

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK**

MEGAN PERKINS,)
)
 Plaintiff,)
)
 v.)
)
 THE NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY,)
 d/b/a *THE NEW YORK TIMES*,)
)
 Defendant.)
 _____)

Civil Action No. 1:22-cv-05202-PKC

CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

This Agreement (“Agreement” or “Settlement Agreement”) is entered into by and among (i) Plaintiff Megan Perkins (“Plaintiff”); (ii) the Settlement Class (as defined herein); and (iii) Defendant The New York Times Company (“Defendant” or “NYT”). The Settlement Class and Plaintiff are collectively referred to as the “Plaintiffs” unless otherwise noted. The Plaintiffs and the Defendant are collectively referred to herein as the “Parties.” This Agreement is intended by the Parties to fully, finally, and forever resolve, discharge, and settle the Released Claims (as defined herein), upon and subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement, and subject to the final approval of the Court.

RECITALS

A. This putative class action was filed on June 21, 2022, in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York. The material allegations of the action are that Defendant enrolled Plaintiff and other Class Members in automatic renewal newspaper subscriptions without providing or formatting certain disclosures as required under a North Carolina statute, N.C.G.S. § 75-41 (the “ARS”). Based on Defendant’s alleged conduct, the Complaint sought monetary relief and brought claims for: (1) violation of N.C.G.S. § 75-41

(Count One); (2) unfair and deceptive trade practices under North Carolina law (Count Two); and (3) unjust enrichment (Count 3). (Dkt. 1.)

B. In response to the complaint, on September 9, 2022, Defendant filed a motion to dismiss under Rule 12(b)(6), arguing that Plaintiff failed to state a claim upon which relief could be granted. (Dkt. 22–24.) Among other things, Defendant argued that it complied with the ARS; that Plaintiff failed to allege facts supporting a claim for unfair and deceptive trade practices and because ARS subsection 75-41(e) sets forth the exclusive remedy for a violation of the ARS ; and that Plaintiff failed to state an unjust enrichment claim because the parties’ relationship was governed by an express contract. Plaintiff filed her opposition brief on September 30, 2022 (Dkt. 32), and Defendant filed a reply brief on October 14, 2022 (Dkt. 27).

C. On May 23, 2023, the Court issued an Opinion and Order granting in part and denying in part Defendant’s motion to dismiss. (Dkt. 33). The Court denied the motion as to Plaintiff’s claims asserted in Count One under ARS subsections 75-41(a)(2) and (a)(4). The Court deemed Plaintiff’s claim asserted in Count One under ARS subsection 75-41(a)(3) to be voluntarily dismissed and granted the motion as to the remainder of Count One and the entirety of Counts Two and Three.

D. Defendant answered the complaint on June 6, 2023. (Dkt. 35). The Parties engaged in a Rule 26(f) planning conference and a Rule 16 scheduling conference, and the Court issued a Civil Case Management Plan and Scheduling Order. (Dkt. 40–42, 45).

E. The Parties proceeded to fact discovery, which closed on April 18, 2024. Through discovery, the Parties were able to assess the size and scope of the putative class, along with the strengths and weakness of the claims and defenses.

F. After the close of fact discovery, the Parties engaged in mediation before Mark E. Isserles, an experienced neutral affiliated with JAMS.

G. The mediation took place on April 25, 2024, was conducted by Zoom, and lasted approximately five hours. The Parties engaged in good faith negotiations, which at all times were at arms' length. Although the Parties were unable to reach an agreement at the mediation itself, they continued to discuss settlement through Mr. Isserles and, with his help, were able to reach an agreement on all material terms of a class action settlement. The Parties thereafter executed a term sheet.

H. On May 13, 2024, the Parties filed a joint letter informing the Court that the Parties had reached agreement on all material terms of a class action settlement and requesting that the Court enter an order staying all upcoming deadlines. On May 14, 2024, the Court entered an order granting in part and denying in part the Parties' request, staying all deadlines on the condition that a motion for preliminary approval of a class settlement be filed by July 12, 2024.

I. At all times, Defendant has denied and continues to deny any wrongdoing whatsoever and has denied and continues to deny that it committed any wrongful act or violation of law or duty alleged in the Action, and has opposed and continues to oppose certification of a litigation class. Defendant believes that the claims asserted in the Action do not have merit and that Defendant would have prevailed at summary judgment or at trial. Nonetheless, taking into account the uncertainty and risks inherent in any litigation, and the desire for finality and closure of this Action, Defendant has concluded it is desirable and beneficial that the Action be fully and finally settled and terminated in the manner and upon the terms and conditions set forth in this Agreement. This Agreement is a compromise, and the Agreement, any related documents, and any negotiations resulting in it shall not be construed as or deemed to be evidence of or an admission or concession of liability or wrongdoing on the part of Defendant, or any of the Released Parties (defined below), with respect to any claim of any fault or liability or

wrongdoing or damage whatsoever or with respect to the certifiability of a litigation class.

J. Plaintiff believes that the claims asserted in the Action against Defendant have merit and that she would have prevailed at summary judgment and/or trial. Nonetheless, Plaintiff and Class Counsel recognize that Defendant has raised factual and legal defenses that present a risk that Plaintiff may not prevail. Plaintiff and Class Counsel also recognize the expense and delay associated with continued prosecution of the Action against Defendant through class certification, summary judgment, trial, and any subsequent appeals. Plaintiff and Class Counsel also have taken into account the uncertain outcome and risks of litigation, especially in complex class actions, as well as the difficulties inherent in such litigation. Therefore, Plaintiff believes it is desirable that the Released Claims be fully and finally compromised, settled, and resolved with prejudice. Based on its evaluation, Class Counsel has concluded that the terms and conditions of this Agreement are fair, reasonable, and adequate to the Settlement Class, and that it is in the best interests of the Settlement Class to settle the claims raised in the Action pursuant to the terms and provisions of this Agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY STIPULATED AND AGREED by and among Plaintiff, the Settlement Class, and each of them, and Defendant, by and through its undersigned counsel that, subject to final approval of the Court after a hearing or hearings as provided for in this Settlement Agreement, in consideration of the benefits flowing to the Parties from the Agreement set forth herein, that the Action and the Released Claims will be finally and fully compromised, settled, and released, and the Action will be dismissed with prejudice, upon and subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

AGREEMENT

1. DEFINITIONS.

As used in this Settlement Agreement, the following terms have the meanings specified below:

1.1 “Action” means *Perkins v. The New York Times Company*, Case No. 1:22-cv-05202-PKC, pending in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York.

1.2 “Alternate Judgment” means a form of final judgment that may be entered by the Court herein but in a form other than the form of Judgment provided for in this Agreement and where none of the Parties elects to terminate this Settlement by reason of such variance.

1.3 “Approved Claim” means a Claim Form submitted by a Settlement Class Member for cash payment from the Settlement Fund that is: (a) submitted timely and in accordance with the directions on the Claim Form and the provisions of the Settlement Agreement, as determined by the Settlement Administrator; (b) fully and truthfully completed by a Settlement Class Member with all of the information requested in the Claim Form; (c) signed by the Settlement Class Member, physically or electronically under penalty of perjury; and (d) approved by the Settlement Administrator pursuant to the provisions of this Agreement.

1.4 “Claim Form” means the document substantially in the form attached hereto as **Exhibit A**, as approved by the Court. The Claim Form shall be submitted by Settlement Class Members seeking a cash payment pursuant to this Settlement Agreement. The Claim Form will be available online at the Settlement Website (defined at paragraph 1.38 below).

1.5 “Claims Deadline” means the date by which all Claim Forms must be postmarked or received, including by electronic submission via the Settlement Website, to be considered timely and will be set as a date no later than forty-five (45) days following the dissemination of Notice to the Settlement Class by the Settlement Administrator, pursuant to the

terms herein. The Claims Deadline will be clearly set forth in the Preliminary Approval Order, and will be stated on the Notice and the Claim Form.

1.6 “Class Counsel” means J. Hunter Bryson and Nick Suciu III of the law firm of Milberg Coleman Bryson Phillips Grossman, PLLC, and Philip L. Fraietta and Alec Leslie of the law firm of Bursor & Fisher, P.A.

1.7 “Class Period” means the period of time from June 21, 2018, to and through June 2, 2023.

1.8 “Class Representative” means the named Plaintiff in this Action, Megan Perkins.

1.9 “Court” means the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, the Honorable P. Kevin Castel presiding, or any judge who will succeed him as the Judge in this Action.

1.10 “Defendant” or “NYT” means The New York Times Company.

1.11 “Defendant’s Counsel” means Stephen V. Carey and Jasmine Little of the law firm of Parker Poe Adams and Bernstein LLP and Demetri B. Blaisdell, Karen A. Chesley, and David E. McCraw of The New York Times Company.

1.12 “Effective Date” means the date ten (10) days after which all of the events and conditions specified in paragraph 9.1 have been met and have occurred.

1.13 “Escrow Account” means the “Escrow Account” means the separate, interest-bearing escrow account to be established by the Settlement Administrator under terms acceptable to all Parties at a depository institution insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. The Settlement Fund shall be deposited by Defendant into the Escrow Account in accordance with the terms of this Agreement and the money in the Escrow Account shall be invested in the following types of accounts and/or instruments and no other: (i) demand deposit accounts and/or

(ii) time deposit accounts and certificates of deposit, in either case with maturities of forty-five (45) days or less. The costs of establishing and maintaining the Escrow Account shall be paid from the Settlement Fund.

1.14 “Fee Award” means the amount of attorneys’ fees and reimbursement of expenses awarded by the Court to Class Counsel, which will be paid out of the Settlement Fund.

1.15 “Final Approval Date” means one (1) business day following the latest of the following events: (i) the date upon which the time expires for filing or noticing any appeal of the Court’s Final Judgment approving the Settlement Agreement, if no appeal has been filed; (ii) if there is an appeal or appeals, other than an appeal or appeals solely with respect to the Fee Award, the date of completion, in a manner that finally affirms and leaves in place the Final Judgment without any material modification, of all proceedings arising out of the appeal or appeals (including, but not limited to, the expiration of all deadlines for motions for reconsideration or petitions for review and/or *certiorari*, all proceedings ordered on remand, and all proceedings arising out of any subsequent appeal or appeals following decisions on remand); or (iii) the date of final dismissal of any appeal or the final dismissal of any proceeding on *certiorari*.

1.16 “Final Approval Hearing” means the hearing before the Court where the Parties will request the Final Judgment to be entered by the Court approving the Settlement Agreement, the Fee Award, and the Incentive Award to the Class Representative.

1.17 “Final Judgment” means the Final Judgment and Order to be entered by the Court approving the Agreement after the Final Approval Hearing, which is substantially in the form of **Exhibit B** attached hereto.

1.18 “Incentive Award” means any award approved by the Court that is payable to the Plaintiff from the Settlement Fund.

1.19 “Net Settlement Fund” means the amount of the Settlement Fund remaining after payment of Settlement Administration Expenses, incentive award to the Class Representative, and the Fee Award.

1.20 “Notice” means the notice of this proposed Class Action Settlement Agreement and Final Approval Hearing, which is to be sent to the Settlement Class substantially in the manner set forth in this Agreement, consistent with the requirements of Due Process, Rule 23, and substantially in the form of **Exhibits C-E** hereto.

1.21 “Notice Plan” means the Settlement Administrator’s plan to disseminate Notice to Settlement Class Members as further detailed in paragraph 4.1.

1.22 “Notice Date” means the publication of notice pursuant paragraph 4.1(b) of this Agreement, which shall be no later than twenty-eight (28) days after the Preliminary Approval Order.

1.23 “NYT Subscriptions” means all of Defendant’s print and digital subscription offerings in the state of North Carolina.

1.24 “Objection/Exclusion Deadline” means the date by which a written objection to this Settlement Agreement or a request for exclusion submitted by a Person within the Settlement Class must be made, which shall be designated as a date no later than forty-five (45) days after the Notice Date and no sooner than fourteen (14) days after papers supporting the Fee Award are filed with the Court and posted to the settlement website listed in paragraph 4.1(e), or such other date as ordered by the Court.

1.25 “Person” shall mean, without limitation, any individual, corporation, partnership, limited partnership, limited liability company, association, joint stock company, estate, legal representative, trust, unincorporated association, government or any political subdivision or agency thereof, and any business or legal entity and their spouse, parent, child, guardian,

associate, co-owners, heirs, predecessors, successors, representatives, or assigns. “Person” is not intended to include any governmental agencies or governmental actors, including, without limitation, any state Attorney General office.

1.26 “Plaintiff” means Megan Perkins.

1.27 “Preliminary Approval” means the Court’s entry of an order preliminarily approving the terms and conditions of this Settlement Agreement, including the manner of providing, and content of, the notice to Settlement Class Members.

1.28 “Preliminary Approval Date” means the date on which the Court enters an order granting Preliminary Approval.

1.29 “Preliminary Approval Order” means the order preliminarily approving the Settlement Agreement, conditionally certifying the Settlement Class for settlement purposes, and directing notice thereof to the Settlement Class, which will be agreed upon by the Parties and submitted to the Court in conjunction with Plaintiffs’ motion for preliminary approval of the Agreement. The Parties’ proposed form of Preliminary Approval Order is attached hereto as **Exhibit F**.

1.30 “Released Claims” means any and all causes of action or claims for relief, whether in law or equity, including but not limited to injunctive relief, actual damages, nominal damages, statutory damages, punitive damages, exemplary or multiplied damages, restitution, disgorgement, expenses, attorneys’ fees and costs, and/or any other form of consideration whatsoever (including “Unknown Claims” as defined below), whether in law or in equity, accrued or un-accrued, direct, individual or representative, of every nature and description whatsoever, that were brought or could have been brought in the Action relating to any and all Releasing Parties, any NYT Subscription associated with any of them, or that in any way relate to or arise out of Defendant’s automatic renewal and/or continuous service programs in North

Carolina from June 21, 2018 to date of entry of judgment in this action, including but not limited to any of the facts, transactions, events, matters, occurrences, acts, disclosures, statements, representations, omissions or failures to act related thereto.

1.31 “Released Parties” means The New York Times Company, as well as any and all of its respective present or past heirs, executors, estates, administrators, predecessors, successors, assigns, parent companies, subsidiaries, licensors, licensees, associates, affiliates, employers, agents, consultants, independent contractors, insurers, and customers, including without limitation employees of the foregoing, directors, managing directors, officers, partners, principals, members, attorneys, accountants, financial and other advisors, underwriters, shareholders, lenders, auditors, investment advisors, legal representatives, successors in interest, assigns and companies, firms, trusts, and corporations.

1.32 “Releasing Parties” means Plaintiff, those Settlement Class Members who do not timely opt out of the Settlement Class, and all of their respective present or past heirs, executors, estates, administrators, predecessors, successors, assigns, parent companies, subsidiaries, associates, affiliates, employers, employees, agents, consultants, independent contractors, insurers, directors, managing directors, officers, partners, principals, members, attorneys, accountants, financial and other advisors, underwriters, shareholders, lenders, auditors, investment advisors, legal representatives, successors in interest, assigns and companies, firms, trusts, and corporations.

1.33 “Settlement Administration Expenses” means the expenses actually incurred by the Settlement Administrator in providing Notice (including CAFA notice), processing claims, responding to inquiries from members of the Settlement Class, mailing checks for Approved Claims, and related services, paying taxes and tax expenses related to the Settlement Fund (including all federal, state or local taxes of any kind and interest or penalties thereon, as well as

expenses incurred in connection with determining the amount of and paying any taxes owed and expenses related to any tax attorneys and accountants).

1.34 “Settlement Administrator” means Analytics Consulting, LLC, or such other reputable administration company that has been selected jointly by the Parties and approved by the Court to perform the duties set forth in this Agreement, including but not limited to serving as Escrow Agent for the Settlement Fund, overseeing the distribution of Notice, as well as the processing and payment of Approved Claims to the Settlement Class as set forth in this Agreement, handing all approved payments out of the Settlement Fund, and handling the determination, payment and filing of forms related to all federal, state and/or local taxes of any kind (including any interest or penalties thereon) that may be owed on any income earned by the Settlement Fund. Class Counsel’s assent to this Agreement shall constitute consent on behalf of each and every member of the Settlement Class as defined herein to disclose all information required by the Settlement Administrator to perform the duties and functions ascribed to it herein.

1.35 “Settlement Class” means all Persons who are or were NYT digital, print, and ancillary subscription consumers who used a North Carolina billing and delivery zip code and were directly billed and automatically renewed by NYT from June 21, 2018, to and through June 2, 2023. Excluded from the Settlement Class are: (1) any Judge or Magistrate presiding over this Action and members of their families; (2) Defendant, Defendant’s subsidiaries, parent companies, successors, predecessors, and any entity in which Defendant or its parents have a controlling interest and their current or former officers, directors, agents, attorneys, and employees; (3) Persons who properly execute and file a timely request for exclusion from the class; and (4) the legal representatives, successors or assigns of any excluded Persons.

1.36 “Settlement Class Member” means a Person who falls within the definition of the Settlement Class.

1.37 “Settlement Fund” means the non-reversionary total cash fund that shall be established by Defendant for purposes of this settlement in the total amount of \$275,000 USD to be deposited into the Escrow Account, according to the schedule set forth herein, plus all interest earned thereon. The Settlement Fund represents the total extent of Defendant’s monetary obligations under this Agreement. The Settlement Fund shall be used for payment of the following: (i) Approved Claims submitted by Settlement Class Members; (ii) the Settlement Administration Expenses; (iii) any Fee Award to Class Counsel; and (iv) any Incentive Award to the Class Representative, not to exceed \$10,000, as may be ordered by the Court. The Settlement Fund shall be kept in the Escrow Account with permissions granted to the Settlement Administrator to access said funds until such time as the listed payments are made. The Settlement Fund includes all interest that shall accrue on the sums deposited in the Escrow Account. The Settlement Administrator shall be responsible for all tax filings with respect to any earnings on the Settlement Fund and the payment of all taxes that may be due on such earnings. The payment of the Settlement Amount by Defendant fully discharges the Defendant and the other Released Parties’ financial obligations (if any) in connection with the Settlement, meaning that no Released Party shall have any other obligation to make any payment into the Escrow Account or to any Class Member, or any other Person, under this Agreement. In no event shall the total monetary obligation with respect to this Agreement on behalf of Defendant exceed two hundred seventy five thousand dollars (\$275,000).

1.38 “Settlement Website” means a website to be established, operated, and maintained by the Settlement Administrator for purposes of providing notice and otherwise

making available to the Settlement Class Members the documents, information, and online claims submission process referenced in paragraphs 2.1(b) through 2.1(d), below.

1.39 “Unknown Claims” means claims that could have been raised in the Action and that any or all of the Releasing Parties do not know or suspect to exist, which, if known by him or her, might affect his or her agreement to release the Released Parties or the Released Claims or might affect his or her decision to agree, object, or not to object to the Settlement. The Releasing Parties acknowledge that they may discover facts in addition to or different from those that they now know or believe to be true with respect to the subject matter of this release, but that it is their intention to finally and forever settle and release the Released Claims, notwithstanding any Unknown Claims they may have, as that term is defined in this paragraph.

2. SETTLEMENT RELIEF.

2.1 Payment to Settlement Class Members.

(a) Defendant shall cause to be paid into the Escrow Account the amount of the Settlement Fund (\$275,000 USD), specified in paragraph 1.37 of this Agreement, within twenty-eight (28) business days after Preliminary Approval.

(b) Settlement Class Members shall have until the Claims Deadline to submit a Claim Form for approval by the Settlement Administrator as an Approved Claim. Each Settlement Class Member who submits an Approved Claim will receive a *pro rata* payment from the Net Settlement Fund in the form of a check, issued and mailed by the Settlement Administrator within 60 days of the Effective Date.

(c) The Settlement Administrator will be responsible for reviewing all claims to determine their validity. The Settlement Administrator will reject any claim that does not comply in any material respect with the instructions on the Claim Form or the terms of paragraphs 1.3 and 1.4, above, or is submitted after the Claims Deadline. Defendant has the

right to audit the claims process for evidence of fraud or error; provided, however, that the Settlement Administrator shall be the final arbiter of a claim's validity.

(d) Each claimant who submits an invalid Claim Form to the Settlement Administrator must be given a notice of the Claim Form's deficiency and an opportunity to cure the deficiency within 21 days of the date of the notice.

(e) All cash payments issued to Settlement Class Members via check will state on the face of the check that it will expire and become null and void unless cashed within one hundred and eighty (180) days after the date of issuance. If a check issued to a Settlement Class Member is not cashed within one hundred and eighty (180) days after the date of issuance, such funds shall be donated as *cy pres* to organizations that have a connection to the issues raised in this lawsuit, as recommended by Class Counsel and Defendant and approved by the Court.

3. RELEASE.

3.1 The obligations incurred pursuant to this Settlement Agreement shall be a full and final disposition of the Action and any and all Released Claims, as against all Released Parties.

3.2 Upon the Effective Date, the Releasing Parties, and each of them, shall be deemed to have, and by operation of the Final Judgment shall have, fully, finally, and forever released, relinquished, and discharged all Released Claims against the Released Parties, and each of them.

3.3 Plaintiff, the Settlement Class and the Releasing Parties each individually covenant not to bring any Released Claim and expressly agree that this Release will be, and may be raised as, a complete defense to and will preclude any action or proceeding encompassed by the release(s) contained herein in respect to any NYT Subscription associated with a Class Member.

4. NOTICE TO THE CLASS.

4.1 The Notice Plan shall consist of the following:

(a) *Settlement Class List.* Defendant shall produce an electronic list from its records that includes the names, and last known e-mail and U.S. Mail addresses that, according to its records, belong to Persons with NYT Subscriptions within the Settlement Class. This electronic document shall be called the “Class List,” and shall be provided to the Settlement Administrator with a copy to Class Counsel. In no event shall the Class List be provided to the Settlement Administrator later than fourteen (14) days prior to the date Notice shall be disseminated. This Class List is confidential and shall not be used for any other purposes beyond providing notice to the Settlement Class and assisting with the determination of valid claims. Class Counsel’s assent to this Agreement shall constitute consent on behalf of each and every member of the Settlement Class as defined herein to disclose this information as stated in this paragraph.

(b) *Direct Notice to Settlement Class Members.* No later than the twenty-eight (28) days from entry of the Preliminary Approval Order, the Settlement Administrator shall send notice to the Class Members via email in the form attached as **Exhibit C**, along with an electronic link to the Claim Form, to all Settlement Class Members for whom a valid email address is in the Class List. If an email notice to a Settlement Class Member is returned as non-deliverable, the Settlement Administrator shall send the notice in the form attached as **Exhibit D** to the Settlement Class Member’s billing or mailing address via First Class U.S. Mail, together with a postcard Claim Form with return postage prepaid. For Settlement Class Members without an email address, the Settlement Administrator shall send the Notice via First Class U.S. Mail, together with a postcard Claim Form with return postage prepaid.

(c) If any Notice is returned as non-deliverable, and a forwarding address is provided, the Settlement Administrator shall re-mail the Notice to the forwarding address within five (5) business days. If any Notice is returned as non-deliverable, and no forwarding address

is provided, the Settlement Administrator shall attempt to ascertain a valid address for the affected Settlement Class Member by seeking change of address information through the U.S. Postal Service's National Change of Address Link, and shall re-mail the Notice within five (5) business days to the address(es) that are found. The Settlement Administrator shall have no obligation to send Notices beyond those obligations specified herein.

(d) *Settlement Website.* Within ten (10) days from entry of the Preliminary Approval Order, Notice shall be provided on a website at an available URL that will be agreed upon by the parties (such as, for example, www.NCrenewalsettlementNYT.com) which shall be obtained, administered and maintained by the Settlement Administrator and shall include the ability to file Claim Forms online, provided that such Claim Forms, if signed electronically, will be binding for purposes of applicable law and contain a statement to that effect. The Notice provided on the Settlement Website shall be substantially in the form of **Exhibit E** hereto.

(e) *CAFA Notice.* Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1715, not later than ten (10) days after the Agreement is filed with the Court, the Settlement Administrator shall cause to be served upon the Attorney General of the United States, and any other required government official, notice of the proposed settlement as required by law, subject to paragraph 5.1 below.

4.2 The Notice shall advise the Settlement Class of their rights, including the rights to be excluded from or object to the Settlement Agreement or any of its terms. The Notice shall specify that any objection to the Settlement Agreement, and any papers submitted in support of said objection, shall be considered by the Court at the Final Approval Hearing only if, on or before the Objection/Exclusion Deadline approved by the Court and specified in the Notice, the Person making the objection files notice of an intention to do so and at the same time (a) files copies of such papers he or she proposes to be submitted at the Final Approval Hearing with the Clerk of the Court, or alternatively, if the objection is from a Class Member represented by

counsel, files any objection through the Court's CM/ECF system, and (b) sends copies of such papers by mail, hand, or overnight delivery service to Class Counsel and Defendant's Counsel.

4.3 Any Settlement Class Member who intends to object to this Agreement must present the objection in writing to the Settlement Administrator, postmarked on or before the Objection/Exclusion deadline approved by the Court and specified in the Notice, which must be personally signed by the objector, and must include: (1) the objector's name and address; (2) an explanation of the basis upon which the objector claims to be a Settlement Class Member; (3) all grounds for the objection, including all citations to legal authority and evidence supporting the objection; (4) the name and contact information of any and all attorneys representing, advising, or in any way assisting the objector in connection with the preparation or submission of the objection (the "Objecting Attorneys"); and (5) a statement indicating whether the objector intends to appear at the Final Approval Hearing (either personally or through counsel who files an appearance with the Court in accordance with the Local Rules).

4.4 Within the last 7 years, if a Settlement Class Member or any of the Objecting Attorneys has objected to any class action settlement where the objector or the Objecting Attorneys asked for or received any payment in exchange for dismissal of the objection, or any related appeal, with or without any modification to the settlement, then the objection must include a statement identifying each such case by full case caption and amount of payment received.

4.5 A Settlement Class Member may request to be excluded from the Settlement Class by sending a written request postmarked on or before the Objection/Exclusion Deadline approved by the Court and specified in the Notice. To exercise the right to be excluded, a Person in the Settlement Class must timely send a written request for exclusion to the Settlement Administrator providing his/her name and address, a signature, the name and number of the case,

and a statement that he or she wishes to be excluded from the Settlement Class for purposes of this Settlement. A request to be excluded that does not include all of this information, or that is sent to an address other than that designated in the Notice, or that is not postmarked within the time specified, shall be invalid, and the Person(s) serving such a request shall be a member(s) of the Settlement Class and shall be bound as a Settlement Class Member by this Agreement, if approved. Any member of the Settlement Class who validly elects to be excluded from this Agreement shall not: (i) be bound by any orders or the Final Judgment; (ii) be entitled to relief under this Settlement Agreement; (iii) gain any rights by virtue of this Agreement; or (iv) be entitled to object to any aspect of this Agreement. The request for exclusion must be personally signed by each Person requesting exclusion. So-called “mass” or “class” opt-outs shall not be allowed. To be valid, a request for exclusion must be postmarked or received by the date specified in the Notice. Upon receiving any request(s) for exclusion, the Settlement Administrator shall stamp on the original the date it was received and shall promptly notify Class Counsel and Defendant’s Counsel of such request(s) no later than two (2) calendar days after receiving any request. The Settlement Administrator shall indicate whether such request is timely received, and provide copies of the request(s) for exclusion, the mailing envelope, and any accompanying documentation, by email.

4.6 The Final Approval Hearing shall be no earlier than ninety (90) days after the date Preliminary Approval is granted.

5. SETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION.

5.1 The Settlement Administrator shall, under the supervision of the Court, administer the relief provided by this Settlement Agreement by processing Claim Forms in a rational, responsive, cost effective, and timely manner, consistent with the terms of this Agreement. The Settlement Administrator shall maintain reasonably detailed records of its activities under this

Agreement. The Settlement Administrator shall maintain all such records as are required by applicable law in accordance with its normal business practices and such records will be made available to Class Counsel and Defendant's Counsel upon request. The Settlement Administrator shall also provide reports and other information to the Court as the Court may require. The Settlement Administrator shall provide Class Counsel and Defendant's Counsel with regular reports at weekly intervals containing information concerning Notice, administration, and implementation of the Settlement Agreement. Should the Court request, the Parties shall submit a timely report to the Court summarizing the work performed by the Settlement Administrator, including a report of all amounts from the Settlement Fund paid to Settlement Class Members on account of Approved Claims. Without limiting the foregoing, the Settlement Administrator shall:

(a) Forward to Defendant's Counsel, with copies to Class Counsel, all original documents and other materials received in connection with the administration of the Settlement, and all copies thereof, within thirty (30) days after the date on which all Claim Forms have been finally approved or disallowed in accordance with the terms of this Agreement;

(b) Provide Class Counsel and Defendant's Counsel with drafts of all administration related documents, including but not limited to CAFA Notices, follow-up class notices or communications with Settlement Class Members, telephone scripts, website postings or language or other communications with the Settlement Class, at least five (5) days before the Settlement Administrator is required to or intends to publish or use such communications, unless Class Counsel and Defendant's Counsel agree to waive this requirement in writing on a case by case basis;

(c) Receive requests to be excluded from the Settlement Class and other requests and promptly provide to Class Counsel and Defendant's Counsel copies thereof. If the

Settlement Administrator receives any exclusion forms or other requests after the deadline for the submission of such forms and requests, the Settlement Administrator shall promptly provide copies thereof to Class Counsel and Defendant's Counsel;

(d) Provide weekly reports to Class Counsel and Defendant's Counsel, including without limitation, reports regarding the number of Claim Forms received, the number approved by the Settlement Administrator, and the categorization and description of Claim Forms rejected, in whole or in part, by the Settlement Administrator; and

(e) Make available for inspection by Class Counsel or Defendant's Counsel the Claim Forms received by the Settlement Administrator at any time upon reasonable notice.

5.2 The Settlement Administrator shall be obliged to employ reasonable procedures to screen claims for abuse or fraud and deny Claim Forms where there is evidence of abuse or fraud. The Settlement Administrator shall determine whether a Claim Form submitted by a Settlement Class Member is an Approved Claim by determining if the Person is on the Class List and shall reject Claim Forms that fail to (a) comply with the instructions on the Claim Form or the terms of this Agreement, or (b) provide full and complete information as requested on the Claim Form. If a Person submits a timely Claim Form by the Claims Deadline where the Person appears on the Class List but the Claim Form is not otherwise complete, then the Settlement Administrator shall give such Person one (1) reasonable opportunity to provide any requested missing information, which information must be received by the Settlement Administrator no later than thirty (30) calendar days after the Claims Deadline. If the Settlement Administrator receives such information more than thirty (30) days after the Claims Deadline, then any such claim shall be denied. The Settlement Administrator may contact any Person who has submitted a Claim Form to obtain additional information necessary to verify the Claim Form.

5.3. In the exercise of its duties outlined in this Agreement, the Settlement Administrator shall have the right to reasonably request additional information from the Parties or any Settlement Class Member.

5.4. Defendant, the Released Parties, and Defendant's Counsel shall have no responsibility for, interest in, or liability whatsoever with respect to: (i) any act, omission, or determination by Class Counsel, or the Claims Administrator, or any of their respective designees or agents, in connection with the administration of the settlement or otherwise; (ii) the management, investment, or distribution of the Settlement Fund; (iii) the allocation of Net Settlement Funds to Settlement Class Members or the implementation, administration, calculation or interpretation thereof; (iv) the determination, administration, calculation, or payment of any claims asserted against the Settlement Fund; (v) any losses suffered by, or fluctuations in value of, the Settlement Fund; or (vi) the payment, reporting, or withholding of any taxes, tax expenses, or costs incurred in connection with the taxation of the Settlement Fund or the filing of any federal, state, or local returns.

5.5. To allow a calculation of the *pro rata* payments to Settlement Class Members, no later than twenty-one (21) days before any distribution of Settlement Funds must occur, the Settlement Administrator shall submit to Class Counsel and Defendant's Counsel a final and total invoice for all of the Settlement Administrator's services.

5.7. All taxes and tax expenses shall be paid out of the Settlement Fund, and shall be timely paid by the Settlement Administrator pursuant to this Agreement and without further order of the Court. Any tax returns or reporting forms prepared for the Settlement Fund (as well as the election set forth therein) shall be consistent with this Agreement and in all events shall reflect that all taxes on the income earned by the Settlement Fund shall be paid out of the Settlement Fund as provided herein. The Released Parties shall have no responsibility or

liability for the acts or omissions of the Settlement Administrator or its agents with respect to the reporting or payment of taxes or tax expenses.

6. TERMINATION OF SETTLEMENT.

6.1 Subject to paragraphs 9.1-9.2 below, Defendant or the Class Representative on behalf of the Settlement Class, shall have the right to terminate this Agreement by providing written notice of the election to do so (“Termination Notice”) to all other Parties hereto within twenty-one (21) days of any of the following events: (i) the Court’s refusal to grant Preliminary Approval of this Agreement in any material respect; (ii) the Court’s refusal to grant Final Approval of this Agreement in any material respect; (iii) the Court’s refusal to enter the Final Judgment in this Action in any material respect; (iv) the date upon which the Final Judgment is vacated, modified or reversed in any material respect by the Court, the Court of Appeals or the Supreme Court; or (v) the date upon which an Alternate Judgment, as defined in paragraph 9.1(d) of this Agreement is vacated, modified or reversed in any material respect by the Court, the Court of Appeals or the Supreme Court. The parties will meet and confer if any of the following events occur as outlined in this section to see if any material item can be resolved before providing Termination Notice to either party.

6.2 If, prior to the filing of the Final Approval Motion, Persons who otherwise would be members of the Settlement Class have timely requested exclusion from the Settlement Class in accordance with the provisions of the Notice, and such Persons in the aggregate constitute more than half of a percent (.5%) of the Settlement Class, Defendant shall have, in its sole and absolute discretion, the option to terminate this settlement by giving notice as set forth in paragraph 6.1.

7. PRELIMINARY APPROVAL ORDER AND FINAL APPROVAL ORDER.

7.1 Promptly after the execution of this Settlement Agreement, Class Counsel shall submit this Agreement together with its Exhibits to the Court and shall move the Court for Preliminary Approval of the settlement set forth in this Agreement; certification of the Settlement Class for settlement purposes only; appointment of Class Counsel and the Class Representative; and entry of a Preliminary Approval Order substantially in the form of **Exhibit F** hereto, which order shall set a Final Approval Hearing date and approve the Notice and Claim Form for dissemination substantially in the form of **Exhibits C, D and E** hereto. The Preliminary Approval Order shall also authorize the Parties, without further approval from the Court, to agree to and adopt such amendments, modifications and expansions of the Settlement Agreement and its implementing documents (including all Exhibits to this Agreement) so long as they are consistent in all material respects with the terms of the Settlement Agreement and do not limit or impair the rights of the Settlement Class or materially expand the obligations of Defendant.

7.2 At the time of the submission of this Agreement to the Court as described above, Class Counsel shall request that, after Notice is given, the Court hold a Final Approval Hearing and approve the settlement of the Action as set forth herein.

7.3 After Notice is given, the Parties shall request and seek to obtain from the Court a Final Judgment substantially in the form of **Exhibit B** hereto, which will (among other things):

(a) find that the Court has personal jurisdiction over all Settlement Class Members and that the Court has subject matter jurisdiction to approve the Agreement, including all Exhibits thereto;

(b) approve the Settlement Agreement and the proposed settlement as fair, reasonable, and adequate as to, and in the best interests of, the Settlement Class Members; direct

the Parties and their counsel to implement and consummate the Agreement according to its terms and provisions; and declare the Agreement to be binding on, and have *res judicata* and preclusive effect in all pending and future lawsuits or other proceedings maintained by or on behalf of Plaintiffs and Releasing Parties;

(c) find that the Notice implemented pursuant to the Agreement (1) constitutes the best practicable notice under the circumstances; (2) constitutes notice that is reasonably calculated, under the circumstances, to apprise the Settlement Class of the pendency of the Action, their right to object to or exclude themselves from the proposed Agreement, and to appear at the Final Approval Hearing; (3) is reasonable and constitutes due, adequate, and sufficient notice to all persons entitled to receive notice; and (4) meets all applicable requirements of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, the Due Process Clause of the United States Constitution, and the rules of the Court;

(d) find that the prerequisites for a class action under Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(a) and Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(b) have been satisfied for settlement purposes for the Settlement Class in that: (1) the number of Settlement Class Members is so numerous that joinder of all members thereof is impracticable; (2) there are questions of law and fact common to the Settlement Class Members; (3) the claims of the Class Representative are typical of the claims of the Settlement Class they seek to represent; (4) the Class Representative has and will continue to fairly and adequately represent the interests of the Settlement Class for purposes of entering into the Settlement Agreement; (5) the questions of law and fact common to Settlement Class Members predominate over any questions affecting any individual Settlement Class Member; (6) the Settlement Class is ascertainable; and (7) a class action is superior to the other available methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of the controversy.

(e) dismiss the Action (including all individual claims and Settlement Class Claims presented thereby) on the merits and with prejudice, without fees or costs to any party except as provided in the Settlement Agreement;

(f) incorporate the Release set forth above, make the Release effective as of the date of the Effective Date, and forever discharge the Released Parties as set forth herein;

(g) permanently bar and enjoin all Settlement Class Members from filing, commencing, prosecuting, intervening in, or participating (as class members or otherwise) in any lawsuit or other action in any jurisdiction based on the Released Claims;

(h) without affecting the finality of the Final Judgment for purposes of appeal, retain jurisdiction as to all matters relating to administration, consummation, enforcement, and interpretation of the Settlement Agreement and the Final Judgment, and for any other necessary purpose;

(i) close the case; and

(j) incorporate any other provisions, as the Court deems necessary and just, provided that such other provisions do not materially abridge, enlarge or modify any rights or responsibilities of the Released Parties or Settlement Class Members under this Agreement.

8. CLASS COUNSEL'S ATTORNEYS' FEES AND REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES; INCENTIVE AWARD.

8.1 Class Counsel may receive from the Settlement Fund, subject to Court approval, attorneys' fees, costs, and expenses not to exceed one third of the Settlement Fund. Plaintiff will petition the Court for an award of such attorneys' fees, costs, and expenses. Class Counsel, shall not seek more than this amount from the Court in attorneys' fees, costs, and expenses. Payment of the Fee Award shall be made from the Settlement Fund, and should the Court award less than the amount sought by Class Counsel, the difference in the amount sought and the amount

ultimately awarded pursuant to this paragraph shall remain in the Settlement Fund for *pro rata* distribution to Settlement Class Members in distributions for Approved Claims.

8.2 The Fee Award shall be payable by the Settlement Administrator within ten (10) business days after entry of the Court's Final Judgment, subject to Class Counsel executing the Undertaking Regarding Attorneys' Fees and Costs (the "Undertaking") attached hereto as **Exhibit G**, and providing all payment routing information and tax I.D. numbers for Class Counsel. Payment of the Fee Award shall be made from the Settlement Fund by wire transfer to Milberg Coleman Bryson Phillips Grossman, PLLC, in accordance with wire instructions to be provided by Milberg Coleman Bryson Phillips Grossman, PLLC, and completion of necessary forms, including but not limited to W-9 forms. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if for any reason the Final Judgment is reversed or rendered void as a result of an appeal(s) then Class Counsel shall return such funds to the Defendant plus interest. Additionally, should any parties to the Undertaking dissolve, merge, declare bankruptcy, become insolvent, or cease to exist prior to the final payment to Class Members, those parties shall execute a new undertaking guaranteeing repayment of funds within 14 days of such an occurrence.

8.3 Subject to Court approval, the Settlement Administrator may pay an Incentive Award to the Class Representative from the Settlement Fund, in addition to any settlement payment as a result of a valid claim pursuant to this Agreement, in the amount of up to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00). Should the Court award less than this amount, the difference in the amount sought and the amount ultimately awarded pursuant to this paragraph shall remain in the Settlement Fund for *pro rata* distribution to Settlement Class Members for Approved Claims. Such Incentive Award shall be paid from the Settlement Fund (in the form of a check to the Class Representative that is sent care of Class Counsel), within five (5) business days after entry

of the Final Judgment if there have been no objections to the Settlement Agreement, and, if there have been such objections, within five (5) business days after the Effective Date.

9. CONDITIONS OF SETTLEMENT, EFFECT OF DISAPPROVAL, CANCELLATION OR TERMINATION.

9.1 The Effective Date of this Settlement Agreement shall not occur unless and until ten (10) days after each of the following events occurs and shall be the date upon which the last (in time) of the following events occurs:

- (a) The Parties and their counsel have executed this Agreement;
- (b) The Court has entered the Preliminary Approval Order;
- (c) The Court has entered an order finally approving the Agreement,

following Notice to the Settlement Class and a Final Approval Hearing, as provided in the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, and has entered the Final Judgment, or a judgment consistent with this Agreement in all material respects; and

- (d) The Final Judgment has become Final, as defined above, or, if the Court enters an Alternate Judgment, such Alternate Judgment becomes Final.

9.2 If some or all of the conditions specified in paragraph 9.1 are not met, or if this Agreement is not approved by the Court, or the settlement set forth in this Agreement is terminated or fails to become effective in accordance with its terms, then this Settlement Agreement shall be canceled and terminated subject to paragraph 6.1 unless Class Counsel and Defendant's Counsel mutually agree in writing to proceed with this Agreement. If any Party is in material breach of the terms hereof, any other Party, provided that it is in substantial compliance with the terms of this Agreement, may terminate this Agreement on notice to all of the Settling Parties. Notwithstanding anything herein, the Parties agree that the Court's failure to approve, in whole or in part, Class Counsel's request for payment of attorneys' fees, costs and/or

expenses and/or the request for Incentive Award payments set forth in paragraph 8.3 above shall not prevent the Agreement from becoming effective, nor shall it be grounds for termination.

9.3 If this Agreement is terminated or fails to become effective for the reasons set forth in paragraphs 6.1 or 6.2 and/or 9.1-9.2 above, the Parties shall be restored to their respective positions in the Action as of the moment just prior to the signing of this Agreement. In such event, any Final Judgment or other order entered by the Court in accordance with the terms of this Agreement shall be treated as vacated, *nunc pro tunc*, and the Parties shall be returned to the *status quo ante* with respect to the Action as if this Agreement had never been entered into. Within five (5) business days after written notification of termination as provided in this Agreement is sent to the other Parties, the Settlement Fund (including accrued interest thereon), less any Settlement Administration costs actually incurred, paid or payable and less any taxes and tax expenses paid, due or owing, shall be refunded by the Settlement Administrator to Defendant, based upon written instructions provided by Defendant's Counsel. If the Final Settlement Order and Judgment or any part of it is vacated, overturned, reversed, or rendered void as a result of an appeal, or the Settlement Agreement is voided, rescinded, or otherwise terminated for any other reason, Class Counsel shall, within thirty (30) days repay to Defendant, based upon written instructions provided by Defendant's Counsel, the full amount of the attorneys' fees and costs paid to Class Counsel from the Settlement Fund, plus interest. If the attorney fees and costs awarded by the Court or any part of them are vacated, modified, reversed, or rendered void as a result of an appeal, Class Counsel shall within thirty (30) days repay to Defendant, based upon written instructions provided by Defendant's Counsel, the attorneys' fees and costs paid to Class Counsel and/or Class Representative from the Settlement Fund, in the amount vacated or modified, plus interest.

10. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.

10.1 The Parties (a) acknowledge that it is their intent to consummate this Settlement Agreement; and (b) agree, subject to their fiduciary and other legal obligations, to cooperate to the extent reasonably necessary to effectuate and implement all terms and conditions of this Agreement, to exercise their reasonable best efforts to accomplish the foregoing terms and conditions of this Agreement, to secure final approval, and to defend the Final Judgment through any and all appeals. Class Counsel and Defendant's Counsel agree to cooperate with one another in seeking Court approval of the Settlement Agreement, entry of the Preliminary Approval Order, and the Final Judgment, and promptly to agree upon and execute all such other documentation as may be reasonably required to obtain final approval of the Agreement.

10.2 The Parties intend this Settlement Agreement to be a final and complete resolution of all disputes between them with respect to the Released Claims by Plaintiffs, the Settlement Class and each or any of them, on the one hand, against the Released Parties, and each or any of the Released Parties, on the other hand.

10.3 The Parties have relied upon the advice and representation of counsel, selected by them, concerning their respective legal liability for the claims hereby released. The Parties have read and understand fully the above and foregoing agreement and have been fully advised as to the legal effect thereof by counsel of their own selection and intend to be legally bound by the same.

10.4 Whether or not the Effective Date occurs or the Settlement Agreement is terminated, neither this Agreement nor the settlement contained herein or any term, provision or definition therein, nor any act or communication performed or document executed in the course of negotiating, implementing or seeking approval pursuant to or in furtherance of this Agreement or the settlement:

(a) is, may be deemed, or shall be used, offered or received in any civil, criminal or administrative proceeding in any court, administrative agency, arbitral proceeding or other tribunal against the Released Parties, or each or any of them, as an admission, concession or evidence of, the validity of any Released Claims, the truth of any fact alleged by the Plaintiff, the deficiency of any defense that has been or could have been asserted in the Action, the violation of any law or statute, the definition or scope of any term or provision, the reasonableness of the settlement amount or the Fee Award, or of any alleged wrongdoing, liability, negligence, or fault of the Released Parties, or any of them. Defendant, while continuing to deny all allegations of wrongdoing and disclaiming all liability with respect to all claims, considers it desirable to resolve the action on the terms stated herein to avoid further expense, inconvenience, and burden, and therefore has determined that this settlement is in Defendant's best interests. Any public statements made by Plaintiffs or Class Counsel will be consistent with this paragraph and Class Counsel will not issue any press release concerning this Agreement or the settlement contained herein;

(b) is, may be deemed, or shall be used, offered or received against any Released Party, as an admission, concession or evidence of any fault, misrepresentation or omission with respect to any statement or written document approved or made by the Released Parties, or any of them;

(c) is, may be deemed, or shall be used, offered or received against the Released Parties, or each or any of them, as an admission or concession with respect to any liability, negligence, fault or wrongdoing or statutory meaning as against any Released Parties, or supporting the certification of a litigation class, in any civil, criminal or administrative proceeding in any court, administrative agency or other tribunal. However, the settlement, this Agreement, and any acts performed and/or documents executed in furtherance of or pursuant to

this Agreement and/or Settlement may be used in any proceedings as may be necessary to effectuate the provisions of this Agreement. Further, if this Settlement Agreement is approved by the Court, any Party or any of the Released Parties may file this Agreement and/or the Final Judgment in any action that may be brought against such Party or Parties in order to support a defense or counterclaim based on principles of *res judicata*, collateral estoppel, release, good faith settlement, judgment bar or reduction, or any other theory of claim preclusion or issue preclusion or similar defense or counterclaim;

(d) is, may be deemed, or shall be construed against Plaintiffs, the Settlement Class, the Releasing Parties, or each or any of them, or against the Released Parties, or each or any of them, as an admission or concession that the consideration to be given hereunder represents an amount equal to, less than or greater than that amount that could have or would have been recovered after trial; and

(e) is, may be deemed, or shall be construed as or received in evidence as an admission or concession against Plaintiffs, the Settlement Class, the Releasing Parties, or each and any of them, or against the Released Parties, or each or any of them, that any of Plaintiffs' claims are with or without merit or that damages recoverable in the Action would have exceeded or would have been less than any particular amount.

10.5 The Parties acknowledge that (a) any certification of the Settlement Class as set forth in this Agreement, including certification of the Settlement Class for settlement purposes in the context of Preliminary Approval, shall not be deemed a concession that certification of a litigation class is appropriate, or that the Settlement Class definition would be appropriate for a litigation class, nor would Defendant be precluded from challenging class certification in further proceedings in the Action or in any other action if the Settlement Agreement is not finalized or finally approved; (b) if the Settlement Agreement is not finally approved by the Court for any

reason whatsoever, then any certification of the Settlement Class will be void, the Parties and the Action shall be restored to the status quo ante, and no doctrine of waiver, estoppel or preclusion will be asserted in any litigated certification proceedings in the Action or in any other action; and (c) no agreements made by or entered into by Defendant in connection with the Settlement may be used by Plaintiffs, any person in the Settlement Class, or any other person to establish any of the elements of class certification in any litigated certification proceedings, whether in the Action or any other judicial proceeding.

10.6. No person or entity shall have any claim against the Class Representative, Class Counsel, the Settlement Administrator or any other agent designated by Class Counsel, or the Released Parties and/or their counsel, arising from distributions made substantially in accordance with this Agreement. The Parties and their respective counsel, and all other Released Parties, shall have no liability whatsoever for the investment or distribution of the Settlement Fund or the determination, administration, calculation, or payment of any claim or nonperformance of the Settlement Administrator, the payment or withholding of taxes (including interest and penalties) owed by the Settlement Fund, or any losses incurred in connection therewith.

10.7. All proceedings with respect to the administration, processing and determination of Claims and the determination of all controversies relating thereto, including but not limited to disputed questions of law and fact with respect to the validity of Claims, and the enforcement of the Release and Covenant not to Sue set forth herein, shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the Court, which shall have exclusive jurisdiction to protect and effectuate the Final Order and Judgment.

10.8 The headings used herein are used for the purpose of convenience only and are not meant to have legal effect.

10.9 The waiver by one Party of any breach of this Agreement by any other Party shall not be deemed as a waiver of any other prior or subsequent breaches of this Agreement.

10.10 All of the Exhibits to this Agreement are material and integral parts thereof and are fully incorporated herein by this reference.

10.11 This Agreement and its Exhibits set forth the entire agreement and understanding of the Parties with respect to the matters set forth herein, and supersede all prior negotiations, agreements, arrangements and undertakings with respect to the matters set forth herein. No representations, warranties or inducements have been made to any Party concerning this Settlement Agreement or its Exhibits other than the representations, warranties and covenants contained and memorialized in such documents. This Agreement may be amended or modified only by a written instrument signed by or on behalf of all Parties or their respective successors-in-interest.

10.12 Except as otherwise provided herein, each Party shall bear its own costs.

10.13 Plaintiffs represent and warrant that they have not assigned any claim or right or interest therein as against the Released Parties to any other Person or Party and that they are fully entitled to release the same.

10.14 Each counsel or other Person executing this Settlement Agreement, any of its Exhibits, or any related settlement documents on behalf of any Party hereto, hereby warrants and represents that such Person has the full authority to do so and has the authority to take appropriate action required or permitted to be taken pursuant to the Agreement to effectuate its terms.

10.15 This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts. Signature by digital means, facsimile, or in PDF format will constitute sufficient execution of this Agreement.

All executed counterparts and each of them shall be deemed to be one and the same instrument.

A complete set of original executed counterparts shall be filed with the Court if the Court so requests.

10.16 This Settlement Agreement shall be binding upon, and inure to the benefit of, the successors and assigns of the Parties hereto and the Released Parties.

10.17 The Court shall retain jurisdiction with respect to implementation and enforcement of the terms of this Agreement, and all Parties hereto submit to the jurisdiction of the Court for purposes of implementing and enforcing the settlement embodied in this Agreement.

10.18 This Settlement Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the substantive laws of the State of New York without giving effect to its conflict of laws provisions.

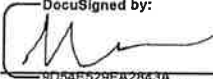
10.19 This Agreement is deemed to have been prepared by counsel for all Parties, as a result of arm's-length negotiations among the Parties. Because all Parties have contributed substantially and materially to the preparation of this Agreement, it shall not be construed more strictly against one Party than another.

10.20 Where this Agreement requires notice to the Parties, such notice shall be sent to the undersigned counsel: J. Hunter Bryson, Milberg Coleman Bryson Phillips Grossman, PLLC, 900 W. Morgan St., Raleigh, NC 27603, hbryson@milberg.com; Alec M. Leslie, Bursor & Fisher, P.A., 1330 Avenue of the Americas, 32nd Floor, New York, NY 10019, aleslie@bursor.com; Stephen V. Carey, Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein LLP, 301 Fayetteville St., Suite 1400, P.O. Box 389, Raleigh, NC 27601, stevecarey@parkerpoe.com; Demetri B. Blaisdell, Counsel, The New York Times Company, Legal Department, 620 8th Avenue, New York, NY 10018, demetri.blaisdell@nytimes.com.

IT IS SO AGREED TO BY THE PARTIES:

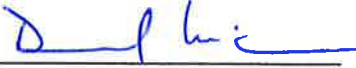
Dated: 7/24/2024

MEGAN PERKINS

DocuSigned by:
By: 
Megan Perkins, individually and as representative
of the Class

Dated: 7/24/2024

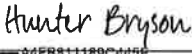
THE NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY

By: 
DAVID MCCRAW

IT IS SO STIPULATED BY COUNSEL:

Dated: 7/22/2024

**MILBERG COLEMAN BRYSON PHILLIPS
GROSSMAN, PLLC**

DocuSigned by:
By: 
J. Hunter Bryson

Dated: 7/25/2024

PARKER POE ADAMS & BERNSTEIN LLP

By: 
Stephen V. Carey