

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
VIRGINIA, ALEXANDRIA DIVISION

Lori Chavez-Deremer, in her capacity as Secretary of Labor for the
United States Department of Labor v. Spring of Life Healthcare,
LLC and Justine Njafuh

Chavez-Deremer · No. 1:25-cv-00925-AJT-LRV · Decided December 23, 2025

SUMMARY

This Report and Recommendation addresses the Secretary of Labor’s motion for default judgment against Spring of Life Healthcare, LLC and Justine Njafuh for alleged violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act. The court recommends finding liability for unpaid overtime wages and inadequate employment records, awarding \$243,459.94 in back wages and an equal amount in liquidated damages, and granting injunctive relief. The recommendation also addresses jurisdiction, service of process, default, willfulness, and damages calculations.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, Alexandria Division
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, Alexandria Division
DECIDED	December 23, 2025
DOCKET	1:25-cv-00925-AJT-LRV
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The Secretary of Labor moved for default judgment against Spring of Life Healthcare, LLC and Justine Njafuh under the Fair Labor Standards Act. The magistrate judge issued a Report and Recommendation recommending that the motion be granted.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	On a motion for default judgment, the court determines subject matter jurisdiction, personal jurisdiction, venue, and proper service; treats well-pleaded factual allegations as admitted but independently evaluates whether the complaint states a claim under the Rule 12(b)(6) plausibility standard and independently determines damages.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	nonprecedential

TOPICS

default judgment flsa wage and hour service of process injunctions

PRACTICE AREAS

employment law federal employment law wage and hour civil procedure remedies

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the court had subject matter jurisdiction, personal jurisdiction, and proper venue over the FLSA action.
2. Whether Defendants were properly served and whether default was properly entered.
3. Whether the well-pleaded allegations and supporting evidence established Defendants' liability for failing to pay FLSA overtime wages.
4. Whether Defendants violated the FLSA recordkeeping requirements.
5. Whether Plaintiff established entitlement to back wages and liquidated damages, including application of the three-year limitations period for willful violations.
6. Whether Plaintiff was entitled to the requested injunctive relief under the FLSA and Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 65(d).

HOLDINGS

1. The court had subject matter jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 1345, alternatively under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1337 and 29 U.S.C. § 217; personal jurisdiction over both Defendants; and proper venue in the Eastern District of Virginia. Defendants were properly served through executed waivers.
2. Defendants violated Section 7 of the FLSA by failing to pay the 53 Schedule A Employees at least one-and-one-half times their regular rates for hours worked over 40 in a workweek.
3. Defendants violated Section 11(c) of the FLSA by failing to make, keep, and preserve adequate and accurate records of wages, hours, and employment conditions, including accurate weekly overtime premium-pay records.
4. Plaintiff established entitlement to \$243,459.94 in back wages for the three-year period applicable to willful FLSA violations.
5. Plaintiff was entitled to an equal amount of liquidated damages, \$243,459.94, because Defendants failed to establish good faith and reasonable grounds for their FLSA violations.
6. The requested prospective injunction broadly requiring Defendants to comply with specified FLSA provisions was too vague, duplicative, or insufficiently specific under Rule 65(d), but an injunction prohibiting Defendants from soliciting or accepting the return of amounts distributed under the judgment was appropriate.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Although a defaulting defendant is deemed to have admitted the well-pleaded allegations of fact set forth in the complaint, see Fed. R. Civ. P. 8(b)(6), conclusions of law or “allegations regarding liability that are not ‘well-pleaded’” are not deemed admitted.” (at 7)

“To meet this standard, the Complaint must set forth “sufficient factual matter, accepted as true, to state a claim for relief that is plausible on its face.”” (at 9)

“All orders granting an injunction must further comply with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 65(d) by stating the reason why the injunction was issued; stating its terms specifically; and describing “in reasonable detail ... the act . . . required” without referring to any “other document.”” (at 14)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Spring of Life Healthcare, LLC operated assisted-living facilities in Virginia, and Justine Njafuh owned and managed the company, including its hiring, firing, supervision, compensation, and employment-record practices. From September 2021 through October 2024, Defendants employed 53 identified workers and paid them straight time rather than one-and-one-half times their regular rates for hours worked over 40 in a workweek. Defendants also failed to maintain accurate records of weekly overtime premium pay. The Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division investigated the practices and reviewed time records, payroll records, employee interviews, and other employment records.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The Secretary of Labor filed the action on May 30, 2025. Defendants waived service but failed to file a responsive pleading by July 29, 2025; the Clerk entered default on July 31, 2025. Plaintiff moved for default judgment on August 27, 2025, and the court held a hearing on September 12, 2025, at which Plaintiff appeared and Defendants did not. The magistrate judge recommended entry of judgment, damages, distribution procedures, and limited injunctive relief, subject to the parties' right to object under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 72(b).

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- GlobalSantaFe Corp. v. Globalsantafe.com, 250 F. Supp. 2d 610, 612 n.3 (E.D. Va. 2003)
- Anderson v. Foundation for Advancement, Education & Employment of American Indians, 187 F.3d 628 (4th Cir. 1999) (unpublished table decision)
- Barbeau v. Siegfried Techs., LLC, No. 1:24-cv-682-CMH-WEF, 2025 WL 1905584, at *7 (E.D. Va. July 1, 2025)
- Goodyear Dunlop Tires Operations, S.A. v. Brown, 564 U.S. 915, 924 (2011)
- Balt. Line Handling Co. v. Brophy, 771 F. Supp. 2d 531, 540 (D. Md. 2011)
- Ryan v. Homecomings Fin. Network, 253 F.3d 778, 780 (4th Cir. 2001)
- JTH Tax, Inc. v. Grabert, 8 F. Supp. 3d 731, 736 (E.D. Va. 2014)

- Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678-79 (2009)
- Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007)
- Francis v. Giacomelli, 588 F.3d 186, 193 (4th Cir. 2009)
- Kerr v. Marshall University Board of Governors, 824 F.3d 62, 83 (4th Cir. 2016)
- Schultz v. Capital International Security, Inc., 466 F.3d 298, 305 (4th Cir. 2006)
- Darveau v. Detecon, Inc., 515 F.3d 334, 337 (4th Cir. 2008)
- Walsh v. Kynd Hearts Home Healthcare, LLC, 644 F. Supp. 3d 180, 186 (E.D. Va. 2022)
- Wilcox v. Transmodal Solutions, LLC, 473 F. Supp. 3d 574, 584 (E.D. Va. 2020)
- Calderon v. GEICO General Insurance Co., 809 F.3d 111, 130 (4th Cir. 2015)
- Desmond v. PNGI Charles Town Gaming, LLC, 630 F.3d 351, 357 (4th Cir. 2011)
- McLaughlin v. Richland Shoe Co., 486 U.S. 128, 133 (1988)
- Perez v. Mountaire Farms, Inc., 650 F.3d 350, 375 (4th Cir. 2011)
- Su v. Med. Staffing of Am., LLC, No. 22-cv-1290, 2023 WL 3735221, at *6 (4th Cir. May 31, 2023)
- Acosta v. Rubins Co. MJ, Inc., No. 1:17-cv-0032 (LO/JFA), 2018 WL 3232823, at *6 (E.D. Va. Mar. 12, 2018)