



News from:

**Oakland City Attorney Barbara J. Parker**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Oakland City Attorney and Centro Legal de la Raza secure settlement with hotel owners who violated workers' rights**

**Settlement includes compensation for former housekeepers and mandates improvement of working conditions at the Quality Inn in East Oakland**

OAKLAND, CA – City Attorney Barbara J. Parker and Centro Legal de la Raza have secured a settlement with the owners of an East Oakland hotel that systematically violated state and local labor laws, including Oakland's Minimum Wage and Sick Leave Ordinance.

The City Attorney and Centro Legal sued the owners of the Quality Inn on Enterprise Way in January 2017 for refusing to pay overtime, failing to provide sick leave, retaliating against employees who called in sick, refusing to provide rest breaks and engaging in other illegal conduct over a period of at least four years.

The [settlement secured on October 1](#) with owner Hemant Investments, LLC includes an injunction ordering the hotel to improve working conditions, provide required sick leave, properly train supervisors and compensate former housekeeping employees for the alleged violations. Choice Hotels International, Inc., the Delaware-based franchiser of the Quality Inn brand, also signed the settlement agreement.

“Oakland's Minimum Wage and Sick Leave law entitles every Oakland worker, regardless of their profession, race, gender or immigration status, to basic rights including sick leave and a minimum wage,” City Attorney Parker said. “We will continue to hold employers accountable for wage theft, exploitation and abuse of workers; these actions not only violate state and local laws, they undermine Oakland families well-being and stability.”

Centro Legal and the City Attorney jointly filed the lawsuit – Centro Legal on behalf of eight plaintiffs who worked as housekeepers at the Quality Inn, and the City Attorney on behalf of the City of Oakland and the People of California.

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[\*The City of Oakland, The People of the State of California, Matilda Cortez et al. v. Choice Hotels International, Inc. et al., Alameda County Superior Court Case No. RG17847671\*](#)

The agreement to improve working conditions also provides for creating a break room for meal and rest periods, and ensuring that no housekeepers are required to fumigate the hotel rooms. The agreement allows the City of Oakland to conduct spot inspections to ensure full compliance and requires the hotel to allow any current employee to talk with City representatives free from retaliation.

The employee plaintiffs were separately compensated under the terms of a confidential settlement.

“I am grateful for the help of Centro Legal and the City of Oakland in reaching this important agreement,” one of the plaintiff housekeepers said after the settlement. “I am especially proud of the protections for the new housekeepers who currently work at the hotel.”

“We are very proud of what we achieved with the City of Oakland in this groundbreaking case,” said Centro Legal Workers' Rights Attorney Deylin Thrift-Viveros. “Fear and retaliation permeate the housekeeping industry and allow employers to exploit their low-wage and immigrant workers. It is very important that other employers understand that they must comply with local and state laws protecting workers.”

In 2014, Oakland voters overwhelmingly passed Measure FF establishing the Minimum Wage and Sick Leave Ordinance. The law requires that employers in Oakland provide paid sick leave to their employees, and that hospitality employers who collect service charges from customers pay all service charges to their hospitality workers.

[More information about Oakland's Minimum Wage law.](#)