e 1 of 13 FILED U. S. DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT ARKANSAS

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

JAMES W. McCORMACK, CLERK

JUL 27 2018

SCOTT AVERY WILSON, Individually and on Behalf of All Others Similarly Situated

PLAINTIFF

VS.

4:18-cv-491-5WW

FILTREX SERVICE GROUP, INC., and CHRISTOPHER BLOUNT

DEFENDANTS

This case assigned to District Judge Longh

ORIGINAL COMPLAINT—COLLECTIVE ACTION

COMES NOW Plaintiff Scott Avery Wilson, individually and on behalf of others similarly situated, by and through his attorneys Daniel Ford, Chris Burks and Josh Sanford of Sanford Law Firm, PLLC, and for his Original Complaint—Collective Action ("Complaint") against Defendant Filtrex Service Group, Inc., and Christopher Blount (collectively "Defendants"), and in support thereof he does hereby state and allege as follows:

I. PRELIMINARY STATEMENTS

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 attorney's fees, as a result of Defendants' commonly applied policy and practice of failing to pay Plaintiff and all others similarly situated overtime wages as required by the FLSA and the AMWA.

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

II. JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 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. Accordingly, this Court has jurisdiction pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331 and 28 U.S.C. § 1337.
- 5. Plaintiff's claim under the AMWA form part of the same case or controversy and arise out of the same facts as the FLSA claims alleged in this complaint.
- 6. Therefore, this Court has supplemental jurisdiction over Plaintiff's state law claims pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1367(a).
- 7. The acts and omissions complained of herein were committed and had a principal effect, as described more fully below, within the Western Division of the Eastern District of Arkansas; therefore, venue is proper within this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391.

III. THE PARTIES

- 8. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges all the preceding paragraphs of this Complaint as if fully set forth in this section.
- 9. Plaintiff Avery Wilson is an individual and resident and domiciliary of Lonoke County.

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10. Plaintiff was employed by Defendants as a technician from March of 2018

until July of 2018.

11. At all times material herein, Plaintiff has been entitled to the rights,

protection and benefits provided under the FLSA and the AMWA.

12. Separate Defendant Filtrex Service Group, Inc., is an Oklahoma for-profit,

foreign corporation that does business in the State of Arkansas.

13. Separate Defendant Filtrex Service Group, Inc.'s primary business

purpose is to provide the commercial, retail and restaurant industries HVAC/R asset

tracking, coil cleaning and maintenance, energy management and equipment

evaluations.

14. Separate Defendant Filtrex Service Group, Inc.'s annual gross volume of

sales made or business done was not less than \$500,000.00 (exclusive of excise 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,

Separate Defendant Filtrex Service Group, Inc., has at least two employees that handle,

sell, or otherwise work on goods or materials that have been moved in or produced for

interstate commerce.

16. Separate Defendant Filtrex Service Group, Inc. was at all times relevant

hereto Plaintiff's employer and is and has been engaged in interstate commerce as that

term is defined under the FLSA.

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17. Separate Defendant Filtrex Service Group, Inc., has designated Larry

Houston Cardwell, Jr., at 1623 East Apache Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 74106, to accept

service on its behalf as its registered agent.

18. Separate Defendant Christopher Blount is a citizen and resident of the

state of Arkansas.

19. Separate Defendant Christopher Blount's principal address is 920 E. 36th

Pl. Tulsa, Oklahoma 74105.

20. Separate Defendant Christopher Blount's annual gross volume of sales

made or business done was not less than \$500,000.00 (exclusive of excise taxes at the

retail level that are separately stated) during each of the three calendar years preceding

the filing of this Complaint.

21. During each of the three years preceding the filing, Separate Defendant

Christopher Blount has at least two employees that handle, sell, or otherwise work on

goods or materials that have been moved in or produced for interstate commerce.

22. Separate Defendant Christopher Blount was at all times relevant hereto

Plaintiff's employer and is and has been engaged in interstate commerce as that term is

defined under the FLSA.

23. Separate Defendant Christopher Blount, an individual, has operational

control and management over employees, including shared power to supervise, hire

and fire, establish wages and wage policies and set schedules for their employees

through unified management.

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24. Specifically, Separate Defendant Christopher Blount established and

communicated the pay policy applicable to Plaintiff and all others similarly situated in

this lawsuit.

27.

25. Upon information and believe, revenue from HVAC service operations was

merged and managed in a unified manner.

26. As a result of this unified operation, control and management, through

shared employees and ownership with the authority to establish wages and wage

policy, Defendants operated as a single enterprise.

Separate Defendants Filtrex Service Group, Inc., and Christopher Blount

acted jointly as the employer of Plaintiff and the proposed collective members.

IV. FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

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

as though fully incorporated in this section.

29. Defendants' primary business purpose is to provide HVAC/R maintenance

and energy management, and Defendants employ technicians to accomplish this

purpose.

30. Within three years prior to the filing of this Complaint, Defendants hired

Plaintiff, among other individuals, to perform HVAC/R service duties at Defendants'

customer locations across the country.

31. Defendants hired Plaintiff and set his work schedule, including the hours

to be worked.

32. Defendants exercised comprehensive control over the employment of its

technicians, including Plaintiff's employment.

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33. Defendants required technicians to follow a fixed schedule in performing

their duties.

34. Specifically, Defendants required technicians to work approximately sixty

(60) hours a week, with some employees required to work more.

35. Technicians could not refuse to travel to and work on certain assigned

projects.

36. Defendants set the pay rate for technicians. During the statutory period,

Defendants compensated HVAC service technicians, including Plaintiff, by paying them

a day rate for all hours worked, which Defendants would sometimes lower based on

how many jobs technicians completed in a day.

37. Plaintiff and other technicians regularly worked over forty (40) hours per

week.

38. Plaintiff and other technicians received the same day rate regardless of

the number of hours they worked in a day or work week.

39. Defendants did not pay Plaintiff or other technicians an overtime premium

for hours that they worked over forty (40) hours per week.

40. In other words, if any technician worked more than forty (40) hours per

week, Defendants' practice was not to pay that employee an overtime premium of one

and one half (1.5) times the technicians' regular rate for the hours over forty (40).

41. Defendants knew or should have known that the job duties of Plaintiff

required Plaintiff to work hours in excess of forty (40) per week, yet Defendants failed

and refused to compensate Plaintiff for his work as required by the FLSA and the

AMWA.

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42. At all times relevant hereto, Defendants were aware of the minimum wage

and overtime requirements of the FLSA and the AMWA.

V. REPRESENTATIVE ACTION ALLEGATIONS

FLSA 216(b) Collective Action

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

as though fully incorporated in this section.

44. Plaintiff brings his 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 Defendants 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:

A. Payment for all hours worked and overtime premiums for all hours worked

for Defendants in excess of forty (40) hours in a workweek; and

B. Liquidated damages and attorneys' fees and costs.

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

the FLSA collective but believes that the group exceeds thirty (30) persons. Defendants

can readily identify the members of the FLSA collective, who are a certain portion of the

current and former employees of Defendants'.

46. The names and physical and mailing addresses of the probable FLSA

collective action Plaintiffs are available from Defendants, and notice should be provided

to the probable FLSA collective action Plaintiffs via first class mail to their last known

physical and mailing addresses as soon as possible.

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47. The email addresses of many of the probable FLSA collective action

Plaintiffs are available from Defendants, and notice should be provided to the probable

FLSA collective action Plaintiffs via email to their last known email address as soon as

possible.

48. The phone numbers of many of the probable FLSA collective action

Plaintiffs are available from Defendants, and notice should be provided to the probable

FLSA collective action Plaintiffs via text message to their last known phone number as

soon as possible.

49. The proposed collective of opt-in Plaintiff in this case is preliminarily

defined as follows:

Each technician employed by Defendants any time during the three years preceding the filing of the Complaint.

50. The proposed FLSA collective members are similarly situated in that they

share these traits:

A. They were misclassified by Defendants as exempt from the overtime

requirements of the FLSA;

B. They were paid a day rate;

C. They performed the same or similar job duties;

D. They were subject to Defendants' common practice of denying pay for all

hours worked, including overtime pay for some hours worked over forty (40) per week.

E. They were subject to numerous other common policies and practices as

described supra.

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VI. FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION (Individual Claim for FLSA Overtime Violations)

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

Complaint as if fully set forth in this section.

52. 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 one and one-half times (1.5) 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.

53. During the relevant time period, Defendants unlawfully refrained from

paying Plaintiff a proper overtime premium for hours over forty (40) per week.

54. Defendants' conduct and practice, as described above, has been and is

willful, intentional unreasonable arbitrary and in bad faith.

55. By reason of the unlawful acts alleged herein, Defendants are 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.

56. Alternatively, should the Court find that Defendants acted in good faith in

failing to pay Plaintiff as provided by the FLSA, Plaintiff is entitled to an award of

prejudgment interest at the applicable legal rate.

VII. SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION (Collective Action Claim for Violations of the FLSA)

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

as though fully incorporated in this section.

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58. Plaintiff, 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.

59. During the relevant time period, Defendants unlawfully refrained from

paying technicians a proper minimum wage and overtime premium for hours over forty

(40) per week.

60. Defendants failed to pay an overtime premium for some hours worked

over forty (40) and failed to pay Plaintiff and other technicians their regular rate of or an

overtime premium for additional hours worked over 40 (forty).

61. Plaintiff proposes to represent a class of individuals who are owed

overtime wages and other damages for the same reasons as Plaintiff, which may be

defined as follows:

Each technician employed by Defendants any time during the three years preceding the filing of the Complaint.

62. Defendants' conduct and practice, as described above, has been and is

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

63. By reason of the unlawful acts alleged herein, Defendants are liable to

members of the Section 216 class 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.

64. Alternatively, should the Court find that Defendants acted in good faith in

failing to pay Plaintiff and all those similarly situated as provided by the FLSA, Plaintiff

and all those similarly situated are entitled to an award of prejudgment interest at the

applicable legal rate.

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VIII. THIRD CLAIM FOR RELIEF

(Individual Claim for Violation of the AMWA)

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

as though fully incorporated in this section.

66. Plaintiff asserts this claim for damages and declaratory relief pursuant to

the AMWA.

67. At all relevant times, Defendants were Plaintiff's "employer" within the

meaning of the AMWA.

68. Arkansas Code Annotated § 11-4-211 requires 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 (1.5) 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.

69. Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff all overtime wages owed, as required

under the AMWA.

70. Despite the entitlement of Plaintiff to payment of a lawful minimum wage

and overtime payments under the AMWA, Defendants failed to pay Plaintiff a lawful

overtime premium.

71. Defendants' conduct and practices, as described above, was willful,

intentional, unreasonable, arbitrary and in bad faith.

72. By reason of the unlawful acts alleged in this Complaint, Defendants are

liable to Plaintiff for monetary damages, liquidated damages, costs, and a reasonable

attorney's fee provided by the AMWA for all violations which occurred beginning at least

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three (3) years preceding the filing of Plaintiff's initial complaint, plus periods of

equitable tolling.

73. Alternatively, should the Court find that Defendants acted in good faith in

failing to pay Plaintiff as provided by the AMWA, Plaintiff is entitled to an award of

prejudgment interest at the applicable legal rate.

IX. PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, premises considered, Plaintiff Scott Avery Wilson, individually

and on behalf of others similarly situated, respectfully prays for declaratory relief and

damages as follows:

A. That Defendants be summoned to appear and answer herein;

B. That Defendants be required to account to Plaintiff, the collective

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

members and all monies paid to them;

C. A declaratory judgment that Defendants' practices alleged herein violate

the FLSA and attendant regulations at 29 C.F.R. § 516 et seq.;

D. A declaratory judgment that Defendants' practices alleged herein violate

the AMWA and attendant regulations:

E. Certification of, and proper notice to, together with an opportunity to

participate in the litigation, all qualifying members of the collective action;

F. Judgment for damages for all unpaid overtime compensation under the

FLSA and attendant regulations at 29 C.F.R. § 516 et seq.; and the AMWA.

G. Judgment for liquidated damages pursuant to the FLSA and attendant

regulations at 29 C.F.R. § 516 et seq., in an amount equal to all unpaid overtime

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compensation owed to Plaintiff and putative collective action members during the applicable statutory period;

- H. An order directing Defendants to pay Plaintiff and members of the collective action prejudgment interest, reasonable attorney's fees and all costs connected with this action; and
- I. Such other and further relief as this Court may deem necessary, just and proper.

Respectfully submitted,

SCOTT AVERY WILSON, Individually and on Behalf of All Others Similarly Situated, PLAINTIFF

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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				DEFENDANT	rs .				
SCOTT AVERY WILSON, Individually and On Behalf of All Others Similarly Situated				FILTREX SERVICE GROUP, INC., and CHRISTOPHER BLOUNT					
(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff Lonoke (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)				County of Residence of First Listed Defendant (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY) NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.					
(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Josh Sanford, SANFORI 650 South Shackleford, 9 501-221-0088; josh@sal	D LAW FIRM, PLLC, (Suite 411, Little Rock,	One Financial Cente	er,	Attorneys (If Know	n)				
II. BASIS OF JURISD	ICTION (Place an "X" in C	ne Box Only)	III. CI	TIZENSHIP OF	PRINCIPA	L PARTIES	(Place an "X" in	One Box f	or Plaintif
1 U.S. Government Plaintiff	■ 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government)	Not a Party)		(For Diversity Cases Only		Incorporated or Pr	and One Box for incipal Place		
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110 Insurance 120 Marine 130 Miller Act 140 Negotiable Instrument 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment 151 Medicare Act 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans (Excludes Veterans) 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits 160 Stockholders' Suits 190 Other Contract 195 Contract Product Liability 196 Franchise 210 Land Condemnation 220 Foreclosure 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment 240 Torts to Land 245 Tort Product Liability 290 All Other Real Property	PERSONAL INJURY 310 Airplane 315 Airplane Product Liability 320 Assault, Libel & Slander 330 Federal Employers' Liability 340 Marine 345 Marine Product Liability 350 Motor Vehicle 355 Motor Vehicle Product Liability 360 Other Personal Injury Medical Malpractice 440 Other Civil Rights 441 Voting 442 Employment 443 Housing/ Accommodations 445 Amer. w/Disabilities - Employment 446 Amer. w/Disabilities - Other 448 Education	PERSONAL INJUR 365 Personal Injury - Product Liability 367 Health Care/ Pharmaceutical Personal Injury Product Liability 368 Asbestos Persona Injury Product Liability PERSONAL PROPEE 370 Other Fraud 371 Truth in Lending 380 Other Personal Property Damage Product Liability Habeas Corpus: 463 Alien Detainee 510 Motions to Vacate Sentence 530 General 535 Death Penalty Other: 540 Mandamus & Oth 550 Civil Rights 555 Prison Condition 560 Civil Detainee - Conditions of Confinement	1	5 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881 0 Other 0 Fair Labor Standards Act 0 Labor/Management Relations 0 Railway Labor Act 1 Family and Medical Leave Act 0 Other Labor Litigation 1 Employee Retirement Income Security Act 2 Naturalization Applicati 5 Other Immigration Actions	423 With 28 U 820 Copy 830 Pater 835 Pater 840 Trad 864 SIII 863 DIW 864 SSII 865 RSI 870 Taxe 871 IRS—26 U	rrights at - Abbreviated Drug Application emark (1395ff) k Lung (923) C/DIWW (405(g)) D Title XVI (405(g))	□ 480 Consum □ 490 Cable/S: □ 850 Securiti □ Exchan; □ 890 Other St □ 891 Agricult □ 893 Environ; □ 895 Freedon Act □ 896 Arbitratt □ 899 Adminis	n (31 USC)) apportions it nd Bankin, ree tion organization Credit at TV es/Commo ge tatutory Ac tural Acts mental Mat n of Inform ion strative Pre iew or App iew or	ment g ced and ions ditties/ ctions cters nation occdure peal of
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VI. CAUSE OF ACTIO	120115 € 201 6	nuse:	re filing <i>(I</i>			versity):			
VII. REQUESTED IN CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER RULE 23, F.R.Cv.P.			N Di	EMAND \$ CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint: JURY DEMAND: □ Yes ※No					
VIII. RELATED CASI IF ANY	E(S) (See instructions):	JUDGE			DOCKE	T NUMBER			
DATE	SIGNATURE OF ACTORNEY OF RECORD								
07/27/2018 FOR OFFICE USE ONLY		- (Y/)							
	MOUNT	APPLYING IFP		JUDGE		MAG. JUD	GE		

ClassAction.org

This complaint is part of ClassAction.org's searchable class action lawsuit database and can be found in this post: Former Technician Sues Filtrex Service Group Over Allegedly Unpaid Wages