

Electronically Received 08/19/2022 04:05 PM

MELMED LAW GROUP, P.C.
Jonathan Melmed, CA Bar No. 290218
jm@melmedlaw.com
Laura M. Supanich, CA Bar No. 314805
lms@melmedlaw.com
Maria Burciaga, CA Bar No. 334545
mb@melmedlaw.com
1801 Century Park East, Suite 850
Los Angeles, California 90067
Telephone: (310) 824-3828
Facsimile: (310) 862-6851

FILED
Superior Court of California
County of Los Angeles
12/09/2022
Sherri R. Carter, Executive Officer / Clerk of Court
By: T. Lewis Deputy

Attorneys for Plaintiff, the Putative Class, and the Aggrieved Employees

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

MARIA GONZALEZ, on behalf of herself and
all other similarly situated;

Plaintiff,

vs.

LIEF ORGANICS, LLC, a California Limited
Liability Company; and DOES 1 through 20,
inclusive;

Defendants.

Case No. 20STCV19371

**~~[PROPOSED]~~ ORDER GRANTING FINAL
APPROVAL OF CLASS ACTION
SETTLEMENT AND FINAL JUDGMENT**

Date: September 13, 2022
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Judge: Hon. David S. Cunningham III
Dept.: 11

Complaint Filed: May 19, 2020

1 On September 13, 2022, the Court held a hearing on Plaintiff's Motion for Final Approval of Class
2 Action Settlement.

3 In conformity with California Rules of Court, Rule 3.769, with due and adequate notice having
4 been given to Class Members, and the Court having considered the Joint Stipulation Of Class Action And
5 Representative Action Pursuant To Labor Code § 2699(f) Settlement And Release Between Plaintiff, On
6 Behalf Of Herself And All Others Similarly Situated And Aggrieved, And Defendant ("Settlement
7 Agreement") attached as Exhibit A to the Declaration of Jonathan Melmed in Support of Plaintiff's Second
8 Motion For Order Granting Preliminary Approval Of Class Action Settlement filed on April 13, 2022, all
9 of the legal authorities and documents submitted in support thereof, all papers filed and proceedings has
10 herein, all oral and written comments received regarding the proposed settlement, and having reviewed the
11 record in this litigation, and good cause appearing, the Court **GRANTS final approval of the Settlement**
12 **and ORDERS AND MAKES THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS AND DETERMINATIONS AND**
13 **ENTERS FINAL JUDGMENT AS FOLLOWS:**

14 1. All terms used in this Order Granting Final Approval of Class Action Settlement (the
15 "Order") shall have the same meanings given as those terms are used and/or defined in the parties'
16 Settlement Agreement. A copy of the Settlement Agreement is attached as **Exhibit A** to the Declaration
17 of Jonathan Melmed in Support of Plaintiff's Second Motion For Order Granting Preliminary Approval Of
18 Class Action Settlement and is made a part of this Order.

19 2. The Court has personal jurisdiction over the Parties to this litigation and subject matter
20 jurisdiction to approve this Settlement and all exhibits thereto.

21 3. For settlement purposes only, the Court finally certifies the Class, as defined in the
22 Agreement and as follows:

23 *all individuals who are or were employed as non-exempt employees by Defendant*
24 *Lief Organics, LLC from May 19, 2016 through April 14, 2021.*

25 4. The Court deems this definition sufficient for the purpose of California Rule of Court
26 3.765(a), and solely for the purpose of effectuating the Settlement.

27 5. The Court finds that an ascertainable class of 136 class members exists and a well-defined
28 community of interest exists on the questions of law and fact involved because in the context of the

1 Settlement: (i) all related matters, predominate over any individual questions; (ii) the claims of the Plaintiff
2 are typical of claims of the Class Members; and (iii) in negotiating, entering into and implementing the
3 Settlement, Plaintiff and Class Counsel have fairly and adequately represented and protected the interest
4 of the Class Members.

5 6. The Court is satisfied that CPT Group, Inc., which functioned as the Settlement
6 Administrator, completed the distribution of Class Notice and Share Form to the Class in a manner that
7 comports with California Rule of Court 3.766. The Class Notice informed 137 Class Members of the
8 Settlement terms, their rights to do nothing and receive their settlement share, their rights to submit a
9 request for exclusion, their rights to comment on or object to the Settlement, and their rights to appear at
10 the Final Approval Hearing and be heard regarding approval of the Settlement. Adequate periods of time
11 to respond and to act were provided by each of these procedures. No Class Members filed written objections
12 to the Settlement as part of this notice process, and no Class Members filed a written statement of intention
13 to appear at the Final Approval Hearing. One Class Member, Loreto Quintero-Flores, submitted a request
14 for exclusion.

15 7. The Court hereby approves the terms set forth in the Settlement Agreement and finds that
16 the Settlement Agreement is, in all respects, fair, adequate, and reasonable, consistent and compliant with
17 all applicable requirements of the California Code of Civil Procedure, the California and United States
18 Constitutions, including the Due Process clauses, the California Rules of Court, and any other applicable
19 law, and in the best interests of each of the Parties and Class Members.

20 8. The Court directs the Parties to effectuate the Settlement Agreement according to its terms
21 and declares the Settlement Agreement to be binding on all Class Members.

22 9. The Court finds that the Settlement Agreement has been reached as a result of informed and
23 non-collusive arm's-length negotiations. The Court further finds that the Parties have conducted extensive
24 investigation and research, and their attorneys were able to reasonably evaluate their respective positions.

25 10. The Court also finds that the Settlement now will avoid additional and potentially
26 substantial litigation costs, as well as delay and risks of the Parties were to continue to litigate the case.
27 Additionally, after considering the monetary recovery provided as part of the Settlement in light of the
28 challenges posed by continued litigation, and Court concludes that Class Counsel secured significant relief

for Class Members.

1 11. The Settlement Agreement is not an admission by Defendant, nor is this Order a finding of
2 the validity of any allegations or of any wrongdoing by Defendant. Neither this Order, the Settlement
3 Agreement, nor any document referred to herein, nor any action taken to carry out the Settlement
4 Agreement, may be construed as, or may be used as, an admission of any fault, wrongdoing, omission,
5 concession, or liability whatsoever by or against Defendant.

6 12. The Court appoints Plaintiff Maria Gonzalez as Class Representative and finds her to be
7 adequate.

8 13. The Court appoints Jonathan Melmed, Esq. and Laura M. Supanich, Esq. of Melmed Law
9 Group P.C. as Class Counsel, and finds them to be adequate, experienced, and well-versed in class action
10 litigation.

11 14. The terms of the Agreement, including the Gross Settlement Amount of \$576,744.57 and
12 the Individual Settlement Amounts are fair, adequate, and reasonable to the Class and to each Class
13 Member, and the Court grants final approval of the Settlement set forth in the Settlement Agreement,
14 subject to this Order. The Court approves the following allocations, which fall within the ranges stipulated
15 by and through the Settlement Agreement:

16 a. The \$10,000.00 designated for payment to CPT Group, Inc., the Settlement Administrator, is
17 fair and reasonable. The Court grants final approval of, and orders the Parties to make the
18 payment to the Settlement Administrator in accordance with the Agreement.

19 b. The \$191,666.66 amount requested by Plaintiff and Class Counsel for the Class Counsel's
20 attorneys' fees is fair and reasonable in light of the benefit obtained for the Class. The Court
21 grants final approval of, awards, and orders the Class Counsel Fees Payment to be made in
22 accordance with the Agreement.

23 c. The Court awards \$12,791.15 in litigation costs, an amount which the Court finds to be
24 reflective of the reasonable costs incurred. The Court grants final approval of, and order the
25 Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment in this amount to be made in accordance with the
26 Agreement.

27 d. The \$7,500.00 requested by Plaintiff for the Incentive Award is fair and reasonable. The Court
28

1 grants final approval of, and orders the Incentive Award to be paid in accordance with the
2 Agreement.

3 e. The Court approves of the \$20,000.00 allocation assigned for claims under the Private Attorney
4 General Act (PAGA), and orders 75% thereof (i.e., \$15,000.00) to be paid to the California
5 Labor and Workforce Development Agency (LWDA) in accordance with the terms of the
6 Settlement Agreement.

7 15. The Court orders the Parties to comply with and carry out all terms and provisions of the
8 Settlement, to the extent that the terms thereunder do not contradict with this Order, in which case the
9 provisions of this Order shall take precedence and supersede the Settlement.

10 16. Nothing in the Settlement or this Order purports to extinguish or waive Defendant's rights
11 to continue to oppose the merits of the claims in this Action or class treatment of these claims in this case
12 if the Settlement fails to become Final or effective, or in any other case without limitation.

13 17. All Class Members shall be bound by the Settlement and this Order, including the release
14 of claims as set forth in the Agreement.

15 18. The Parties shall bear their own respective attorneys' fees and costs except as otherwise
16 provided in the Settlement Agreement.

17 19. All checks mailed to the Class Members must be cashed within ninety (180) days after
18 mailing.

19 20. Within 10 days after the Court has held a Final and Fairness Approval Hearing and entered
20 a final order certifying the Class for settlement purposes only and approving the Class Settlement, the
21 Settlement Administrator will give notice of judgment to Settlement Class Members pursuant to California
22 Rules of Court, rule 3.771(b) by posting a copy of said order and final judgment on its website.

23 21. The Court retains continuing jurisdiction over the Action and the Settlement, including
24 jurisdiction pursuant to California Rule of Court 3.769(h), solely for purposes of (a) enforcing the
25 Settlement Agreement, (b) addressing settlement administration matters, and (c) addressing such post-
26 Judgment matters as may be appropriate under court rules or applicable law.

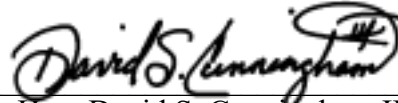
27 22. Plaintiff shall file with the Court a report regarding the status of distribution within one
28 hundred and twenty (120) days after all funds have been distributed.

1 23. This Final Judgment is intended to be a final disposition of the above captioned action in its
2 entirety and is intended to be immediately appealable. This Judgment resolves and extinguishes all claims
3 released by the Settlement Agreement, against Defendant.

4 24. The Court hereby sets a hearing date of 12/09/2022 at 10:00 am for a hearing
5 on the final accounting and distribution of the settlement funds.

6 **IT IS SO ORDERED, ADJUDGED, AND DECREED:**

7 DATED: 12/09/2022



8 _____
9 Hon. David S. Cunningham III
10 Judge of the Superior Court, Los Angeles County