

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

I. Introduction.

This Settlement Agreement (“Agreement”) is hereby entered by and between Defendant Northwest Fire Systems LLC (“the Company”) and the named Plaintiff, Brian F. Rodrigues, who is acting both individually and in his capacity as the proposed class representative for the proposed settlement class defined herein and in the proposed class action entitled *Brian F. Rodrigues v. Northwest Fire Systems LLC*, Pierce County Superior Court Civil Case No. 23-2-05879-3 (the “Case”).

II. Class Certification.

Solely for the purposes of this Settlement, Plaintiff and the Company (hereafter, the “Parties”) agree that this Case should be certified and finally adjudicated as a class action on behalf of the Settlement Class defined herein.

III. Investigations and Due Diligence.

The Parties have conducted substantial formal and informal discovery and investigation of the facts and the law during their respective prosecution and defense of this Case. As part of this review and investigation, the Parties and their counsel have (a) interviewed witnesses; (b) collected and analyzed electronic time records, payroll data, and other information concerning the composition of the Settlement Class and the merits and possible extent of Plaintiff’s claims and the Company’s defenses; and (c) amply considered and analyzed their respective claims and defenses.

IV. Settlement Negotiations.

The Parties engaged in settlement negotiations and outlined the conceptual terms of the Settlement during a November 30, 2023 mediation before Cliff Freed of Washington Arbitration and Mediation Services (“WAMS”). All of the Parties’ settlement negotiations have been conducted in good faith and at arm’s length. Through the Parties’ investigations and communications, the Parties have reached a class action settlement of this Case that they believe to be fair, adequate, and reasonable, and that Plaintiff believes are in the best interest of the proposed Settlement Class. This Agreement memorializes the terms of the final Settlement agreed to by the Parties as the result of the negotiations just described.

V. The Company’s Denials of Wrongdoing and Non-Admission of Allegations.

The Company has denied and continues to deny each of the claims and contentions alleged by Plaintiff on his own behalf and on behalf of any members of the proposed class alleged by Plaintiff in the Case. The Company has asserted, and continues to assert, defenses and objections to the proposed maintenance of this Case as a class action as if it were to proceed through litigation instead of settlement. Furthermore, the Company has expressly denied, and continues to deny, any wrongdoing or legal liability arising out of any of the facts or conduct alleged in this Case. Neither the Settlement, this Agreement, or any document referred to or contemplated herein—nor any action taken to carry out this Agreement—is, may be construed as, or may be used as an admission, concession or indication by or against the Company of any fault, wrongdoing, or liability

whatsoever. The Company expressly denies any such fault, wrongdoing, or liability. If the Parties had not reached the Settlement, then the Company would have continued to vigorously defend against Plaintiff's claims, including seeking denial of full or partial class certification and a full defense verdict at trial. The Company agrees to this Settlement solely to avoid the burden and expense of further litigation.

VI. Stipulated Settlement and Dismissal

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY STIPULATED by the Parties, subject to the approval of the Superior Court, that this Case is hereby being compromised and settled on a class action basis pursuant to the terms and conditions outlined in this Agreement and that, if the Parties' Settlement is finally approved by the Superior Court, this Case shall be fully dismissed on the merits and with prejudice, subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Definitions.

a. **"The Company"** as used in this Agreement includes the named Defendant in the Case, Northwest Fire Systems LLC, as well as its parents, subsidiaries, affiliates, insurers, insurance policies, and benefit plans, as well as each of their respective past and present directors, officers, agents, shareholders, members, equity holders, managers, employees, attorneys, representatives, administrators, fiduciaries, successors, assigns, and transferees, along with any other individual or entity who could be jointly or severally liable for any of the claims alleged in the Case or released by this Agreement.

b. **"Effective Date"** means the date when both (1) the Settlement has been finally approved by the Superior Court, and (2) the Superior Court's anticipated order approving the Settlement and dismissing this Case with prejudice (the "Final Judgment") becomes final. For purposes of this subsection, the Superior Court's Final Judgment "becomes final" upon the later of either (a) thirty one (31) calendar days following the Superior Court's entry of an order granting final approval of the Settlement; or (b) if an appeal is timely filed or other appellate review is sought, the date the Mandate or other final affirmance is issued by the appellate court affirming the Final Judgment.

c. **"Settlement"** means the settlement reached by the Parties through the negotiation process described in Paragraph IV above.

d. **"Settlement Administrator"** means CPT Group Class Action Administrators, subject to the Superior Court's approval.

e. **"Settlement Class Period"** means the period from April 3, 2020, through and including [Class Period End Date].

f. **"Proposed Class"** or **"Proposed Class Members"** means all individuals identified in paragraph 4.1 of the Complaint who are/were employed by the Company in positions performing onsite services in Washington state at any time during the Settlement Class Period. Positions include, but are not limited to, certified service technicians, line testers, certified electricians, plumbers, factory certified electronic technicians, certified fire alarm and sprinkler system inspectors, Washington State licensed low voltage technicians, union fire sprinkler installers, or individuals in positions performing similar functions.

g. **“Proposed Subclass Class” or “Proposed Subclass Members”** means all individuals identified above in Section VI.1.f. as “Proposed Class” or “Proposed Class Members” who were not subject to the collective bargaining agreement between the National Fire Sprinkler Association, Inc. and Sprinkler Fitters and Apprentices Local Union No. 699 Seattle, Washington of the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada.

h. **“Settlement Class” or “Settlement Class Members”** means all Proposed Class Members, exclusive of any person who timely opts out of the Settlement pursuant to the procedures set forth below. All persons who timely opt out from the Settlement in conformity with this Agreement shall not be bound by the terms of this Agreement or any Final Judgment entered by the Superior Court and shall retain the right to pursue (or not pursue) any alleged individual claim(s) against the Company in a separate action.

i. The **“Notice of Settlement”** means the form attached hereto as **Exhibit A**.

j. The **“Initial Mailing Date”** is the date the Settlement Administrator first mails the Notice of Settlement approved by the Superior Court to all Proposed Class Members.

k. The **“Notice Deadline”** is forty-five (45) calendar days after the Initial Mailing Date.

l. **“Class Counsel”** means Entente Law PLLC, subject to the Superior Court’s approval.

m. **“Maximum Settlement Amount”** means the maximum amount the Company may be required to pay pursuant to this Settlement, which is the sum of Five Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$550,000.00), inclusive of any of the Company’s employer-side share of FICA, FUTA, and other similar, mandatory employer-side payroll taxes. In no event shall the Maximum Settlement Amount exceed the foregoing sum.

n. **“Class Fund”** means the aggregate, gross amount the Parties propose be paid to the Settlement Class as Settlement Awards pursuant to this Settlement. The Class Fund shall be calculated by subtracting the Court-approved Attorneys’ Fees and Costs Award, Service Award, and Settlement Administration Expenses Award from the Maximum Settlement Amount.

o. **“Settlement Awards”** means the amounts the Parties propose be paid to members of the Settlement Class pursuant to this Agreement.

p. **“Service Award”** means the amount the Parties propose be paid to Plaintiff as a service award in recognition of his efforts in prosecuting the Case.

q. **“Settlement Administration Expenses Award”** means the amount the Parties propose be paid to the Settlement Administrator for the processing of the Settlement.

r. **“Attorneys’ Fees and Costs Award”** means the amounts the Parties propose be paid to Class Counsel as attorneys’ fees and costs in connection with their prosecution and settlement of the Case.

s. **“Released Claims”** means all claims, whether known or unknown, asserted in the complaint or that could have been asserted based on the facts alleged in the complaint during the Settlement Class Period, including federal, state, and municipal claims. The Released Claims specifically include, but are not limited to, any claims arising out of or relating to any alleged unpaid travel time and other hours worked, alleged unlawful deductions from wages; alleged underpaid statutory overtime, or any alleged missed, interrupted, shortened, untimely, unpaid, and/or non-compliant rest breaks and meal periods, as well as any attendant claims for unpaid wages, overtime payments, premium payments, interest, liquidated or double damages, exemplary damages, and attorneys’ fees and costs relating to any of the foregoing. Released claims also include, but are not limited to, claims arising under the Washington Minimum Wage Act; Washington Wage Rebate Act; Washington Wage Payment Act; and Washington Industrial Welfare Act.

t. **“Weighted Hours Worked”** for purposes of equitably allocating the net settlement amount among Settlement Class and Subclass Members, means the total number of hours worked by Settlement Class Members who are not Settlement Subclass Members and the total number of hours worked by Settlement Subclass Members times 1.35.

2. Releases.

As of the Effective Date, the Settlement and this Agreement will constitute a full and final settlement, release, and waiver by Plaintiff and all members of the Settlement Class of all Released Claims.

3. Payment by the Company.

Subject to approval of the Settlement by the Superior Court, the Company agrees to deposit the Maximum Settlement Amount into a Qualified Settlement Fund (“QSF”) set up by the Settlement Administrator for purposes of processing the Settlement and paying the Service Awards, the Settlement Administration Expenses Award, the Attorneys’ Fees and Costs Award, and the Settlement Awards. The Company will not be responsible for making any additional payments except as expressly set forth below, whether to the Settlement Class Members, to Plaintiff, to Class Counsel, to the Settlement Administrator, or otherwise. By funding the Qualified Settlement Fund, the Company will fully discharge its financial obligations under this Agreement and shall have no further financial obligations under this Agreement, whether to the Settlement Class Members, to Plaintiff, to Class Counsel, to the Settlement Administrator, or otherwise.

4. Calculation of Settlement Awards.

a. Subject to approval by the Superior Court, the calculations of gross (pre-tax) Settlement Awards for Settlement Class Members will be made by the Settlement Administrator based on records submitted to the Settlement Administrator by the Company, which records are presumed to be accurate. The Company will provide data to the Settlement Administrator reasonably necessary for the calculation of the Settlement Awards in the form of an Excel spreadsheet (or spreadsheets), which shall contain the total hours worked by each Proposed Class Member during the Settlement Class Period. The Company shall provide the Excel spreadsheet(s) containing the foregoing data to the Settlement Administrator within twenty (20) business days after this Agreement is preliminarily approved by the Superior Court. Any data provided to the

Settlement Administrator pursuant to this Agreement shall be used solely for the purposes of administering this Settlement and not for any other purpose. The Settlement Administrator shall maintain any data provided pursuant to this Agreement as private and confidential and shall not use or disclose such data to any persons or entities except as required by this Settlement, law, or Court order.

b. The Settlement Administrator shall be responsible for calculating the gross amounts of the Settlement Awards for Settlement Class Members in conformity with this Agreement. Each Settlement Class Member shall receive a minimum settlement payment of Two Hundred Dollars (\$200). The remaining monies from the Class Fund will be allocated to individual Settlement Class Members pro rata based on Weighted Hours Worked during the Settlement Class Period, with the amounts being calculated by dividing each Settlement Class Member's total Weighted Hours Worked during the Settlement Class Period by the total aggregate Weighted Hours Worked by all Settlement Class Members during the Settlement Class Period and then multiplying the resulting ratio by the portion of the Class Fund allocated to these payments.

c. The Settlement Administrator shall provide the Company and Class Counsel with an electronic report setting forth the results of their calculation of the gross Settlement Awards for Settlement Class Members. The Company and Class Counsel shall have ten (10) business days after receiving this electronic report to review the Settlement Administrator's gross Settlement Award calculations for compliance with the terms of this Agreement and to submit any concerns in writing to the Settlement Administrator. Thereafter, the Parties shall confer within five (5) business days in an attempt to resolve any disputes relating to the calculations of the gross amounts of Settlement Awards. If the Parties are unable to resolve any disputes about calculating the gross Settlement Awards pursuant to this Agreement, they shall submit their respective positions in writing to the Superior Court, which shall make the final decision regarding any disputed calculations of any Settlement Awards for any Settlement Class Members.

d. **Allocation of Settlement Awards Between Wages and Non-Wages.** Fifty Percent (50%) of each Settlement Award will be treated as wages and subject to normal payroll tax withholdings and payments, and these amounts shall be reported to the taxing authorities and the Settlement Class Members on IRS Forms W-2. Fifty Percent (50%) of each Settlement Award will be treated as non-wages (liquidated damages, enhancements, and prejudgment interest) on which there will be no tax withholding and for which IRS Forms 1099-MISC (marked "Other Income") shall be issued to the taxing authorities and Eligible Settlement Class Members.

e. **Employer-Side Payroll Taxes.** The required employer share of the payroll taxes associated with the W-2 payments made to Settlement Class Members (including, but not limited to, employer's share of FICA, Medicare, FUTA (if applicable), and any other employer-paid, federal, Washington state, or local requirements) will be paid from the settlement fund.

5. Attorneys' Fees and Costs Award.

As part of seeking the Superior Court's final approval of this Settlement, Class Counsel will apply to the Superior Court for an Attorneys' Fees and Costs Award of no more than thirty

percent (30%) of the Maximum Settlement Amount (i.e., One Hundred Sixty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$165,000)), plus up to an additional Eight Thousand Dollars (\$8,000) for actual litigation costs.

6. Service Award.

Subject to approval by the Superior Court, in addition to a share of the Class Fund computed as described above, Plaintiff Brian F. Rodrigues shall receive a separate Service Award, which will be treated as non-wages, on which there will be no payroll tax withholdings and for which an IRS Form 1099-MISC (marked "Other Income") shall be issued to the taxing authorities and Plaintiff. Subject to approval by the Superior Court, the amount paid to Plaintiff for his service award shall be Seven Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$7,500) deducted from the maximum settlement amount.

7. Full Release Award

Subject to approval by the Superior Court, in addition to a Settlement Award computed as described above and a service award, Plaintiff Brian F. Rodrigues shall receive Full Release Award, which will be treated as non-wages, on which there will be no payroll tax withholdings and for which an IRS Form 1099-MISC (marked "Other Income") shall be issued to the taxing authorities and Plaintiff. The Full Release Award is consideration in exchange for Plaintiff Brian F. Rodrigues releasing individual claims he brought against the Company, including wrongful discharge in violation of public policy, failure to ensure rest periods, failure to provide meal periods, failure to pay overtime, willful withholding of wages, criminal agreement to pay less than amounts due under the Minimum Wage Act, and violation of Washington's Silenced No More Act. Subject to approval by the Superior Court, the amount paid to Plaintiff Brian F. Rodrigues for his full release award shall be Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000).

8. Settlement Administration.

a. The Settlement Administrator shall be responsible for mailing and emailing the Notice of Settlement to the Proposed Class, tracing undeliverable mailings, recording and tracking responses to the mailings to the Proposed Class, tracking and responding to any inquiries made by any member of the Proposed Class, and any other related tasks mutually agreed to by the Parties. The Settlement Administrator shall also be responsible for establishing a Qualified Settlement Fund ("QSF") pursuant to Section 468B(g) of the Internal Revenue Code for purposes of administering this Settlement, as well as issuing the necessary checks for all Settlement Awards, issuing all required tax documents (such as Forms W-2 and 1099-MISC), performing all related tax reporting to taxing authorities and to the Company, and issuing the Service Award, the Settlement Administration Expenses Award, and the Attorneys' Fees and Costs Award.

b. The Settlement Administrator will perform the foregoing duties based on data provided by Class Counsel and the Company, which data shall be presumed to be correct. In addition to the data described in Section VI.4.a., above, the Company shall, within twenty (20) business days after this Agreement is preliminarily approved by the Superior Court, provide the Settlement Administrator with an Excel spreadsheet containing the following information for each member of the Settlement Class: (i) name; (ii) last known address; (iii) last known telephone (if known and reasonably accessible); (iv) email address (if known and reasonably accessible); and

(v) social security number. Other data will be provided, upon request from the Settlement Administrator, as reasonably necessary to complete their settlement administration duties under this Agreement. All such data shall be treated as private and confidential, and the Settlement Administrator shall not use or disclose any such data to any persons or entities except as required by this Settlement, law or Court order.

c. The Settlement Administrator shall also have the responsibility to determine any Proposed Class Member's eligibility for a Settlement Award (i.e., to determine whether any Proposed Class Member is a Settlement Class Member). Each Proposed Class Member who does not submit a valid and timely request for exclusion will automatically be a Settlement Class Member and eligible to receive a Settlement Award. Within five (5) days after the Notice Deadline, the Settlement Administrator shall provide the Company and Class Counsel with (1) an electronic report setting forth the names and identities of all Proposed Class Members who submitted a valid and timely request for exclusion in conformity with this Agreement; (2) an electronic report setting forth the names and identities of all Proposed Class Members who did not submit a valid and timely letter requesting exclusion in conformity with this Agreement ("Exclusion Letter"); (3) copies of all request for exclusion returned or received; and (4) copies of all objections returned or received. The Company and Class Counsel shall be entitled to review the eligibility determinations made by the Settlement Administrator for compliance with the terms of this Agreement. The Settlement Administrator shall retain the originals of all Exclusion Letters returned, along with their envelopes, and objections received. The Company and Class Counsel shall have five (5) business days after receiving the electronic report and related documentation from the Settlement Administrator to challenge any request for exclusion and/or eligibility determination in writing directed to the Settlement Administrator. Within five (5) business days after submitting such concerns to the Settlement Administrator, the Parties shall meet and confer in an attempt to resolve any disputes relating to the subject requests for exclusion and/or eligibility determinations. In the event the Parties are unable to reach resolution on any disputes relating to the subject requests for exclusion and/or eligibility determinations, the Parties shall submit their respective positions in writing to the Superior Court, which shall make the final decision regarding the subject requests for exclusion and/or eligibility determinations. Thereafter, the Settlement Administrator shall provide the results of its eligibility determinations to the Company and Class Counsel, which results will include the names of all Settlement Class Members and the names of all individuals who opted out of the Settlement.

d. In the event the number of Proposed Class Members who have timely requested exclusion from the Settlement exceeds fifteen percent (15%) of the total number of Proposed Class Members, the Company has the right, in its sole discretion, to terminate or not to terminate the Settlement. If the Company chooses to exercise this right, it shall give written notice to Class Counsel within ten (10) business days after receiving the report from the Settlement Administrator required by Section VI.8.c., above.

e. As part of seeking the Superior Court's final approval of this Settlement, Class Counsel will apply to the Superior Court for a Settlement Administration Expenses Award of no more than Twelve Thousand Dollars (\$12,000.00), which will be deducted from the maximum settlement amount. The costs, fees and expenses incurred by the Settlement Administrator in administering this Settlement shall be paid from the Settlement Administration Expenses Award approved by the Court.

9. Notice/Approval of Settlement Class Certification and Settlement Agreement.

As part of this Settlement, the Parties agree to the following procedures for obtaining preliminary Superior Court approval of the Settlement, certifying the Settlement Class, notifying the members of the Proposed Class, obtaining final Superior Court approval of the Settlement, and implementing payment of Settlement Awards to Settlement Class Members:

a. Class Counsel shall file a motion with the Superior Court (to be heard on December 22, 2023, or the earliest date thereafter the Superior Court has available) to obtain preliminary approval of the Settlement in conformity with this Agreement and authorizing the issuance of the Notice of Settlement to members of the Proposed Class.

b. For purposes of this Settlement, Class Counsel will ask the Superior Court to enter an order preliminarily certifying the Settlement Class, preliminarily approving the Settlement and this Agreement, approving Notice of Settlement to the Proposed Class, and setting a date for a Fairness Hearing to determine whether the Court will grant final approval of the Settlement and this Agreement (the “Preliminary Approval Order”). Class Counsel shall provide the Company with a draft of the proposed motion for preliminary approval and Preliminary Approval Order for review and comment at least five (5) business days before the motion is filed. Plaintiff’s counsel agrees to consider in good faith all comments of the Company on the draft. The Company will not oppose Plaintiff’s motion, so long as the Motion for Preliminary Approval and Preliminary Approval Order are in conformity with this Agreement.

c. Subject to the Superior Court’s approval, Notice of the Settlement shall be provided using the following procedures:

(1) Within twenty-one (21) calendar days of the date the Superior Court grants preliminary approval and issues its Preliminary Approval Order, the Settlement Administrator shall send the Notice of Settlement to all Proposed Class Members by mail and email (where addresses are known and reasonably available).

(2) The Notice of Settlement shall provide that Proposed Class Members who do not opt out (i.e., who wish to become Settlement Class Members) and who wish to object to the Settlement must submit to the Settlement Administrator a written statement objecting to the Settlement. Any written statement must be postmarked or delivered to the Settlement Administrator on or before the Notice Deadline.

(3) The Notice of Settlement shall also provide that Proposed Class Members who wish to exclude themselves (i.e., opt out) from the Settlement must mail or email a letter/response to the Settlement Administrator requesting exclusion from the Settlement on or before the Notice Deadline. Proposed Class Members who fail to submit a valid and timely Exclusion Letter on or before the Notice Deadline shall be deemed Settlement Class Members and shall be bound by all terms of the Settlement and any Final Judgment entered in this Case if the Settlement is approved by the Superior Court, regardless of whether they have objected to the Settlement.

(4) The Notice of Settlement shall also advise Settlement Class Members that they need to do nothing (other than not affirmatively opt out) to receive a Settlement Award.

d. The Parties agree that neither they nor their counsel will solicit or otherwise encourage any of the Proposed Class Members to opt out or object to the Settlement or to appeal from the Superior Court's Final Judgment approving the Settlement.

e. Should any Notice of Settlement be returned as undeliverable without a forwarding address, the Settlement Administrator will perform a reasonable "skip trace" search using the National Change of Address database to obtain an updated address and, if located, shall make a second attempt at mailing the Notice of Settlement. If such Notice of Settlement is again returned as undeliverable, no further attempts at delivery of the Notice of Settlement are required to be made. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Settlement Administrator or Class Counsel may mail or email a Notice of Settlement and/or Exclusion Form to a Proposed Class Member at an address or email address obtained by other means if the Notice of Settlement is returned as undeliverable or upon the Proposed Class Member's request for the same.

f. Within the later of twenty-one (21) calendar days after the Notice Deadline, or seven (7) calendar days following resolution of challenge as set forth in Section VI.8.c., above, Class Counsel must file with the Superior Court a supplemental memorandum in support of final approval of the Settlement to inform the Court of any Proposed Class Members who have opted out of the settlement, to provide the Court with copies of all written objections received from any Proposed Class member with copies of their envelopes, and to respond to any objections to the settlement.

g. Subject to the Superior Court's availability and direction but no sooner than thirty (30) business days after the Notice Deadline, a Fairness Hearing shall be held for the Superior Court to determine whether to grant final approval of the Settlement, including Class Counsel's Attorneys' Fees and Costs Award, the Settlement Administration Expenses Award, and the Service Award to the Plaintiff. If the Superior Court finally approves the Settlement, the Parties will promptly and jointly ask the Superior Court to enter a Final Judgment dismissing the Case with prejudice and without an award of attorneys' fees, expenses, or costs to any Party except as provided herein.

h. After entry of the Final Judgment, and subject to Rule 7.2 of the Washington Rules of Appellate Procedure, the Superior Court shall have continuing jurisdiction solely for the purposes of enforcement of the Settlement Agreement and addressing (a) settlement administration matters, and (b) such post-Final Judgment matters as may be appropriate under Court rules.

i. Within twenty (20) business days after the Effective Date, the Company shall initiate a transfer of the Maximum Settlement Amount into the QSF. The Company also will transfer into the QSF an amount equal to the estimated employer share of the payroll taxes required on the W-2 payments made to Settlement Class Members (including employer's share of FICA, Medicare, FUTA (if applicable), and any other employer-paid, federal, Washington state, or local requirements) as estimated by the Settlement Administrator. Such payment shall be made by the Company twenty (20) business days after the Effective Date or twenty (20) business days after the Settlement Administrator provides its estimate of the employer-side payroll taxes to the Company, whichever is later. Thereafter, if there is any dispute relating to the amount needed for the employer share of required payroll taxes, the Parties and Settlement Administrator shall confer within five (5) business days in an attempt to resolve this dispute. In the event they are unable to

reach resolution of any such dispute, the Parties shall submit their respective positions in writing to the Superior Court, which shall make the final decision regarding the amount required for the employer share of payroll taxes. The QSF will hold all funds transferred by the Company pending the issuance of the Settlement Awards to Settlement Class Members. Until the date that the Company's funding of the QSF is due, the Company shall have sole and complete control over all such funds and shall have no obligation to segregate such funds or to place them in escrow or to otherwise earmark them before the funding deadline.

j. Within three (3) business days after the Maximum Settlement Amount is deposited into the QSF, the Settlement Administrator shall issue and mail checks for the Service Award, the Settlement Administration Expenses Award, and the Attorneys' Fees and Costs Award to the respective recipients thereof. Within ten (10) business days after the Maximum Settlement Amount is deposited into the QSF, the Settlement Administrator shall issue and mail the Settlement Award checks. Settlement Award checks for each Settlement Class Member shall include an amount for wages and a separate amount for non-wages (liquidated and exemplary damages, enhancements, and prejudgment interest). The Settlement Administrator shall withhold and pay to the appropriate taxing authority(ies), all federal, Washington state, and local withholding taxes from each amount for wages, and shall issue appropriate IRS Forms W-2 for each amount for wages. The non-wages (liquidated and exemplary damages, enhancements, and prejudgment interest) amount shall not be subject to withholdings and shall be reported on an IRS Form 1099 (marked "Other Income") issued by the Settlement Administrator. Using the funds transferred into the QSF by the Company for the employer share of the payroll taxes required on the W-2 payments, the Settlement Administrator will also pay all of the required employer share of payroll taxes in connection with issuing the wage checks to Settlement Class Members, including the employer's share of FICA, Medicare, FUTA (if applicable), and any other employer-paid, federal, Washington state, and local requirements.

k. No later than one hundred sixty (160) calendar days after the Settlement Administrator issues the Settlement Award checks, Class Counsel shall file a Satisfaction of Judgment confirming that the payments required by the Final Judgment have been made and that no further actions are needed to comply with the Final Judgment. This shall terminate the Court's jurisdiction over the Case.

l. Should any Settlement Award checks be returned as undeliverable without a forwarding address, the Settlement Administrator will perform a reasonable "skip trace" search using the National Change of Address database to obtain an updated address and, if located, shall make a second attempt at mailing the Settlement Award Check. The Settlement Administrator shall mail any Settlement Class Member their Settlement Award check if they contact the Settlement Administrator and provides a correct mailing address within ninety (90) business days after the initial distribution of the Settlement Award checks. If contacted by a Settlement Class member about the Settlement Award after Notice has been sent, the Company shall instruct the member to contact the Settlement Administrator or Class Counsel. No later than one hundred twenty (120) days after the initial distribution of the Settlement Award checks, the Settlement Administrator shall provide both Parties with an accounting indicating which funds have been distributed to Settlement Class Members and which, if any, checks to Settlement Class Members have not been negotiated by that time. At this same time, the Settlement Administrator shall also provide the Company with copies of all IRS Forms W-2 and IRS Forms 1099 documents issued in connection with the payment of the Settlement Awards, and any other tax documentations

reasonably required by the Company. If any checks to Settlement Class Members have not been negotiated within one hundred twenty (120) days after distribution, the funds from those checks will be sent by the Settlement Administrator in the corresponding Settlement Class Member's name to the Unclaimed Property Fund for the State of Washington pursuant to the Unclaimed Property Act (RCW 63.29 et seq). The Company will not receive funds from any uncashed checks.

m. If the Superior Court does not enter an Order preliminarily or finally approving the Settlement, or if the Settlement does not become final for any other reason, this Agreement shall be null and void. In such case, the Parties shall proceed in all respects as if this Agreement had not been executed. In the event an appeal is filed from the Superior Court's Final Judgment, or from any other appellate review that is sought prior to the Effective Date, funding and administration of the Settlement shall be stayed pending final resolution of the appeal or any other form of appellate review.

10. No Effect on Employee Benefits.

This Settlement, and any payments made under this agreement to Settlement Class Members, shall have no effect on the eligibility for and/or calculation of employee benefits of any Settlement Class Members.

11. Miscellaneous Provisions.

a. The Parties agree to stay all further proceedings in this Case, except such proceedings as are necessary to implement and complete this Settlement and/or to implement this Agreement, pending the Fairness Hearing to be conducted by the Superior Court and the Effective Date of the Settlement.

b. This Agreement may be amended or modified only by a written instrument signed by counsel for all Parties or their successors-in-interest.

c. This Agreement constitutes the entire Agreement among these Parties. No representations, warranties or inducements have been made to any Party concerning this Agreement, other than the representations, warranties and covenants contained and memorialized in this Agreement and the documents it requires (such as the Notice of Settlement and Exclusion Form).

d. Counsel for all Parties warrant and represent that they are expressly authorized by the Parties whom they represent to enter into this Agreement and to take all appropriate action required or permitted to be taken by such Parties pursuant to this Agreement to effectuate its terms, and to execute any other documents required to effectuate the terms of this Agreement. The Parties and their counsel will cooperate with each other and use their best efforts to implement this Settlement. If the Parties are unable to reach agreement on the form or content of any document needed to implement this Settlement or this Agreement, or on any supplemental provisions that may become necessary to effectuate the terms of this Settlement or this Agreement, then either Party may seek the Superior Court's assistance to resolve such disagreement.

e. This Agreement shall be binding upon, and shall inure to the benefit of, the successors of the Parties hereto, as previously defined.

f. All terms of this Agreement shall be governed by and interpreted according to the laws of the State of Washington.

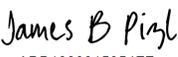
g. Plaintiff and the Company believe that this is a fair, reasonable, and adequate settlement, and have arrived at this Settlement through arm's-length negotiations, considering all relevant factors, present and potential.

h. Plaintiff's counsel and/or the Settlement Administrator may create a notice website with information about this Settlement after preliminary approval of this Settlement is obtained from the Superior Court, which notice website may include a copy of this Agreement and any other documents filed with the Superior Court. The notice website shall be made available (for review and comments) to Company's counsel five (5) business days in advance of making it available to the public. Plaintiff's counsel shall consider in good faith any edits, concerns, or suggestions raised by Company's counsel before the notice website is shared with the public or with the Settlement Class Members.

IT IS SO AGREED.

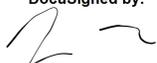
**COUNSEL FOR PLAINTIFF
BRIAN F. RODRIGUES AND
PROPOSED CLASS COUNSEL**

ENTENTE LAW PLLC

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James B. Pizl, WSBA #28969

Dated: 11/30/2023

**PLAINTIFF AND PROPOSED CLASS
REPRESENTATIVE**

DocuSigned by:

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Brian F. Rodrigues

Dated: 11/30/2023

**COUNSEL FOR DEFENDANT
NORTHWEST FIRE SYSTEMS LLC**

SEBRIS BUSTO JAMES P.S.

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Darren A. Feider, WSBA #22430

Dated: 11/30/2023

NORTHWEST FIRE SYSTEMS LLC

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By **Clark Potter III, Owner/President**

Dated: 11/30/2023

EXHIBIT A
NOTICE OF
SETTLEMENT

SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE STATE OF WASHINGTON
IN AND FOR PIERCE COUNTY

Brian F. Rodrigues v. Northwest Fire Systems LLC
Pierce County Superior Court Civil Case No. 23-2-05879-3

— NOTICE OF SETTLEMENT —

A court authorized this notice. This is not a solicitation from a lawyer. This is not a lawsuit against you, and you are not being sued. However, your legal rights are affected whether you act or not. Please read this notice carefully.

TO: All individuals who, at any time between April 3, 2020, and November 30, 2023, were employed by Northwest Fire Systems LLC in the State of Washington and worked in a position that required driving company-owned vehicles and were allowed or required to park company-owned vehicles at their homes.

- A former employee brought claims against Northwest Fire Systems LLC (“The Company”) alleging that the Company failed to pay for all hours worked, including all time driving company vehicles, failed to pay proper prevailing wage, and failed to pay proper overtime. The Company strongly denies these claims. The parties have reached a proposed Class Action Settlement.
- The Company strongly denies any fault, wrongdoing, or liability. If the Parties had not reached a Settlement, the Company would have continued to vigorously defend against Plaintiff’s claims, including seeking a denial of class certification and a full defense verdict at trial. The Company agreed to this Settlement to avoid the risk, burden, and expense of further litigation, and as a means of making its employees whole for even any arguable claims relating to the lawsuit.
- The Class Action Settlement includes a total maximum settlement payment by the Company of Gross Settlement Amount Dollars (\$550,000).
- To qualify for a share of this payment: (A) you must have been employed by the Company and worked in a position that required driving a company-owned vehicle and were allowed or required to park said vehicles at your homes in the State of Washington between April 3, 2020, and November 30, 2023; and (B) you must not exclude yourself from the Class Action Settlement in the manner outlined below.
- **If you were employed by Northwest Fire Systems LLC and worked in a position that required driving a company-owned vehicle and were allowed or required to park the company-owned vehicle at your home in the State of Washington at any time between April 3, 2020 and November 30, 2023, you do not have to do anything to be eligible to receive a share of the settlement payment.**

YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS AND OPTIONS IN THIS SETTLEMENT	
DO NOTHING	You will be eligible to get a payment for your share of the Class Action Settlement. (You may need to provide the Settlement Administrator with any updated contact information to ensure you receive a payment). You will give up rights relating to the legal claims in this Case.
ASK TO BE EXCLUDED	Get no payment. This is the only option that allows you to ever be a part of any other lawsuit against The Company with respect to the legal claims in this Case.
OBJECT	Write to the Court if you do not like the settlement and explain why. If the Settlement is approved, you will still receive a payment and you will give up rights relating to the legal claims in this Case.
GO TO A HEARING	Ask to speak in Court about the fairness of the Class Action Settlement. If the Settlement is approved, you will still receive a payment and you will give up rights relating to the legal claims in this Case.

- These rights and options—**and the deadlines to exercise them**—are explained in this Notice.
- The Court in charge of this Case still has to decide whether to finally approve the Settlement. If the Court approves the Settlement, payments will be made after any appeals are resolved. Please be patient.

1. Why did I get this Notice?

The Company's records show that you were employed by the Company and worked in a position that required driving a company-owned vehicle and were allowed or required to park said vehicles at your home in the State of Washington between April 3, 2020 and November 30, 2023. The Court has allowed this Notice to be sent to you to inform you about a proposed settlement of a class action lawsuit, and about your options, before the Court decides whether to finally approve the Settlement. If the Court approves the Settlement, and after any appeals are resolved, payments will be made to Settlement Class Members who do not affirmatively request to be excluded from the Settlement.

This Notice explains the Case, the Class Action Settlement, your legal rights, what benefits are available, who is eligible for them, and how to get them.

2. What is the Case about?

The Plaintiff, former employee Brian F. Rodrigues, claims that the Company violated Washington State wage and hour laws by failing to pay for all hours worked including, but not limited to all drive and travel time and other hours worked, by failing to pay proper prevailing wage, and by failing to pay proper overtime in conformity with the requirements of Washington law. The Company has denied the Plaintiff's claims.

The Honorable Gretchen Leanderson, of the Superior Court for the State of Washington in and for Pierce County, is overseeing this Class Action. The lawsuit is known as *Brian F. Rodrigues v. Northwest Fire Systems LLC*, Pierce County Superior Court Civil Case No. 23-2-05879-3 (the "Case").

3. What is a class action and who is involved?

In a class action lawsuit, one or more people called a “Class Representative” sues on behalf of other people whom they believe have similar claims. The people together are a “Class” or “Class Members.” The employee(s) who sued, and who represent(s) the Class, are called the Plaintiff(s).

The person the Plaintiff(s) sue(s) (in this case the Company) is called the Defendant. In a class action, one court resolves the issues for everyone in the Class—except for those people who choose to exclude themselves from the Class.

4. Why is there a Settlement?

The Court did not decide in favor of the Plaintiff or the Company. Instead, both sides agreed to a Settlement. This allows the parties to avoid the cost of a trial, and the people affected will be entitled to compensation. The Class Representative and his attorneys think the Settlement is best for everyone in the Class.

5. How do I know whether I am part of the Settlement?

As part of the Settlement of the Case, the Pierce County Superior Court has decided that everyone who fits the following description is a Settlement Class Member:

All individuals who were employed by Northwest Fire Systems LLC in Washington state and worked in a position that required driving a company-owned vehicle and required or allowed the vehicle to be parked at their homes at any time from April 3, 2020 through November 30, 2023.

As part of the Settlement of the Case, the Pierce County Superior Court has decided that everyone who fits the following description is a Settlement Subclass Member:

All Class Members who were not subject to the collective bargaining agreement between the National Fire Sprinkler Association, Inc. and Sprinkler Fitters and Apprentices Local Union No. 699 Seattle, Washington of the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada.

If it is approved, the Settlement will cover all Settlement Class Members who have not timely and affirmatively excluded themselves from the Case. To be a part of and receive any money pursuant to the Settlement, Settlement Class Members need do nothing (other than refrain from affirmatively opting out of the Settlement).

6. What claims are covered by the Settlement?

The Settlement will resolve all of the claims Settlement Class and Subclass Members could have brought against the Company regarding an alleged failure to pay for all hours worked including, but not limited to driving and travel time, failure to pay proper prevailing wages, and failure to pay proper overtime required by Washington law (collectively, the “Released Claims”).

The Released Class Claims include all claims, whether known or unknown, that were brought or that could have been brought based on any facts alleged in the Case with respect to any failure to

pay for all hours worked, failure to properly pay statutory overtime, and failure to provide meal periods and/or rest breaks. The Released Claims specifically include, but are not limited to, any claims arising out of or relating to: (1) any claims for unpaid drive and travel time or other hours worked; (2) any claims for underpaid prevailing wage; (3) any claims for improperly paid overtime; and (4) any attendant claims for unpaid wages, overtime, premium payments, exemplary damages, interest, and attorneys' fees and costs arising out of or relating to any of the foregoing.

The Release Claims by Subclass members also include any claims arising out of or relating to any alleged missed, interrupted, shortened, untimely, unpaid, and/or noncompliant rest breaks and/or meal period.

7. What are the basic terms of the Settlement?

Subject to Court approval, the essential terms of the Settlement are as follows:

The Company will pay a total of **\$550,000** as part of the Settlement, apportioned as follows:

- **Class Fund:** The Company will pay approximately **\$311,500**, which will be available for the payment of Settlement Awards to Settlement Class Members who do not timely opt out of this Settlement.
- **Employer-side Payroll Taxes:** Employer-side Payroll Taxes will be paid out of the settlement fund.
- **Attorneys' Fees and Costs Award:** The Company will pay up to \$165,000 to Plaintiff's attorney for the attorneys' fees award and up to \$8,000 for actual litigation costs they have incurred and will incur through final judgment in representing Plaintiff and the Settlement Class. This amount will be paid out of the settlement fund.
- **Service Award:** The Company will pay up to \$7,500 to Plaintiff and Class Representative Brian F. Rodrigues as a service award in recognition of his efforts in prosecuting the Case. This amount will be paid out of the settlement fund.
- **Full Release Award:** The Company will pay up to \$40,000 to Plaintiff Brian F. Rodrigues in exchange for a release of any and all, known or unknown individual claims arising out of his application for employment, employment, and/or cessation of employment with the Company. This amount will be paid out of the settlement fund.
- **Settlement Administration Expenses Award:** The Company will pay up to **\$12,000** to the Settlement Administrator for the processing of the Settlement, including the expenses of providing notice of the Settlement, handling the claims administration process, processing payments to Settlement Class Members, and handling tax reporting requirements. This amount will be paid out of the settlement fund.

Monetary Relief: The amount available to the Settlement Class is intended to compensate Settlement Class Members for the wages and other compensation they allegedly lost and damages they are allegedly owed as a result of the practices alleged in the Case.

"Weighted Hours Worked": for purposes of equitably allocating the net settlement amount among Settlement Class and Subclass Members, means the total number of hours worked by Settlement Class Members who are not Settlement Subclass Members and the total number of hours worked by Settlement Subclass Members times 1.35.

Distribution of Settlement Fund: Each Settlement Class Member who does not submit a valid and timely request for exclusion will automatically receive a settlement payment. Each Settlement Class Member who does not request exclusion shall receive a minimum settlement payment of \$200. The remaining amount from the class fund will be allocated to individual Settlement Class Members on a pro rata basis, based on weighted hours worked during the Class Period, with the amounts being calculated by dividing each Settlement Class Member's total weighted hours worked during the Class Period by the total aggregate weighted hours worked by all Settlement Class Members during the Class Period and then multiplying the resulting ratio by the portion of the class fund allocated to these payments. Checks will be mailed to Settlement Class Members by the Settlement Administrator. If any checks have not been negotiated within one hundred twenty (120) days after distribution, the funds from those checks will be sent in the corresponding Settlement Class Member's name to the Unclaimed Property Fund for the State of Washington pursuant to the Unclaimed Property Act (RCW 63.29 et seq). The Company will not receive funds from any uncashed checks.

Tax Treatment of Settlement Awards: Fifty Percent (50%) of each Settlement Class Member's settlement award will be treated as wages and subject to normal tax withholding and shall be reported to the taxing authorities and the Settlement Class Member on an IRS Form W-2. Fifty Percent (50%) of each Settlement Class Member's settlement award will be treated as non-wages (a combination of liquidated and exemplary damages, enhancements, and prejudgment interest) on which there will be no tax withholding and for which an IRS Form 1099-MISC (marked "Other Income") shall be issued to the taxing authorities and the Settlement Class Member. In addition to contributing to the Settlement Fund described above, the Company is also paying all required employer-paid taxes incurred as part of the Settlement. The Company's payment of these employer-paid taxes will not decrease the funds available to Settlement Class Members.

Release of Claims: Upon final approval by the Court, the Settlement Class and each Settlement Class Member who has not submitted a valid and timely written request to be excluded from the Settlement will irrevocably release all of the Released Claims against the Company relating to the period from April 3, 2020 through November 30, 2023.

This Release specifically includes any claims arising out of or relating to any unpaid travel time, statutory overtime, and underpaid prevailing wages and any attendant claims for unpaid wages, overtime payments, premium payments, interest, exemplary damages, and attorneys' fees and costs arising out of or relating to any of the foregoing. The release by Settlement Subclass Members includes any alleged missed, interrupted, shortened, untimely, unpaid, and/or non-compliant rest breaks and/or meal periods.

This Release requires you to waive and precludes you from bringing any Released Claims against the named Defendant in the case, Northwest Fire Systems LLC, as well as its past, current, or future predecessors, successors, and assigns, together with each of their respective parent companies, subsidiaries, related or affiliated companies, members, shareholders, owners, officers, directors, employees, agents, attorneys, and insurers, along with any other individual or entity who could be jointly or severally liable for any of the Released Claims.

Dismissal of Action: Upon final approval, the Court will enter a judgment of dismissal of the Case with prejudice but shall retain jurisdiction to enforce the terms of the settlement.

8. How can I get a payment?

To get payment, you need to do nothing. As long as you do not submit a written request to be excluded from the Settlement, you will be a Settlement Class Member and will be entitled to payment.

9. When would I get my payment?

The Court will hold a hearing on **[HEARING DATE]** to decide whether to finally approve the settlement. If the Pierce County Superior Court approves the settlement, the parties will then have to wait to see whether there is an appeal. This will take at least thirty (30) days and, if there is an appeal, can take up to a year or more to resolve. In the event of an appeal, information regarding the appeal's progress will be made available at **[WEBSITE]**. If there is no appeal, we expect payments will go out within approximately sixty (60) days of the Court's final approval of the Settlement. Please be patient.

10. Do I have a lawyer in this case?

The Court has decided that James B. Pizl and the lawyers from the law firm of Entente Law PLLC are qualified to represent you and all Settlement Class Members. These lawyers are called "Class Counsel." You will not be charged for these lawyers. If you want to be represented by our own lawyer, you may hire one at your own expense.

11. How will the lawyers be paid?

As indicated above, Class Counsel will seek payment of their attorneys' fees in the amount of \$165,000 and their litigation costs in the amount of up to \$8,000, each of which must be approved by the Court as part of the final approval of this Settlement. Class Counsel has been working on this case since approximately March 2023 and has not received any fees or reimbursements for the costs of the lawsuit.

12. How do I exclude myself from the Settlement?

If you fit the definition of a Settlement Class Member and want to exclude yourself from the Settlement, you must request exclusion in writing. You may be excluded as a member of the class by submitting a written request stating, "I request that I be excluded from the Class in the case of Brian F. Rodrigues v. Northwest Fire Systems LLC." The request must include your name, address, and signature. You must mail a copy of the letter to the Settlement Administrator at the following address **postmarked no later than [NOTICE DEADLINE]**:

Rodrigues v. Northwest Fire Systems LLC
c/o CPT GROUP INC.
50 Corporate Park
Irvine, CA 92606

If you exclude yourself from the Settlement (i.e., opt out), you will not receive any payment from the Settlement. You will also not be entitled to object to the Settlement. If you exclude yourself, you will not be bound by the terms of the Settlement, including the Release described in Sections 6 and 7, above. This means you will retain the right at your own expense to pursue (or not pursue) any claims you may have against The Company.

13. If I don't like the Settlement, how do I tell the Court?

If you are a Settlement Class Member, have not excluded yourself from the Settlement, and do not like the Settlement or the fee request, you can object. You must do so in writing, and you must state the reasons why you think the Court should not approve the Settlement. If you object, be sure to include your name, address, and telephone number, the name of the Case (Brian F. Rodrigues v. Northwest Fire Systems LLC, Pierce County Superior Court Civil Case No. 23-2-05879-3), the reasons you object to the Settlement, and a signature. You must mail a copy of the objection to the following address **postmarked no later than [OBJECTION DEADLINE]**:

Rodrigues v. Northwest Fire Systems LLC
c/o CPT GROUP INC.
50 Corporate Park
Irvine, CA 92606

14. When and where will the Court decide to approve the Settlement?

The Court will hold a Fairness Hearing at [HEARING TIME] on [HEARING DATE], before Judge Gretchen Leanderson at Pierce County Superior Court, Department 13, 930 Tacoma Ave S, Tacoma, WA 98402. If there are objections, the Court will consider them. Judge Leanderson will listen to people who have asked to speak at the hearing (*see* Section 16). After the hearing, the Court will decide whether to finally approve the Settlement, including Class Counsel's request for Attorneys' Fees and Costs, Settlement Administration Expenses, and Service Award for the named Plaintiff. We do not know how long that decision will take.

15. Do I have to come to the hearing?

No. Class Counsel will answer any questions Judge Leanderson may have, but you are welcome to attend at your own expense. If you send an objection, you do not have to come to Court to talk about it. As long as you mail or deliver your written objection on time, the Court will consider it. You may also pay your own lawyer to attend, but that is not necessary.

16. May I speak at the hearing?

You may ask the Court for permission to speak at the Fairness Hearing. To do so, you must send a letter saying it is your "Notice of Intention to Appear in Brian F. Rodrigues v. Northwest Fire Systems LLC, Pierce County Superior Court Civil Case No. 23-2-05879-3." Be sure to include your name, address, phone number, and your signature. Your Notice of Intention to Appear must be **postmarked no later than [NOTICE DEADLINE]**, and be sent to the Court, Class Counsel, and Defense Counsel at the three addresses set forth below:

Court	Class Counsel	Defense Counsel
Hon. Gretchen Leanderson Department 15 Pierce County Superior Court 930 Tacoma Ave S, Rm 334 Tacoma, WA 98402	James B. Pizl Entente Law PLLC 315 39 th Ave SW, Suite 14 Puyallup, WA 98373	Darren A. Feider Sebris Busto James P.S. 15375 SE 30 th Place, Suite 310 Bellevue, WA 98007

17. What happens if I do nothing at all?

If you do nothing—that is, if you do not mail or deliver a timely written request to exclude yourself from the Settlement—you will be part of the Settlement Class and will be entitled to a share of the Settlement. You will also be bound by the terms of the Settlement, including the Release described in Sections 6 and 7, above.

18. Are there more details about the Settlement?

This Notice summarizes the proposed Settlement. More details are in the Settlement Agreement. You can get a copy of the Settlement Agreement by visiting the website [WEBSITE], which has a copy of the Settlement Agreement posted. Plaintiff's motion for final approval of the settlement agreement, including Class Counsel's request for Attorneys' Fees and Costs, Settlement Administration Expenses, and a Service Award for the named Plaintiff will be available for you to review on [DATE] at [WEBSITE URL].