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7 8	Attorneys for Plaintiff, RUBEN RAMIREZ, on behalf of himself and all others similarly situated and aggrieved,		
	SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA		
9   10	FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – SPRING STREET COURTHOUSE		
11	RUBEN RAMIREZ, an individual and on	CASE NO.: 21STCV22026	
12	behalf of all others similarly situated and	[Assigned to the Hon. Lawrence P. Riff in	
13	aggrieved,	Dept. 7]	
	Plaintiff,	<u>CLASS ACTION</u>	
14	v.	JOINT STIPULATION RE: CLASS ACTION AND REPRESENTATIVE	
15	SEA WIN, INC., a California corporation; BEST INTERNATIONAL TRADING, INC., a	ACTION SETTLEMENT	
16	California corporation; ALL GOOD FOODS,	Action Filed: June 11, 2021 Trial Date: None Set	
17	INC., a California corporation; and DOES 1 through 100, inclusive,	That Batter I voice set	
18	Defendants.		
19			
20	This Joint Stipulation re: Class Action and Representative Action Settlement		
21	("Settlement" or "Agreement" or "Settlement Agreement") is made by and between plaintiff		
22	Ruben Ramirez ("Plaintiff"), individually and on behalf of the Settlement Class, as defined		
23	below, on the one hand; and defendant SeaWin, Inc. ("SeaWin" or "Defendant"), on the other		
24	hand; in the lawsuit entitled Ramirez v. SeaWin, Inc., et al., filed in Los Angeles County Superior		
25	Court, Case No. 21STCV22026 (the "Action"). Plaintiff and Defendant shall be, at times,		
26	collectively referred to as the "Parties" and individually as a "Party". This Agreement is intended		
27	by the Parties to fully, finally, and forever resol	ve, discharge and settle the claims as set forth	
28	herein, based upon and subject to the terms and c	conditions of this Agreement.	

# 1. **DEFINITIONS**

- **A.** "Action" means *Ramirez v. SeaWin, Inc., et al.,* filed in Los Angeles County Superior Court, Case No. 21STCV22026.
- **B.** "Aggrieved Employees" means Class Members working for Defendant as non-exempt, hourly-paid employees in California during the PAGA Period.
- C. "Class Counsel" means: David D. Bibiyan and Diego Aviles of Bibiyan Law Group, P.C. as well as Jasmin K. Gill of J. Gill Law Group, P.C. The term "Class Counsel" shall be used synonymously with the term "Plaintiff's Counsel."
  - **D.** "Class Period" means the period from June 11, 2017 through October 29, 2022.
- **E.** "Court" means the Superior Court of the State of California for the County of Los Angeles.
- F. "Class Notice" means and refers to the notice sent to Class Members after preliminary approval of the Settlement in the manner described in Paragraph 9(A) of this Agreement, a copy of which is attached to this Agreement as Exhibit A.
  - **G.** "**Defendant**" shall refer to defendant SeaWin, Inc.
- H. "Employer Taxes" means employer-funded taxes and contributions imposed on the wage portions of the Individual Settlement Payments under the Federal Insurance Contributions Act, the Federal Unemployment Tax Act, and any similar state and federal taxes and contributions required of employers, such as for unemployment insurance.
- I. "Final Approval Date" means the later of: (1) the date the Court signs an Order granting final approval of this Settlement ("Final Approval") and Judgment; (2) if there is an objector, 60 days from the date the Final Approval and Judgment; or (3) to the extent any appeals have been filed, the date on which they have been resolved or exhausted.
- J. "General Release" means the general release of claims by Plaintiff, which is in addition to his limited release of claims as a Participating Class Member and Aggrieved Employee, neither of which include and both of which expressly exclude any release for any and all claims that may be brought, have been brought, or could have been brought by Plaintiff for wrongful termination, discrimination, retaliation, harassment, failure to prevent harassment or

As the same may be increased only in accordance with Paragraph 17.

discrimination or under the Fair Employment and Housing Act, California Family Rights Act and/or any other applicable state or federal laws.

- K. "Gross Settlement Amount" means a non-reversionary fund in the sum of Four Hundred Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents (\$475,000.00),¹ which shall be paid by Defendant, and from which all payments for the Individual Settlement Payments to Participating Class Members, Individual PAGA Payments to Aggrieved Employees and the Court-approved amounts for attorneys' fees and reimbursement of litigation costs and expenses to Class Counsel, Settlement Administration Costs, a Service Award to Plaintiff, and the LWDA Payment for resolution of Plaintiff's cause of action for civil penalties under the Labor Code Private Attorneys' General Act, codified at Labor Code Section 2698, *et seq.* ("PAGA"), interest and certain taxes shall be paid. It expressly excludes Employer Taxes, which shall be paid by Defendant separate and apart from the Gross Settlement Amount.
- L. "Individual PAGA Payment" means a payment to an Aggrieved Employee of his or her share of the PAGA Payment.
- M. "Individual Settlement Payment" means a payment to a Participating Class Member of his or her net share of the Net Settlement Amount, excluding any PAGA Payment to which he or she may be entitled if he or she is also an Aggrieved Employee.
- N. "Individual Settlement Share" means the gross amount of the Net Settlement Amount that a Participating Class Member is projected to receive based on the number of Workweeks that he or she worked as a Settlement Class Member during the Class Period if he or she does not submit a timely and valid Request for Exclusion, excluding any PAGA Payment to which he or she may be entitled if he or she is also an Aggrieved Employee.
- O. "LWDA Payment" means the payment to the LWDA for its seventy-five percent (75%) share of the total amount allocated toward penalties under the PAGA, which is to be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount. The Parties have agreed that Twenty Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents (\$20,000.00) shall be allocated toward PAGA penalties ("PAGA Payment"), of which Fifteen Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents (\$15,000.00) will be paid to the LWDA (*i.e.*, the

LWDA Payment) and Five Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents (\$5,000.00) will remain a part of the Net Settlement Amount for payment to Aggrieved Employees on a *pro rata* basis, based on the Workweeks worked for Defendant as a non-exempt, hourly-paid employee in California in the PAGA Period.

- P. "Net Settlement Amount" means the portion of the Gross Settlement Amount that is available for distribution to Participating Class Members after deductions for the Courtapproved allocations for Settlement Administration Costs, a Service Award to Plaintiff, an award of attorneys' fees, reimbursement of litigation costs and expenses to Class Counsel, and the LWDA Payment. It excludes the PAGA Payment (which is subsumed within the LWDA Payment).
- Q. "Operative Complaint or "Complaint" means the First Amended Complaint that was filed with the Court in *Ramirez v. SeaWin, Inc., et al.*, filed in Los Angeles County Superior Court, Case No. 21STCV22026.
- **R.** "PAGA Payment" is the \$5,000.00 payment payable to Aggrieved Employees in addition to their Individual Settlement Share if they do not opt out of the Settlement.
- S. "PAGA Period" means the period from May 3, 2020 through the end of the Class Period.
- T. "Participating Class Members" means all Settlement Class Members who do not submit a timely and valid Request for Exclusion.
- U. "Participating Individual Settlement Share" means the gross amount of the Net Settlement Amount that a Participating Class Member is eligible to receive based on the number of Workweeks that he or she worked as a Settlement Class Member during the Class Period once all opt-outs have been factored in, excluding any Individual PAGA Payment to which he or she may be entitled if he or she is also an Aggrieved Employee.
  - V. "Parties" shall refer to Plaintiff and Defendant collectively.
  - W. "Plaintiff" shall refer to Plaintiff Ruben Ramirez.
- X. "Preliminary Approval Date" means the date on which the Court enters an Order granting preliminary approval of the Settlement.

Y. "Released Parties" shall mean Defendant SeaWin, Inc. as well as each of SeaWin, Inc.'s present and former respective affiliates, parents, subsidiaries, predecessors, successors, divisions, joint ventures and assigns, and each of these entities' past or present directors, officers, employees, partners, members, principals, agents, insurers, shareholders, attorneys, and personal or legal representatives. "Released Parties" expressly excludes Best International Trading, Inc. and All Good Foods, Inc.

Z. "Response Deadline" means the deadline for Settlement Class Members to mail any Requests for Exclusion, Objections, or Workweek Disputes to the Settlement Administrator, which is forty-five (45) calendar days from the date that the Class Notice is first mailed in English and Spanish by the Settlement Administrator, unless a Class Members' notice is re-mailed. In such an instance, the Response Deadline shall be fourteen (14) calendar days beyond the forty-five (45) calendar days otherwise provided in the Class Notice, in which to postmark a Request for Exclusion, Workweek Dispute or Objection. The date of the postmark shall be the exclusive means for determining whether a Request for Exclusion, Objection, or Workweek Dispute was submitted by the Response Deadline (the Settlement Administrator shall inform the Class Member of the extended deadline with the re-mailed Class Notice).

**AA.** "Request for Exclusion" means a written request to be excluded from the Settlement Class pursuant to Section 9.C below.

- **BB.** "Service Award" means monetary amount to be paid to Plaintiff of up to Seven Thousand, Five Hundred Dollars and Zero Cents (\$7,500.00) which, subject to Court approval, will be paid out of the Gross Settlement Amount.
- CC. "Settlement Administration Costs" means all costs incurred by the Settlement Administrator in administration of the Settlement, including, but not limited to, translating the Class Notice to Spanish, the distribution of the Class Notice to the Settlement Class in English and Spanish, calculating Individual Settlement Shares and Individual Settlement Payments and associated taxes and withholdings, providing declarations, generating Individual Settlement Payment checks and related tax reporting forms, doing administrative work related to unclaimed checks, transmitting payment to Class Counsel for the Court-approved amounts for attorneys'

fees and reimbursement of litigation costs and expenses, to Plaintiff for his Service Award, and to the LWDA from the LWDA Payment, providing weekly reports of opt-outs, objections and related information, and any other actions of the Settlement Administrator as set forth in this Agreement, all pursuant to the terms of this Agreement. The Settlement Administration Costs are estimated not to exceed \$7,950. If the actual amount of the Settlement Administration Costs is less than \$7,950, the difference between \$7,950 and the actual Settlement Administration Costs shall be a part of the Net Settlement Amount. If the Settlement Administration Costs exceed \$7,950, then such excess will be paid solely from the Gross Settlement Amount and Defendant will not be responsible for paying any additional funds in order to pay these additional costs.

- **DD.** "Settlement Administrator" means the Third-Party Administrator chosen to be responsible for the administration of the Settlement including, without limitation, translating the Class Notice in Spanish, the distribution of the Individual Settlement Payments to be made by Defendant from the Gross Settlement Amount and related matters under this Agreement.
- EE. "Settlement Class", "Settlement Class Members" or "Class Members" means all current and former non-exempt, hourly-paid employees who worked in California for Defendant at any time during the Class Period.
- **FF.** "Workweek" means the number of weeks that a Settlement Class Member was employed by Defendant in a non-exempt, hourly-paid position during the Class Period in California, based on hire dates, re-hire dates (as applicable) and termination dates (as applicable).

# 2. BACKGROUND

- A. On May 3, 2021, Plaintiff filed with the Labor and Workforce Development Agency ("LWDA") and served on Defendant a notice under Labor Code section 2699.3 (the "PAGA Notice") stating Plaintiff intended to serve as a proxy of the LWDA to recover civil penalties for Aggrieved Employees. The PAGA Notice includes violations of law pled in the Class Action, in addition to a request for penalties for failure to comply with Labor Code sections 204, 227.3, 246, 404, 432, 1174, 1198.5, and 2810.5.
- **B.** On June 11, 2021, Plaintiff filed a putative wage-and-hour Class Action Complaint in the Superior Court of California for the County of Los Angeles, Case Number

21STCV22026 (the "Action"). Plaintiff alleged that during the Class Period, with respect to Plaintiff and the Settlement Class Members, Defendant, *inter alia*, failed to pay overtime and minimum wages; failed to provide complaint meal and rest periods or compensation in lieu thereof; waiting time penalties; wage statement violations; violated Labor Code section 2802; failed to timely pay wages; and engaged in unfair competition based on the alleged Labor Code violations, which was amended to include Plaintiff's representative allegations and claims for civil penalties under PAGA on August 16, 2021.

- C. Shortly after the filing of this Action, the Parties agreed to exchange informal discovery and attend an early mediation. Prior to mediation, Class Counsel was provided with, among other things: (1) the number of current and former hourly-paid, non-exempt employees of Defendant SeaWin working in California during the Class Period; (2) the number of current and former hourly-paid, non-exempt employees of Defendant SeaWin working in California during the PAGA Period; (3) hire dates and separation dates (as applicable) for the one-hundred fifty-nine (159) Class Members working for Defendant during the Class Period along with information regarding what department they worked in; (4) a sampling of time and payroll records for Class Members; (5) all relevant wage and hour policies in effect during the Class Period; (6) class contact information for Class Members after administration of a *Belaire-West* opt-out notice; and (7) Plaintiff's personnel file.
- **D.** On August 30, 2022, the Parties participated in a mediation before Lynn Frank, Esq., a well-regarded mediator experienced in mediating complex civil disputes. With the aid of the mediator's evaluation, the Parties reached the Settlement to resolve the Action shortly after mediation.
- E. Class Counsel has conducted significant investigation of the law and facts relating to the claims asserted in the Action and the PAGA Notice, and have concluded that that the Settlement set forth herein is fair, reasonable, adequate, and in the best interests of the Settlement Class, taking into account the sharply contested issues involved, the expense and time necessary to litigate the Action through trial and any appeals, the risks and costs of further litigation of the Action, the risk of an adverse outcome, the uncertainties of complex litigation, the information

learned through informal discovery regarding Plaintiff's allegations, and the substantial benefits to be received by the Settlement Class Members.

- F. Defendant has concluded that, because of the substantial expense of defending against the Action, the length of time necessary to resolve the issues presented herein, and the inconvenience involved, and the concomitant disruption to its business operations, it is in Defendant's best interest to accept the terms of this Agreement. Defendant denies each of the allegations and claims asserted against it in the Action. However, Defendant nevertheless desires to settle the Action for the purpose of avoiding the burden, expense and uncertainty of continuing litigation and for the purpose of putting to rest the controversies engendered by the Action.
- **G.** This Agreement is intended to and does effectuate the full, final, and complete resolution of all Class Released Claims of Plaintiff and Participating Class Members, and all PAGA Released Claims of Plaintiff and, to the extent permitted by law, of the State of California and Aggrieved Employees.

# 3. <u>JURISDICTION</u>

The Court has jurisdiction over the Parties and the subject matter of the Action. The Action includes claims that, if proven, would authorize the Court to grant relief pursuant to the applicable statutes. After the Court has granted Final Approval of the Settlement and entered judgment, the Court shall retain jurisdiction over the Parties to enforce the terms of the judgment pursuant to California Rule of Court, rule 3.769, subdivision (h).

# 4. STIPULATION OF CLASS CERTIFICATION

The Parties stipulate to the certification of the Settlement Class under this Agreement for purposes of settlement only.

# 5. MOTIONS FOR APPROVAL OF SETTLEMENT

The Parties agree to jointly prepare and file a motion for preliminary approval ("Motion for Preliminary Approval") that complies with the Court's current checklist for Preliminary Approvals.

5.1 <u>Defendant's Declaration in Support of Preliminary Approval.</u> Within fourteen (14) calendar days of the full execution of this Agreement, Defendant shall prepare and deliver

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to Class Counsel a signed declaration from Defendant and Defense Counsel disclosing all facts relevant to any action or potential conflicts of interest with the Administrator and the Cy Pres Recipient. In their Declarations, Defendant and Defense Counsel 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.

- 5.2 <u>Plaintiff's Responsibilities.</u> Plaintiff will prepare and deliver to Defense Counsel 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; (ii) a draft proposed Order Granting Preliminary Approval; (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/or the proposed Cy Pres; 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, the Administrator and/or the proposed Cy Pres; (v) a signed declaration from each Class Counsel firm attesting to its competency to represent the Class Members; and all facts relevant to any actual or potential conflict of interest with Class Members, the Administrator and/or the Cy Pres Recipient; (vi) a redlined version of the parties' Agreement showing all modifications made to the Model Agreement ready for filing with the Court; In their Declarations, Plaintiff and Class Counsel 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.
- 5.3 <u>Responsibilities of Counsel</u>. Class Counsel and Defense Counsel are jointly responsible for expeditiously finalizing and filing the Motion for Preliminary Approval 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 Order to the Settlement Administrator.

5.4 <u>Duty to Cooperate.</u> 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.

# 6. STATEMENT OF NO ADMISSION

Defendant denies any wrongdoing of any sort and further denies any liability to Plaintiff, the Settlement Class and Aggrieved Employees with respect to any claims or allegations asserted in the Action. This Agreement shall not be deemed an admission by Defendant of any claims or allegations asserted in the Action. Except as set forth elsewhere herein, in the event that this Agreement is not approved by the Court, or any appellate court, is terminated, or otherwise fails to be enforceable, Plaintiff will not be deemed to have waived, limited or affected in any way any claims, rights or remedies, or defenses in the Action, and Defendant will not be deemed to have waived, limited, or affected in any way any of its objections or defenses in the Action. The Parties shall be restored to their respective positions in the Action prior to the entry of this Settlement, including that Plaintiff shall have the express right to re-name Best International Trading, Inc. and All Good Foods, Inc. as named defendants with all claims and allegations relating back the original filing of this Action.

# 7. <u>RELEASE OF CLAIMS</u>

# A. Release by All Participating Class Members.

Effective only upon the entry of an Order granting Final Approval of the Settlement, entry of Judgment, and payment by Defendant to the Settlement Administrator of the full Gross Settlement Amount and Employer's Taxes necessary to effectuate the Settlement, Plaintiff and

all Participating Class Members release the Released Parties of all claims against the Released Parties asserted in the Operative Complaint, or any and all claims that may be asserted against the Released Parties based on the factual allegations in the Operative Complaint, as follows: For Participating Class Members, the release includes, but is not limited to, for the duration of the Class Period: (a) all claims for failure to pay minimum wages; (b) all claims for failure to pay overtime wages; (c) all claims for failure to provide compliant meal and rest periods or compensation in lieu thereof; (d) failure to timely pay all wages due upon termination or resignation; (e) all claims for non-compliant wage statements; (f) failure to reimburse business expenses; and (g) all claims asserted through California Business & Professions Code § 17200 et seq. arising out of the Labor Code violations referenced in the Operative Complaint (the "Class Released Claims"). 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. Participating Class Members also do not

B. Release by All Aggrieved Employees

For Aggrieved Employees, the release includes, for the duration of the PAGA Period, all claims asserted in the PAGA Notice submitted to the LWDA and alleged in the Operative Complaint, for PAGA civil penalties, including all claims for civil penalties under PAGA arising out of Labor Code Sections 210, 226.3, 558, 1174.5, 1197.1, and 2699 based on the factual allegations and Labor Code sections alleged to have been violated in the PAGA Notice and Operative Complaint, which includes, without limitation, Labor Code sections 201-203, 210, 226, 226.7, 227.3, 246, 404, 432, 510, 512, 1174, 1194, 1194.2, 1197, 1198.5, 2802, and 2810.5, unlawful restraint on trade, unlawful restraint of legal activities under Labor Code section 98.6(k), failure to pay wages pursuant to Labor Code section 204, and retaliation in violation of Labor Code section 1102.5 (the "PAGA Released Claims"). The Class Released Claims and PAGA Released Claims shall be referred to herein as the "Released Claims".

release any claims against Best International Trading, Inc. and/or All Good Foods, Inc.

# C. General Release.

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Effective only upon the entry of an Order granting Final Approval of the Settlement, entry of Judgment, and payment by Defendant to the Settlement Administrator of the full Gross Settlement Amount and Employers' Taxes necessary to effectuate the Settlement, in addition to the Released Claims, Plaintiff makes the additional following General Release: Plaintiff releases the Released Parties from all claims, demands, rights, liabilities and causes of action of every nature and description whatsoever, known or unknown, asserted or that might have been asserted, whether in tort, contract, or for violation of any state or federal statute, rule, law or regulation arising out of, relating to, or in connection with any act or omission of the Released Parties through the date of full execution of this Agreement in connection with his employment or the termination thereof. Plaintiff's release does not extend to any claim or actions to enforce this Agreement, or to any 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. 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. With respect to the General Release, Plaintiff stipulates and agrees that, through the Final Approval Date, Plaintiff shall be deemed to have, and by operation of the Final Judgment and payment to the Settlement Administrator shall have, expressly waived and relinquished, to the fullest extent permitted by law, the provisions, rights and benefits of Section 1542 of the California Civil Code, or any other similar provision under federal or state law, which provides:

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.

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# 9. NOTICE, WEEKLY PAY PERIOD DISPUTE, OBJECTION, AND EXCLUSION PROCESS

Plaintiff and Defendant, through their respective counsel, have selected Phoenix

Settlement Administrators to administer the Settlement, which includes but is not limited to

translating the Class Notice to Spanish, distributing and responding to inquiries about the Class

Notice and calculating all amounts to be paid from the Gross Settlement Amount. Charges and

expenses of the Settlement Administrator, currently estimated to be \$7,950 will be paid from the

Gross Settlement Amount. If the actual amount of the Settlement Administration Costs is less

than \$7,950, the difference between \$7,950 and the actual Settlement Administration Costs shall

be a part of the Net Settlement Amount. If the Settlement Administration Costs exceed \$7,950,

then such excess will be paid solely from the Gross Settlement Amount and Defendant will not

be responsible for paying any additional funds in order to pay these additional costs.

### A. Notice to the Settlement Class Members.

(1) Within fifteen (15) calendar days after the Preliminary Approval Date, Defendant's Counsel shall provide the Settlement Administrator, in Microsoft Excel format, with information with respect to each Settlement Class Member, including his or her: (1) name, last known address(es) and last known telephone number(s) currently in Defendant's possession, custody, or control; (2) Social Security Number in Defendant's possession, custody, or control; and (3) the hire dates, re-hire dates (if applicable) and termination dates (if applicable) for each Settlement Class Member ("Class List"). The Settlement Administrator shall perform an address search using the United States Postal Service National Change of Address ("NCOA") database and update the addresses contained on the Class List with the newly found addresses, if any. Using best efforts to perform as soon as possible, and in no event later than fourteen (14) calendar days of receiving the Class List from Defendant, the Settlement Administrator shall mail the Class Notice in English and Spanish to the Settlement Class Members via first-class regular U.S. Mail using the most current mailing address information available. The Settlement Administrator shall maintain a list with names and all addresses to which notice was given, and digital copies

- (3) If a Class Notice from the initial notice mailing is returned as undeliverable, the Settlement Administrator will attempt to obtain a current address for the Settlement Class Member to whom the returned Class Notice had been mailed, within three (3) calendar days of receipt of the returned Class Notice, by: (1) contacting the Settlement Class Member by phone, if possible, and (2) undertaking skip tracing. If the Settlement Administrator is successful in obtaining a new address, it will promptly re-mail the Class Notice to the Settlement Class Member within three (3) business days. Further, any Class Notices that are returned to the Settlement Administrator with a forwarding address before the Response Deadline shall be promptly re-mailed to the forwarding address affixed thereto within three (3) business days by the Settlement Administrator.
- (4) No later than seven (7) calendar days from the Response Deadline, the Settlement Administrator shall provide counsel for the Parties with a declaration attesting to the completion of the notice process, including the number of attempts to obtain valid mailing addresses for and re-sending of any returned Class Notices, as well as the identities, number of, and copies of all Requests for Exclusion and objections/comments received by the Settlement Administrator.

### B. Objections.

Only Participating Class Members may object or comment regarding the Settlement. In order for any Settlement Class Member to object to this Settlement in writing, or any term of it, he or she must do so by mailing a written objection to the Settlement Administrator at the address or phone number provided on the Class Notice no later than the Response Deadline (or the extended Response Deadline if the Class Notice was re-mailed). The Settlement Administrator shall email a copy of the objection forthwith to Class Counsel and Defendant's counsel and attach each objection, if any, to the declaration that Class Counsel files with the Court in support of the Motion for Final Approval. The objection should set forth in writing: (1) the Objector's name; (2) the Objector's address; (3) the last four digits of the Objector's Social Security Number; (4) the Objector's signature; (5) a statement of whether the Objector plans to appear at the Final Approval Hearing; and (6) the reason(s) for the Objection, along with whatever legal authority,

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if any, the Objector asserts in support of the Objection. If a Settlement Class Member objects to the Settlement, the Settlement Class Member will remain a member of the Settlement Class and if the Court approves this Agreement, the Settlement Class Member will be bound by the terms of the Settlement in the same way and to the same extent as a Settlement Class Member who does not object. The date of mailing of the Class Notice to the objecting Settlement Class Member shall be conclusively determined according to the records of the Settlement Administrator. Settlement Class Members need not object in writing to be heard at the Final Approval Hearing; they may object or comment in person at the hearing at their own expense. Class Counsel and Defendant's Counsel may respond to any objection lodged with the Court up to five (5) court days before the Final Approval Hearing.

# C. Requesting Exclusion.

Any Settlement Class Member may request exclusion from (i.e., "opt out" of) the Settlement by mailing a written request to be excluded from the Settlement ("Request for Exclusion") to the Settlement Administrator, postmarked on or before the Response Deadline (or the extended Response Deadline if the Class Notice is re-mailed). To be valid, a Request for Exclusion must include: (1) the Class Member's name; (2) the Class Member's Social Security Number; (3) the Class Member's signature; and (4) the following statement or something to its effect: "Please exclude me from the Settlement Class in the Ruben Ramirez v. SeaWin, Inc., et al. matter" or any statement of similar meaning standing for the proposition that the Class Member does not wish to participate in the Settlement. The Settlement Administrator shall immediately provide copies of all Requests for Exclusion to Class Counsel and Defendant's Counsel and shall report the Requests for Exclusions that it receives, to the Court, in its declaration to be provided in advance of the Final Approval Hearing. Any Settlement Class Member who requests exclusion using this procedure will not be entitled to receive any payment from the Settlement and will not be bound by the Settlement Agreement or have any right to object to, appeal, or comment on the Settlement. Any Settlement Class Member who does not opt out of the Settlement by submitting a timely and valid Request for Exclusion will be bound by all terms of the Settlement, including those pertaining to the Released Claims, as well as any

Judgment that may be entered by the Court if Final Approval of the Settlement is granted. A Settlement Class Member cannot submit both a Request for Exclusion and an objection. If a Settlement Class Member submits an objection and a Request for Exclusion, the Request for Exclusion will control and the objection will be void. Settlement Class Members who worked during the PAGA Period and who submit a valid Request for Exclusion will still be deemed Aggrieved Employees, will still receive their Individual PAGA Payment, and will be bound by the release encompassed in the PAGA Released Claims.

# D. Disputes Regarding Settlement Class Members' Workweeks Data.

Class Members will have an opportunity to dispute the information provided in their Class Notice. To the extent Class Members dispute the number of Workweeks to which they have been credited, Class Members may produce evidence to the Settlement Administrator showing that such information is inaccurate. Absent evidence rebutting Defendant's records, Defendant's records will be presumed determinative. However, if a Class Member produces evidence to the contrary, the Settlement Administrator will evaluate the evidence submitted by the Class Member and will make the final decision as to the number of Workweeks that should be applied. All such disputes are to be resolved not later than ten (10) calendar days after the Response Deadline.

# E. Extension of Response Deadline for Remailing

If a Class Member's notice is re-mailed, the Class Member shall have fourteen (14) calendar days beyond the forty-five (45) calendar days otherwise provided in the Class Notice in which to postmark a Request for Exclusion, written Objection or to dispute their attributed workweek count in the Class Period and/or PAGA Period.

# F. Cooperation

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 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 fourteen (14) days after receipt of Class Notice, or the deadline dates in the Class Notice, which ever are later.

# 10. <u>INDIVIDUAL SETTLEMENT PAYMENTS AND INDIVIDUAL PAGA</u> PAYMENTS TO PARTICIPATING CLASS MEMBERS

Individual Settlement Payments will be calculated and distributed to Participating Class Members from the Net Settlement Amount on a *pro rata* basis, based on the Participating Class Members' respective number of Workweeks during the Class Period. Individual PAGA Payments to Aggrieved Employees will be calculated and distributed to Aggrieved Employees from the PAGA Payment on a *pro rata* basis based on Aggrieved Employees' respective number of Workweeks during the PAGA Period. Specific calculations of the Individual Settlement Shares and Individual PAGA Payments to Aggrieved Employees will be made as follows:

- A. The Settlement Administrator will determine the total number of Workweeks worked by each Settlement Class Member during the Class Period ("Class Member's Workweeks"), as well as the aggregate number of Workweeks worked by all Settlement Class Members during the Class Period ("Class Workweeks"). Additionally, the Settlement Administrator will determine the total number of Workweeks worked by each Aggrieved Employee during the PAGA Period ("Aggrieved Employee's Workweeks"), as well as the aggregate number of Workweeks worked by all Aggrieved Employees during the PAGA Period ("PAGA Workweeks").
- **B.** To determine each Settlement Class Member's Individual Settlement Share, the Settlement Administrator will use the following formula: Individual Settlement Share = (Settlement Class Member's Workweeks ÷ Class Workweeks) × Net Settlement Amount.
- C. To determine each Participating Class Member's Participating Individual Settlement Share, the Settlement Administrator will determine the aggregate number of Workweeks worked by all Participating Class Members during the Class Period ("Participating Class Workweeks") and use the following formula: Individual Settlement Share =

(Participating Class Member's Workweeks ÷ Participating Class Workweeks) × Net Settlement Amount.

- **D.** The net amount of the Participating Individual Settlement Share is to be paid out to Participating Class Members by way of check and is referred to as "Individual Settlement Payment(s)".
- **E.** To determine each Aggrieved Employee's Individual PAGA Payment, the Settlement Administrator will use the following formula: Aggrieved Employee's Individual PAGA Payment = ([Aggrieved Employee's Workweeks ÷ PAGA Workweeks] x \$5,000.00) (the "PAGA Payment").
- F. Individual Settlement Payments and Individual PAGA Payments shall be paid to Participating Class Members and/or Aggrieved Employees by way of check. When a Participating Class Member is also an Aggrieved Employee, one check may be issued that aggregates both the Individual Settlement Payment and the Individual PAGA Payment.

# 11. <u>DISTRIBUTION OF PAYMENTS</u>

# A. Distribution of Individual Settlement Payments.

Participating Class Members will receive an Individual Settlement Payment. All Aggrieved Employees, regardless of whether they submit a valid Request for Exclusion or not, will receive their Individual PAGA Payment. Individual Settlement Payment checks and Individual PAGA Payment checks shall remain valid and negotiable for one hundred and eighty (180) calendar days after the date of their issuance. Within seven (7) calendar days after expiration of the 180-day period, any checks from this distribution shall be canceled and the funds associated with such checks shall be considered unpaid, unclaimed, or abandoned cash residue pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure § 384 ("Unpaid Residue"). The Unpaid Residue plus any interest, if any, as provided in California Code of Civil Procedure § 384, shall be transmitted as follows: to Legal Aid at Work, 180 Montgomery Street, Suite 600, San Francisco, California 94104, for use in Los Angeles County. The Settlement Administrator shall prepare a report regarding the distribution plan pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure § 384 and the report shall be presented to the Court by Class Counsel along with a

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proposed amended judgment that is consistent with the provisions of California Code of Civil Procedure § 384.

#### В. **Funding of Settlement.**

No later than fourteen (14) calendar days after the Final Approval Date, Defendant shall deposit the Gross Settlement Amount—Four Hundred and Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents (\$475,000.00)—unless the same is escalated pursuant to Paragraph 17 below (and in such event, the entire escalated gross settlement amount), for deposit in an interest-bearing qualified settlement account ("QSA") with an FDIC insured banking institution, to the Settlement Administrator for distribution in accordance with this Agreement and the Court's orders and subject to the conditions described herein. In addition, Defendant shall deposit the related Employer's Taxes pursuant to Internal Revenue Code section 1.468B 1 within seven (7) calendar days of receiving the final calculation of such amount from the Settlement Administrator.

Individual Settlement Payments and Individual PAGA Payments shall be paid exclusively from the QSA, pursuant to the settlement formula set forth herein. Payments from the QSA shall be made for (1) the Service Award to Plaintiff as specified in this Agreement and approved by the Court; (2) the Attorneys' Fees and Cost Award to be paid to Class Counsel, as specified in this Agreement and approved by the Court; (3) the Settlement Administrator Costs, as specified in this Agreement and approved by the Court; and (4) the LWDA Payment, as specified in this Agreement, \$5,000 shall be allocated to payment to Aggrieved Employees of Individual PAGA Payments as set forth herein. The balance and any accrued interest thereon remaining shall constitute the Net Settlement Amount from which Individual Settlement Payments shall be made to Participating Class Members, less applicable taxes and withholdings. All interest accrued shall be for the benefit of Participating Class Members and distributed on a pro rata basis.

#### C. Time for Distribution.

No more than fourteen (14) calendar days after payment of the full Gross Settlement Amount (as the same may be increased to in accordance with Paragraph 17) by Defendant, as well as Employer Taxes, the Settlement Administrator shall distribute all payments due under

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the Settlement, including the Individual Settlement Payments to Participating Class Members and Individual PAGA Payments to Aggrieved Employees, as well as the Court-approved payments for the Service Award to Plaintiff, attorneys' fees and litigation costs and expenses to Class Counsel, administration costs to the Settlement Administrator, and the LWDA Payment to the LWDA.

# 12. <u>ATTORNEYS' FEES AND LITIGATION COSTS</u>

Class Counsel shall apply for, and Defendant shall not oppose, an award of attorneys' fees of up to thirty-five percent (35%) of the Gross Settlement Amount, which, unless increased pursuant to Paragraph 17, shall amount to One Hundred Sixty-Six Thousand Two Hundred Fifty Dollars and Zero Cents (\$166,250.00). Class Counsel shall further apply for, and Defendant shall not oppose, an application or motion by Class Counsel for reimbursement of actual costs associated with Class Counsel's prosecution of this matter as set forth by declaration testimony in an amount up to Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents (\$25,000.00). Awards of attorneys' fees and costs shall be paid out of the Gross Settlement Amount, for all past and future attorneys' fees and costs necessary to prosecute, settle, and obtain Final Approval of the settlement in the Action. The "future" aspect of the amounts stated herein includes, without limitation, all time and expenses expended by Class Counsel (including any appeals therein), except for any matters that arise from Defendant's failure to materially comply with the terms of this Agreement. There will be no additional charge of any kind to either the Settlement Class Members or request for additional consideration from Defendant for such work unless, in the event of a material breach of this Agreement by Defendant, Plaintiff is required to move the Court for enforcement of this Agreement. Should the Court approve attorneys' fees and/or litigation costs and expenses in amounts that are less than the amounts provided for herein, then the unapproved portion(s) shall be a part of the Net Settlement Amount.

# 13. SERVICE AWARD TO PLAINTIFF

Plaintiff shall seek, and Defendant shall not oppose, a Service Award in an amount not to exceed Seven Thousand, Five Hundred Dollars and Zero Cents (\$7,500.00) for participation in and assistance with the Action. Any Service Award awarded to Plaintiff shall be paid from the

# 14. TAXATION AND ALLOCATION

shall be a part of the Net Settlement Amount.

A. Each Individual Settlement Share shall be allocated as follows: 20% as wages (to be reported on an IRS Form W2); and 80% as interest and penalties (to be reported on an IRS Form 1099). The Individual PAGA Payments to the Aggrieved Employees shall be allocated entirely as penalties (to be reported on an IRS Form 1099). The Parties agree that the employee's share of taxes and withholdings with respect to the wage-portion of the Individual Settlement Share will be withheld from the Individual Settlement Share in order to yield the Individual Settlement Payment. The amount of federal income tax withholding will be based upon a flat withholding rate for supplemental wage payments in accordance with Treas. Reg. § 31.3402(g)-1(a)(2) as amended or supplemented. Income tax withholding will also be made pursuant to applicable state and/or local withholding codes or regulations.

Gross Settlement Amount and shall be reported on an IRS Form 1099. If the Court approves a

Service Award to Plaintiff in less than the amounts sought herein, then the unapproved portion(s)

- **B.** Forms W-2 and/or Forms 1099 will be distributed by the Settlement Administrator at times and in the manner required by the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (the "Code") and consistent with this Agreement. If the Code, the regulations promulgated thereunder, or other applicable tax law, is changed after the date of this Agreement, the processes set forth in this Section may be modified in a manner to bring Defendant into compliance with any such changes.
- C. All Employer Taxes shall be paid by Defendant separate, apart and above from the Gross Settlement Amount. Defendant shall remain liable to pay the employer's share of payroll taxes as described above.
- **D.** Neither Counsel for Plaintiff nor Defendant intend anything contained in this Agreement to constitute advice regarding taxes or taxability, nor shall anything in this Agreement be relied upon as such within the meaning of United States Treasury Department Circular 230 (31 C.F.R. Part 10, as amended) or otherwise.

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# 16. <u>COURT APPROVAL</u>

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# 17. <u>INCREASE IN WORKWEEKS</u>

and which control in such an event.

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(6,500) Workweeks worked by one hundred fifty-nine (159) Settlement Class Members during the Class Period. In the event the number of Workweeks worked increases by more than 10%, or 650 Workweeks worked (i.e., more than 7,150 WorkWeeks), then the Gross Settlement Amount shall be increased proportionally by the Workweeks in excess of 7,150 (6,500).

nine (159) Settlement Class Members and that there are no more than six thousand five hundred

# 15. PRIVATE ATTORNEYS' GENERAL ACT ALLOCATION

The Parties agree to allocate Twenty Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents (\$20,000.00) of the Gross Settlement Amount toward PAGA penalties. Pursuant to the PAGA, seventy-five percent (75%) of the amount allocated toward PAGA (\$15,000.00) will be paid to the LWDA (*i.e.*, the LWDA Payment), and twenty-five percent (25%) of the amount allocated toward PAGA (\$5,000.00) shall be deemed the "PAGA Payment" and distributed to Aggrieved Employees on a *pro rata* basis based upon their respective Workweeks worked during the PAGA Period (*i.e.*, the Individual PAGA Payments).

This Agreement is contingent upon an order by the Court granting Final Approval of the

Settlement, and that the LWDA does not intervene and/or object to the Settlement. In the event

it becomes impossible to secure approval of the Settlement by the Court and the LWDA, the

Parties shall be restored to their respective positions in the Action prior to entry of this Settlement,

including that Plaintiff shall have the express right to re-name Best International Trading, Inc.

and All Good Foods, Inc. as named defendants with all claims and allegations relating back the

original filing of this Action. If this Settlement Agreement is voided, not approved by the Court

or approval is reversed on appeal, it shall have no force or effect and no Party shall be bound by

its terms except to the extent: (a) the Court reserves any authority to issue any appropriate orders

when denying approval; and/or (b) there are any terms and conditions in this Settlement

Agreement specifically stated to survive the Settlement Agreement being voided or not approved,

Defendant represents and warrants that there are no more than one hundred and fifty-

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Workweeks + 650 Workweeks) multiplied by the Workweek value. The Workweek Value shall be calculated by dividing the Gross Settlement Amount (\$475,000.00) by 6,500. The Parties agree that the Workweek Value amounts to \$73.08 (\$475,000.00 / 6,500 workweeks). Thus, for example, should there be 8,000 workweeks in the Class Period, then the Gross Settlement Amount shall be increased by \$62,118.00. (8,000 workweeks – 7,150 workweeks x \$73.08.)

# 18. <u>VOIDING OF SETTLEMENT AND RETURN OF GROSS SETTLEMENT</u> <u>AMOUNT AND EMPLOYERS' TAXES</u>

Defendant have the option of voiding this Agreement within ten (10) calendar days after expiration of the opt-out period if seven and one-half percent (7.5%) of the Settlement Class members opt out of the Settlement, which option shall be exercised by providing written notice to Class Counsel and the Settlement Administrator no later than ten (10) calendar days after expiration of the opt-out period. If the foregoing occurs, this Agreement shall be null and void ab initio, no Party shall be bound by the terms thereof, and this Agreement shall not be admissible or offered into evidence in the litigation or any other action for any purpose whatsoever, and any order or judgment entered by the Court in furtherance of this Agreement shall be treated as withdrawn or vacated by stipulation of the Parties. In such case, the Parties shall be returned to their respective positions as of the date immediately prior to the execution of this Agreement, including that Plaintiff shall have the express right to re-name Best International Trading, Inc. and All Good Foods, Inc. as named defendants with all claims and allegations relating back the original filing of this Action, the Parties shall proceed in all respects as if this Agreement had not been executed, Defendant shall have no obligation to make any payments to Plaintiff, Counsel for Plaintiff, the LWDA, or any Class Member, and the Settlement Administrator shall return the entirety of the Gross Settlement Amount and Employers' Taxes to Defendant within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of Defendant's written notice exercising the option to void this Agreement. In the event that Defendant voids the Settlement pursuant to the terms of this Agreement, any amounts owed to the Settlement Administrator shall be paid by Defendant solely.

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In addition to any duties set out herein, the Settlement Administrator shall provide notice of the Final Judgment entered in the Action by posting the same on its website for at least four (4) years after the Judgment becomes final.

# 20. <u>MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS</u>

# A. Interpretation of the Agreement.

This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between Plaintiff and Defendant with respect to its subject matter. Except as expressly provided herein, this Agreement has not been executed in reliance upon any other written or oral representations or terms, and no such extrinsic oral or written representations or terms shall modify, vary or contradict its terms. In entering into this Agreement, the Parties agree that this Agreement is to be construed according to its terms and may not be varied or contradicted by extrinsic evidence. The Agreement will be interpreted and enforced under the laws of the State of California, both in its procedural and substantive aspects, without regard to its conflict of law provisions. Any claim arising out of or relating to the Agreement, or the subject matter hereof, will be resolved solely and exclusively in the Superior Court of the State of California for the County of Los Angeles, and Plaintiff and Defendant hereby consent to the personal jurisdiction of the Court in the Action over it solely in connection therewith. Plaintiff, on Plaintiff's own behalf and on behalf of the Settlement Class, and Defendant participated in the negotiation and drafting of this Agreement and had available to them the advice and assistance of independent counsel. As such, neither Plaintiff nor Defendant may claim that any ambiguity in this Agreement should be construed against the other. The Agreement may be modified only by a writing signed by counsel for the Parties and approved by the Court.

# B. Further Cooperation.

Plaintiff, Defendant, and their respective attorneys shall proceed diligently to prepare and execute all documents, to seek the necessary approvals from the Court, and to do all things reasonably necessary to consummate the Settlement as expeditiously as possible. The Parties agree that they will not take any action inconsistent with this Agreement, including, without

limitation, encouraging Class Members to opt out of the Settlement. In the event the Court finds that any Party has taken actions inconsistent with the Settlement, including, without limitation, encouraging Class Members to opt out of the Settlement, the Court may take any corrective actions, including enjoining any Party from communicating regarding the Settlement on an *ex parte* basis, issuing (a) corrective notice(s), awarding monetary, issue, evidentiary and/or terminating sanctions against that Party, and/or enforcing this Agreement despite the presence of opt-outs and/or objections.

# C. Counterparts.

The Agreement may be executed in one or more actual or non-original counterparts, all of which will be considered one and the same instrument and all of which will be considered duplicate originals.

# D. Authority.

Each individual signing below warrants that he or she has the authority to execute this Agreement on behalf of the party for whom or which that individual signs.

# E. No Third-Party Beneficiaries.

Plaintiff, Participating Class Members, Aggrieved Employees, Class Counsel, and Defendant are direct beneficiaries of this Agreement, but there are no third-party beneficiaries.

# F. Deadlines Falling on Weekends or Holidays.

To the extent that any deadline set forth in this Agreement falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, that deadline shall be continued until the following business day.

# G. Severability.

In the event that one or more of the provisions contained in this Agreement shall for any reason be held invalid, illegal, or unenforceable in any respect, such invalidity, illegality, or unenforceability shall in no way effect any other provision if Defendant's Counsel and Class Counsel, on behalf of the Parties and the Settlement Class, mutually elect in writing to proceed as if such invalid, illegal, or unenforceable provision had never been included in this Agreement.

**H. 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.

I. 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: David D. Bibiyan (david@tomorrowlaw.com)
Diego Aviles (diego@tomorrowlaw.com)
Vedang Patel (vedang@tomorowlaw.com)
Bibiyan Law Group, P.C.
8484 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 500
Beverly Hills, California 90210

Jasmin K. Gill (jasmin@jkgilllaw.com)
J. Gill Law Group, P.C.
515 South Flower Street, Suite 1800
Los Angeles, California 90071

To Defendant: Gene Williams (gfwilliams@grsm.com)
Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani, LLP.
633 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, 52<sup>nd</sup> Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90071

J. 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, any with 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.

K. 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 identifying information (i.e., names, addresses, telephone numbers, and social security numbers) for Class Members from the Class Data received from Defendant except as to Plaintiff Ruben Ramirez himself unless, prior to the Court's discharge of the Settlement Administrator's obligation, Defendant makes a written request to Class Counsel for the return, rather than the destruction, of Class Data.

IT IS SO A	AGREED:		Docusigned by:
Dated:	1/18/2023	, 2022	RUBEN RAMIREZ Plaintiff and Class Representative
Dated:		, 2022	SEAWIN, INC. Defendant By: Its:

#### AGREED AS TO FORM ONLY:

Dated: 1/23/2023 , 2022 Vedang J. Patel

DAVID D. BIBIYAN
DIEGO AVILES ; Vedang J. Patel
Bibiyan Law Group, P.C.
Counsel for Plaintiff Ruben Ramirez

1/23/2023

Dated:

any conversation or other communication, before the filing of the Motion for Preliminary Approval, any with 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.

K. 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 identifying information (i.e., names, addresses, telephone numbers, and social security numbers) for Class Members from the Class Data received from Defendant except as to Plaintiff Ruben Ramirez himself unless, prior to the Court's discharge of the Settlement Administrator's obligation, Defendant makes a written request to Class Counsel for the return, rather than the destruction, of Class Data.

IT IS SO AGREED:			DocuSigned by:		
Dated:	1/18/2023	, 2022	RUBEN RAMIREZ Plaintiff and Class Representative		
Dated:	02/03/2023	, <del>2022</del>	Shirley Tran SEAWIN, INC. Defendant By:		
ACREEI	D AS TO FORM O	NI.V•	Its:		

DIEGO AVILES ; Vedang J. Patel

Vedang J. Patel

Bibiyan Law Group, P.C.

**Counsel for Plaintiff Ruben Ramirez** 

1 2 3 4	Dated: _	January 23, 2023	, 2022	JASMIN K. GILL J. Gill Law Group, P.C. Counsel for Plaintiff Ruben Ramirez
5	Dated:		2022	
6	Dated		, 2022	GENE FRANKLIN WILLIAMS
7				Gordon & Rees Scully Mansukhani Counsel for Defendant SeaWin, Inc.
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1 2	Dated: _	January 23, 2023	, 2022	JASMIN K. GILL
3				J. Gill Law Group, P.C.  Counsel for Plaintiff Ruben Ramirez
4				90 - 00
5	Dated: _	2/6/20	<u>23</u> , <del>2022</del> .	
6		<i>1</i>		GENE FRANKLIN WILLIAMS Gordon & Rees Scully Mansukhani
7				Counsel for Defendant SeaWin, Inc.
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# **EXHIBIT A**

JOINT STIPULATION OF CLASS ACTION AND REPRESENTATIVE ACTION SETTLEMENT

#### NOTICE OF PROPOSED CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT AND HEARING DATE FOR FINAL APPROVAL

Ruben Ramirez v. Sea Win, Inc., et al. (County of Los Angeles, California Superior Court Case No. 21STCV22026)

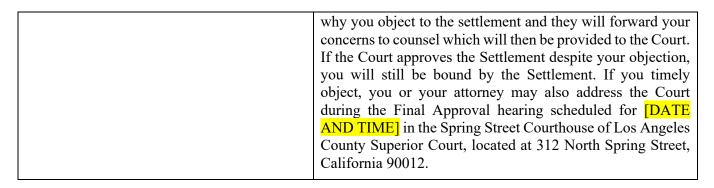
As a current or former non-exempt, hourly-paid California employee for Sea Win, Inc. you are entitled to receive money from a class action settlement.

Please read this Notice carefully. This Notice relates to a proposed settlement of class action litigation. If you are a Class Member, it contains important information about your right to receive a payment from the Settlement fund.

You have received this Notice of Class Action Settlement because the records of Sea Win, Inc. ("Defendant") show you are a "Class Member," and therefore entitled to a payment from this class action Settlement. Class Members are all persons currently or formerly employed by Defendant as non-exempt, hourly-paid employees in the State of California any time from June 11, 2017 through October 29, 2022.

- The settlement resolves a class action lawsuit, *Ramirez v. Sea Win, Inc., et al.* (the "Lawsuit"), which alleges Defendant: (1) failed to pay Class Members overtime wages, (2) failed to pay Class Members minimum wages, (3) failed to provide Class Members legally-compliant meal and rest breaks under California law, (4) failed to provide Class Members with legally compliant wage statements, (5) failed to timely pay all wages due upon termination or resignation, (6) failed to reimburse employees for business expenses, and (7) engaged in unfair business practices. Based on these and other alleged Labor Code violations, Plaintiff also seek penalties under the California Labor Code Private Attorney Generals Act ("PAGA") pursuant to Labor Code sections 210, 226.3, 558, 1174.5, 1197.1, and 2699.
- On \_\_\_\_\_\_, the Los Angeles County Superior Court granted preliminary approval of this class action Settlement and ordered that all Class Members be notified of the Settlement. The Court has not made any determination of the validity of the claims in the Lawsuit. Defendant vigorously denies the claims in the Lawsuit and contends that it fully complied with all applicable laws.

YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS AND OPTIONS IN THIS SETTLEMENT		
DO NOTHING AND RECEIVE PAYMENT	Get a payment, and give up your legal rights to pursue claims released by the settlement of the Lawsuit.	
OPT OUT OF THE SETTLEMENT	Exclude yourself from the Settlement, get no payment for settlement of the class claims, and retain your legal rights to individually pursue the class claims that would otherwise be released by the settlement of the Lawsuit. If you worked from May 3, 2020 through and including the end of the Class Period ("PAGA Period") as a non-exempt, hourly-paid employee of Defendant, as well, then you will be deemed an "Aggrieved Employee" and you will still receive your share of the proceeds available from the settlement of the PAGA Released Claims, defined below, (your "Individual PAGA Payment") regardless of whether you opt out of the class settlement.	
OBJECT TO THE SETTLEMENT	If you do not opt out, you may write to the Settlement Administrator, [Settlement Administrator's Name], about	



The Final Fairness and Approval Hearing on the adequacy, reasonableness, and fairness of the Settlement will be held at \_\_\_\_\_\_.m. on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, in the Spring Street Courthouse of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, located at 312 North Spring Street, Department 7, Los Angeles, California 90012. You are not required to attend the Hearing, but you are welcome to do so.

# Why Am I Receiving This Notice?

Defendant's records show that you currently work, or previously worked, for Defendant as a non-exempt, hourly-paid employee in the State of California any time from June 11, 2017 through October 29, 2022. You were sent this Class Notice because you have a right to know about a proposed settlement of a class action lawsuit, and about all of your options before the Court decides whether to finally approve the settlement. If the Court approves the settlement and then any objections and appeals are resolved, a "Settlement Administrator" appointed by the Court will make the payments described in this Notice. This Notice explains the Lawsuit, the settlement, your legal rights, what benefits are available, who is eligible for them, and how to get them.

## **What Is This Case About?**

Ruben Ramirez was a non-exempt, hourly-paid employee for Defendant in California. He is the "Plaintiff" in this case and is suing on behalf of himself and Class Members for Defendant's alleged failure to pay overtime wages, failure to pay minimum wages, failure to provide legally-compliant meal and rest breaks under California law, failure to provide compliant wage statements, failure to timely pay all wages due upon termination or resignation, failure to reimburse employees for business expenses, and engagement in unfair business practices. Based on these and other alleged Labor Code violations, Plaintiff also seeks to recover penalties under the California Labor Code Private Attorney Generals Act pursuant to Labor Code sections 210, 226.3, 558, 1174.5, 1197.1, and 2699.

Defendant denies all of the allegations made by Plaintiff and denies that it violated any law. The Court has made no ruling on the merits of Plaintiff's claims. The Court has only preliminarily approved this Class Action Settlement. The Court will decide whether to give final approval to the Settlement at the Final Fairness and Approval Hearing.

# **Summary of the Settlement Terms**

Plaintiff and Defendant have agreed to settle this case on behalf of themselves and the Class Members for the Gross Settlement Amount of \$475,000.00, unless the Gross Settlement Amount is escalated pursuant to the Agreement. The Gross Settlement includes: (1) Administration Costs of up to \$7,950.00; (2) a service payment of up to \$7,500.00 to Plaintiff for his time and effort in pursuing this case and in exchange for a broader release of claims against Defendant; (3) up to 35% in attorneys' fees which, unless the Gross Settlement Amount is escalated pursuant to the Agreement, amounts to \$166,250.00 in attorneys' fees; (4) actual litigation costs up to \$25,000.00 to Class Counsel; and (5) payment allocated to PAGA penalties in the amount of \$20,000.00, \$15,000.00 of which will be payable to the Labor and Workforce Development Agency ("LWDA") and \$5,000.00 of which will be payable to Aggrieved Employees.

After deducting these sums, a total of approximately \$248,300.00 will be available for distribution to Class Members ("Net Settlement Amount"), and an additional \$5,000.00 to Aggrieved Employees. In addition to the Gross Settlement, Defendant will separately pay all employer-side payroll tax payments due and payable to federal and state tax authorities as a result of this Settlement.

# **Distribution to Class Members and Aggrieved Employees**

Class Members who do not opt out will receive a *pro rata* payment based on the number of verified actual weeks worked by Class Members for Defendant during the Class Period ("Eligible Workweeks"). Specifically, Class Members' payments will be calculated by dividing the number of Eligible Workweeks attributed to the Class Member by all Eligible Workweeks attributed to members of the Settlement Class, multiplied by the Net Settlement Amount. Otherwise stated, the formula for a Class Member is: (individual's Eligible Workweeks ÷ total Settlement Class Eligible Workweeks) x Net Settlement Amount. In addition, Class Members who worked during the PAGA Period will receive a pro rata share of the \$5,000 allocated as PAGA penalties, whether or not they opt out, based on the number of workweeks worked by the Class Member during the PAGA Period.

Defendant's records indicate that you worked [Eligible Workweeks] as a non-exempt, hourly-paid employee in California during the Class Period and [Eligible Pay Periods] during the PAGA Period. Based on these records, your estimated payment as a Class Member would be [\$Estimated Award] and your estimated payment for PAGA civil penalties would be [\$Estimated Award]. If you believe this information is incorrect and wish to dispute it, you must mail a dispute to the Settlement Administrator no later than [RESPONSE DEADLINE]. Please include any documentation you have that you contend supports your dispute.

# **Tax Reporting**

100% of the payments for PAGA penalties to Aggrieved Employees will be allocated as penalties reported on an IRS Form 1099; 20% of each Settlement Payment will be allocated as wages and reported on an IRS Form W-2; and 80% will be allocated as penalties and interest reported on an IRS Form 1099. This notice is not intended to provide legal or tax advice on your Settlement Share.

# **Your Options Under the Settlement**

# Option 1 – Do Nothing and Receive Your Payment

If you do not opt out, you are automatically entitled to your Settlement Check because you are a Class Member. If you do not dispute your settlement share calculation and do not opt out of the settlement, you will be bound by the settlement and receive a settlement payment. In other words, if you are a Class Member, you do not need to take any action to receive the settlement payment set forth above.

Settlement payment checks must be cashed soon after receipt. The Settlement checks will be able to be cashed for 180 days after they are issued. Within 7 days after expiration of the 180-day period, the Settlement checks will no longer be able to be cashed. Any funds represented by Settlement checks remaining uncashed for more than 180 days after issuance shall be considered unpaid, unclaimed or abandoned funds and shall be transmitted to Legal Aid at Work, 180 Montgomery Street, Suite 600, San Francisco, California 94104 for use in the County of Los Angeles, State of California.

Class Members who do not submit a valid and timely opt out (pursuant to Section 2 below), will be deemed to have fully, finally, and forever released, settled, compromised, relinquished, and discharged the Released Parties of all Released Claims he or she may have or had upon final approval of this Settlement, entry of judgment, and payment by

Defendant to the Settlement Administrator of the full Gross Settlement Amount and Employer's Taxes pursuant to the Agreement.

"Released Claims" means all claims against the Released Parties asserted in the Operative Complaint, or any and all claims that may be asserted against the Released Parties based on the factual allegations in the Operative Complaint, as follows: For Participating Class Members, the release includes, but is not limited to, for the duration of the Class Period: (a) all claims for failure to pay minimum wages; (b) all claims for failure to pay overtime wages; (c) all claims for failure to provide compliant meal and rest periods or compensation in lieu thereof; (d) all claims for failure to timely pay all wages due upon termination or resignation; (e) all claims for non-compliant wage statements; (f) all claims for failure to reimburse business expenses; and (g) all claims asserted through California Business & Professions Code § 17200 et seq. arising out of the Labor Code violations referenced in the Operative Complaint (the "Class Released Claims"). 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 of the Class Period.

For Aggrieved Employees, the release includes, for the duration of the PAGA Period, all claims asserted in the PAGA Notice submitted to the LWDA and alleged in the Operative Complaint, including all claims for civil penalties under PAGA arising out of Labor Code sections 210, 226.3, 558, 1174.5, 1197.1 and 2699 based on the factual allegations and Labor Code sections alleged to have been violated in the PAGA Notice and Operative Complaint, which includes, without limitation, Labor Code sections 98.6(k), 201-204, 210, 226, 226.7, 227.3, 246, 404, 432, 510, 512, 1102.5, 1174, 1194, 1194.2, 1197, 1198.5, 2802, and 2810.5 (the "PAGA Released Claims").

"Class Period" means the period from June 11, 2017 through October 29, 2022.

"PAGA Period" means the period from May 3, 2020 through the end of the Class Period.

"Released Parties" shall mean Defendant Sea Win, Inc., as well as each of Sea Win, Inc.'s present and former respective affiliates, parents, subsidiaries, predecessors, successors, divisions, joint venturers and assigns, and each of SeaWin, Inc.'s past or present directors, officers, employees, partners, members, principals, agents, insurers, shareholders, attorneys, and personal or legal representatives.

### Option 2 – Opt Out of the Settlement

If you do not wish to participate in the Settlement, you may exclude yourself by submitting a written request to be excluded from the Class. Your written request must expressly and clearly indicate that you do not want to participate in the Settlement, and you desire to be excluded from the Settlement. The written request for exclusion must include your name, your Social Security Number, your signature, and the following statement or something to its effect: "Please exclude me from the Settlement Class in the *Ruben Ramirez v. Sea Win, Inc., et al.* matter". Sign, date, and mail your written request for exclusion by U.S. First-Class Mail to the address below.

The proposed settlement includes the settlement of the PAGA Released Claims. An employee may not request exclusion from the settlement of the PAGA Released Claims. Thus, if the court approves the settlement, then even if you request exclusion from the settlement, you will still receive an individual settlement share for the PAGA Released Claims and will be deemed to have released the PAGA Released Claims. A request for exclusion will preserve your right to individually pursue only the remaining Class Released Claims.

[Settlement Administrator]
[Mailing Address]

The written request to be excluded from the Settlement must be postmarked or received by the Administrator not later than [RESPONSE DEADLINE]. If you exclude yourself from the Settlement then you will get no payment, and retain your legal rights to pursue claims that would otherwise be released by the settlement of the Lawsuit.

# Option 3 – File an Objection to the Settlement

If you wish to object to the Settlement, you may file an objection in writing stating why you object to the Settlement. Your objection must provide your full name, your address, the last 4 digits of your social security number, your signature, a statement of whether you plan to appear at the Final Fairness and Approval Hearing, and your reasons for why you think the Court should not approve the Settlement, along with whatever legal authority, if any, you assert supports your objection. Your objection must be mailed to the Administrator no later than [RESPONSE DEADLINE]. Please note that you cannot both object to the Settlement and exclude yourself. If the Court overrules your objection, you will be bound by the Settlement and will receive your Settlement Share.

# **Final Fairness Hearing**

You may, if you wish, also appear at the Final Fairness and Approval Hearing set for \_\_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.m. in the Spring Street Courthouse of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, located at 312 North Spring Street, Department 7, Los Angeles, California 90012, and discuss your objections with the Court and the Parties at your own expense. You may also retain an attorney to represent you at the Hearing at your own expense.

# **Additional Information**

This Notice of Class Action Settlement is only a summary of this case and the Settlement. For a more detailed statement of the matters involved in this case and the Settlement, you may visit <a href="www.\_\_\_\_.com">www.\_\_\_.com</a>, call the Settlement Administrator at <a href="PHONE NUMBER">PHONE NUMBER</a>] or Class Counsel, who may be reached as follows:

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You may also refer to the pleadings, the Settlement Agreement, and other papers filed in this case, which may be inspected at the Office of the Clerk of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, located at [ADDRESS], during regular business hours of each court day.

All inquiries by Class Members regarding this Notice of Class Action Settlement and/or the Settlement should be directed to the Settlement Administrator.

PLEASE DO NOT CONTACT THE CLERK OF THE COURT, THE JUDGE, DEFENDANT, OR DEFENDANT'S ATTORNEYS WITH INQUIRIES.