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Submitted Via Online Filing to the LWDA

California LWDA
Attn: PAGA Administrator
455 Golden Gate Ave., 9th Fl.
San Francisco, CA 94102

Sent Via U.S. Mail and Certified Mail

Fleet Services, Inc.
3520 Miraloma Ave.
Anaheim, CA 92806

Dick Van Eck
3520 Miraloma Avenue
Anaheim, CA 92806

Re: PAGA Civil Penalty Claim
Briana Arreola v. Fleet services, Inc., et al.

To the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, Fleet Services, Inc. and Dick Van Eck:

Pursuant to the Private Attorneys General Act of 2004 ("PAGA"), Labor Code §§ 2699, *et seq.*, this letter shall serve as notification of the PAGA civil penalty claim of aggrieved employee Briana Arreola ("Claimant"), on behalf of the State of California and all Aggrieved Employees, against her employer(s), Fleet Services, Inc. and Dick Van Eck (collectively the "Company"), for violations of Labor Code §§ 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 208, 210, 218.6, 226, 226.3, 226.7, 227.3, 246, 256, 510, 512, 558, 1194, 1194.2, 1197, 1197.1, 1198, 1199, and 2802 among possibly other sections inadvertently omitted, and/or sections of the applicable Industrial Welfare Commission Wage Order(s).

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Claimant has been employed by the Company since August 2022. Claimant alleges that, at all relevant times, she and all other non-exempt employees employed by the Company in California (the "Aggrieved Employees") were subjected to the same policies, working conditions, and corresponding wage and hour violations to Claimant was subjected during her employment.

For instance, at all relevant times, Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees were not provided proper minimum and overtime wages due to the Company's failure to accurately record and compensate for all hours worked. Also, at all relevant times, the Company failed to pay overtime at the required rate (*i.e.,* time and one-half of the regular rate of pay). For example, Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees frequently earned compensation in addition to the base hourly rate (gift cards are one such example), yet the Company failed to include this compensation in calculations for regular rate of pay, leading to underpaid overtime on each such occasion.

Claimant was also not provided 30-minute off-duty meal periods, as mandated by California law, during employment with the Company. As a result of the Company's policies and practices, Claimant was subjected to meal period violations when she was: (1) unable to take a meal period due to workload, (2) forced to take an on-duty meal period while under the control of the Company, (3) forced to take a meal period after the 5th hour of work, and (4) not provided mandated second or third meal periods on shifts in excess of 10 hours or 15 hours, respectively.

The Company also failed to provide Claimant with 10 minutes of net rest break time for every 4 hours worked, or major fraction thereof, as mandated by California law. The Company did not schedule Claimant's rest breaks, Claimant was unable to leave the premises for breaks, and Claimant was often not authorized and/or permitted to take mandated rest breaks due to being overwhelmed by the hectic workload. Furthermore, on occasions when Claimant worked in excess of 10 hours in a shift, the Company failed to authorize and/or permit a third mandated rest break.

Moreover, at all relevant times, the Company required Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees to incur necessary business-related expenses and costs without reimbursement. For example, Claimant was required to incur substantial expenses without reimbursement during employment, including but not limited to acquiring and maintaining a smart phone and related monthly data plan to communicate with the Company via phone, text messages, etc.

Also, at all relevant times, Defendants utilized a policy and practice through which Plaintiff and the Represented Employees accrued vacation and/or PTO hours (collectively, "vacation hours"). However, on occasions when Plaintiff and the Represented Employees had accrued but unused vacation hours upon separation of employment, Defendants failed to pay these wages and, further, failed to pay them at the "final rate" required by Labor Code § 227.3.

The Company also failed to comply with the mandates of Labor Code § 204 regarding the timing of the payment of wages to its employees each period, including meal and rest period premiums. Also, the Company failed to comply with the mandates of Labor Code §§ 201 – 203 regarding payment of final wages upon separation of employment including minimum wages, overtime, meal and rest break premiums, and the Company further failed to pay the Aggrieved Employees for mandated sick time at a rate "calculated in the same manner as the regular rate of pay."

Finally, during her employment with the Company, Claimant received inaccurate and incomplete wage statements that failed to accurately state all necessary items required under Labor Code § 226(a). Specifically, Claimant alleges that the Company failed to provide wage statements that listed all applicable rates of pay and total hours worked, among other violations - in direct violation of Labor Code § 226(a).

Furthermore, Claimant alleges that Dick Van Eck is now and/or at all relevant times was the Chief Financial Officer of Fleet Services, Inc. and were Claimant's and the Aggrieved Employees' actual employer or, in the alternative, were individuals employed by the Company as managerial and/or supervisory employees and/or agents. In addition, Claimant alleges that at all relevant times Dick Van Eck had the authority, in the interest of Fleet Services, Inc. to exercise independent judgment to hire, transfer, promote, discharge, assign, discipline, or take other similar actions against Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees, and were in Claimant's chain of command at the time of and direct participants in the wrongful conduct which constitutes the basis of Claimant's complaint herein. Claimant also alleges that Fleet Services, Inc. and Dick Van Eck are the agents, servants, employees, partners, affiliates, and/or representatives of each other,

and were, at all times herein mentioned, acting within the course, scope, and purpose of such relationship(s) and with the knowledge, consent and/or ratification of each other. Furthermore, in conducting themselves in the manner described herein, Fleet Services, Inc. and Dick Van Eck were acting in active concert with on another such that the acts of each were fully attributable to the other in all material respects.

Claimant also alleges that Fleet Services, Inc. and Dick Van Eck were merely the alter-ego of the other in that there existed a unity of interest and ownership such that any separateness between them ceased to exist and each exercised undue dominance, control, influence, and management over the other. Claimant further alleges that, at all relevant times, Fleet Services, Inc. has been inadequately capitalized to conduct business, has failed to follow appropriate corporate formalities, and has simply been shells and instrumentality through which Dick Van Eck has conducted personal affairs. Adherence to the fiction of the separate existence of Fleet Services, Inc. would permit abuse of the corporate privilege, thereby sanctioning fraud and promoting injustice. Accordingly, the corporate veil should be pierced, and any liability attached to Fleet Services, Inc. should be imposed jointly and severally against Dick Van Eck.

Finally, in an additional separate, but not necessarily mutually exclusive, alternative theory of liability, Dick Van Eck is liable for PAGA civil penalties under Labor Code § 558 as "other person(s)" who caused the violations regarding minimum wage among other claims. See *Atempa v. Pedrazzani* (2018) 27 Cal.App.5th 809, 820 ("if there is evidence and a finding that a party other than the employer 'violates, or causes to be violated' the overtime laws (§ 558(a)) or 'pays or causes to be paid to any employee' less than minimum wage (§ 1197.1(a)), then that party is liable for certain civil penalties regardless of the identity or business structure of the employer"); *Moua v. IBM* (N.D. Cal. 2019) 2019 U.S.Dist.LEXIS 40851 (same)

As a result of these violations, and others described below, Claimant alleges that she and other Aggrieved Employees were denied specific rights to which they are/were entitled under California law and the rules promulgated by the IWC Wage Orders, including the following:

PAGA ASSESSMENT FOR FAILURE TO PAY ALL MINIMUM, REGULAR, AND OVERTIME WAGES

(Labor Code §§ 204, 221-223, 510, 558, 1194, 1194.2, 1197, 1197.1, 1198; IWC Wage Order §§ 3, 4(B))

As discussed above, the Company failed to pay all required minimum, regular, and overtime wages to Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees due to the Company's failure to accurately record and compensate for all hours worked. This resulted in earned, but unpaid, minimum, regular, and overtime wages due and owing to Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees.

Accordingly, Labor Code §§ 210, 558, 1197.1, and 2699, among possibly others, impose various penalties upon the Company for each employee and each pay period in which it failed to pay all wages including, but not limited to, minimum, regular, and overtime wages in violation of the Labor Code and/or the IWC Wage Orders.

PAGA ASSESSMENT FOR DENIAL OF MEAL PERIODS, REST BREAKS, AND WAGE PREMIUMS

(Labor Code §§ 226.7(b) & (c), 512, 558; Cal. Admin. Code, Title 8, § 11090)

Labor Code § 226.7(b) states that "[a]n employer shall not require an employee to work during a meal or rest or recovery period mandated pursuant to an applicable statute, or applicable regulation, standard,

or order of the Industrial Welfare Commission ..." Labor Code § 512(a) states in pertinent part: "[A]n employer may not employ an employee for a work period of more than 5 hours per day without providing the employee with an uninterrupted meal period of not less than 30 minutes [...] [a]n employer may not employ an employee for a work period of more than 10 hours per day without providing the employee with a second meal period of not less than 30 minutes."

Section 12 of applicable IWC Wage Order states in pertinent part: "Every employer shall authorize and permit all employees to take rest periods, which insofar as practicable shall be in the middle of each work period. The authorized rest period time shall be based on the total hours worked daily at the rate of ten (10) minutes net rest time per four (4) hours or major fraction thereof."

Here, Claimant and other Aggrieved Employees were regularly not provided compliant mandatory meal periods and paid rest breaks due to the Company's policies described above. Although the Company was required to pay Claimant and all Aggrieved Employees premium wages equal to an additional hour of pay at the employee's regular rate of pay for each violation under Labor Code § 226.7(c), the Company did not pay the mandatory one-hour wage premiums. Labor Code § 558 imposes a penalty for each violation, plus an amount sufficient to recover the underpaid wages. Additionally, the civil assessment set forth in Labor Code § 2699 applies to these violations.

PAGA ASSESSMENT FOR FAILURE TO REIMBURSE BUSINESS EXPENSES

(Labor Code § 2802; IWC Wage Order § 9(b))

Labor Code § 2802(a) states "An employer shall indemnify his or her employee for all necessary expenditures or losses incurred by the employee in direct consequence of the discharge of his or her duties." IWC Wage Order § 9(b) states "[w]hen tools or equipment are required by the employer or are necessary to the performance of a job, such tools and equipment shall be provided and maintained by the employer."

Here, the Company required Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees to incur expenses in direct consequence of the discharge of their duties without reimbursement. Accordingly, Labor Code § 2699 imposes a penalty upon the Company for each such violation of Labor Code § 2802.

FAILURE TO PAY VESTED VACATION UPON SEPARATION OF EMPLOYMENT

(Labor Code § 227.3)

Pursuant to Labor Code § 227.3, an employer that has implemented a paid vacation, paid time off, or compensated time off policy must, upon an employee's separation from employment, pay to the employee all vested but unused vacation and/or paid time off at her final rate of pay. However, as alleged herein, the Company only paid vested vacation upon separation at the base rate of pay, leading to a violation on each such occasion. As a result of these violations, penalties may be assessed pursuant to Labor Code § 2699.

FAILURE TO PAY SICK TIME AT PROPER RATE OF PAY

(Labor Code § 246)

Labor Code § 246(l)(1) provides that paid sick time for non-exempt employees must be "calculated in the same manner as the regular rate of pay for the workweek in which the employee uses paid sick time, whether or not the employee actually works overtime in that workweek." Additionally, Labor Code § 246(l)(2) states that the paid sick time must be "calculated by dividing the employee's total wages, not

including overtime premium pay, by the employee's total hours worked in the full pay periods of the prior 90 days of employment."

Here, Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees were compensated on an hourly basis plus additional compensation in the form of nondiscretionary bonuses, commissions, and other forms of payment. However, on the occasions that the Aggrieved Employees took sick time and received paid sick leave, the Company only paid sick time at the base rate of pay (not factoring in the additional compensation as required by Labor Code §§ 246(l)(1-2). As such, penalties may be assessed pursuant to Labor Code § 2699.

PAGA ASSESSMENT FOR FAILURE TO PAY ALL WAGES DUE AND OWING EACH PAYROLL PERIOD WITHIN THE TIME REQUIRED BY LAW
(Labor Code §§ 204, 204.1, 208, 256 and 2699)

Labor Code § 204(a) states that all wages earned by a person are due and payable twice during each calendar month, and further states that wages earned during the first through fifteenth days of the month must be paid no later than the twenty-sixth day of the month, and that wages earned between the sixteenth and last day of the month must be paid by the tenth day of the following month. Labor Code § 204(d) states "[t]he requirements of this section shall be deemed satisfied by the payment of wages for weekly, biweekly, or semimonthly payroll if the wages are paid not more than seven calendar days following the close of the payroll period."

As a result of the Company's failure to pay Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees all compensation to which they were entitled, the Company had a pattern and practice of failing to pay all wages due and owing to Claimant and the Aggrieved Employees within the time mandated by Labor Code § 204. As a result of these violations, penalties may be assessed pursuant to Labor Code §§ 203, 210, 256, and/or 2699.

PAGA ASSESSMENT FOR FAILURE TO TIMELY PAY FINAL WAGES
(Labor Code §§ 201, 202, 203, 256 and 2699)

Labor Code § 201(a) provides in pertinent part: "If an employer discharges an employee, the wages earned and unpaid at the time of discharge are due and payable immediately." Labor Code § 202(a) states in pertinent part "If an employee not having a written contract for a definite period quits his or her employment, his or her wages shall become due and payable not later than 72 hours thereafter, unless the employee has given 72 hours' previous notice of his or her intention to quit, in which case the employee is entitled to his or her wages at the time of quitting." Labor Code § 203(a) states "If an employer willfully fails to pay, without abatement or reduction, in accordance with Sections 201, 201.3, 201.5, 201.9, 202, and 205.5, any wages of an employee who is discharged or who quits, the wages of the employee shall continue as a penalty from the due date thereof at the same rate until paid or until an action therefor is commenced; but the wages shall not continue for more than 30 days."

The Company did not pay the Aggrieved Employees all wages that were due and owing within the required time following the end of their employment in accordance with Labor Code §§ 201-202. As a result, all such Aggrieved Employees are entitled to 30 days of wages as a "waiting time penalty." (Labor Code §§ 203, 256.) Labor Code § 2699 also imposes a penalty.

PAGA ASSESSMENT FOR FAILURE TO PROVIDE ACCURATE, ITEMIZED WAGE STATEMENTS

(Labor Code §§ 226, 226.3, and 1174)

Labor Code § 226(a) requires an employer to provide its employees with itemized wage statements accurately stating gross wages earned, total hours worked, all deductions, net wages earned, the inclusive dates of the pay period, the employee's name and the last four digits of his or her Social Security number (or employee identification number), the name and address of the legal entity that is the employer, and all applicable hourly rates in effect during the pay period and the corresponding number of hours worked at each hourly rate by the employee.

At all times pertinent hereto, the Company failed to provide accurate itemized wage statements to Claimants and all Aggrieved Employees due to violations including the failure to state total hours worked during the period and the failure to state all applicable hourly rates of pay and number of hours worked at each date. Additionally, the Company's wage statements failed to accurately state gross wages earned, all deductions, net wages earned, and the name and address of the legal entity that is the employer. Accordingly, Claimants are entitled to damages under Labor Code § 226(e), including reasonable attorneys' fees. Labor Code §§ 226.3 and 2699 also impose a civil penalty and/or assessment for these violations.

PAGA ASSESSMENT FOR FAILURE TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT RECORDS

(Labor Code §§ 1174, 1174.5, 1198, and § 7 of the IWC Wage Orders)

Labor Code § 1174(d), and § 7 of the IWC Wage Orders require employers to maintain accurate employment records, including accurate payroll records showing the total number of regular and overtime hours worked each day by employees, including meal periods, and the gross wages earned by the employee, including all applicable pay rates and the corresponding number of hours worked at each pay rate, among other requirements.

Here, the Company failed to maintain accurate employment records as mandated by California law. Therefore, in addition to recovering the amount of attorneys' fees and cost incurred herein, Claimant is entitled to the assessment of civil penalties in accordance with Labor Code §§ 1174(d), 1174.5, 1199, and 2699.

PAGA ASSESSMENT FOR VIOLATIONS OF LABOR CODE § 1199

(Labor Code § 1199)

An employer violates Labor Code § 1199 if said employer: (a) requires or causes an employee to work for longer hours than those fixed, or under conditions of labor prohibited by an order of the commission; (b) pays or causes to be paid to any employee a wage less than the minimum fixed by an order of the commission; or, (c) violates or refuses or neglects to comply with any provision of this chapter or any order or ruling of the commission. Labor Code § 2699.5 specifically enumerates Labor Code § 1199 as a section to which the civil penalties under the PAGA apply. Therefore, as a result of the Company's violations described herein, the Company is subject to the civil penalties in accordance with Labor Code § 2699.

ATTORNEYS' FEES, INTEREST, AND PENALTIES

(Labor Code §§ 2699(f)(2), 2699(g)(1), 2699.5)

Labor Code § 2699(g)(1), give employees the right to recover in a civil action the unpaid balance of the full amount of wages, including interest thereon, penalties and other damages, as applicable, reasonable attorneys' fees, and costs of suit. Additionally, Claimants seek the assessment of penalties, including civil penalties, under Labor Code §§ 203, 210, 225.5, 226.3, 1174.5, 1197.1, 2699, and/or § 20 of the IWC Wage Orders, among possibly other provisions inadvertently omitted herein. Furthermore, Claimants is entitled to bring a wage/hour claim on behalf of all current and former similarly situated employees of the Company. Thus, the Company is exposed to these same penalties for violations involving all Aggrieved Employees.

Additionally, Claimant seeks attorney's fees pursuant to C.C.P. § 1021.5. Please construe this correspondence as Claimants' notification of alleged wrongdoing and attempted resolution in accordance with C.C.P. § 1021.5 and *Graham v. DaimlerChrysler Corp.* (2004) 34 Cal.4th 553.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, the Company may be liable for penalties related to the foregoing claims and remedies. If Claimant becomes aware of any additional claims for Labor Code violations related to her employment and/or other employees of the Company, she reserves the right to add new claims by amending this claim letter.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to give me a call. In the meantime, I look forward to your response.

Very Truly Yours,

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