



NEWS RELEASE

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Labor Commissioner's Office Reaches \$2.6 Million Settlement Securing Unpaid Wages for 133 Bay Area Restaurant Workers

San Francisco—The Labor Commissioner's Office has reached a \$2.6 million settlement with the owners of Kome Japanese Seafood & Buffet in Daly City, securing compensation for 133 workers for unpaid minimum wage, overtime and split shift premiums that were uncovered in a 2018 wage theft investigation. The settlement will also compensate workers for WARN Act violations, which occurred when the restaurant closed without notice.

"These workers have waited a long time for the wages they earned," said California Labor Commissioner Lilia García-Brower. "This settlement puts that money back in their pockets and is a testament to these workers standing up for their rights."

The Labor Commissioner's Office [in June 2018 issued wage assessments and penalties of \\$5.16 million](#) to Kome Japanese Seafood & Buffet in Daly City including \$4,381,461 for unpaid back wages and \$780,400 for penalties. The wage theft violations and civil penalties included failure to pay minimum wage, overtime and split shift premiums. In 2019, the civil penalties were adjusted to \$754,950 and the unpaid wages were adjusted to \$3,575,433 based on evidence presented prior to hearing.

Notification has been delivered to the current and former restaurant workers of their expected settlement payments and workers began receiving checks this month. The workers are receiving settlement payments ranging from \$20 to \$47,253 with an average of \$14,217 per worker. The settlement also includes \$55,000 in civil penalties payable to the state.

The Labor Commissioner's Office launched its investigation into Kome Japanese Seafood & Buffet after receiving complaints from workers who reported wage theft. The Labor Commissioner's Office worked with [Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus](#) and the [Chinese Progressive Association](#), which represented many of the workers who cooperated in the investigation.

The Department of Industrial Relations' Division of Labor Standards Enforcement, also known as the [California Labor Commissioner's Office](#), combats wage theft and unfair competition by

investigating allegations of illegal and unfair business practices.

The Labor Commissioner's Office launched an interdisciplinary outreach campaign, "Reaching Every Californian." The campaign amplifies basic protections and builds pathways to impacted populations so that workers and employers understand workplace protections, obligations and how to ensure compliance with these laws.

Employees with work-related questions or complaints may contact DIR's Call Center in English or Spanish at 844-LABOR-DIR (844-522-6734).

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The [California Department of Industrial Relations](#), established in 1927, protects and improves the health, safety, and economic well-being of over 18 million wage earners, and helps their employers comply with state labor laws. DIR is housed within the [Labor & Workforce Development Agency](#). For general inquiries, contact DIR's Communications Call Center at 844-LABOR-DIR (844-522-6734) for help in locating the appropriate [division or program](#) in our department.