FILED
U. S. DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT ARKANSAS

# IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS WESTERN DIVISION

SEP 05 2018

JAMES W. MCCORMACK, CLERK By: DEP CLERK

JENNIFER BERRY, Individually and on Behalf of all Others Similarly Situated

**PLAINTIFF** 

VS.

No. 4:18-cv-<u>(632</u>-3m

FRIENDS FIRST, LLC

**DEFENDANT** 

### **ORIGINAL COMPLAINT—CLASS AND COLLECTIVE ACTION**

comes now Plaintiff Jennifer Berry, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated, by and through her attorneys Steve Rauls and Josh Sanford of Sanford Law Firm, PLLC, and for her Original Complaint—Class and Collective Action against Defendant Friends First, LLC ("Defendant"), does This case assigned to District Judge hereby state and allege as follows:

#### I. INTRODUCTION

1. Plaintiff, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated, brings this action under the Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 U.S.C. § 201, et seq. ("FLSA"), and the Arkansas Minimum Wage Act, Ark. Code Ann. § 11-4-201, et seq. ("AMWA"), for declaratory judgment, monetary damages, liquidated damages, prejudgment interest, civil penalties and costs, including reasonable attorneys' fees as a result of Defendant's failure to pay Plaintiff and all others similarly situated overtime compensation for all hours that Plaintiff and all others similarly situated worked in excess of forty (40) per workweek.

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2. Upon information and belief, for at least three (3) years prior to the filing of this Complaint, Defendant has willfully and intentionally committed violations of the FLSA and AMWA as described *infra*.

#### II. <u>JURISDICTION AND VENUE</u>

- 3. The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas has subject matter jurisdiction over this suit under the provisions of 28 U.S.C. § 1331 because this suit raises federal questions under the FLSA.
- 4. This Complaint also alleges violations of the AMWA, which arise out of the same set of operative facts as the federal cause of action herein alleged; accordingly, this state cause of action would be expected to be tried with the federal claim in a single judicial proceeding.
- 5. This Court has supplemental jurisdiction over Plaintiff's state law claim pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1367(a).
- 6. Defendant conducts business within the State of Arkansas, operating several pizza delivery establishments under the name Domino's Pizza.
- 7. Defendant's principal place of business is within the Western Division of the Eastern District of Arkansas.
- 8. Venue lies properly within this Court under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(1) and (c)(2), because the State of Arkansas has personal jurisdiction over Defendant, and Defendant therefore "resides" in Arkansas.

III. THE PARTIES

9. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges all the preceding paragraphs of this

Complaint as if fully set forth in this section.

10. Plaintiff is a resident and citizen of Saline County.

11. From approximately August of 2017 until April of 2018, Plaintiff was

an hourly-paid employee at Defendant's pizza stores located at 17310 Interstate-

30, Suite 1, Benton, Arkansas 72019, 2744 Albert Pike Road, Hot Springs,

Arkansas 71913, and 208 East Grand Avenue, Hot Springs, Arkansas 71901.

12. At all times material herein, Plaintiff and those similarly situated to

Plaintiff have been entitled to the rights, protections and benefits provided under

the FLSA and the AMWA.

13. Defendant is a domestic limited liability company, which operates

various Domino's franchises in Arkansas.

14. Defendant's annual gross volume of sales made or business done

was not less than \$500,000.00 (exclusive of exercise taxes at the retail level that

are separately stated) during each of the three calendar years preceding the filing

of this complaint.

15. During each of the three years preceding the filing of this

Complaint, Defendant employed at least two individuals who were engaged in

interstate commerce or in the production of goods for interstate commerce, or

had employees handling, selling, or otherwise working on goods or materials that

had been moved in or produced for commerce by any person, including goods or

materials typically used in the fast food industry.

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16. Defendant has more than four employees.

17. Defendant is an "employer" within the meanings set forth in the

FLSA and AMWA, and was, at all times relevant to the allegations in this

Complaint, Plaintiff's employer, as well as the employer of the members of the

class and collective.

18. Defendant's registered agent for service of process in the State of

Arkansas is Brent J. Medders, 8410 Counts Massie Road, Maumelle, Arkansas

72113.

IV. FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

19. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges all previous paragraphs of this

Complaint as though fully incorporated in this section.

20. Defendant owns and operates the Domino's pizza delivery

franchises located at 17310 Interstate-30, Suite 1, Benton, Arkansas 72019,

2744 Albert Pike Road, Hot Springs, Arkansas 71913, and 208 East Grand

Avenue, Hot Springs, Arkansas 71901.

21. Upon information and belief, Defendant owns and operates more

than three Domino's franchises within the State of Arkansas.

22. During the period relevant to this lawsuit, Defendant classified

Plaintiff and those similarly situated as hourly employees non-exempt from the

overtime requirements of the FLSA and the AMWA.

23. Plaintiff and other hourly employees worked more than forty (40)

hours per week on a regular basis within the three years prior to the filing of

Plaintiff's Complaint.

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24. As an hourly-paid employee, Defendant automatically clocked out

Plaintiff and other hourly-paid employees once the store had been closed to

customers. However, Defendant did not allow Plaintiff and other hourly-paid

employees to leave until the store had been fully cleaned and prepared for the

next shift.

25. These off-the-clock duties included completing paperwork,

inventory, cleaning and general store closing responsibilities.

26. Defendant also reduced the hours recorded by hourly employees

by modifying existing time clock records to reflect fewer hours than the

employees actually worked.

27. As a direct result of Defendant's policies, even though Plaintiff and

other hourly-paid employees worked more than forty (40) hours in many weeks

that they worked for Defendant during time period relevant to this Complaint, they

were not compensated for all of their overtime hours worked.

V. <u>REPRESENTATIVE ACTION ALLEGATIONS</u>

A. FLSA § 216(b) Class

28. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges all previous paragraphs of this

Complaint as though fully incorporated in this section.

29. Plaintiff brings her claims for relief for violation of the FLSA as a

collective action pursuant to Section 16(b) of the FLSA, 29 U.S.C. § 216(b), on

behalf of all persons who were, are or will be employed by Defendant as similarly

situated employees at any time within the applicable statute of limitations period,

who are entitled to payment of the following types of damages:

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A. Minimum wages for the first forty (40) hours worked each week;

B. Overtime premiums for all hours worked for Defendant in excess of

forty (40) hours in any week; and

C. Liquidated damages and attorney's fees.

30. Plaintiff proposes the following class under the FLSA:

All hourly employees at any time since September 5, 2015

31. In conformity with the requirements of FLSA Section 16(b), Plaintiff

will file her written Consent to Join this lawsuit.

32. The relevant time period dates back three years from the date on

which Plaintiff's Original Complaint—Class and Collective Action was filed herein

and continues forward through the date of judgment pursuant to 29 U.S.C. §

255(a), except as set forth herein below.

33. The members of the proposed FLSA Class are similarly situated in

that they share these traits:

A. They were classified by Defendant as non-exempt from the

minimum wage and overtime requirements of the FLSA;

B. They were subject to Defendant's common policy requiring hourly

workers to reduce their recorded hours of work by working off the clock, such as

by clocking out and continuing to work at the end of the workday; and

C. They were subject to Defendant's common policy of reducing the

recorded hours of work for hourly employees by modifying existing time clock

records.

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34. Plaintiff is unable to state the exact number of potential members of

the FLSA Class but believe that the class exceeds one hundred (100) persons.

35. Defendant can readily identify the members of the class, which

encompasses all hourly employees of Defendant's restaurants within the three-

year period preceding the filing of Plaintiff's Original Complaint.

36. The names, addresses and cell phone numbers of the FLSA

collective action plaintiffs are available from Defendant, and a Court-approved

Notice should be provided to the FLSA collective action plaintiffs via text

message, email, and first class mail to their last known physical and electronic

mailing addresses as soon as possible, together with other documents and

information descriptive of Plaintiff's FLSA claim.

B. <u>AMWA Rule 23 Classes</u>

37. Plaintiff, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated

who were employed by Defendant within the State of Arkansas, brings this claim

for relief for violation of the AMWA as a class action.

38. Plaintiff proposes to represent the class defined as follows:

All hourly employees at any time since September 5, 2015

39. Upon information and belief, Defendant has employed more than

one hundred (100) hourly employees within Arkansas within the last three (3)

years. Therefore, the proposed AMWA Class is so numerous that joinder of all

members is impracticable.

40. Common questions of law and fact relate to all of the proposed

AMWA Class members, such as:

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A. Whether Defendant had an unlawful policy requiring members of

the proposed class to perform work before they clocked in or after they clocked

out;

B. Whether Defendant had an unlawful policy of adjusting time clock

records so as to reduce class members' hours worked;

C. Whether Defendant maintained accurate records of hours worked

by members of the proposed class as required by the AMWA; and

D. Whether Defendant paid the members of the proposed class one

and one-half times their regular wages for hours worked over forty (40) in each

week in accordance with the AMWA.

41. The above common questions of law and fact predominate over

any questions affecting only the individual named Plaintiff, and a class action is

superior to other available methods for fairly and efficiently adjudicating the

claims of the members of both AMWA Classes.

42. The class members have no interest in individually controlling the

prosecution of separate actions because the policy of the AMWA provides a

bright-line rule for protecting all non-exempt employees as a class. To wit: "It is

declared to be the public policy of the State of Arkansas to establish minimum

wages for workers in order to safeguard their health, efficiency, and general well-

being and to protect them as well as their employers from the effects of serious

and unfair competition resulting from wage levels detrimental to their health.

efficiency, and well-being." Ark. Code Ann. § 11-4-202. To that end, all non-

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exempt employees must be paid for time worked over forty (40) hours per week

at a rate of one and one-half times their regular rate. Ark. Code Ann. § 11-4-211.

43. At the time of the filing of this Complaint, neither Plaintiff nor

Plaintiff's counsel knows of any litigation already in progress by any members of

the proposed class concerning the allegations in this Complaint.

44. Concentrating the litigation in this forum is highly desirable because

Defendant has a significant presence in the Eastern District of Arkansas and

because Plaintiff and all proposed Rule 23 class members work or worked within

Arkansas.

45. No difficulties are likely to be encountered in the management of

this class action.

46. Plaintiff's claim is typical of the claims of the proposed AMWA class

in that Plaintiff worked as an hourly employee for Defendant and experienced the

same violations of the AMWA that all other class members suffered.

47. Plaintiff and her counsel will fairly and adequately protect the

interests of the classes.

48. Plaintiff's counsel is competent to litigate Rule 23 class actions and

other complex litigation matters, including wage and hour cases like this one, and

to the extent, if any, that they find that they are not, they are able and willing to

associate additional counsel.

49. Plaintiff has consented in writing to the association of additional

counsel.

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50. Prosecution of separate actions by individual members of the proposed classes would create the risk of inconsistent or varying adjudications with respect to individual members of the proposed class that would establish incompatible standards of conduct for Defendant.

#### VI. FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

#### (Individual Claim for Violation of the FLSA)

- 51. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges all previous paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully incorporated in this section.
- 52. Plaintiff asserts this claim for damages and declaratory relief pursuant to the FLSA, 29 U.S.C. § 201, et seq.
- 53. At all relevant times, Defendant was Plaintiff's "employer" within the meaning of the FLSA, 29 U.S.C. § 203.
- 54. At all relevant times, Defendant has been, and continues to be, an enterprise engaged in commerce within the meaning of the FLSA, 29 U.S.C. § 203.
- 55. 29 U.S.C. §§ 206 and 207 require any enterprise engaged in commerce to pay all employees a minimum wage for all hours worked up to forty (40) in one week and to pay time and a half of regular wages for all hours worked over forty (40) hours in a week, unless an employee meets certain exemption requirements of 29 U.S.C. § 213 and all accompanying Department of Labor regulations.
- 56. During the period relevant to this lawsuit, Defendant classified Plaintiff as non-exempt from the overtime requirements of the FLSA.

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57. Despite the entitlement of Plaintiff to minimum wage and overtime

payments under the FLSA, Defendant failed to pay Plaintiff an overtime rate of

one and one-half times her regular rate of pay for all hours worked over forty (40)

in each one-week period.

58. Defendant's failure to properly pay overtime wages to Plaintiff

stems from Defendant's acts of requiring off-the-clock work by Plaintiff in excess

of forty (40) hours per week.

59. Defendant's conduct and practices, as described above, were

willful, intentional, unreasonable, arbitrary and in bad faith.

60. By reason of the unlawful acts alleged herein, Defendant is liable to

Plaintiff for monetary damages, liquidated damages, and costs, including

reasonable attorneys' fees, for all violations that occurred within the three (3)

years prior to the filing of this Complaint.

VII. SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION

(Individual Claim for Violation of the AMWA)

61. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges all previous paragraphs of this

Complaint as though fully incorporated in this section.

62. Plaintiff asserts this claim for damages and declaratory relief

pursuant to the AMWA, Arkansas Code Annotated §§ 11-4-201 et seg.

63. At all relevant times, Defendant was Plaintiff's "employer" within the

meaning of the AMWA, Ark. Code Ann. § 11-4-203(4).

64. Arkansas Code Annotated §§ 11-4-210 and 211 require employers

to pay all employees a minimum wage for all hours worked up to forty in one

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week and to pay one and one-half times regular wages for all hours worked over

forty hours in a week, unless an employee meets the exemption requirements of

29 U.S.C. § 213 and accompanying Department of Labor regulations.

65. During the period relevant to this lawsuit, Defendant classified

Plaintiff as non-exempt from the overtime requirements of the AMWA.

66. Despite the entitlement of Plaintiff to minimum wage and overtime

payments under the AMWA, Defendant failed to pay Plaintiff an overtime rate of

one and one-half times her regular rate of pay for all hours worked over forty (40)

in each one-week period.

67. Defendant's failure to properly pay overtime wages to Plaintiff

stems from Defendant's acts of requiring off-the-clock work by Plaintiff in excess

of forty (40) hours per week.

68. Defendant's conduct and practices, as described above, were

willful, intentional, unreasonable, arbitrary and in bad faith.

69. By reason of the unlawful acts alleged herein, Defendant is liable to

Plaintiff for monetary damages, liquidated damages, and costs, including

reasonable attorneys' fees, for all violations that occurred within the three (3)

years prior to the filing of this Complaint pursuant to Arkansas Code Annotated §

11-4-218.

VIII. THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

(Collective Action Claim for Violation of the FLSA)

70. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges all previous paragraphs of this

Complaint as though fully incorporated in this section.

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71. Plaintiff, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated,

asserts this claim for damages and declaratory relief pursuant to the FLSA, 29

U.S.C. § 201, et seq.

72. At all relevant times, Defendant has been, and continues to be, an

"employer" of Plaintiff and all those similarly situated within the meaning of the

FLSA, 29 U.S.C. § 203.

73. During the period relevant to this lawsuit, Defendant classified

Plaintiff and all similarly situated members of the FLSA collective as non-exempt

from the overtime requirements of the FLSA.

74. Despite the entitlement of Plaintiff and those similarly situated to

minimum wage and overtime payments under the FLSA, Defendant failed to pay

Plaintiff and all those similarly situated an overtime rate of one and one-half times

their regular rates of pay for all hours worked over forty (40) in each one-week

period.

75. Defendant's conduct and practice, as described above, has been

and is willful, intentional, unreasonable, arbitrary and in bad faith.

76. By reason of the unlawful acts alleged herein, Defendant is liable to

Plaintiff and all those similarly situated for monetary damages, liquidated

damages, and costs, including reasonable attorneys' fees, for all violations that

occurred within the three (3) years prior to the filing of this Complaint.

77. Alternatively, should the Court find that Defendant acted in good

faith in failing to pay Plaintiff and all those similarly situated as provided by the

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FLSA, Plaintiff and all those similarly situated are entitled to an award of

prejudgment interest at the applicable legal rate.

IX. FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Class Action Claim for Violation of the AMWA)

78. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges all previous paragraphs of this

Complaint as though fully incorporated in this section.

79. Plaintiff, individually and on behalf of the members of the proposed

class, asserts this claim for damages and declaratory relief pursuant to the

AMWA, Arkansas Code Annotated §§ 11-4-201, et seq.

80. At all relevant times, Defendant has been, and continues to be, an

"employer" of Plaintiff and the members of the proposed class within the meaning

of the AMWA, Ark. Code Ann. § 11-4-203(4).

81. Arkansas Code Annotated §§ 11-4-210 and 211 require employers

to pay all employees a minimum wage for all hours worked up to forty (40) in one

week and to pay one and one-half times regular wages for all hours worked over

forty (40) hours in a week, unless an employee meets the exemption

requirements of 29 U.S.C. § 213 and accompanying Department of Labor

regulations.

82. During the period relevant to this lawsuit, Defendant classified

Plaintiff and all similarly situated members of the AMWA class as non-exempt

from the overtime requirements of the AMWA.

83. Despite the entitlement of Plaintiff and those similarly situated to

minimum wage and overtime payments under the AMWA, Defendant failed to pay

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Plaintiff and all those similarly situated an overtime rate of one and one-half times

their regular rates of pay for all hours worked over forty (40) in each one-week

period.

84. Defendant's conduct and practices, as described above, were

willful, intentional, unreasonable, arbitrary and in bad faith.

85. By reason of the unlawful acts alleged herein, Defendant is liable to

Plaintiff and the proposed class for monetary damages, liquidated damages,

costs, and a reasonable attorney's fee provided by the AMWA for all violations

which occurred within the three (3) years prior to the filing of this Complaint, plus

periods of equitable tolling.

86. Alternatively, should the Court find that Defendant acted in good

faith in failing to pay Plaintiff and members of the proposed class as provided by

the AMWA, Plaintiff and members of the proposed class are entitled to an award

of prejudgment interest at the applicable legal rate.

X. PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, premises considered, Plaintiff Jennifer Berry, individually

and on behalf of all others similarly situated, respectfully prays as follows:

A. That Defendant be summoned to appear and answer this

Complaint;

B. That Defendant be required to account to Plaintiff, the class

members, and the Court for all of the hours worked by Plaintiff and the class

members and all monies paid to them;

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C. For orders regarding certification of and notice to the proposed

collective action members;

D. A declaratory judgment that Defendant's practices alleged herein

violate the Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 U.S.C. § 201, et seq., and attendant

regulations at 29 C.F.R. § 516 et seq.;

E. A declaratory judgment that Defendant's practices alleged herein

violate the Arkansas Minimum Wage Act, Ark. Code Ann. § 11-4-201, et seq. and

the related regulations;

F. Judgment for damages for all unpaid overtime compensation owed

to Plaintiff and the proposed class members under the Fair Labor Standards Act,

29 U.S.C. § 201, et seq., and attendant regulations at 29 C.F.R. § 516 et seq.;

G. Judgment for damages for all unpaid overtime compensation under

the Arkansas Minimum Wage Act, Ark. Code Ann. § 11-4-201, et seq. and the

related regulations;

H. Judgment for liquidated damages pursuant to the Fair Labor

Standards Act, 29 US.C. § 201, et seq., and attendant regulations at 29 C.F.R. §

516 et seq., in an amount equal to all unpaid overtime compensation owed to

Plaintiff and the proposed class members during the applicable statutory period;

I. Judgment for liquidated damages pursuant to the Arkansas

Minimum Wage Act, Ark. Code Ann. § 11-4-201, et seq., and the relating

regulations;

J. For a reasonable attorneys' fee, costs, and pre-judgment interest:

and

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K. Such other and further relief as this Court may deem necessary, just and proper.

Respectfully submitted,

JENNIFER BERRY, Individually and on Behalf of All Others Similarly Similarly Situated, PLAINTIFF

SANFORD LAW FIRM, PLLC ONE FINANCIAL CENTER 650 SOUTH SHACKLEFORD, SUITE 411 LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72211 TELEPHONE: (501) 221-0088 FACSIMILE: (888) 787-2040

Steve Rauls

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Josh Sanford

Ark. Bar No 2001037 josh@sanfordlawfirm.com

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

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I. (a) PLAINTIFFS				DEFENDANTS							
JENNIFER BERRY, Individually and on Behalf of all Others Similar Situated				FRIENDS FIRST, LLC							
(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)				County of Residence of First Listed Defendant							
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South Shackleford, Suite	411, Little Rock, Arka		., 000								
501-221-0088; josh@sar	fordlawfirm.com										
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230 Rent Lease & Ejectment	☐ 442 Employment	510 Motions to Vacate	e	•	□ 871 IR			i i	view or App		
<ul> <li>240 Torts to Land</li> <li>245 Tort Product Liability</li> </ul>	443 Housing/ Accommodations	Sentence  530 General			- 1	26 U	ISC 7609	Agency 950 Constitu	Decision	c	
290 All Other Real Property	445 Amer. w/Disabilities -		10.5	A RELIGIOUS AND				State St	•	<b>91</b>	
	Employment	Other:		2 Naturalization Applica							
	446 Amer. w/Disabilities - Other	<ul><li>540 Mandamus &amp; Oth</li><li>550 Civil Rights</li></ul>	ner 🔲 46	55 Other Immigration Actions	1						
	448 Education	555 Prison Condition	ı	Actions	1			1			
		560 Civil Detainee -			i			1			
		Conditions of Confinement	1								
V. ORIGIN (Place an "X" ii	n One Box Onlv)							1			
1 Original 2 Re	moved from 3	Remanded from Appellate Court	□ 4 Rein Reop	pened An	ansferred other Di		6 Multidistr		Multidis Litigatio	n -	
	Cite the U.S. Civil Sta	tute under which you a	re filing (		ecify) I <b>statutes</b>	unless di	Transfer		Direct Fi	ie	
VI. CAUSE OF ACTION	29 U.S.C. 201 et s	seq.									
VI. CAUSE OF ACTIO	Brief description of ca	iuse:									
VII. REQUESTED IN	Unpaid Wages	TO 4 CT 4 CO 4 CTT C	· D	EMAND C			THEOR WEG1	10.11.11			
VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT: CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER RULE 23, F.R.Cv.P.			V D	EMAND \$ CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint:  JURY DEMAND:							
VIII. RELATED CASI	E(S)	White 1 L. C		****							
IF ANY	(See instructions):	JUDGE				DOCKE	ET NUMBER				
DATE		SIGNATURE OF AT	TORNEY (	OF RECORD							
September 5, 2018		s/ Josh Sanford	>~ ~	9							
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY		<u> </u>	0								
RECEIPT # AM	MOUNT	APPLYING IFP		JUDG	E		MAG. JUD	OGE			

## **ClassAction.org**

This complaint is part of ClassAction.org's searchable class action lawsuit database and can be found in this post: Former Domino's Employee Owed OT Wages for Off-the-Clock Work, Lawsuit Alleges