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Attorneys for Plaintiff, LAURA SMITH, on
behalf of herself and others similarly
situated.

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SAN JOAQUIN

JESSE GALINDO and LAURA SMITH,
individually, and on behalf of all persons
similarly situated,

Plaintiffs,

v.

PAQ, INC., DBA FOOD 4 LESS and/or
RANCHO SAN MIGUEL MARKETS, a
California corporation, and DOES 1 through
50, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No. STK-CV-UOE-2022-0000452

Assigned for All Purposes to:
Honorable Judge. Evelio Grillo

**DECLARATION OF LAURA SMITH IN
SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFF'S MOTION
FOR PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF
CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT**

1 I, Laura Smith, declare as follows:

2 1. I am a Named Plaintiff and PAGA Representative in the case of *Galindo v. PAQ,*
3 *Inc.* San Joaquin Case No. STK-CV-UOE-2022-0000452. I make this declaration on the basis of
4 my personal knowledge and if asked to testify thereto I could and would do so.

5 2. I was employed by PAQ, Inc. ("PAQ") from on or about September 13, 2016
6 through on or about October 21, 2019 and occupied a non-exempt position as Grocery Night
7 Associate.

8 3. Prior to retaining the law firm of James Hawkins APLC to redress the grievances
9 that I had against PAQ, I was made aware of the advantages and disadvantages of litigation. I was
10 also made aware of my responsibilities as both a Plaintiff and a class representative prior to filing
11 the class action complaint which was filed on July 9, 2020. I accepted the responsibility and
12 agreed to move forward. I also accepted the responsibilities as a named plaintiff and
13 representative under the Private Attorneys General Act ("PAGA"). I pledged to participate
14 actively in the lawsuits.

15 4. During the litigation of this action, I continuously interacted with my attorneys to
16 discuss the status of the case and I provided oral and documentary information necessary to
17 prosecute this case. I provided information to my attorneys which helped in the discovery
18 propounded in PAQ. Also, I took time from work and was available to my counsel during the
19 mediation and provided information which ultimately assisted in the settlement of this class and
20 PAGA action.

21 5. By agreeing to bring this action, I formally accepted the responsibilities of
22 representing the interests of Aggrieved Employees in California and willingly chose to assume
23 risks and potential costs that I alone might have to bear if judgement would have been rendered in
24 favor of PAQ.

25 6. As part of the PAGA settlement, I also signed a general release releasing all claims
26 I have or may have against PAQ which is far broader than the release by other Aggrieved
27 Employees who are only releasing PAGA civil penalty claims, and claims related to allegations
28 that PAQ failed to reimburse business expenses. The incentive payout also serves as

1 compensation for agreeing to a full, general release of all claims against PAQ.

2 7. I also risked the potential stigma of being the named plaintiff in a representative
3 action labor dispute which could affect my further employability in the industry or with any
4 prospective employer who learns of my lawsuit against a former employer.

5 8. The incentive payout, subject to court approval, is Ten Thousand Dollars
6 (\$10,000). I believe that this amount is fair and reasonable in light of the efforts and risks of
7 litigating this action as a class and PAGA representative which has resulted in a favorable
8 outcome to the Aggrieved Employees and class members. This incentive payment is also in
9 consideration for executing a general release of all my claims against PAQ.

10 I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

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12 Executed on this 8th day of March, 2024 at Manteca, California.

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15 DocuSigned by:
Laura Smith
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17 Laura Smith
18 Plaintiff
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