.2. Participating Class Members may send written objections to the Administrator, by fax, email, or mail. In the alternative, Participating Class Members may appear in Court (or hire an attorney to appear in Court) to present verbal objections at the Final Approval Hearing. A Participating Class Member who elects to send a written objection to the Administrator must do so not later than 45 days after the Administrator's mailing of the Class Notice (plus an additional 14 days for Class Members whose Class Notice was re-mailed).

7.7.3. Non-Participating Class Members have no right to object to any of the class action components of the Settlement.

7.8. Administrator Duties. The Administrator has a duty to perform or observe all tasks to be performed or observed by the Administrator contained in this Agreement or otherwise.

7.8.1. Website, Email Address and Toll-Free Number. The Administrator will establish and maintain and use an internet website to post information of interest to Class Members including the date, time and location for the Final Approval Hearing and copies of the Settlement Agreement, Motion for Preliminary Approval, the Preliminary Approval, the Class Notice, the Motion for Final Approval, the Motion for Class Counsel Fees Payment, Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment and Class Representative Service Payment, the Final Approval and the Judgment. The Administrator will also maintain and monitor an email address and a toll-free telephone number to receive Class Member calls, faxes and emails.

7.8.2. Requests for Exclusion (Opt-outs) and Exclusion List. The Administrator will promptly review on a rolling basis Requests for Exclusion to ascertain their validity. Not later than 5 days after the expiration of the deadline for submitting Requests for Exclusion, the Administrator shall email a list to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel containing (a) the names and other identifying information of Class Members who have timely submitted valid Requests for Exclusion ("Exclusion List"); (b) the names and other identifying information of Class Members who have submitted invalid Requests for Exclusion; (c) copies of all Requests for Exclusion from Settlement submitted (whether valid or invalid).

7.8.3. Weekly Reports. The Administrator must, on a weekly basis, provide written reports to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel that, among other things, tally the number of: Class Notices mailed or re-mailed, Class Notices returned undelivered, Requests for Exclusion (whether valid or invalid) received, objections received, challenges to Workweeks received and/or resolved, and

checks mailed for Individual Class Payments and Individual PAGA Payments (“Weekly Report”). The Weekly Reports must include the Administrator’s assessment of the validity of Requests for Exclusion and attach copies of all Requests for Exclusion and objections received.

- 7.8.4. Workweek Challenges. The Administrator has the authority to address and make final decisions consistent with the terms of this Agreement on all Class Member challenges over the calculation of Workweeks. The Administrator’s decision shall be final and not appealable or otherwise susceptible to challenge.
- 7.8.5. Administrator’s Declaration. Not later than 7 days after the Response Deadline, the Administrator will provide to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel a signed declaration suitable for filing in Court attesting to its due diligence and compliance with all of its obligations under this Agreement, including, but not limited to, its mailing of Class Notice, the Class Notices returned as undelivered, the re-mailing of Class Notices, attempts to locate Class Members, the total number of Requests for Exclusion from Settlement it received (both valid or invalid), the number of written objections and attach the Exclusion List, the high, low, and average Individual Class Payment, and the high, low, and average Individual PAGA Payment. The Administrator will supplement its declaration as needed or requested by the Parties and/or the Court. Class Counsel is responsible for filing the Administrator’s declaration(s) in Court.
- 7.8.6. Final Report by Settlement Administrator. Within 10 days after the Administrator disburses all funds in the Gross Settlement Amount, the Administrator will provide Class Counsel and Defense Counsel with a final report detailing its disbursements by employee identification number only of all payments made under this Agreement. At least 15 days before any deadline set by the Court, the Administrator will prepare, and submit to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel, a signed declaration suitable for filing in Court attesting to its disbursement of all payments required under this Agreement. Class Counsel is responsible for filing the Administrator’s declaration in Court.

8. CLASS SIZE ESTIMATES and ESCALATOR CLAUSE.

Based on a review of its records to date, Defendant estimates that, as of the date of this Settlement Agreement, (1) there are 846 Class Members who collectively worked a total of 42,609 Workweeks, and 502 PAGA Members who worked a total of 21,493 PAGA Workweeks during the PAGA Period.

If the number of workweeks between April 19, 2018 through May 17, 2023 exceeds the amount of Workweeks stated herein by 10% or more, Defendant shall pay an increased settlement proportionate to the increase over the 10% threshold. For example, if the final number of work weeks is 15% greater than 42,609 between April 19, 2018 through May 17, 2023, the Gross Settlement Amount will increase by 5%. As an alternative to paying more with the escalator provision, Defendant shall also have the sole discretionary option to cap the total workweeks by reducing the Class Period to one workweek prior to the workweek count exceeding 46,870 workweeks (which is 110% of 42,609 workweeks). In other words, if the number of workweeks exceed these amounts stated herein by 10% or more for the Class Period, Defendant shall have the option to close out the workweeks that are part of the class action on the date the number of workweeks reaches 46,870.

9. DEFENDANT'S RIGHT TO WITHDRAW.

If the number of valid Requests for Exclusion identified in the Exclusion List exceeds 7.5% of the total of all Class Members, Defendant may, but is not obligated, elect to withdraw from the Settlement. The Parties agree that, if Defendant withdraws, the Settlement shall be void ab initio, have no force or effect whatsoever, and that neither Party will have any further obligation to perform under this Agreement; provided, however, Defendant will remain responsible for paying all Settlement Administration Expenses incurred to that point. Defendant must notify Class Counsel and the Court of its election to withdraw not later than ten calendar days after the Administrator sends the final Exclusion List to Defense Counsel; late elections will have no effect.

10. MOTION FOR FINAL APPROVAL.

Not later than 16 court days before the calendared Final Approval Hearing, Plaintiff will file in Court, a motion for final approval of the Settlement that includes a request for approval of the PAGA settlement under Labor Code section 2699, subd. (l), a Proposed Final Approval Order and a proposed Judgment (collectively "Motion for Final Approval"). Plaintiff shall provide drafts of these documents to Defense Counsel not later than seven calendar days prior to filing the Motion for Final Approval. Class Counsel and Defense Counsel will expeditiously meet and confer in person or by telephone, and in good faith, to resolve any disagreements concerning the Motion for Final Approval.

- 10.1. Response to Objections. Each Party retains the right to respond to any objection raised by a Participating Class Member, including the right to file responsive documents in Court no later than five court days prior to the Final Approval Hearing, or as otherwise ordered or accepted by the Court.
- 10.2. Duty to Cooperate. If the Court does not grant Final Approval or conditions Final Approval on any material change to the Settlement (including, but not limited to, the scope of release to be granted by Class Members), the Parties will expeditiously work together in good faith to address the Court's concerns by revising the Agreement as necessary to obtain Final Approval. The Court's decision to award less than the amounts requested for the Class Representative Service Payment, Class Counsel Fees Payment, Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment and/or Administrator Expenses Payment shall not constitute a material modification to the Agreement within the meaning of this paragraph.
- 10.3. Continuing Jurisdiction of the Court. The Parties agree that, after entry of Judgment, the Court will retain jurisdiction over the Parties, Action, and the Settlement solely for purposes of (i) enforcing this Agreement and/or Judgment, (ii) addressing settlement administration matters, and (iii) addressing such post-Judgment matters as are permitted by law.
- 10.4. Waiver of Right to Appeal. Provided the Judgment is consistent with the terms and conditions of this Agreement, specifically including the Class Counsel Fees Payment and Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment reflected set forth in this Settlement, the Parties, their respective counsel, and all Participating Class Members who did not object to the Settlement as provided in this Agreement, waive all rights to appeal from the Judgment, including all rights to post-judgment and appellate proceedings, the right to file motions to vacate judgment, motions for new trial, extraordinary writs, and appeals. The waiver of appeal does not include any waiver of the right to oppose such motions, writs or appeals. If an objector appeals the Judgment, the Parties' obligations to perform under this

Agreement will be suspended until such time as the appeal is finally resolved and the Judgment becomes final, except as to matters that do not affect the amount of the Net Settlement Amount.

- 10.5. Appellate Court Orders to Vacate, Reverse, or Materially Modify Judgment. If the reviewing Court vacates, reverses, or modifies the Judgment in a manner that requires a material modification of this Agreement (including, but not limited to, the scope of release to be granted by Class Members), this Agreement shall be null and void. The Parties shall nevertheless expeditiously work together in good faith to address the appellate court's concerns and to obtain Final Approval and entry of Judgment, sharing, on a 50-50 basis, any additional Administration Expenses reasonably incurred after remittitur. An appellate decision to vacate, reverse, or modify the Court's award of the Class Representative Service Payment or any payments to Class Counsel shall not constitute a material modification of the Judgment within the meaning of this paragraph, as long as the Gross Settlement Amount remains unchanged.

11. AMENDED JUDGMENT.

If any amended judgment is required under Code of Civil Procedure section 384, the Parties will work together in good faith to jointly submit a proposed amended judgment.

12. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS.

- 12.1. No Admission of Liability, Class Certification or Representative Manageability for Other Purposes. This Agreement represents a compromise and settlement of highly disputed claims. Nothing in this Agreement is intended or should be construed as an admission by Defendant that any of the allegations in the Operative Complaint have merit or that Defendant has any liability for any claims asserted; nor should it be intended or construed as an admission by Plaintiff that Defendant's defenses in the Action have merit. The Parties agree that class certification and representative treatment is for purposes of this Settlement only. If, for any reason the Court does grant Preliminary Approval, Final Approval or enter Judgment, Defendant reserves the right to contest certification of any class for any reasons, and Defendant reserves all available defenses to the claims in the Action, and Plaintiff reserves the right to move for class certification on any grounds available and to contest Defendant's defenses. The Settlement, this Agreement and Parties' willingness to settle the Action will have no bearing on, and will not be admissible in connection with, any litigation (except for proceedings to enforce or effectuate the Settlement and this Agreement).
- 12.2. Confidentiality Prior to Preliminary Approval. Plaintiff, Class Counsel, Defendant and Defense Counsel separately agree that, until the Motion for Preliminary Approval of Settlement is filed, they and each of them will not disclose, disseminate and/or publicize, or cause or permit another person to disclose, disseminate or publicize, any of the terms of the Agreement directly or indirectly, specifically or generally, to any person, corporation, association, government agency, or other entity except: (1) to the Parties' attorneys, accountants, or spouses, all of whom will be instructed to keep this Agreement confidential; (2) counsel in a related matter; (3) to the extent necessary to report income to appropriate taxing authorities; (4) in response to a court order or subpoena; or (5) in response to an inquiry or subpoena issued by a state or federal government agency. Each Party agrees to immediately notify each other Party of any judicial or agency order, inquiry, or subpoena seeking such information. Plaintiff, Class Counsel, Defendant and Defense Counsel separately agree not to, directly or indirectly, initiate any conversation or other

communication, before the filing of the Motion for Preliminary Approval, with any third party regarding this Agreement or the matters giving rise to this Agreement except to respond only that “the matter was resolved,” or words to that effect. This paragraph does not restrict Class Counsel’s communications with Class Members in accordance with Class Counsel’s ethical obligations owed to Class Members.

- 12.3. No Solicitation. The Parties separately agree that they and their respective counsel and employees will not solicit any Class Member to opt out of or object to the Settlement, or appeal from the Judgment. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to restrict Class Counsel’s ability to communicate with Class Members in accordance with Class Counsel’s ethical obligations owed to Class Members.
- 12.4. Integrated Agreement. Upon execution by all Parties and their counsel, this Agreement together with its attached exhibits shall constitute the entire agreement between the Parties relating to the Settlement, superseding any and all oral representations, warranties, covenants, or inducements made to or by any Party.
- 12.5. Attorney Authorization. Class Counsel and Defense Counsel separately warrant and represent that they are authorized by Plaintiff and Defendant, respectively, to take all appropriate action required or permitted to be taken by such Parties pursuant to this Agreement to effectuate its terms, and to execute any other documents reasonably required to effectuate the terms of this Agreement including any amendments to this Agreement.
- 12.6. Cooperation. The Parties and their counsel will cooperate with each other and use their best efforts, in good faith, to implement the Settlement by, among other things, modifying the Settlement Agreement, submitting supplemental evidence and supplementing points and authorities as requested by the Court. In the event the Parties are unable to agree upon the form or content of any document necessary to implement the Settlement, or on any modification of the Agreement that may become necessary to implement the Settlement, the Parties will seek the assistance of a mediator and/or the Court for resolution. Plaintiff and Plaintiff’s Counsel shall support the Settlement and take such steps as are reasonably necessary to effectuate the Settlement. Neither Plaintiff nor Plaintiff’s Counsel shall directly or indirectly encourage Class Members to opt out of or object to the Settlement. The Parties agree to use their best efforts to carry out the terms of this Settlement Agreement. At no time shall any of the Parties or their counsel, solicit, seek to solicit or otherwise encourage Class Members to exclude themselves from the settlement, to submit written objections to the Settlement Agreement, or to appeal from the Court’s Final Judgment.
- 12.7. No Prior Assignments. The Parties separately represent and warrant that they have not directly or indirectly assigned, transferred, encumbered, or purported to assign, transfer, or encumber to any person or entity and portion of any liability, claim, demand, action, cause of action, or right released and discharged by the Party in this Settlement.
- 12.8. No Tax Advice. Neither Plaintiff, Class Counsel, Defendant nor Defense Counsel are providing any advice regarding taxes or taxability, nor shall anything in this Settlement be relied upon as such within the meaning of United States Treasury Department Circular 230 (31 CFR Part 10, as amended) or otherwise.
- 12.9. Modification of Agreement. This Agreement, and all parts of it, may be amended, modified, changed, or waived only by an express written instrument signed by all Parties or their representatives, and approved by the Court.

- 12.10. Agreement Binding on Successors. This Agreement will be binding upon, and inure to the benefit of, the successors of each of the Parties.
- 12.11. Applicable Law. All terms and conditions of this Agreement and its exhibits will be governed by and interpreted according to the internal laws of the state of California, without regard to conflict of law principles.
- 12.12. Cooperation in Drafting. The Parties have cooperated in the drafting and preparation of this Agreement. This Agreement will not be construed against any Party on the basis that the Party was the drafter or participated in the drafting.
- 12.13. Confidentiality. To the extent permitted by law, all agreements made, and orders entered during Action and in this Agreement relating to the confidentiality of information shall survive the execution of this Agreement.
- 12.14. Use and Return of Class Data. Information provided to Class Counsel pursuant to Cal. Evid. Code §1152, and all copies and summaries of the Class Data provided to Class Counsel by Defendant in connection with the mediation, other settlement negotiations, or in connection with the Settlement, may be used only with respect to this Settlement, and no other purpose, and may not be used in any way that violates any existing contractual agreement, statute, or rule of court. Not later than 90 days after the date when the Court discharges the Administrator's obligation to provide a Declaration confirming the final pay out of all Settlement funds, Plaintiff shall destroy all paper and electronic versions of Class Data received from Defendant unless, prior to the Court's discharge of the Administrator's obligation, Defendant makes a written request to Class Counsel for the return, rather than the destruction of Class Data. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Claims Administrator shall retain records sufficient to show the identity of individuals included in the Settlement, the amounts paid, and proof of sending notice and payment of amounts pursuant to this Agreement.
- 12.15. Headings. The descriptive heading of any section or paragraph of this Agreement is inserted for convenience of reference only and does not constitute a part of this Agreement.
- 12.16. Calendar Days. Unless otherwise noted, all reference to "days" in this Agreement shall be to calendar days. In the event any date or deadline set forth in this Agreement falls on a weekend or federal legal holiday, such date or deadline shall be on the first business day thereafter.
- 12.17. Notice. All notices, demands or other communications between the Parties in connection with this Agreement will be in writing and deemed to have been duly given as of the third business day after mailing by United States mail, or the day sent by email or messenger, addressed as follows:

To Plaintiff:
JCL LAW FIRM, APC
Jean-Claude Lapuyade (State Bar #248676)
5440 Morehouse Drive, Suite 3500
San Diego, CA 92121

ZAKAY LAW GROUP, APLC

Shani O. Zakay (State Bar #277924)
5440 Morehouse Drive, Suite 3500
San Diego, CA 92121

To Defendant:
James E. Hart
P. Dustin Bodaghi
LITTLER MENDELSON, P.C.
18565 Jamboree Road
Suite 800
Irvine, California 92612
Telephone: (949) 705-3000
Fax Number: (949) 724-1201

- 12.18. Execution in Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts by facsimile, electronically (i.e. DocuSign), or email which for purposes of this Agreement shall be accepted as an original. All executed counterparts and each of them will be deemed to be one and the same instrument if counsel for the Parties will exchange between themselves signed counterparts. Any executed counterpart will be admissible in evidence to prove the existence and contents of this Agreement.
- 12.19. Stay of Litigation. The Parties agree that upon the execution of this Agreement the litigation shall be stayed, except to effectuate the terms of this Agreement. The Parties further agree that upon the signing of this Agreement that pursuant to CCP section 583.330 to extend the date to bring a case to trial under CCP section 583.310 for the entire period of this settlement process.
- 12.20. Counsel for all Parties warrant and represent they are expressly authorized by the Parties whom they represent to negotiate this Settlement Agreement and to take all appropriate action required or permitted to be taken by such Parties pursuant to this Settlement Agreement to effectuate its terms, and to execute any other documents required to effectuate the terms of this Settlement Agreement.

Dated: Jun 16, 2023

Jonathan Cheung

Jonathan Cheung

Jonathan Cheung (Jun 16, 2023 16:21 PDT)

Dated: June 20, 2023

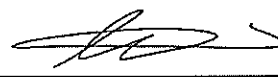
JCL LAW FIRM, APC

By: 

Jean-Claude Lapuyade
Attorneys for Plaintiff

Dated: June 20, 2023

ZAKAY LAW GROUP, APLC

By: 

Shani O. Zakay
Attorneys for Plaintiff

Dated: June 26, 2023

Signature Commercial Solutions, LLC

By: 

On behalf of Signature Commercial Solutions, LLC

Dated: June 26, 2023

Littler Mendelson P.C.

By: 

James E. Hart, Esq.
P. Dustin Bodaghi, Esq.
Attorneys for Defendant Signature Commercial Solutions,
LLC

EXHIBIT A

**COURT APPROVED NOTICE OF CLASS ACTION AND PAGA SETTLEMENT AND
HEARING DATE FOR FINAL COURT APPROVAL**

Jonathan Cheung v. Signature Commercial Solutions, LLC

Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 22STCV13034

The Superior Court for the State of California authorized this Notice. Read it carefully! It's not junk mail, spam, an advertisement, or solicitation by a lawyer. You are not being sued.

You may be eligible to receive money from an employee class action lawsuit (“Action”) against Signature Commercial Solutions, LLC (“Defendant” is used herein as a placeholder) for alleged wage and hour violations. The Action was filed by Jonathan Cheung (“Plaintiff”)—who is a former employee of Defendant—and seeks payment of (1) back wages and other relief for a class of hourly employees (“Class Members”) who worked for Defendant during the Class Period (April 19, 2018 to May 17, 2023); and (2) penalties under the California Private Attorney General Act (“PAGA”) for all hourly employees who worked for Defendant during the PAGA Period (February 8, 2021 to May 17, 2023) (“PAGA Members”).

The proposed Settlement has two main parts: (1) a Class Settlement requiring Defendant to fund Individual Class Payments, and (2) a PAGA Settlement requiring Defendant to fund Individual PAGA Payments and pay penalties to the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency (“LWDA”).

Based on Defendant's records, and the Parties’ current assumptions, **your Individual Class Payment is estimated to be \$_____ (less withholding) and your Individual PAGA Payment is estimated to be \$_____**. The actual amount you may receive likely will be different and will depend on a number of factors. (If no amount is stated for your Individual PAGA Payment, then according to Defendant's records you are not eligible for an Individual PAGA Payment under the Settlement because you didn’t work during the PAGA Period.)

The above estimates are based on Defendant's records showing that **you worked _____ workweeks** during the Class Period and **you worked _____ Workweeks** during the PAGA Period. If you believe that you worked more workweeks or pay periods during either period, you can submit a challenge by the deadline date. See Section 4 of this Notice.

The Court has already preliminarily approved the proposed Settlement and approved this Notice. The Court has not yet decided whether to grant final approval. Your legal rights are affected whether you act or not act. Read this Notice carefully. You will be deemed to have carefully read and understood it. At the Final Approval Hearing, the Court will decide whether to finally approve the Settlement and how much of the Settlement will be paid to Plaintiff and Plaintiff's attorneys (“Class Counsel”). The Court will also decide whether to enter a judgment that requires Defendant to make payments under the Settlement and requires Class Members and PAGA Members to give up their rights to assert certain claims against Defendant.

If you worked for Defendant during the Class Period and/or the PAGA Period, you have two basic options under the Settlement:

(1) Do Nothing. You don't have to do anything to participate in the proposed Settlement and be eligible for an Individual Class Payment and/or an Individual PAGA Payment. As a Participating Class Member, though, you will give up your right to assert Class Period wage claims and PAGA Period penalty claims against Defendant.

(2) Opt-Out of the Class Settlement. You can exclude yourself from the Class Settlement (opt-out) by submitting the written Request for Exclusion or otherwise notifying the Administrator in writing. If you opt-out of the Settlement, you will not receive an Individual Class Payment. You will, however, preserve your right to personally pursue Class Period wage claims against Defendant, and, if you are an PAGA Member, remain eligible for an Individual PAGA Payment. You cannot opt-out of the PAGA portion of the proposed Settlement.

Defendant will not retaliate against you for any actions you take with respect to the proposed Settlement.

SUMMARY OF YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS AND OPTIONS IN THIS SETTLEMENT

You Don't Have to Do Anything to Participate in the Settlement	If you do nothing, you will be a Participating Class Member, eligible for an Individual Class Payment and an Individual PAGA Payment (if any). In exchange, you will give up your right to assert the wage claims against Defendant that are covered by this Settlement (Released Claims).
You Can Opt-out of the Class Settlement but not the PAGA Settlement	If you don't want to fully participate in the proposed Settlement, you can opt-out of the Class Settlement by sending the Administrator a written Request for Exclusion. Once excluded, you will be a Non-Participating Class Member and no longer eligible for an Individual Class Payment. Non-Participating Class Members cannot object to any portion of the proposed Settlement. See Section 6 of this Notice.
The Opt-out Deadline is _____	You cannot opt-out of the PAGA portion of the proposed Settlement. Defendant must pay Individual PAGA Payments to all Alleged PAGA Members and the Alleged PAGA Members must give up their rights to pursue Released Claims (defined below).
Participating Class Members Can Object to the Class Settlement but not the PAGA Settlement	All Class Members who do not opt-out ("Participating Class Members") can object to any aspect of the proposed Settlement. The Court's decision whether to finally approve the Settlement will include a determination of how much will be paid to Class Counsel and Plaintiff who pursued the Action on behalf of the Class. You are not personally responsible for any payments to Class Counsel or Plaintiff, but every dollar paid to Class Counsel and Plaintiff reduces the overall amount paid to Participating Class Members. You can object to the amounts requested by Class Counsel or Plaintiff if you think they are unreasonable. See Section 7 of this Notice.
Written Objections Must be Submitted by _____	

You Can Participate in the Final Approval Hearing	The Court’s Final Approval Hearing is scheduled to take place on _____. You don’t have to attend but you do have the right to appear (or hire an attorney to appear on your behalf at your own cost), in person, by telephone or by using the Court’s virtual appearance platform. Participating Class Members can verbally object to the Settlement at the Final Approval Hearing. See Section 8 of this Notice.
You Can Challenge the Calculation of Your Workweeks Written Challenges Must be Submitted by _____	The amount of your Individual Class Payment and PAGA Payment (if any) depend on how many workweeks you worked at least one day during the Class Period and how many Workweeks you worked at least one day during the PAGA Period, respectively. The number Class Period Workweeks and number of PAGA Workweeks you worked according to Defendant's records is stated on the first page of this Notice. If you disagree with either of these numbers, you must challenge it by _____. See Section 4 of this Notice.

1. WHAT IS THE ACTION ABOUT?

Plaintiff is a former employee of Defendant. The Action accuses Defendant of violating California labor laws based on the following: (1) Failure to provide compliant meal and rest periods; (2) Failure to pay all minimum, regular and overtime wages; (3) Failure to correctly calculate the regular rate of pay; (4) Failure to maintain true and accurate records; (5) Failure to reimburse for required business expenses; (6) Failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements; (7) Failure to timely pay wages due during, and upon termination of employment; and (8) engaging in Unfair Competition pursuant to Cal. Bus & Prof. Code § 17200. Based on the same claims (except for the Unfair Competition claim), Plaintiff has also asserted a claim for civil penalties under the California Private Attorneys General Act (Labor Code §§ 2698, et seq.) (“PAGA”). Plaintiff is represented by attorneys in the Action: JCL Law Firm, APC and the Zakay Law Group, APLC (“Class Counsel.”)

Defendant strongly denies violating any laws or failing to pay any wages and contends it complied with all applicable laws.

2. WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT THE ACTION HAS SETTLED?

So far, the Court has made no determination whether Defendant or Plaintiff are correct on the merits. In the meantime, Plaintiff and Defendant hired an experienced, neutral mediator in an effort to resolve the Action by negotiating an to end the case by agreement (settle the case) rather than continuing the expensive and time-consuming process of litigation. The negotiations were successful. By signing a lengthy written settlement agreement (“Agreement”) and agreeing to jointly ask the Court to enter a judgment ending the Action and enforcing the Agreement, Plaintiff and Defendant have negotiated a proposed Settlement that is subject to the Court’s Final Approval. Both sides agree the proposed Settlement is a compromise of disputed claims. By agreeing to settle, Defendant does not admit any violations or concede the merit of any claims. Plaintiff and

Class Counsel strongly believe the Settlement is a good deal for you because they believe that: (1) Defendant has agreed to pay a fair, reasonable and adequate amount considering the strength of the claims and the risks and uncertainties of continued litigation; and (2) Settlement is in the best interests of the Class Members and Alleged PAGA Members. The Court preliminarily approved the proposed Settlement as fair, reasonable and adequate, authorized this Notice, and scheduled a hearing to determine Final Approval.

3. WHAT ARE THE IMPORTANT TERMS OF THE PROPOSED SETTLEMENT?

1. The Gross Settlement Amount is \$750,000.00. Defendant has agreed to deposit the Gross Settlement into an account controlled by the Administrator of the Settlement. The Administrator will use the Gross Settlement to pay the Individual Class Payments, Individual PAGA Payments, Class Representative Service Payment, Class Counsel's attorney's fees and expenses, the Administrator's expenses, and penalties to be paid to the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency ("LWDA"). Assuming the Court grants Final Approval, Defendant will fund the Gross Settlement not more than 14 days after the Judgment entered by the Court becomes final. The Judgment will be final on the date the Court enters Judgment, or a later date if Participating Class Members object to the proposed Settlement or the Judgment is appealed.
2. Court Approved Deductions from Gross Settlement. At the Final Approval Hearing, Plaintiff and/or Class Counsel will ask the Court to approve the following deductions from the Gross Settlement, the amounts of which will be decided by the Court at the Final Approval Hearing:
 - A. Up to \$250,000.00 (33% of the Gross Settlement) to Class Counsel for attorneys' fees and up to \$25,000.00 for their litigation expenses. To date, Class Counsel have worked and incurred expenses on the Action without payment.
 - B. Up to \$10,000.00 to Plaintiff Jonathan Cheung as a Class Representative Service Payment for filing the Action, working with Class Counsel and representing the Class. A Class Representative Service Payment will be the only monies Jonathan Cheung will receive other than Jonathan Cheung's Individual Class Payment and any Individual PAGA Payment.
 - C. Up to \$12,000.00 to the Administrator for services administering the Settlement.
 - D. Up to \$60,000.00 for PAGA Penalties, allocated as 75% to the LWDA PAGA Payment and 25% in Individual PAGA Payments to the Alleged PAGA Members based on their PAGA Workweeks.

Participating Class Members have the right to object to any of these deductions. The Court will consider all objections.

3. Net Settlement Distributed to Class Members. After making the above deductions in amounts approved by the Court, the Administrator will distribute the rest of the Gross Settlement (the "Net Settlement") by making Individual Class Payments to Participating Class Members based on their Class Period Workweeks.
4. Taxes Owed on Payments to Class Members. Plaintiff and Defendant are asking the Court to approve an allocation of 34% of each Individual Class Payment to taxable

wages (“Wage Portion”) and 66% to interest, etc. (“Non-Wage Portion”). The Wage Portion is subject to withholdings and will be reported on IRS W-2 Forms. Defendant will separately pay employer payroll taxes it owes on the Wage Portion. The Individual PAGA Payments are counted as penalties rather than wages for tax purposes. The Administrator will report the Individual PAGA Payments and the Non-Wage Portions of the Individual Class Payments on IRS 1099 Forms.

Although Plaintiff and Defendant have agreed to these allocations, neither side is giving you any advice on whether your Payments are taxable or how much you might owe in taxes. You are responsible for paying all taxes (including penalties and interest on back taxes) on any Payments received from the proposed Settlement. You should consult a tax advisor if you have any questions about the tax consequences of the proposed Settlement.

5. Need to Promptly Cash Payment Checks. The front of every check issued for Individual Class Payments and Individual PAGA Payments will show the date when the check expires (the void date). If you don’t cash it by the void date, your check will be automatically canceled, and the monies will be sent to the California State Controller’s Unclaimed Property Fund.
6. Requests for Exclusion from the Class Settlement (Opt-Outs). You will be treated as a Participating Class Member, participating fully in the Class Settlement, unless you notify the Administrator in writing, not later than _____, that you wish to opt-out. The easiest way to notify the Administrator is to send a written and signed Request for Exclusion by the _____ Response Deadline. The Request for Exclusion should be a letter from a Class Member or his/her representative setting forth a Class Member’s name, present address, telephone number, and a simple statement electing to be excluded from the Settlement. Excluded Class Members (i.e., Non-Participating Class Members) will not receive Individual Class Payments, but will preserve their rights to personally pursue wage and hour claims against Defendant.

You cannot opt-out of the PAGA portion of the Settlement. Class Members who exclude themselves from the Class Settlement (Non-Participating Class Members) remain eligible for Individual PAGA Payments and are required to give up their right to assert PAGA claims against Defendant based on the PAGA Period facts alleged in the Action.

7. The Proposed Settlement Will be Void if the Court Denies Final Approval. It is possible the Court will decline to grant Final Approval of the Settlement or decline to enter a Judgment. It is also possible the Court will enter a Judgment that is reversed on appeal. Plaintiff and Defendant have agreed that, in either case, the Settlement will be void: Defendant will not pay any money and Class Members will not release any claims against Defendant.
8. Administrator. The Court has appointed a neutral company, ILYM Group, Inc. (the “Administrator”) to send this Notice, calculate and make payments, and process Class Members’ Requests for Exclusion. The Administrator will also decide Class Member Challenges over Workweeks, mail and re-mail settlement checks and tax forms, and perform other tasks necessary to administer the Settlement. The Administrator’s contact information is contained in Section 9 of this Notice.

9. Participating Class Members' Release. After the Judgment is final and Defendant has fully funded the Gross Settlement and separately paid all employer payroll taxes, Participating Class Members will be legally barred from asserting any of the claims released under the Settlement. This means that unless you opted out by validly excluding yourself from the Class Settlement, you cannot sue, continue to sue, or be part of any other lawsuit against Defendant or related entities for wages based on the Class Period facts and PAGA penalties based on PAGA Period facts, as alleged in the Action and resolved by this Settlement.

The Participating Class Members will be bound by the following release:

all claims that were alleged, or reasonably could have been alleged, based on the Class Period facts stated in the Operative Complaint and ascertained in the course of the Action including any and all claims involving any allegations that Defendant: failed to pay all wages due (including minimum wages, regular wages, sick pay, vacation, paid time off and overtime wages); failed to provide legally-compliant meal and rest breaks and failed to pay premium pay for missed, late, interrupted or short meal and rest breaks; failed to timely pay all earned wages and compensation; failed to provide timely final pay; failed to provide accurate itemized wage statements; failed to reimburse for necessary business expenses; and engaged in unfair business practices due to the underlying violations at any time during the Class Period. This includes any claims for injunctive relief, declaratory relief, restitution, fraudulent business practices or punitive damages alleged or other damages or penalties or which could have been alleged under the facts, allegations and/or claims pleaded as part of the Action. This further includes any and all other claims under California common law, the California Labor Code including but not limited to the Fair Labor Standards Act, California Industrial Welfare Commission Wage Orders, and the California Business and Professions Code alleged in or that could have been alleged under the facts, allegations and/or claims pleaded in the Action. Except as set forth in Section 5.3 of the Settlement Agreement, Participating Class Members do not release any other claims, including claims for vested benefits, wrongful termination, violation of the Fair Employment and Housing Act, unemployment insurance, disability, social security, workers' compensation, or claims based on facts occurring outside the Class Period.

10. Alleged PAGA Members' PAGA Release. After the Court's judgment is final, and Defendant has paid the Gross Settlement (and separately paid the employer-side payroll taxes), all Alleged PAGA Members will be barred from asserting PAGA claims against Defendant, whether or not they exclude themselves from the Settlement. This means that all Alleged PAGA Members, including those who are Participating Class Members and those who opt-out of the Class Settlement, cannot sue, continue to sue, or participate in any other PAGA claim against Defendant or its related entities based on the PAGA Period facts alleged in the Action and resolved by this Settlement. The Alleged PAGA Members' Releases for Participating and Non-Participating Class Members are as follows:

All Participating and Non-Participating Class Members who are Alleged PAGA Members are deemed to release, on behalf of themselves and their respective former and present representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns, the Released Parties, from all claims for PAGA penalties that were alleged, or reasonably could have been alleged, based on the PAGA Period facts stated in the Operative Complaint, and the PAGA Notice, and ascertained in the course of the Action including, violation of Labor Code section 2698, et seq. (Private Attorneys General Act of 2004), including, any and all claims for PAGA penalties involving any allegations that Defendant failed to pay all wages due (including minimum, regular, sick pay, vacation, paid time off and overtime wages), failed to provide legally-compliant meal and rest breaks and failed to pay premium pay for missed, late, interrupted or short meal and rest breaks, failed to timely pay all earned wages and compensation, failed to provide timely final pay, failed to provide accurate itemized wage statements, and failed to reimburse for necessary business expenses, at any time during the PAGA Period.

4. HOW WILL THE ADMINISTRATOR CALCULATE MY PAYMENT?

1. Individual Class Payments. The Administrator will calculate Individual Class Payments by (a) dividing the Net Settlement Amount by the total number of Workweeks worked by all Participating Class Members, and (b) multiplying the result by the number of Workweeks worked by each individual Participating Class Member.
2. Individual PAGA Payments. The Administrator will calculate Individual PAGA Payments by (a) dividing \$15,000.00 by the total number of PAGA Workweeks worked by all Alleged PAGA Members and (b) multiplying the result by the number of PAGA Workweeks worked by each individual PAGA Member.
3. Workweek Challenges. The number of Class Workweeks you worked during the Class Period and the number of PAGA Workweeks you worked during the PAGA Period, as recorded in Defendant's records, are stated in the first page of this Notice. You have until _____ to challenge the number of Workweeks and/or Workweeks credited to you. You can submit your challenge by signing and sending a letter to the Administrator via mail email or fax. Section 9 of this Notice has the Administrator's contact information.

You need to support your challenge by sending copies of pay stubs or other records. The Administrator will accept Defendant's calculation of Workweeks based on Defendant's records as accurate unless you send copies of records containing contrary information. You should send copies rather than originals because the documents will not be returned to you. The Administrator will resolve Workweek challenges based on your submission and on input from Class Counsel (who will advocate on behalf of Participating Class Members) and Defendant's Counsel. The Administrator's decision is final. You can't appeal or otherwise challenge its final decision.

5. HOW WILL I GET PAID?

1. Participating Class Members. The Administrator will send, by U.S. mail, a check to every Participating Class Member (i.e., every Class Member who doesn't opt-out)

including those who also qualify as Alleged PAGA Members. The single check will combine the Individual Class Payment and the Individual PAGA Payment.

2. Non-Participating Class Members. The Administrator will send, by U.S. mail, a single Individual PAGA Payment check to every PAGA Member who opts out of the Class Settlement (i.e., every Non-Participating Class Member).

Your check will be sent to the same address as this Notice. If you change your address, be sure to notify the Administrator as soon as possible. Section 9 of this Notice has the Administrator's contact information.

6. HOW DO I OPT-OUT OF THE CLASS SETTLEMENT?

Submit a written and signed letter with your name, present address, telephone number, and a simple statement that you do not want to participate in the Settlement. The Administrator will exclude you based on any writing communicating your request to be excluded. Be sure to personally sign your request, identify the Action as *Jonathan Cheung v. Signature Commercial Solutions, LLC*, Case No. 22STCV13034, and include your identifying information (full name, address, telephone number, approximate dates of employment, and social security number for verification purposes). You must make the request yourself. If someone else makes the request for you, it will not be valid. **The Administrator must be sent your request to be excluded by _____, or it will be invalid.** Section 9 of the Notice has the Administrator's contact information.

7. HOW DO I OBJECT TO THE SETTLEMENT?

Only Participating Class Members have the right to object to the Settlement. Before deciding whether to object, you may wish to see what Plaintiff and Defendant are asking the Court to approve. At least 16 court days before the _____ Final Approval Hearing, Class Counsel and/or Plaintiff will file in Court (1) a Motion for Final Approval that includes, among other things, the reasons why the proposed Settlement is fair, and (2) a Motion for Fees, Litigation Expenses and Service Award stating (i) the amount Class Counsel is requesting for attorneys' fees and litigation expenses; and (ii) the amount Plaintiff is requesting as a Class Representative Service Award. Upon reasonable request, Class Counsel (whose contact information is in Section 9 of this Notice) will send you copies of these documents at no cost to you. You can also view them on the Court's website <https://www.lacourt.org/casesummary/ui/>.

A Participating Class Member who disagrees with any aspect of the Agreement, the Motion for Final Approval and/or Motion for Fees, Litigation Expenses and Service Award may wish to object, for example, that the proposed Settlement is unfair, or that the amounts requested by Class Counsel or Plaintiff are too high or too low. **The deadline for sending written objections to the Administrator is _____.** Be sure to tell the Administrator what you object to, why you object, and any facts that support your objection. Make sure you identify the Action, *Jonathan Cheung v. Signature Commercial Solutions, LLC*, Case No. 22STCV13034, and include your name, current address, telephone number, and approximate dates of employment for Defendant and sign the objection. Section 9 of this Notice has the Administrator's contact information.

Alternatively, a Participating Class Member can object (or personally retain a lawyer to object at your own cost) by attending the Final Approval Hearing. You (or your attorney) should be ready to tell the Court what you object to, why you object, and any facts that support your

objection. See Section 8 of this Notice (immediately below) for specifics regarding the Final Approval Hearing.

8. CAN I ATTEND THE FINAL APPROVAL HEARING?

You can, but don't have to, attend the Final Approval Hearing on _____ at _____ in Department 1 of the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, located at 312 North Spring Street, Los Angeles, California 90012. At the Hearing, the judge will decide whether to grant Final Approval of the Settlement and how much of the Gross Settlement will be paid to Class Counsel, Plaintiff, and the Administrator. The Court will invite comment from objectors, Class Counsel and Defense Counsel before making a decision. You can attend (or hire a lawyer to attend) either personally or virtually via LACourtConnect (<https://www.lacourt.org/lacc/>). Check the Court's website for the most current information.

It's possible the Court will reschedule the Final Approval Hearing. You should check the Administrator's website [https://www. ilymgroup.com/](https://www.ilymgroup.com/) beforehand or contact Class Counsel to verify the date and time of the Final Approval Hearing.

9. HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

The Agreement sets forth everything Defendant and Plaintiff promised to do under the proposed Settlement. The easiest way to read the Agreement, the Judgment or any other Settlement documents is to go to ILYM Group, Inc.'s website at [https://www. ilymgroup.com/](https://www.ilymgroup.com/). You can also telephone or send an email to Class Counsel or the Administrator using the contact information listed below, or consult the Superior Court website by going to (<http://www.lacourt.org/casesummary/ui/index.aspx>) and entering the Case Number for the Action, Case No. 22STCV13034. You can also make an appointment to personally review court documents in the Clerk's Office at the Stanley Mosk Courthouse by calling (213) 830-0800.

DO NOT TELEPHONE THE SUPERIOR COURT TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT THE SETTLEMENT.

Class Counsel:

Name of Attorney: Jean-Claude Lapuyade
Email Address: jlapuyade@jcl-lawfirm.com
Name of Firm: JCL Law Firm, APC
Mailing Address: 5440 Morehouse Drive, Suite 3500, San Diego, CA 92121
Telephone: (619) 599-8292

Name of Attorney: Shani O. Zakay
Email Address: shani@zakaylaw.com
Name of Firm: Zakay Law Group, APLC
Mailing Address: 5440 Morehouse Drive, Suite 3500, San Diego, CA 92121
Telephone: (619) 892-7095

Settlement Administrator:

Name of Company: ILYM Group, Inc.

Email Address:

Mailing Address: 14771 Plaza Drive, Ste. L, Tustin, CA 92780

Telephone: 1-888-250-6810

10. WHAT IF I LOSE MY SETTLEMENT CHECK?

If you lose or misplace your settlement check before cashing it, the Administrator will replace it as long as you request a replacement before the void date on the face of the original check. If your check is already void you may contact the California State Controller's Unclaimed Property Fund to recover your settlement.

11. WHAT IF I CHANGE MY ADDRESS?

To receive your check, you should immediately notify the Administrator if you move or otherwise change your mailing address.

EXHIBIT 2

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Civil Division

Central District, Stanley Mosk Courthouse, Department 56

22STCV13034

**JONATHAN CHEUNG vs SIGNATURE COMMERCIAL
SOLUTIONS, LLC**

July 31, 2023

8:30 AM

Judge: Honorable Holly J. Fujie
Judicial Assistant: O.Chavez
Courtroom Assistant: B. Chavez

CSR: None
ERM: None
Deputy Sheriff: None

APPEARANCES:

For Plaintiff(s): Sydney Castillo-Johnson by LACC for Shani Zakay

For Defendant(s): No Appearances

NATURE OF PROCEEDINGS: Hearing on Motion - Other Preliminary Approval of Class Action and PAGA Settlement

The matter is held.

The court issue its tentative ruling .

Counsel appearing submits to the court's tentative ruling which becomes the order of the court.

The Motion for Preliminary Approval of Settlement filed by Jonathan Cheung on 07/06/2023 is Granted.

MOVING PARTY: Plaintiff

The Court has considered the moving papers. No opposition papers were filed. Any opposition papers were required to have been filed and served at least nine court days before the hearing pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure ("CCP") section 1005, subdivision (b).

BACKGROUND

The currently operative third amended complaint (the "TAC") alleges nine causes of action arising out of an employment relationship.

On July 6, 2023, Plaintiff filed a motion for preliminary approval of Private Attorneys General Act ("PAGA") and class action settlement (the "Motion") on the grounds that Plaintiff has reached a settlement agreement (the "Settlement Agreement") with Defendant. The Motion requests that the Court preliminarily approve the Settlement Agreement and: (1) conditionally certify the settlement class; (2) approve distribution of the proposed Notice of Class Action

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Civil Division

Central District, Stanley Mosk Courthouse, Department 56

22STCV13034

**JONATHAN CHEUNG vs SIGNATURE COMMERCIAL
SOLUTIONS, LLC**

July 31, 2023

8:30 AM

Judge: Honorable Holly J. Fujie
Judicial Assistant: O.Chavez
Courtroom Assistant: B. Chavez

CSR: None
ERM: None
Deputy Sheriff: None

Settlement; (3) appoint Plaintiff as the class representative; (4) appoint the JCL Law Firm, APC and Zakay Law Group, APLC as class counsel; and (5) set a hearing date for final approval of the Settlement Agreement.

DISCUSSION

Approval of class action settlements occurs in two steps. First, the court preliminarily approves the settlement, and the class members are notified as directed by the court. (Cal. Rules of Court (“CRC”), r. 3.769(c), (f); Cellphone Termination Fee Cases (2009) 180 Cal.App.4th 1110, 1118.) Second, the court conducts a final approval hearing to inquire into the fairness of the proposed settlement. (CRC, r. 3.769(e); Cellphone Termination Fee Cases, supra, 180 Cal.App.4th at 1118.) Any party to a settlement agreement may serve and file a written notice of motion for preliminary approval of the settlement. (CRC, r. 3.769(c).) The settlement agreement and proposed notice to class members must be filed with the motion, and the proposed order must be lodged with the motion. (Id.)

The trial court has broad discretion to determine whether the settlement is fair. (Cellphone Termination Fee Cases, supra, 180 Cal.App.4th at 1117.) In determining whether to approve a class settlement, the court’s responsibility is to “prevent fraud, collusion or unfairness to the class” through settlement and dismissal of the class action because the rights of the class members, and even named plaintiffs, “may not have been given due regard by the negotiating parties.” (Consumer Advocacy Group, Inc. v. Kintetsu Enterprises of America (2006) 141 Cal.App.4th 46, 60.)

Terms of the Settlement

The proposed Settlement Agreement was entered into by Plaintiff and Defendant (the “Parties”) after they participated in private mediation. (See Declaration of Jean-Claude Lapuyade (“Lapuyade Decl.”) ¶¶ 12-13 Exhibit 1.) The Settlement Agreement provides for a gross settlement amount (the “GSA”) of \$750,000 to be allocated among approximately 846 class members. (Lapuyade Decl., Exhibit 1.)

The Parties have agreed to a disbursement of the GSA as follows: (1) attorney’s fees in the approximate amount of \$250,000 and litigation expenses not to exceed \$25,000; (2) an incentive award to Plaintiff in the amount of up to \$10,000; (3) fees and expenses of administration of the Settlement Agreement to the settlement administrator in an amount not to exceed \$12,000; (4) PAGA penalties (the “Penalties”) in the amount of \$60,000, with 25 percent of the Penalties to

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Civil Division

Central District, Stanley Mosk Courthouse, Department 56

22STCV13034

**JONATHAN CHEUNG vs SIGNATURE COMMERCIAL
SOLUTIONS, LLC**

July 31, 2023

8:30 AM

Judge: Honorable Holly J. Fujie
Judicial Assistant: O.Chavez
Courtroom Assistant: B. Chavez

CSR: None
ERM: None
Deputy Sheriff: None

be part of the remaining net settlement amount (the “NSA”) that will be distributed to PAGA class members in the amount of \$15,000; and 75 percent paid to the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency (“LWDA”). (See Lapuyade Decl., Exhibit 1.) The NSA is approximately \$393,000 and will be allocated to participating class members on a pro-rata basis according to the number of weeks each class member worked during the relevant class period. The average payment to participating class members who do not opt out is approximately \$464.53. (Lapuyade Decl. ¶ 6.)

Class Certification

Before the court may approve the settlement, the settlement class must satisfy the normal prerequisites for class action. (*Amchem. Products, Inc. v. Windsor* (1997) 521 U.S. 591, 625-27.) The party advocating class treatment must demonstrate the: (1) existence of an ascertainable and sufficiently numerous class; (2) well-defined community of interest; and (3) substantial benefits from certification that render proceeding as a class superior to the alternatives. (*Brinker Restaurant Corp. v. Superior Court* (2012) 53 Cal.4th 1004, 1021.)

1. Ascertainability and Numerosity

In determining the existence of an ascertainable and sufficiently numerous class, courts examine the class definition, the size of the class, and the means of identifying class members. (*Miller v. Woods* (1983) 148 Cal.App.3d 862, 873.) Class members are ascertainable when they can be readily identified without unreasonable expense or time by reference to official or business records. (*Sevidal v. Target Corp.* (2010) 189 Cal.App.4th 905, 919.) The ascertainability requirement is satisfied if the potential class members may be identified without unreasonable expense or time and given notice of the litigation, and the proposed class definition offers an objective means of identifying those persons who will be bound by the results of the litigation. (*Id.* at 919.)

Plaintiff contends that the proposed class is ascertainable because class members can be readily identified in Defendants’ records. The proposed settlement class consists of approximately 846 current and former employees who were identified from Defendant’s business records. (Lapuyade Decl. ¶ 48.) The Court finds that Plaintiff has sufficiently established the existence of an ascertainable and sufficiently numerous class.

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Civil Division

Central District, Stanley Mosk Courthouse, Department 56

22STCV13034

**JONATHAN CHEUNG vs SIGNATURE COMMERCIAL
SOLUTIONS, LLC**

July 31, 2023

8:30 AM

Judge: Honorable Holly J. Fujie
Judicial Assistant: O.Chavez
Courtroom Assistant: B. Chavez

CSR: None
ERM: None
Deputy Sheriff: None

2. Community of Interest

The community of interest component embodies three factors: (1) predominant common questions of law or fact; (2) class representatives with claims or defenses typical of the class; and (3) class representatives who can adequately represent the class. (*Sav-On Drug Stores, Inc. v. Superior Court* (2004) 34 Cal.4th 319, 326.) The “ultimate question” for predominance is whether the issues which may be jointly tried, when compared with those requiring separate adjudication, are so numerous or substantial that the maintenance of a class action would be advantageous to the judicial process and to the litigants. (*Duran v. U.S. Bank Nat’l Assn.* (2014) 59 Cal.4th 1, 28.)

As a general rule, if the defendant’s liability can be determined by facts common to all members of the class, a class will be certified even if the members must individually prove their damages. (*Brinker Restaurant Corp. v. Superior Court* (2012) 53 Cal.4th 1004, 1021-22.) Class treatment is not, however, appropriate if every member of the alleged class would be required to litigate numerous and substantial questions determining his individual right to recover following the class judgment determining issues common to the purported class. (*City of San Jose v. Superior Court* (1974) 12 Cal.3d 447, 459.)

The class members here were all employed by Defendants during the relevant time period and were subjected to the same policies and practices. (See Lapuyade Decl. ¶¶ 49-51.) The Court finds that this is sufficient to show a community of interest.

3. Substantial Benefit from Certification

Given the number of individuals with potential claims against Defendant involving common questions of fact and law, the Court finds there are substantial benefits from class certification that render proceeding as a class superior to the alternatives.

The Court finds that Plaintiff has satisfied the prerequisites for class certification and preliminarily approves the class.

Fairness of Settlement

In determining whether a settlement is fair, the Court considers all relevant factors, including the strength of the plaintiffs’ case, the risk, expense, complexity, and likely duration of further litigation, the risk of maintaining class action status through trial, the amount offered in

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Civil Division

Central District, Stanley Mosk Courthouse, Department 56

22STCV13034

**JONATHAN CHEUNG vs SIGNATURE COMMERCIAL
SOLUTIONS, LLC**

July 31, 2023

8:30 AM

Judge: Honorable Holly J. Fujie
Judicial Assistant: O.Chavez
Courtroom Assistant: B. Chavez

CSR: None
ERM: None
Deputy Sheriff: None

settlement, the extent of discovery completed and the stage of the proceedings, the experience and views of counsel, the presence of a governmental participant, and the reaction of the class members to the proposed settlement. (Kullar v. Foot Locker Retail, Inc. (2008) 168 Cal.App.4th 116, 128.) The recovery should represent a reasonable compromise, given the magnitude and apparent merit of the claims being released, discounted by the risks and expenses of attempting to establish and collect on those claims by pursuing the litigation. (Id. at 129.) Nevertheless, the strength of the case on the merits for the plaintiffs is the most important factor, balanced against the amount offered in the settlement. (Id. at 130.)

The fact that a proposed settlement may only amount to a fraction of the potential recovery does not, in and of itself, mean that the proposed settlement is grossly inadequate and should be disapproved. (City of Detroit v. Grinnell Corporation (2d Cir. 1974) 495 F.2d 448, 455.) The test is not the maximum amount plaintiff might have obtained at trial on the complaint but, rather, whether the settlement is reasonable under all of the circumstances. (Wershba v. Apple Computer, Inc. (2001) 91 Cal.App.4th 224, 250.)

A presumption of fairness exists where: (1) the settlement is reached through arm's-length bargaining; (2) investigation and discovery are sufficient to allow counsel and the court to act intelligently; (3) counsel is experienced in similar litigation; and (4) the percentage of objectors is small. (Cellphone Termination Fee Cases (2009) 180 Cal.App.4th 1110, 1118.)

Plaintiff's counsel has analyzed evidence from class members and evidence produced by USS. (See Lapuyade Decl. ¶¶ 14-20.) The Parties agreed on the terms of the Settlement Agreement after they participated in mediation, where they discussed and examined the proposed class members and the Parties' positions on Plaintiff's claims. (Lapuyade Decl. ¶¶ 21-22.) Plaintiff's counsel believes that the Settlement Agreement is fair based on the risks in proceeding to trial that became apparent after evaluating Plaintiff's claims and Defendants' defenses, the potential difficulties in having the class certified, and the time and resources that would potentially be expended in prolonged litigation involving many individuals. (See Lapuyade Decl. ¶¶ 22-23, 38-40.)

The Court finds that it appears a presumption of fairness of the Settlement Agreement exists. The Court notes that because the percentage of objectors cannot be determined until the fairness hearing and final approval, the Court's finding of a presumption of fairness is provisional.

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Civil Division

Central District, Stanley Mosk Courthouse, Department 56

22STCV13034

**JONATHAN CHEUNG vs SIGNATURE COMMERCIAL
SOLUTIONS, LLC**

July 31, 2023

8:30 AM

Judge: Honorable Holly J. Fujie
Judicial Assistant: O.Chavez
Courtroom Assistant: B. Chavez

CSR: None
ERM: None
Deputy Sheriff: None

Notice

If the court has certified the action as a class action, notice of the final approval hearing must be given to the class members in the manner specified by the court. (CRC, r. 3.769(f).) The notice must contain an explanation of the proposed settlement and procedures for class members to follow in filing written objections to it and in arranging to appear at the settlement hearing and state any objections to the proposed settlement. (Id.)

CRC, rule 3.766(d) requires that the notice include:

- (1) A brief explanation of the case, including the basic contentions or denials of the parties;
- (2) A statement that the court will exclude the member from the class if the member so requests by a specific date;
- (3) A procedure for the member to follow in requesting exclusion from the class;
- (4) A statement that the judgment, whether favorable or not, will bind all members who do not request exclusion; and
- (5) A statement that any member who does not request exclusion may, if the member so desires, enter an appearance through counsel. (CRC, r. 3.766(d).)

Plaintiff's proposed Notice complies with each of the requirements set forth by CRC rule 3.766(d). (See Lapuyade Decl., Exhibit 1 at Exhibit A.)

PAGA Settlement

Labor Code section 2699, subdivision (l)(2) provides that the superior court shall review and approve any settlement of any civil action filed pursuant to PAGA. (Lab. Code § 2699, subd. (l)(2).) Section 2699, subdivision (l)(2) requires submission of the proposed settlement to the Labor Workforce and Development Agency (the "LWDA") at the same time it is submitted to the court. (Id.) Any settlement of any civil action filed under PAGA must be "fair and adequate in view of the purposes and policies of the statute." (Flores v. Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc. (C.D. Cal. 2017) 253 F.Supp.3d 1074, 1077.) Seventy five percent of all PAGA

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Civil Division

Central District, Stanley Mosk Courthouse, Department 56

22STCV13034

**JONATHAN CHEUNG vs SIGNATURE COMMERCIAL
SOLUTIONS, LLC**

July 31, 2023

8:30 AM

Judge: Honorable Holly J. Fujie
Judicial Assistant: O.Chavez
Courtroom Assistant: B. Chavez

CSR: None
ERM: None
Deputy Sheriff: None

penalties must be paid to the LWDA and the remaining 25 percent must be paid to the aggrieved employees. (Lab. Code, § 2699, subd. (i).)

Based on the terms of the Settlement Agreement and allocation of the GSA to the LDWA as described above, the Court finds that the Settlement Agreement complies with Labor Code section 2699, subdivision (i).

Class Representative/Incentive Award

In order to be deemed an adequate class representative, the class action proponent must show it has claims or defenses that are typical of the class, and it can adequately represent the class. (J.P. Morgan & Co. v. Superior Court (2003) 113 Cal.App.4th 195, 212.) Where there is a conflict that goes to the very subject matter of the litigation, it will defeat a party's claim of class representative status. (Id.) Thus, a finding of adequate representation will not be appropriate if the proposed class representative's interests are antagonistic to the remainder of the class. (Id.)

Plaintiff worked for Moving Defendants during the relevant time period and spent time working with counsel on the case. (See Lapuyade Decl. ¶ 43; Declaration of Jonathan Cheung ¶¶ 2-7.) There is no indication that Plaintiff has interests adverse to other class members. The Court approves the request and approves Plaintiff as the class representative.

The Motion also seeks preliminary approval of an incentive award of \$10,000 to Plaintiff for acting as class representative in this action. The Court preliminarily approves this amount.

Class Counsel

The Court finds that Plaintiff's counsel is sufficiently experienced in litigating wage and hour and employment class actions and approves their appointment as class counsel. (See Lapuyade Decl. ¶¶ 52-59; Declaration of Shani O. Zakay ¶ 3.)

Attorney's Fees and Costs

Any agreement, express or implied, that has been entered into with respect to the payment of attorney's fees or the submission of an application for the approval of attorney fees must be set forth in full in any application for approval of the dismissal or settlement of an action that has been certified as a class action. (CRC, r. 3.769(b).)

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Civil Division

Central District, Stanley Mosk Courthouse, Department 56

22STCV13034

**JONATHAN CHEUNG vs SIGNATURE COMMERCIAL
SOLUTIONS, LLC**

July 31, 2023

8:30 AM

Judge: Honorable Holly J. Fujie
Judicial Assistant: O.Chavez
Courtroom Assistant: B. Chavez

CSR: None
ERM: None
Deputy Sheriff: None

Ultimately, the award of attorney's fees is made by the court at the fairness hearing, using the lodestar method with a multiplier, if appropriate. (PLCM Group, Inc. v. Drexler (2000) 22 Cal.4th 1084, 1095-96.) In common fund cases, the court may utilize the percentage method, cross-checked by the lodestar. (Laffitte v. Robert Half Int'l, Inc. (2016) 1 Cal.5th 480, 503.) Despite any agreement by the parties to the contrary, the court has an independent right and responsibility to review the attorney fees provision of the settlement agreement and award only so much as it determined reasonable. (Garabedian v. Los Angeles Cellular Telephone Company (2004) 118 Cal.App.4th 123, 128.)

Plaintiff seeks preliminary approval of attorney's fees of up to one-third of the GSA in the amount of \$250,000 plus litigation costs of up to \$20,000. The Court preliminarily approves these amounts, pending a determination of the evidence supporting the fees presented by Plaintiff at the final approval hearing. Counsel should submit evidence justifying the requested attorney's fees and litigation costs with the motion for final approval of the settlement.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, the Court GRANTS the Motion. The Court sets a hearing for the final approval of the Settlement Agreement on December 19, 2023 at 8:30 a.m. in this department.

Moving party is ordered to give notice of this ruling.

Dated this 31st day of July 2023

/s/ Holly J. Fujie

Hon. Holly J. Fujie
Judge of the Superior Court

EXHIBIT 3

Jennifer Heming

From: DIR PAGA Unit <lwdadonotreply@dir.ca.gov>
Sent: Thursday, July 6, 2023 2:23 PM
To: Jennifer Heming
Subject: Thank you for your Proposed Settlement Submission

07/06/2023 02:22:14 PM

Thank you for your submission to the Labor and Workforce Development Agency.

Item submitted: Proposed Settlement

If you have questions or concerns regarding this submission or your case, please send an email to pagainfo@dir.ca.gov.

DIR PAGA Unit on behalf of
Labor and Workforce Development Agency

Website: http://labor.ca.gov/Private_Attorneys_General_Act.htm

EXHIBIT 4

EXHIBIT 5

JCL LAW FIRM, APC
5440 Morehouse Drive, Suite 3600
San Diego, CA 92121
Tel: (619) 599-8292
Fax: (619) 599-8291

FIRM RESUME

Areas of Practice: Employee Class Actions, Wage and Hour Class Actions, Civil Litigation, and Unlawful Housing Practices.

ATTORNEY BIOGRAPHIES

Jean-Claude Lapuyade, Esq.
California Bar Number 248676
Founding Partner

Biography:

Mr. Lapuyade is a San Diego based labor and employment attorney representing aggrieved California employees and the victims of unlawful housing practices throughout the State of California. Mr. Lapuyade's litigation practice focuses on representing California employees in wage and hour class actions for unpaid wages, missed meal and rest breaks, and misclassification, wrongful termination cases and tenants in unlawful housing class actions. Mr. Lapuyade prides himself on providing his clients with aggressive, attentive and result driven representation through the litigation process, trial and arbitration. Since 2007, Mr. Lapuyade successfully recovered in excess of \$200 million in monetary awards for his clients.

Mr. Lapuyade served as co-editor of the Insurance Column for Consumer Attorneys of San Diego from 2011 to 2014. As editor, Mr. Lapuyade was responsible for publishing monthly articles in the Trial Bar News periodical analyzing complex insurance coverage issues. Mr. Lapuyade is a four-time recipient of the Super Lawyers Rising Star by Thomson Reuters. To be eligible for inclusion in Rising Stars, a candidate must be either 40 years old or younger or in practice for 10 years or less. While up to 5 percent of the lawyers in a state are named to Super Lawyers, no more than 2.5 percent are named to Rising Stars.

Bar Admissions:

- California
- U.S. District Court Southern District of California
- U.S. District Court Central District of California
- U.S. District Court Eastern District of California
- U.S. District Court Northern District of California

Professional Associations:

- California Employment Lawyers Association, 2007 to Present
- Consumer Attorneys of San Diego, 2007 to 2020
- American Bar Association, Section of Litigation, Member, 2007 to 2020
- American Bar Association, Labor & Employment Section, Member, 2007 to 2020
- American Bar Association, Tort, Trial & Insurance Section, Member, 2007 to 2020
- California Bar Association, Labor & Employment Section, Member, 2007 to Present
- California Bar Association, Litigation Section, Member, 2007 to Present

Education:

- **California Western School of Law**
 - J.D. - 2006
 - Honors: Deans Merit Scholarship, California Western School of Law 2005 - 2006
- **University of Arizona**
 - B.A. - 2001
 - Major: History

Honors:

- Super Lawyers Rising Star, Thomson Reuters, 2015 - 2018
- Distinguished Advocate Award for Outstanding Oral Advocacy, 2005 - 2006

Sydney Castillo-Johnson, Esq.
California Bar Number 343881
Associate Attorney

Biography:

Ms. Castillo-Johnson is a San Diego based labor and employment attorney representing California employees throughout the state of California. Ms. Castillo-Johnson's litigation practice focuses on representing current and former employees in wage and hour class actions for unpaid wages, missed meal and rest breaks, misclassification, and wrongful termination.

Ms. Castillo-Johnson volunteered her time at California Western School of Law first as a student intern and later as a student manager with the Community Law Project which offers legal services to the low-income community of San Diego.

Education:

- **California Western School of Law**
 - J.D.- 2022
 - Honors:
 - Dean's Honor List: Spring 2021, Fall 2021
 - Public Service Honor Society Fall 2021
 - 3L Academic Merit Scholarship
 - Dean's Diversity, Service, and Leadership Scholarship
 - Activities: Community Law Project Student Manager
- **Azusa Pacific University**
 - B.A. – 2018
 - Major: Criminal Justice

Monnett De La Torre, Esq.
California Bar Number 272884
Senior Associate

Biography:

Ms. De La Torre is a San Diego and Ventura County based labor and employment attorney representing aggrieved California employees throughout the State of California. Ms. De La Torre's litigation practice focuses on representing California employees in wage and hour class and representative actions for unpaid wages, missed meal and rest breaks, misclassification, penalties, and wrongful termination cases. Ms. De La Torre has extensive experience handling internal workplace investigations. Ms. De La Torre has handled matters before the Department of Fair Employment and Housing, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and Department of Labor.

Ms. De La Torre is a two-time recipient of the Super Lawyers Rising Star by Thomas Reuters. To be eligible for inclusion in Rising Stars, a candidate must be either 40 years old or younger or in practice for 10 years or less. While up to five percent of the lawyers in a state are named to Super Lawyers, no more than 2.5 percent are named to Rising Stars.

Bar Admissions:

- California
- U.S. District Court Southern District of California

Professional Associations:

- California Employment Lawyers Association, 2022 to Present
- Consumer Attorneys of San Diego, 2010-2015
- American Bar Association, Labor & Employment Section, Member, 2015 to Present
- California Bar Association, Labor & Employment Section, Member, 2015 to Present
- San Diego La Raza Lawyers Association, 2010-2015
- Ventura County Bar Association, 2015-Present
- Women Lawyers of Ventura County, 2015-Present

Education:

- **New England School of Law**
 - J.D.- 2010

- Honors:
 - Dean's List Consecutive years
- **University of California, San Diego**
 - B.A.- 2006
 - Major: Economics
 - Minor: Latin American Studies

Honors:

- Super Lawyers Rising Star, Thomson Reuters, 2021 and 2022
- Pacific Cost Business Times, "Top 40 under 40" Award
- Daily Transcripts "Top Young Attorney: nominee, consecutive years"

REPORTED CASES

- *Blanchette et al., v. Superior Court (GHA Homes)*, 8 Cal.App.5th 521, 2017
- *Chmurny v. State*, 392 Md. 159, 2006

EXAMPLES OF THE JCL LAW FIRM'S
REPRESENTATIVE CLASS ACTION & REPRESENTATIVE CASES

- *Ware v. Shake Shack Enterprises, LLC*, Alameda Superior Court Case No. 21CV002063 (October 19, 2023) Hon. Brad Seligman approved a \$1,330,000.00 class action and PAGA action settlement for violations of California wage and hour laws. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.
- *Trinh v. Precision Metal Products, Inc., et al.*, San Diego Superior Court Case No. 37-2022-00000965-CU-OE-CTL (October 16, 2023) Hon. Matthew C. Braner approved a \$450,000.00 class action and PAGA action settlement for, *inter alia*, unpaid off the clock work. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.
- *Anderson v. Barton Myers Associates, Inc., et al.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 21STCV43314 (October 12, 2023) Hon. Elihu M. Berl approved a \$900,000.00 class action and PAGA action settlement for meal and rest period violations. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.
- *DeSanctis v. Douglas Products and Packaging Company, LLC*, Contra Costa Superior Court Case No. C21-01874 (October 11, 2023) Hon. Charles S. Treat approved a \$372,500.00 class action and PAGA action settlement for, *inter alia*, failure to pay for all hours worked. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.
- *Jackson v. White Fir, LLC, et al.*, Sacramento Superior Court Case No. 34-2021-00301656 (October 6, 2023) Hon. Lauri A. Damrell approved a \$750,000.00 class action and PAGA action settlement for violations of California wage and hour laws. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.
- *Kneisly v. SR Machining, Inc., et al.*, Riverside Superior Court Case No. CVRI2201491 (October 5, 2023) Hon. Harold W. Hopp approved a \$220,000.00 class action and PAGA action settlement for meal and rest period violations. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.
- *Mendez v. Bondz, Inc., et al.*, San Joaquin Superior Court Case No. STK-CV-UOE-2020-0007486 (September 14, 2023) Hon. George J. Abdallah, Jr. approved a \$180,000.00 class action and PAGA action settlement for, *inter alia*, failure to comply with piece-rate laws. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.
- *Baray v. Curation Foods, Inc., et al.*, Santa Barbara Superior Court Case No. 21CV02834 (August 29, 2023) Hon. James F. Rigali approved a \$495,000.00 class action and PAGA action settlement for meal and rest period violations. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.
- *Rodriguez, et al. v. Ferma Greenbox, Inc., et al.*, Alameda Superior Court Case No. RG21101104 (August 23, 2023) Hon. Evelio Grillo approved a \$200,000.00 class action and PAGA action settlement for, *inter alia*, unpaid off-the-clock work. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.
- *O'Quinn v. Laugh Factory, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 19STCV28155 (August 1, 2023) Hon. Carolyn B. Kuhl approved a \$144,000.00 class action and PAGA action settlement for, *inter alia*, unlawful tip pooling. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.
- *Toler v. Total Testing Solutions, LLC*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 21STCV38452 (July 27, 2023) Hon. Elihu M. Berle approved a \$160,000.00 class action and PAGA action settlement for meal and

rest period violations. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.

- *Rodriguez v. EAH, Inc.*, Santa Cruz Superior Court Case No. 21CV00884 (July 25, 2023) Hon. Marjorie Carter approved a \$1,450,000.00 class action and PAGA action settlement for, *inter alia*, failure to compensate overtime and redeemed sick pay at the regular rate of pay. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.
- *Neutall v. Urban Alchemy*, San Francisco Superior Court Case No. CGC-20-588622 (July 13, 2023) Hon. Richard B. Ulmer approved a \$980,000.00 class action settlement for violations of California wage and hour laws. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel.
- *Rodriguez v. RM Parks Place, Inc.*, San Joaquin Superior Court Case No. STK-CV-UOE-2021-6050 (June 7, 2023) Hon. Erin Guy Castillo approved a \$175,000.00 class action and PAGA action settlement for, *inter alia*, wage statement violations. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.
- *Chrestensen v. Northeastern Rural Health Clinics* Lassen, Superior Court Case No. 63703 (April 13, 2023) Hon. Leonard J. La Casse approved a \$270,000.00 class action and PAGA action settlement for, *inter alia*, unpaid overtime wages. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.
- *Hernandez, et al. v. Parenting Network, Inc.*, Tulare Superior Court Case No. VCU287027 (March 14, 2023) Hon. Bret Hilman approved a \$225,000.00 class action and PAGA action settlement for, *inter alia*, unpaid off-the-clock work. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.
- *Sarmiento v. Caduceus Healthcare Inc.*, San Diego Superior Court Case No. 37-2021-00002597 (March 10, 2023) Hon. Richard S. Whitney approved a \$315,000.00 class action and PAGA action settlement for, *inter alia*, unpaid off-the-clock work. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.
- *Garces, et al. v. DriverDo, LLC*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 19STCV32773 (January 24, 2023) Hon. Carolyn B. Kuhl approved a \$700,000 class action and PAGA settlement for meal and rest period violations. The JCL Law Firm, APC, represented the plaintiff, the State of California, and the Aggrieved Employees.
- *De Jesus v. Guardian Angel Home Care, Inc.*, San Diego Superior Court Case No. 37-2020-00021049-CU-OE-CTL (July 29, 2022) Hon. Ronald F. Frazier approved a \$300,000 class action and PAGA settlement for meal and rest period violations. The JCL Law Firm, APC, represented the plaintiff, the State of California, and the Aggrieved Employees.
- *Kaur v. Aces 2020 I, LLC, et al.*, Contra Costa Superior Court Case No. MSC20-02482 (December 22, 2022) Hon. Edward G. Weil approved a \$585,000 class action and PAGA settlement for meal and rest period violations. The JCL Law Firm, APC, represented the plaintiff, the State of California, and the Aggrieved Employees.
- *Molina v. Hawaiian Airlines, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 20STCV28079 (November 23, 2022) Hon. Maren Nelson approved a \$250,000 class action settlement for meal and rest period violations. The JCL Law Firm, APC, represented the Plaintiff.
- *Lang Jr. v. Pathways Community Services LLC*, San Diego Superior Court Case No. 37-2019-00049969-CU-OE-CTL (September 9, 2022) Hon. James A. Mangione approved a \$160,000 class action and PAGA settlement for meal and rest period violations. The JCL Law Firm, APC, represented the plaintiff, the State of California, and the Aggrieved Employees.
- *Martinello v. Century Wilshire, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 20STCV32613 (March 1, 2022) Hon. Carolyn Kuhl approved a \$550 billing rate and appointed Jean Claude Lapuyade, Esq. of the JCL Law Firm, APC, as Class Counsel.
- *Wilson v. Spreen Inc. (dba Spreen Honda)*, San Bernardino Superior Court Case No. CIVSB2119857 (April 6, 2022) Hon. David Cohn approved a \$300,000 PAGA action settlement for meal and rest period violations. The JCL Law Firm, APC, represented the plaintiff, the State of California, and the Aggrieved Employees.
- *Ledesma v. TVJ Sons I, Inc.; Porter and Howard, Inc.* Santa Barbara Superior Court Case No. 20CV03573 (November 10, 2021) Hon. Jed Beebe approved a \$350,000 PAGA action settlement for meal and rest period violations. The JCL Law Firm, APC represented the State of California and the Aggrieved Employees.
- *Jacobs v. Rush Media Company, LLC; XLT Management Services, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 20STCV32350 (May 2, 2022) Hon. Daniel J. Buckley appointed the JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and approved a \$330,000 class action settlement for, *inter alia*, independent contractor misclassification.
- *Chavez v. HTL Conrad Domestic, LLC; HTL Conrad Domestic Employer, LLC*, San Diego Superior Court Case No. 37-2020-00016193-CU-OE-CTL (June 9, 2022) Hon. John S. Meyer approved a \$850,000 PAGA action settlement for, *inter alia*, failure to compensate overtime at the regular rate of pay. The JCL Law Firm, APC acted as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California and the Aggrieved Employees.
- *Renteria v. Love's Country Stores of California*, San Bernardino Superior Court Case No. CIVDS20164481 (June 14, 2022) Hon. David Cohn approved a \$2.2 million dollar class action and PAGA action settlement

for, *inter alia*, unpaid overtime and sick pay. The JCL Law Firm, APC acted as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.

- *Lopez v. Adidas America, Inc.*, Ventura Superior Court Case No. 56-2021-005498444-CU-OE-VTA (April 4, 2022) Hon. Mark Borrell approved a \$1.5 million dollar class action and PAGA action settlement for, *inter alia*, inaccurate overtime calculations, and appointed the JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel.
- *Felix v. TVI, Inc., d.b.a. Savers*, Santa Clara Superior Court Case No. 21CV376407 (February 18, 2022) Hon. Sunil R. Kulkarni approved a \$1.8 million dollar class action and PAGA action settlement for, *inter alia*, unpaid off-the-clock work. The Court appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and as representative PAGA counsel for the State of California.
- *Munoz v. AMTCR*, San Bernardino Superior Court Case No. CIV-DS2001914 (August 24, 2021) Hon. David Cohn approved a \$1.8 million dollar class and PAGA settlement for, *inter alia*, inaccurate itemized wage statements. The JCL Law Firm, APC acted as class counsel for the settlement class and as representative PAGA counsel the State of California and the Aggrieved Employees.)
- *Nunes v. Home Depot U.S.A., Inc.*, San Joaquin Superior Court Case No. STK-CV-UOE-2020-0011011 (October 20, 2021 – Hon. Roger Ross approved a \$1.5 million dollar class and PAGA settlement for, *inter alia*, miscalculated meal period premiums and appointed Jean-Claude Lapuyade, Esq. as Class Counsel.)
- *Pillsbury v. T&T Restaurants CA, Inc.*, Del Norte Superior Court Case No. CVUJ-20-1214 (December 14, 2021 – Hon. Darren McElfresh approved \$550 billing rate and appointed Jean-Claude Lapuyade, Esq. as Class Counsel in a wage and hour class action settlement.)
- *Latin v. OneMain General Service Corporation*, Stanislaus County Superior Court Case No. CV-20-002498 (October 22, 2021) Hon. Stacy Speiller approved a PAGA action settlement for \$700,000 wage statement violations. The JCL Law Firm, APC acted as counsel for the plaintiff, the State of California and the Aggrieved Employees.
- *Elias Kaser v. Aviation Consultants, Inc.*, Orange County Superior Court Case No. 30-2021-01191204-CU-OE-CXC (September 22, 2021 – Hon. Peter J. Wilson approved \$550 billing rate in a representative California Labor Code Private Attorney General Act settlement).
- *Rodriguez v. RSI Home Products, Inc.*, San Bernardino Superior Court Case No. CIVDS2023354 (July 30, 2021 – Hon. David Cohn approved a \$1.45 million class and PAGA settlement for, *inter alia*, failure to comply with piece-rate laws, and appointed the JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel)
- *Jer Vang v. Bridge Property Management*, Alameda County Superior Court, Case No RG19047434 (January 8, 2021 – Hon. Winifred Smith approved a class and PAGA settlement for, *inter alia*, unpaid off the clock work. The JCL Law Firm, APC acted as class counsel for the settlement class and as representative PAGA counsel the State of California and the Aggrieved Employees.)
- *Johnson v. Volt Management Corp., Inc. et al.*, Los Angeles County Superior Court, Case No. 19STCV16466 (December 11, 2020 – Hon. Amy Hogue approved a PAGA Settlement negotiated on behalf of the State of California and the aggrieved employees by the JCL Law Firm, APC.)
- *Salazar v. Frontier Auto Sales Inc., dba Frontier Toyota*, Los Angeles Superior Court, Case No. 19STCV20382 (November 24, 2020 – Hon. John P. Doyle appointed the JCL Law Firm, APC as class counsel and approved a class and PAGA settlement for, *inter alia*, missed meal and rest periods.)
- *Villalobos v. Alterra Group, LLC et al.*, Los Angeles County Superior Court, Case No. 19STCV19448 (November 11, 2020 – Hon. Richard Fruin approved a PAGA Settlement for, *inter alia*, unreimbursed business expenses. The JCL Law Firm, APC acted as counsel for the plaintiff, the State of California and the Aggrieved Employees.)
- *Stevens et al., v. Bank of England*, San Diego County Superior Court Case No. 37-2019-00018662-CU-OE-CTL (October 16, 2020 – Hon. John Meyer appointed JCL Law Firm as Class Counsel and granted final approval of wage and hour class action for, *inter alia*, off-the-clock work.)
- *Frazier v. ASA Carlton, Inc.*, San Diego Superior Court Case No. 37-2019-00036147 (October 9, 2020 Hon. Kenneth Medel appointed the JCL Law Firm as Class Counsel and granted final approval of wage and hour class action for off-the-clock work.)
- *Krake et al., v. Central Valley Diner, Inc.*, Placer County Superior Court Case No. SCV0041645 (September 4, 2020 – Hon. Michael Jones appointed JCL Law Firm as class counsel and granted final approval of wage and hour class action for meal period violations.)
- *Conner v. Ascendant Marketing, LLC et al.*, San Diego Superior Court Case No. 37-2019-00026864-CU-OE-CTL (July 24, 2020 Hon. Joel Wohlfeil granted approval of PAGA Settlement for, among other things, off-the-clock work. JCL Law Firm, APC acted as lead counsel.)
- *Guerrero v. Estancia Operations, LLC.*, San Diego Superior Court Case No. 37-2019-00028963 (August 25, 2020 – Hon. Katherine Bacal approved PAGA Settlement for, *inter alia*, missed meal and rest periods. JCL Law Firm, APC, acted as lead counsel.)
- *Moreno v. Dash Lube, et al.*, United States District Court, Southern District of California, Case No. 18cv1922 DMS (AHG) (December 13, 2019 – Granted class certification of Labor Code Section 226 claim and appointed JCL Law Firm, APC, as Class Counsel.)

- *Perkins et al., v. Tahiti Enterprises, Inc., et al.*, Orange County Superior Court Case No. 30-2016-00863095 (October 22, 2019 – Hon. Peter Wilson appointed JCL Law Firm, APC, as Class Counsel and granted final approval for an unlawful housing class action settlement arising out of Civil Code Section 1940.1.)
- *Hill v. Stemak Holdings, Ltd.*, San Diego Superior Court Case No., 37-2018-00000747 (January 28, 2020 – Hon. Kenneth Medel appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as class counsel and granted final approval of wage and hour class action for unpaid overtime.)
- *Shachno et al., v. KT Hotels, LLC, et al.* San Diego Superior Court Case No. 37-2018-00043601 (May 31, 2019 – Hon. Gregory Pollack appointed JCL Law Firm, APC, as Class Counsel and granted preliminary approval for the wage and hour class action settlement involving nearly 900 current and former employees. Final approval scheduled for October 4, 2019)
- *Almanza v. The Express Group, Inc.*, San Bernardino Superior Court Case No. CIVDS1722542 (April 19, 2019 – Hon. David Cohn appointed the JCL Law Firm, APC, as Class Counsel and granted final approval for a wage and hour class action settlement for *inter alia*, missed meal and rest periods and independent contractor misclassification.)
- *Moschetto v. Pillow Global, Inc.* San Diego Superior Court, Case No. 37-2017-00024031-CU-OE-CTL (April 5, 2019 – Hon. John S. Meyer appointed JCL LAW Firm, APC, as Class Counsel and granted final approval for a wage and hour wage class action settlement involving misclassified house cleaners.)
- *Burke v. Friendship Hotel, LLC*, San Diego County Superior Court Case No. 37-2017-00022517-CU-OE-CTL (March 10, 2019 – final approval granted on for an unlawful housing class action arising under Civil Code Section 1940.2)
- *Terrado et al., v. Accredited Debt Relief, LLC*, San Diego County Superior Court Case No. 37-2018-00014181-CU-OE-CTL (February 8, 2019 – Hon. Gregory W. Pollock appointed JCL Law Firm, APC as Class Counsel and granted final approval for a wage and hour class action settlement for meal and rest period violations);
- *Macaspac v. San Antonio Regional Hospital*, San Bernardino Superior Court Case No. CIVDS1512625, (July 27, 2018 – Hon. Thomas S. Garza appointed JCL Law Firm, APC, as Class Counsel and granted final approval for a wage and hour class action settlement involving claims for on duty meal and rest periods.);
- *Summerlin et al. v. Maplebear, Inc. dba Instacart*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. BC603030 (2018 - certified and settled wage and hour class action.)
- *Ortega v. Prime Healthcare*, San Diego Superior Court Case No. 37-2014-00011240-CU-OE-CTL (2018 – Approved PAGA only settlement for on duty meal and rest periods)
- *Engstrom v. Bender-Rosenthal, Inc.* San Diego Superior Court Case No. 37-2016-00012373-CU-OE-CTL (2017 - Certified and settled class action for employee misclassification);
- *Crawford v. Outlook Amusements, Inc.*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. BC617160 (2017 - Certified and settled wage and hour class action.);
- *Hernandez v. Sunglass Hut Trading, LLC*, San Bernardino Superior Court Case No. CIVDS1505181 (2016 - Certified and settled wage and hour class action);
- *Burns v. Shalom, LLC*, San Diego Superior Court, Case No., 37-2013-00058356-CU-BT-CTL (2015 - certified and settled class action for unlawful housing practices arising out of Civil Code Section 1940.1);