

SUMMONS

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JAMES KRUZELNICK, ANNMARIE

STEFANO, DENISE GUAGENTI, LIS

Plaintiff(s)

vs.

ISLAND SERVICES III, LLC, D/B/A,

MOHAWK HOUSE RESTAURANT,

Defendant(s)

Superior Court of New Jersey

Sussex County

Law Division

Docket No: _____

CIVIL ACTION SUMMONS

From The State of New Jersey To The Defendant(s) Named Above:

The plaintiff, named above, has filed a lawsuit against you in the Superior Court of New Jersey. The complaint attached to this summons states the basis for this lawsuit. If you dispute this complaint, you or your attorney must file a written answer or motion and proof of service with the deputy clerk of the Superior Court in the county listed above within 35 days from the date you received this summons, not counting the date you received it. (A directory of the addresses of each deputy clerk of the Superior Court is available in the Civil Division Management Office in the county listed above and online at http://www.njcourts.gov/forms/10153_deptyclerklawref.pdf.) If the complaint is one in foreclosure, then you must file your written answer or motion and proof of service with the Clerk of the Superior Court, Hughes Justice Complex, P.O. Box 971, Trenton, NJ 08625-0971. A filing fee payable to the Treasurer, State of New Jersey and a completed Case Information Statement (available from the deputy clerk of the Superior Court) must accompany your answer or motion when it is filed. You must also send a copy of your answer or motion to plaintiff's attorney whose name and address appear above, or to plaintiff, if no attorney is named above. A telephone call will not protect your rights; you must file and serve a written answer or motion (with fee of \$175.00 and completed Case Information Statement) if you want the court to hear your defense.

If you do not file and serve a written answer or motion within 35 days, the court may enter a judgment against you for the relief plaintiff demands, plus interest and costs of suit. If judgment is entered against you, the Sheriff may seize your money, wages or property to pay all or part of the judgment.

If you cannot afford an attorney, you may call the Legal Services office in the county where you live or the Legal Services of New Jersey Statewide Hotline at 1-888-LSNJ-LAW (1-888-576-5529). If you do not have an attorney and are not eligible for free legal assistance, you may obtain a referral to an attorney by calling one of the Lawyer Referral Services. A directory with contact information for local Legal Services Offices and Lawyer Referral Services is available in the Civil Division Management Office in the county listed above and online at http://www.njcourts.gov/forms/10153_deptyclerklawref.pdf.

Clerk of the Superior Court

DATED: _____

Name of Defendant to Be Served: See Attached Rider

Address of Defendant to Be Served: See Attached Rider

SUMMONS RIDER

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JAMES KRUZELNICK, ANNMARIE STEFANO,
DENISE GUAGENTI, LISA STOECKEL, KAYLA
DOLLAR, and CRAIG VACCARO,

Plaintiffs,

-against-

ISLAND SERVICES III, LLC, D/B/A MOHAWK
HOUSE RESTAURANT, and STEVE SCRO,
individually,

Defendants.
-----X

To: *(Defendants' name and address)*

ISLAND SERVICES III, LLC
d/b/a MOHAWK HOUSE RESTAURANT
1 Mohawk Avenue
Sparta, New Jersey 07871

STEVE SCRO
1 Mohawk Avenue
Sparta, New Jersey 07871

SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY
LAW DIVISION SUSSEX COUNTY

Docket No.:

SUMMONS

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

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JAMES KRUZELNICK, ANNMARIE STEFANO,
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Plaintiffs,

-against-

ISLAND SERVICES III, LLC, D/B/A MOHAWK
HOUSE RESTAURANT, and STEVE SCRO,
individually,

Defendants.
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SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY
LAW DIVISION SUSSEX COUNTY

Docket No.:

COMPLAINT

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

Plaintiffs James Kruzelnick (“Mr. Kruzelnick” or “Jake”), AnnMarie Stefano (“Ms. Stefano”), Denise Guagenti (“Ms. Guagenti”), Lisa Stoeckel (“Ms. Stoeckel”), Kayla Dollar (“Ms. Dollar”) and Craig Vaccaro (“Mr. Vaccaro”) (collectively, “Plaintiffs”), by their attorneys JOSEPH & NORINSBERG, LLC, bring this action against defendants Island Services III, LLC D/B/A Mohawk House Restaurant (“Mohawk House”), and Steve Scro (“Scro”), individually, (collectively the “Defendants”), alleging, on personal knowledge as to them and on information and belief as to all other matters, as follows:

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

1. Behind the glitz and glamour of the Mohawk House, a well-known fine dining establishment in Sparta, New Jersey, patronized by celebrities, local politicians, judges and the Sparta police, exists the owner Steve Scro, a sexual predator, who for years has subjected his

employees to countless acts of sexual abuse and illegal discrimination. Steve Scro had a fixation, with among other things, grabbing, smacking and squeezing the buttocks of his employees, and on at least one occasion he expanded his reach to an employee's vaginal area. Steve Scro would also repeatedly and openly objectify his female employees. His demands included asking them to obtain breast enhancements and wear low cut blouses to titillate his male customers.

2. Defendant Scro engaged in these deplorable acts not only to satisfy his perverse sexual desires, but also, because he viewed himself as all powerful and believed that in Sparta, he was untouchable.

3. Over the years, while Scro unapologetically sexually abused his employees and discriminated against them, he would continuously remind them that in Sparta, he had close connections with many powerful people, including the Sparta police department, judges and local politicians.

4. Because of these powerful connections, Scro felt that he could act above the law with impunity. In Scro's mind, he was simply too powerful to be touched, especially when coupled with his wealth and the money he donated to charities in Sparta. Indeed, Scro lived by the creed that being rich and powerful entitled him to treat anyone as he pleased, with no consequences whatsoever for his misconduct.

5. For a number of years, Scro's tactics worked and his employees, despite suffering untold abuses, remained silent, fearful of Scro's harassment, intimidation and retaliation against them. At long last, Scro will be held accountable for his grossly improper conduct towards employees at the Mohawk House.

6. Plaintiffs now bring this civil action seeking compensatory damages, punitive damages and attorney's fees pursuant to New Jersey Law C.2A:14-2B ("C.2A:14-2B"), as a result

of being subjected to years of unlawful sexual contact and abuse by defendant Steve Scro, who was their employer and boss when they worked at the Mohawk House.

7. Apart from Plaintiffs' claims under C.2A:14-2B, Plaintiff James Kruzelnick brings a separate claim for compensatory damages, punitive damages and attorney's fees pursuant to New Jersey Law Against Discrimination ("NJLAD") for years of enduring a hostile work environment where Defendant Steve Scro openly discriminated against him based on his sexual orientation.

8. Further, both Plaintiff James Kruzelnick and Plaintiff AnnMarie Stefano seek compensatory damages, punitive damages and attorney's fees pursuant to the NJLAD's law prohibiting employers from engaging in illegal retaliatory personnel action.

9. Specifically, in response to Mr. Kruzelnick's repeated complaints of sexual abuse and being bullied for being gay, Defendant Scro amplified his acts of sexual abuse and illegal discrimination towards Mr. Kruzelnick, and repeatedly threatened to use his "powerful connections" to silence Mr. Kruzelnick. Further, when Defendants believed, erroneously, that the statute of limitations for Mr. Kruzelnick to file his claims had expired, they unlawfully discharged him.

10. Similarly, in response to AnnMarie Stefano's objections to Steve Scro's repeated and dehumanizing acts of sexual abuse and sexual harassment, Scro persisted and amplified his unlawful behavior and boasted to Ms. Stefano, that because of his power and influence in Sparta, she could never win a case against him. Ultimately, Ms. Stefano was forced to tender her resignation when she could no longer endure the intolerable work environment that Scro had created.

JURY DEMAND

11. Plaintiffs demand a trial by jury on all issues so triable.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

12. This Court has personal jurisdiction over the Defendants, in that on the date of the incidents described herein, Defendants owned real property in the State of New Jersey, committed the unlawful acts alleged herein at said property, and are therefore subject to the Court's Jurisdiction.

13. This Court has jurisdiction over this action because the amount of damages Plaintiffs seek exceed the jurisdictional limits of all lower courts which would otherwise have jurisdiction.

14. Venue for this action is proper in the County of Sussex, pursuant to *R. 4:3-2* in that venue is properly laid in the county in which the cause of action arose.

**C.2A:14-2B COMMENCEMENT OF ACTIONS REGARDLESS OF
STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS**

15. Plaintiffs' causes of action are timely pursuant to C.2A:14-2B, which was enacted on May 13, 2019, and went into effect on December 1, 2019. Plaintiffs allege that Defendant Steve Scro committed intentional or negligent acts or omissions which resulted in Plaintiffs suffering physical, psychological or other injuries or conditions as a direct and proximate result of conduct which constitutes a sexual offense committed against their person, as defined in Section 1 of P.L. 1992, c. 109, as amended on May 13, 2019. This action, moreover, has not been filed until after the effective date of December 1, 2019.

16. Under P.L. 2019c.120 (C.A:14-2a et al.), the statute of limitations is also extended for sexual assault/abuse victims who are 18 years of age or older.

PARTIES

17. Plaintiff JAMES KRUZELNICK is an individual currently residing in Wantage, New Jersey.

18. At all relevant times, Plaintiff Kruzelnick, commonly referred to as “Jake,” was employed as a waiter at the Mohawk House, a fine dining American steakhouse located in Sparta, New Jersey, and is an “employee” under the NJLAD.

19. Plaintiff ANNMARIE STEFANO is an individual currently residing in Highland Lakes, New Jersey.

20. At all relevant times, Plaintiff Stefano was employed as a bartender at the Mohawk House restaurant, located in Sparta, New Jersey and is an “employee” under the NJLAD.

21. Plaintiff DENISE GUAGENTI is an individual currently residing in Leland, North Carolina.

22. At all relevant times, Plaintiff Guagenti was employed as a hostess at the Mohawk House, a restaurant located in Sparta, New Jersey and is an “employee” under the NJLAD.

23. Plaintiff LISA STOECKEL is an individual currently residing in Totowa, New Jersey.

24. At all relevant times, Plaintiff Stoeckel was employed as a bartender at the Mohawk House, a restaurant located in Sparta, New Jersey, and is an “employee” under the NJLAD.

25. Plaintiff KAYLA DOLLAR is an individual currently residing in Riverside, California.

26. At all times relevant, Plaintiff Kayla Dollar was employed as a waitress at the Mohawk House, a restaurant located in Sparta, New Jersey and is an “employee” under the NJLAD.

27. Plaintiff CRAIG VACCARO is an individual currently residing in Newton, New

Jersey.

28. At all relevant times, Plaintiff Vaccaro was employed as a waiter at the Mohawk House, a restaurant located in Sparta, New Jersey, and is an “employee” under the NJLAD.

29. At all relevant times, Defendant ISLAND SERVICES III, LLC, D/B/A MOHAWK HOUSE RESTAURANT, a limited liability company of New Jersey, is a fine dining American steakhouse and destination venue with its principal place of business located at 1 Mohawk Avenue, Sparta, New Jersey.

30. At all relevant times, Defendant STEVE SCRO is the owner and manager of Defendants Island Services III, LLC, D/B/A Mohawk House restaurant and is an “employer” under the NJLAD.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

JAMES KRUZELNICK

Mr. Kruzelnick’s Employment with Defendants

31. Defendants hired Plaintiff James Kruzelnick to work as a waiter at the Mohawk House in August 2005 in or around the time the restaurant first opened.

32. Mr. Kruzelnick worked at the Mohawk House until he was wrongfully discharged on or about September 28, 2018.

33. During Mr. Kruzelnick’s tenure he performed as an exemplary employee, received rave reviews from customers, trained the majority of the new waiters and waitresses, and participated in the restaurants marketing efforts, including TV commercials.

34. Throughout Mr. Kruzelnick’s employment, Defendants subjected him to discrimination and harassment on the basis of his sexual orientation, which created a hostile and

offensive work environment. Further, Defendant Scro, throughout Mr. Kruzelnick employment, repeatedly subject him to unwanted sexual contact in violation of the C.2A:14-2B.

35. When Mr. Kruzelnick repeatedly objected to this unlawful and discriminatory treatment, Defendants retaliated against him by amplifying the illegal conduct. Defendants then wrongfully discharged Mr. Kruzelnick on September 28, 2018, in retaliation for his complaints.

Defendants Subjected Mr. Kruzelnick to Illegal acts of Discrimination by Defendants Based Upon His Sexual Orientation, and Steve Scro Subjected Mr. Kruzelnick to Illegal Acts of Sexual Abuse.

36. When Mr. Kruzelnick started working at the Mohawk House, he had not yet openly come out as a gay male.

37. Defendant Scro suspected he was gay and would make comments or ask questions to trigger a reaction from Mr. Kruzelnick. For example, Scro would ask Mr. Kruzelnick, “Is this the way the gays do things?” Or on other occasions, if an attractive man came into the restaurant, Scro would look at Mr. Kruzelnick and comment, “That could be for you.” In the beginning, Mr. Kruzelnick never took the bait and would just ignore Scro.

38. In 2008, Mr. Kruzelnick became more open about his sexual orientation, and publicly disclosed that he was gay. Mr. Kruzelnick told his co-workers and superiors, including Scro and his wife, Rachel Scro, who would manage the restaurant during the day.

39. At times, Scro would occasionally make gay jokes or comments to Mr. Kruzelnick, but Plaintiff would just ignore him.

40. Over the years as the restaurant grew in popularity and many powerful people visited the restaurant, including the Sparta police force, local politicians, celebrities and professional athletes. Scro seized upon this and repeatedly made it known to his staff that he had

a lot of friends in powerful positions in Sparta, and that he was well-connected, especially with the Sparta police, judges and local politicians.

41. Overtime, Scro grew more arrogant, controlling and intoxicated by the influential connections he had made in Sparta, and he had truly started to believe that he was “untouchable.”

42. In late 2012, Mr. Kruzelnick became extremely ill, and was out of work until early 2013.

43. When Mr. Kruzelnick returned to work in 2013, Scro inappropriately asked him if he had HIV, and Kruzelnick refused to answer. Over time, Scro’s attitude towards Mr. Kruzelnick became hostile. The gay jokes increased and Scro would now openly call him “faggot.”

44. Scro was not alone in making these bigoted comments. Richard Soni (commonly referred to as “Ricky”), another employee at Mohawk House, would also make them.

45. Defendants hired Ricky, in 2008 as a busser. In the beginning, Plaintiff’s relationship with Ricky was okay, but over time, following Scro’s lead, Ricky also made discriminatory statements to Mr. Kruzelnick such as: “you know gays like tight pants” or “are you running home to your boyfriend to have big sex tonight.” Ricky would also repeatedly call Mr. Kruzelnick a “faggot” and say “Jake is light in the loafers.”

46. Sometimes when Mr. Kruzelnick was bloated from his medications, Ricky would say, “Jake has gas in him from his boyfriend f*****g him in his ass.” And when talking to Jake, Richard would alter his voice to sound feminine or bend his hand at his wrist.

47. Ricky would engage in the above-described behavior on a weekly basis and on many occasions, directly in front of Scro. Scro never once admonished or disciplined Ricky for his grossly improper conduct toward Plaintiff. To the contrary, Scro actually rewarded Ricky’s bad behavior by promoting Ricky to manager.

48. On one occasion Ricky even texted Jake and arbitrarily mentioned something about a “dildo sale.”

49. Mr. Kuzelnick tolerated the behavior from both Ricky and Scro, because he feared losing his job, feared Scro’s power and influence in Sparta, and believed that if he complained, they would deny everything and it would simply be their word against his.

Defendants Intensify the Hostile Work Environment Based on Mr. Kuzelnick’s Sexual Orientation by Sending Two Emails Entitled “Gay Boy.”

50. On May 16, 2016, Ricky sent Mr. Kuzelnick two emails through a work portal called “Schedulefly.” Both emails were called “**yo gay boy.**” One email was sent at 8:32 p.m. and the other at 10:33 pm.¹

51. After seeing both emails Mr. Kuzelnick became irate. Seeing the bigoted comments in writing enraged Plaintiff, and provided undeniable proof of the kind of hostile work environment that he had been subjected to over the years because of his sexual orientation.

52. On or about May 18, 2016, Mr. Kuzelnick confronted Ricky about the emails, but Ricky callously responded, “Your gay anyway.”

53. Mr. Kuzelnick then mentioned the emails to Scro and his wife, Rachel Scro, but they just ignored him and took no disciplinary action whatsoever against Ricky.

54. Mr. Kuzelnick grew increasingly upset about the emails and Defendants’ decision to completely ignore his complaints. Plaintiff felt genuinely hurt by the Scro’s inaction, and he became visibly cold and distant at work.

55. Thereafter, Scro became irritated about Mr. Kuzelnick’s “attitude” and decided that he would have a talk with Mr. Kuzelnick. On or about June 14, 2016, shortly after Mr.

¹ Attached hereto as Exhibit “A” are the “Yo gay Boy” emails sent through Schedulefly.

Kruzelnick arrived at work, Scro ordered Mr. Kruzelnick to take a drive with him to view a property that Scro had just purchased across the street from the Lake Mohawk Country club.

56. While the two were alone at the property, Scro admonished Mr. Kruzelnick for his “attitude” at work. In response, Mr. Kruzelnick brought up the emails and asked why hadn’t anything been done about it. Scro then became even more enraged and yelled at Plaintiff, telling him that he needed to get over it and act as if “the emails never happened!” Scro then went on to remind Mr. Kruzelnick of how powerful he was in Sparta, and that he knew all of the local and state police, local mayors and judges.

57. Terrified, Mr. Kruzelnick backed down and started crying out loud in front of Scro. Confident that his intimidation tactics were impactful, Scro’s attitude towards Mr. Kruzelnick then improved, as he calmed down and started touring his new property with Mr. Kruzelnick as if nothing had ever happened.

58. In the following weeks, Scro engaged in more acts of intimidation to ensure Mr. Kruzelnick silence. On one occasion, while at work, Mr. Kruzelnick was going through papers and Scro approached him, and said he had just visited the Sussex county jail and asked Mr. if his brother, Dallas Kruzelnick was still in jail. Without waiting for a response, Scro then intimated that he could start trouble at the Court for his brother.

59. On another occasion, Scro ordered Mr. Kruzelnick to go downstairs into the speakeasy to “have a talk.” The speakeasy is a retro-style bar located in the basement of the restaurant. When Mr. Kruzelnick entered the room, Scro was already inside, and instructed Ricky, who had been standing outside, to lock the door from the outside.

60. As Mr. Kruzelnick was trying to open the door, Scro came up behind and struck Plaintiff’s buttocks extremely hard with his hand, causing Mr. Kruzelnick to feel pain and

experience some bruising the next day.

61. Prior to that occasion, Scro had previously smacked Mr. Kruzelnick on his buttocks, as he had done with other employees – which was an extremely offensive and degrading practice in its own right -- but this time he had locked the door and was significantly more aggressive. Mr. Kruzelnick responded by saying, “Owww, what the F**k are you doing?!” In response, Scro laughed, squeezed Mr. Kruzelnick’s buttocks, and then instructed Ricky to open the door.

62. Mr. Kruzelnick left the room feeling terrified and humiliated.

Defendants Unlawfully Retaliate Against Mr. Kruzelnick

63. A few days later, Mr. Kruzelnick confronted Scro about how Scro had sexually abused him in the speakeasy, and Scro just responded, “I am not a fag.” To underscore the point, Scro ordered Mr. Kruzelnick to look him directly in his eyes when he spoke to him. Scro would often demand that employees look him directly in his eyes when he demanded their full attention. It was a tactic Scro said he learned from training his dogs.

64. In the following months, Scro continued to intimidate Mr. Kruzelnick with threats and abusive behavior. On one occasion, on or about December 15, 2016, at the end of Mr. Kruzelnick’s shift, Scro again ordered Mr. Kruzelnick to meet him in the speakeasy to discuss his “attitude.”

65. Once Mr. Kruzelnick entered the room, Scro locked the door from the outside and left Mr. Kruzelnick locked in the room for about five (5) to ten (10) minutes. When Scro returned, he opened the door and confronted Mr. Kruzelnick about his attitude and flicked Mr. Kruzelnick’s nipples with his middle fingers.

66. On or about January 24, 2017, Scro hugged Mr. Kruzelnick for his birthday and also then grabbed Mr. Kruzelnick’s buttocks.

67. In an effort to stop the repeated acts of abuse, Mr. Kruzelnick continued with his verbal complaints and made several written complaints to Defendants about their failure to take any corrective action regarding the discrimination he was subjected to as well as Scro's acts of sexual abuse.

68. Defendants repeatedly ignored Mr. Kruzelnick's complaints.

69. By way of example, in an email Mr. Kruzelnick sent on November 19, 2017 to Rachael Scro, he complained of Defendant Scro's "sexual harassment," "being bullied... for being gay" and the retaliation he has endured since complaining about the "yo gay boy emails."²

70. By way of another example, in an email dated May 16, 2018, Mr. Kruzelnick again complained to Rachel Scro that Defendant Scro was still subjecting him to "sexual harassment" and mocking him for being gay.³

71. Defendants never directly responded, or took any immediate corrective action in response to any of Mr. Kruzelnick's emails.

72. Rather, Defendants decided to use their attorneys to bully and intimidate Mr. Kruzelnick.

73. On or about May 22, 2018, while at work and without any warning to Mr. Kruzelnick, Defendants had two of their attorneys show up to the restaurant to question Mr. Kruzelnick about his allegations against Scro and the attorneys also requested that Mr. Kruzelnick "sign some paperwork."

74. Understandably intimidated, Mr. Kruzelnick refused to talk to Defendants' attorneys or sign any of their paperwork.

75. Needless to say, Scro's abusive behavior towards Plaintiff, in the manner described

² Attached hereto as Exhibit "B" is November 19, 2017, email.

³ Attached hereto as Exhibit "C" is the May 16, 2018 email.

above, continued and even worsened over time.

76. Exasperated, on or about August 28, 2018, Mr. Kruzelnick again complained to Rachael Scro, who for the first time directly addressed his complaints by telling Mr. Kruzelnick, falsely, that he could no longer file a lawsuit, since the statute of limitations had already expired.

77. Undeterred, on September 25, 2018, Mr. Kruzelnick again emailed Rachael Scro and complained about the abuses and harassment he had endured for years.

78. On September 27, 2018, emboldened by her belief that Mr. Kruzelnick no longer had any timely claims against the Defendants, Rachel Scro emailed Plaintiff a written warning.

79. The following day, on September 28 2018, Rachel Scro sent Mr. Kruzelnick a Termination letter.

80. Defendants' termination of Mr. Kruzelnick was in direct retaliation to his repeated complaint of the "gay boy emails" and his repeated complaints of the sexual abuse, and the bullying he faced for being gay, throughout his employment at the Mohawk House.

81. On October 9, 2018, in a further effort to intimidate Mr. Kruzelnick and exert their professed power and influence within Sparta, Defendants sent Mr. Kruzelnick a letter threatening that if he ever returned to the Mohawk House, as well as any of their other properties it would be considered trespassing.

82. Defendants copied Sparta police on said letter.

83. Not so coincidentally, and to cement Defendants' blatant act of intimidation, Mr. Kruzelnick also received a phone call from the Sparta police – a call that most ordinary citizens would never be able to get the Sparta police to make -- warning Mr. Kruzelnick to stay away from the Mohawk House and all of the Defendants' properties.

84. As a direct result of all of Defendants' conduct described herein, Mr. Kruzelnick

has suffered, and will continue to suffer great pain of mind and body, severe and permanent emotional distress physical manifestations of emotional distress and economic damages.

ANNMARIE STEFANO

Ms. Stefano's Employment with Defendants

85. In November of 2016, Defendants hired Ms. Stefano as bartender at the Mohawk House.

86. Ms. Stefano performed as an exemplary employee.

87. Throughout Ms. Stefano's employment, Defendant Scro repeatedly subjected her to acts of sexual harassment on the basis of her gender, which created an overtly hostile and offensive work environment.

88. Further, Defendant Scro, throughout Ms. Stefano's employment repeatedly subject her to unwanted sexual contact in violation of C.2A:14-2B.

89. When Ms. Stefano objected to this unlawful and discriminatory treatment, Defendant Scro retaliated against her by amplifying the illegal conduct. As a direct result of Defendant Scro's repeated acts of sexual abuse and harassment, Ms. Stefano was forced to tender her resignation on or about November 28, 2019.

Steve Scro Repeatedly Subjects Ms. Stefano to Unwanted Sexual Harassment and Unwanted Sexual Contact.

90. Shortly after Ms. Stefano commenced her employment at the Mohawk House, she noticed that there was a lot of inappropriate sexual banter amongst the staff, but also, Scro's willingness to completely ignore such improper comments.

91. Several months into her employment at the Mohawk House, Scro began to make inappropriate sexual contact with Ms. Stefano, engage in inappropriate sexually charged banter

with her, and make sexually offensive and disparaging remarks about her appearance.

92. Scro would also repeatedly smack and grope Ms. Stefano's buttocks.

93. Further, Scro would make highly inappropriate suggestions as to how Ms. Stefano could make herself "hotter" by getting breast enhancement surgery, even while repeatedly telling her how "hot" she was already.

94. Although Ms. Stefano observed that Scro not only engaged in this manner with her, but also, with a number of other employees, everyone remained silent, cowed into silence by their fear of retaliation, intimidation and harassment by Scro.

95. Indeed, when Ms. Stefano tried to bring up Scro's inappropriate behavior with other employees, they would quickly warn her that Scro was a "powerful man," with a lot of "powerful friends," most significantly the Sparta police.

96. Moreover, Scro would consistently tell her that he was "extremely powerful and had all of Sussex County" on his side, and to *never* disobey him or go against him.

97. As Ms. Stefano continued to work at the Mohawk House, Scro's behavior grew increasingly more improper and offensive.

98. By way of example, in or around May of 2018, "The Nerds," a very popular native New Jersey band, was playing at the Mohawk House. On this particular evening Scro pulled Ms. Stefano aside at approximately 9:00 p.m. and asked her how the evening was going.

99. Ms. Stefano told Scro that it was very busy and that she needed to go to the restroom and then return to the bar, so she could take more customers. Scro then said to her "Hurry up! Pull your top down more so the guests can see your boobs! It will help make me more money!"

100. On Ms. Stefano's way back from the restroom, Scro yelled at her, "Go get the 'fag' outside (referring to Mr. Kruzelnick), and tell him I need to speak to him!"

101. Although it had not been the first time, she heard Scro refer to Mr. Kruzelnick in this derogatory and offensive manner, it always shocked and angered her when she heard Scro makes such statements.

102. Ms. Stefano then repeated to Mr. Kruzelnick, what Scro had just called him, and although Mr. Kruzelnick became visibly upset, he also did not appear shocked, as Scro had called him derogatory and bigoted names on countless prior occasions.

103. Later that same evening, as guests were leaving and Ms. Stefano, along with other staff, cleaned the restaurant, Scro called her to the front desk of the establishment and gave her more inappropriate and offensive beauty “tips”: “You should visit Salon DePasquale and get your hair dyed blonde, and maybe consider getting a larger top area. Keep working for me and you can afford all of these things! You would be way hotter!”

104. Ms. Stefano, completely humiliated, went home and cried as Scro’s comments made her doubt herself and whether she was attractive.

105. Further, when she would walk by him, in the dining room area, the foyer of the restaurant or the lounge, Scro would smack her buttocks and make moaning noises.

106. Scro would also touch her hands and caress her shoulders while attempting to pull her closer to him while making fake promises of advancement in the restaurant.

107. These exchanges disgusted Ms. Stefano and made her extremely uncomfortable, but she tolerated Scro’s behavior because she needed the income, and even more importantly, she was truly afraid of Scro.

108. On Thanksgiving Eve November 21, 2018, Ms. Stefano was downstairs at Mohawk House retrieving ice for the very busy bar, along with her co-worker, Bailey Ressa (“Mr. Ressa”). As Mr. Ressa was scooping 4 buckets with ice, she used the restroom. When she came out of the

washroom, she walked to the ice machine to help Mr. Ressa with two buckets of ice, while he held the other two.

109. As they walked down the basement hall towards the stairs which lead to the upper front door, and as they rounded the corner, Scro approached her from behind and very aggressively smacked and groped her buttocks. And even more disturbingly, Scro, touched her vaginal area in the process.

110. Absolutely disgusted and dumbfounded by Scro's deplorable acts and words, she screamed and walked away in tears, and could not believe how invasively and inappropriately he had touched her.

111. Ms. Stefano's co-worker, Mr. Ressa, yelled at Scro for his actions, and asked him why he would do that to her. Scro, showing absolutely no remorse for his behavior, responded by shamelessly yelling at Mr. Ressa to get out.

112. Ms. Stefano continued working half in tears, while her co-workers, all of whom were fearful of getting involved, looked the other way.

113. The following day, Scro requested, incredibly, that Ms. Stefano sit next to him, and he proceeded to ask her -- as if nothing had happened the day before -- how her day was going. Ms. Stefano responded that she was extremely tired because she had been crying all night as a direct result of what Scro had done to her, and that she that she could sue him for such actions. Scro then responded: "I know everybody in Sussex County, the FBI and Sparta police and that *no one* could ever win a case against me."

Scro Retaliates Against Ms. Stefano, and Aggressively Persists in Unwanted Acts of Sexual Harassment Towards Ms. Stefano, After he Complains and Threatens a Lawsuit.

114. From that day onward, Scro would sexually harass Ms. Stefano even more frequently, as if to underscore the point that was, in fact untouchable in Sussex County.

115. By way of example, Ms. Stefano would work the Friday morning shift, and every morning after clocking in, she would go downstairs in the basement to retrieve the items she needed for her shift. She would grab buckets of ice, fruit to cut, and would tap beers and wines in the keg rooms.

116. On one particular Friday, in or around July of 2019, she was in the keg room freezer and had bent over to change a keg key. The door then opened, Scro walked in and aggressively smacked her buttocks and said, "Make me money!" To add insult to injury, as if Ms. Stefano were not already humiliated enough, Scro then told her how "good your ass looks," and then walked away.

117. After he left Ms. Stefano stayed in the freezing keg room crying, trying to drum up the courage to quit. Unfortunately, like most employees who tolerated Scro's abuse, Plaintiff needed the income to pay her bills and her mortgage, and she could not financially afford to lose her job. Moreover, Ms. Stefano genuinely believed the hype that Scro was "untouchable" and had the power to punish her if she stood up to him.

118. In the months that that followed Scro would repeatedly come behind the bar and touch her shoulders and try to kiss her constantly. He would remind her on numerous occasions that he felt she would look better as a blonde and with larger breasts. He would consistently tell her how "hot" she was, and that she should dress sexier and "show your cleavage" more, in order to make him more money.

119. Ms. Stefano would complain to her manger, Ricky Soni, who would simply ignore her complaints and laugh them off.

120. After a while, Ricky grew tired of her complaining and told her, "Leave if you can't get over it or accept the way Scro is."

121. On or about November 28, 2019, after suffering from Scro's abuse for over 3 years, Ms. Stefano resigned from her position. She communicated her resignation to Rachel Scro and explained her reasons for leaving. Not surprisingly, Rachel Scro did not even respond to Ms. Stefano.

122. Upon resigning from the Mohawk House, it took Ms. Stefano a number of months to secure new employment at a significantly lower salary.

123. As a direct result of all of Defendants' conduct described herein, Ms. Stefano has suffered, and will continue to suffer, great pain of mind and body, severe and permanent emotional distress, physical manifestations of emotional distress and economical damages.

DENISE GUAGENTI

Ms. Guagenti's Employment with Defendants

124. In or around February 2007, Defendants hired Plaintiff Denise Guagenti to work as a bartender at the Mohawk House.

125. In or around the fall of 2008, as a direct result of Ms. Guagenti's hard work and dedication, Scro promoted her to front of house hostess.

126. In reality, Ms. Guagenti, functioned more as a manger than hostess, in that she would often trouble shoot issues that arose with the servers and customers, would put the night's earnings in the safe at the end of the night (sometimes upward of \$30,000.00 on the weekends), and lock up the restaurant at the end of the night, which included setting the alarm.

127. Throughout Ms. Guagenti's employment, Defendant Scro repeatedly subjected her to unwanted sexual contact in violation of the C.2A:14-2B.

128. Defendant Scro then abruptly terminated Ms. Guagenti's employment in or around January of 2011.

Steve Scro Repeatedly Subjects Ms. Guagenti to Unwanted Sexual Contact.

129. Within a few months of working at the Mohawk House, Scro began to engage in sexually offensive behavior towards Ms. Guagenti, which made her feel extremely uncomfortable.

130. Scro started by frequently kissing her and hugging her. Scro would then approach her from behind, grab her around her waist and smack her buttocks.

131. Almost every time Ms. Guagenti would unload the dishwasher, which was located behind the bar, Scro would rub up against her as she was bending over, or grab her around the waist from behind or brush up against her very closely. And if Ms. Guagenti was facing him, he would brush his chest against her breasts.

132. This offensive and unwelcomed ritual went on repeatedly during the years Ms. Guagenti worked at the Mohawk House.

133. Ms. Guagenti also noticed that Scro would frequently engage in this offensive behavior with other employees, especially the employees who were more financially vulnerable.

134. For example, Ms. Guagenti witnessed Scro inappropriately touching and kissing a number of the employees. And with respect to Mr. Kruzelnick, she also heard on a number of occasions Scro mocking him for being gay and calling him names such as "fag boy," or "faggot," or "gay boy." Indeed, Scro would also make comments like "Jake is light in the loafers" or "He and his boyfriend are fighting again," when Mr. Kruzelnick and another gay waiter would disagree.

135. Although Scro employed other gay waiters he would specifically target Jake with the disparaging remarks about Mr. Kruzelnick being gay.

136. In or around late 2008, Scro's offensive and abusive behavior escalated. Ms. Guagenti was wearing a red dress. As she was standing at the front desk and waiting to seat people in her role as hostess, Scro came from behind the hostess stand and slapped her buttocks -- which

by now had grown to become a regular occurrence -- but this time he also grabbed her buttocks with both hands and squeezed it. Scro then grabbed Ms. Guagenti around her waist as he rubbed himself against her from behind and told her, "You look good tonight."

137. That night, Ms. Guagenti was so shocked and appalled by Scro's behavior that she went home and cried for hours. She felt violated and disgusted with herself for tolerating the behavior, but she was going through a messy divorce and living with a friend, so she needed to remain employed.

138. As Ms. Guagenti continued to work at the Mohawk House, Scro continued with his offensive behavior in the manner described. Scro would continually inappropriately touch her including, squeezing and grabbing her buttocks without her consent.

139. Scro would stand so close to her that customers would come in and ask, "is this your wife?", and Scro would respond, "No, this is my girlfriend." He would also order her to come sit down and have dinner with him.

140. When bands would typically perform on the weekends at the Mohawk House, Scro would order Ms. Guagenti to turn down the music that would ordinarily play at the Mohawk House, as the live band was getting ready to perform. To turn the down the music, Ms. Guagenti would have to climb a five-foot ladder, and Scro would always insist that she wear a dress to work. Scro would also insist on holding the ladder for her, and seize the opportunity to look up her dress. It was yet another sick and twisted sexual ritual that Scro forced Ms. Guagenti to engage in, and it left her feeling cheap and humiliated.

141. In or around May or June of 2010, Scro thought someone was stealing from him, so Ms. Guagenti called her brother, who was in the commercial security business, to provide Scro with an estimate.

142. Ms. Guagenti's brother examined the premises and recommended a system, but in the end, Scro said it was too expensive, so he installed fake cameras.

143. In or around June 2010, when Scro and Ms. Guagenti were alone in the restaurant, he took her down to the basement at around 3:00 a.m. to "show" her the fake cameras. Scro had his arm around her and was holding her closely.

144. Despite the fact Ms. Guagenti appeared visibly scared, and kept telling Scro she wanted to leave, he kept her there against her will, holding her tightly with his arm around her for what felt like a significant period of time. When Ms. Guagenti, eventually started crying and kept insisting she wanted to go home, he finally let her go.

145. In December of 2010, Ms. Guagenti, who had appeared as though she were in her 40(s), turned 60, and a friend posted a happy 60th on Facebook. Although Ms. Guagenti immediately asked her friend to take it down and she did, Scro called her shortly thereafter and told her, "it's just not working out."

146. As a direct result of all of Defendants' unlawful conduct, as described herein, Ms. Guagenti has suffered and will continue to suffer great pain of mind and body, severe and permanent emotional distress, and physical manifestations of emotional distress.

LISA STOECKEL

Ms. Stoeckel's Employment with Defendants

147. In 2004, Defendants hired Plaintiff Lisa Stoeckel to work as a bartender at the Mohawk House.

148. In 2007, as a result of Ms. Stoeckel's exemplary work ethic and dedication, Scro promoted Ms. Stoeckel to Bar manager

149. Throughout Ms. Stoeckel's employment, Defendant Scro repeatedly subjected her to unwanted sexual contact in violation of the C.2A:14-2B.

150. Ms. Stoeckel ultimately tendered her resignation on or about May 4, 2016, after tolerating years of sexual abuse and misconduct at the hands of Scro.

Steve Scro Repeatedly Subjects Ms. Stoeckel to Unwanted Sexual Contact

151. Throughout her employment Scro would openly and frequently make sexually charged remarks to female staff, and Ms. Stoeckel was no exception.

152. By way of example, Scro would insist that Ms. Stoeckel "dress sexy" and "wear the stuff husbands would be mad at."

153. Scro would also ask Ms. Stoeckel, as well as other female staff, to kiss him when they walked by him. For example, if Ms. Stoeckel was carrying something, and Scro was in her way, he would ask for a kiss on the lips before moving out of the way.

154. More disturbingly, on numerous occasions, Scro – just as he had done with a number of other employees -- Scro would smack and then grab Ms. Stoeckel's buttocks without her consent.

155. Although Scro engaged in this behavior throughout Ms. Stoeckel's employment, similar to other employees, she remained silent because she needed the income, and she was genuinely afraid of Scro, who repeatedly expressed to her that he was "well connected in Sparta" especially with the Sparta police.

156. In or around the latter part of 2015 and early 2016, Scro ordered her to go to his truck, where he kept the band schedule. When Ms. Stoeckel went out to the truck, Scro followed her and ordered her to get inside the truck. Scro then drove her to the "Hunan Taste" restaurant in Denville, New Jersey, to eat dinner. Stoeckel kept insisting on returning to work, but Scro

essentially ignored her.

157. Even more disturbingly, during the trip to and from Denville, Scro would repeatedly say to Stoeckel, “This is the way a man should treat you,” as if they were somehow on a date together. During the entire trip Ms. Stoeckel felt powerless, and Scro’s words seemed to be extremely inappropriate, and left her feeling very uncomfortable.

158. At work, Scro would constantly pull her away from the bar, get close to her and try to engage in long conversations with her, all of which made her feel very uncomfortable.

159. Over time, as she kept rejecting his advances, he grew more hostile towards her and started to say, he had to make some changes.

160. Thereafter, Scro demoted Ms. Stoeckel from manager to bartender and told the other bartenders that they no longer had to listen to her. In an act of blatant retaliation, Scro cut Ms. Stoeckel’s hourly wages from \$8.00 to \$5.00 per hour.

161. As the tension grew between the two of them, Scro would constantly tell her that he would never fire her, but would just continue to do as he pleased with her until she was forced to quit.

162. Not surprisingly, after years of tolerating Scro’s sexual acts of abuse and reprehensible misconduct, Ms. Stoeckel tendered her resignation on or about May 4, 2016.

163. As a direct result of all of Defendants’ unlawful conduct, as described herein, Ms. Stoeckel has suffered, and will continue to suffer, great pain of mind and body, severe and permanent emotional distress, and physical manifestations of emotional distress.

KAYLA DOLLAR

Ms. Dollar’s Employment with Defendants

164. Plaintiff Kayla Dollar began working as a waiter at the Mohawk House in 2017.

165. In or around the fall of 2017, Defendants hired Kayla Dollar for the position of bartender, but then made her a waitress when she actually started working at the restaurant.

166. Throughout Ms. Dollar's employment, Defendant Scro subjected her to acts of sexual harassment on the basis of her gender, which created an overtly hostile and offensive work environment.

167. Further, Defendant Scro, throughout Ms. Dollar's employment, repeatedly subject her to unwanted sexual contact in violation of the C.2A:14-2B.

168. As a direct result of Defendant Scro's repeated acts of sexual abuse and harassment, Ms. Dollar was forced to tender her resignation in or around October of 2019.

Steve Scro Repeatedly Subjects Ms. Dollar to Work Place Sexual Harassment and Unwanted Sexual Contact

169. Shortly after Ms. Dollar began working at the Mohawk House, Scro began with his all too familiar offensive and sexually charged statements.

170. For example, Scro would repeatedly ask Ms. Dollar to wear lower cut blouses so that she could "make more money." Scro would inappropriately remark on her appearance with comments like, "You look sexy today."

171. Further into her tenure, Scro would tell Ms. Dollar to get a "boob" job, just as he had told Ms. Stefano, to make herself more attractive to customers.

172. Ms. Dollar also recalled Scro being particularly abusive to Mr. Kruzelnick, which was surprising because customers loved him. Although she did not work with Mr. Kruzelnick that often, she recalls Scro referring to him on more than one occasion as a "faggot."

173. Scro's comments made Ms. Dollar extremely uncomfortable, ashamed and humiliated. But she, like so many other of the employees that Scro preyed upon, needed the income and was genuinely afraid of Scro.

174. As per Scro's usual practice, he would often brag to her about his powerful connections throughout Sparta. Scro would frequently mention the names of the celebrities who frequented the Mohawk House, and he would also talk about his vast connections with the local Sparta police department.

175. Several months after Ms. Dollar commenced her employment, Scro included her in the unwilling group of employees whose buttocks he regularly smacked.

176. Scro would repeatedly smack Ms. Dollar's buttocks and, over time, Scro began to approach her from behind and rub her hip bone without her consent.

177. Further Scro, when giving her an order, would put his hand on her shoulder and direct Ms. Dollar to look into his eyes as he was speaking. Ms. Dollar later learned from a co-worker that this was a technique that Scro had learned from training his dogs.

178. Quickly into her tenure, Ms. Dollar informed Scro that she was in a committed relationship, but Scro ignore her and continued to engage in the above described acts of sexual harassment and abuse.

179. Despite the fact Scro's acts of sexual harassment were pervasive, employees rarely talked about it amongst themselves because they were admittedly terrified of Scro.

180. In or around October of 2018, Ms. Dollar tendered her resignation after repeatedly being subjected to Scro's sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

181. As a direct result of all of Defendants' unlawful conduct, as described herein, Ms. Dollar has suffered, and will continue to suffer, great pain of mind and body, severe and permanent emotional distress, and physical manifestations of emotional distress.

CRAIG VACCARO

Mr. Vaccaro's Employment with Defendants

182. In September of 2015, Defendants hired Plaintiff Craig Vaccaro to work as a waiter at the Mohawk House.

183. In or about March 2016, Mr. Vaccaro stopped working for Defendants in part due to a significant reduction in his schedule, but then later resumed his employment in November 2016 as a bartender.

184. Mr. Vaccaro performed in an exemplary manner throughout both periods of his employment.

185. Defendants then terminated Mr. Vaccaro in January of 2017.

186. Throughout Mr. Vaccaro's employment, Defendant Scro, on more than one occasion, subject him to unwanted sexual contact in violation of the C.2A:14-2B.

Steve Scro Repeatedly Subjects Mr. Vaccaro to Unwanted Sexual Contact

187. Scro asked Mr. Vaccaro to attend a wine tasting with him approximately one week after Defendants initially hired him.

188. After the wine tasting concluded, Vaccaro expressed that he had learned a great deal, and showed genuine enthusiasm for the experience.

189. Mr. Scro then walked Mr. Vaccaro into the Conservatory entrance, and smacked him on his backside without his consent.

190. Mr. Vaccaro was taken aback, and felt extremely belittled and uncomfortable, but did not say anything for fear of losing the job that he had just obtained.

191. In or around January 16th of 2016, Scro motioned for Mr. Vaccaro to walk over to him, and once he did, Scro gestured towards Mr. Kruzelnick, who appeared to be having a good

day and was dancing a little. Scro then asked Mr. Vaccaro, “Why is Jake acting so f**ggy?”

192. Mr. Vaccaro was deeply offended by Scro’s use of such a derogatory word and felt compelled to say something. Mr. Vaccaro then asked Scro, rhetorically, “You know, that’s offensive, right?” Scro shrugged indifferently and then smacked Mr. Vaccaro on his buttocks, as if to demean him for even attempting to stand up to him.

193. Immediately thereafter, Scro significantly reduced the tables Mr. Vaccaro covered by approximately seventy-five (75) percent, and reduced his schedule from working the majority of the week to only weekends.

194. Mr. Vaccaro left the restaurant, and after Scro felt he had been sufficiently punished, he allowed Mr. Vaccaro return work as a bartender.

195. As a bartender, Mr. Vaccaro worked day shifts, two days a week.

196. On or about Christmas Day in 2016, as Scro was talking to Mr. Vaccaro, he grabbed his buttocks and then walked away. Mr. Vaccaro stood there shocked, speechless and degraded.

197. Although Scro did this in front of the kitchen staff, everyone ignored Scro’s behavior because they were afraid of him, and he had done it so frequently that he had normalized his offensive behavior.

198. Indeed, during his tenures, Mr. Vaccaro heard a number of complaints from female staff about Scro’s sexually inappropriate behavior.

199. By way of example, Scro would repeatedly tell his female staff, especially the bartenders, “If you want to work for me, you have to show more skin.”

200. In 2017, Mr. Vaccaro, despite being enticed to return to the Mohawk house, was terminated.

201. As a direct result of all of Defendants’ unlawful conduct, as described herein, Mr.

Vaccaro has suffered, and will continue to suffer, great pain of mind and body, severe and permanent emotional distress, and physical manifestations of emotional distress.

FIRST CLAIM FOR RELIEF BY ALL PLAINTIFFS
(Sexual Abuse)

202. Plaintiffs repeat and reallege each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

203. Defendant Scro did sexually harass, sexually assault, sexually abuse, and/or have sexual contact with each Plaintiff in violation of the laws of the State of New Jersey.

204. By sexually harassing, sexually assaulting, sexually abusing, and/or having sexual contact with Plaintiffs, Defendant Scro placed each Plaintiff in imminent and reasonable apprehension of harmful and offensive contact.

205. By sexually harassing, sexually assaulting, sexually abusing, and/or having sexual contact with Plaintiffs, Defendant Scro acted so as to cause repeated unjustified, harmful and offensive physical contact with Plaintiffs.

206. As a direct result of Defendant's conduct, Plaintiffs have suffered the injuries and damages described herein.

207. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants are liable to Plaintiffs for compensatory damages and for punitive damages, together with interest and costs.

SECOND CLAIM FOR RELIEF BY ALL PLAINTIFFS
Sexual Assault Under New Jersey Law

208. Plaintiffs repeat and reallege each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

209. Defendant Steve Scro did sexually assault, sexually abuse, and/or have sexual contact with Plaintiffs in violation of the laws of the State of New Jersey.

210. By sexually assaulting, sexually abusing, and/or having sexual contact with

Plaintiffs, Defendant Scro placed Plaintiffs in imminent and reasonable apprehension of harmful and offensive contact.

211. By sexually assaulting, sexually abusing, and/or having sexual contact with Plaintiffs, Defendant Scro acted so as to cause repeated unjustified, harmful and offensive physical contact with Plaintiffs.

212. As a direct result of Defendants' conduct, Plaintiffs have suffered the injuries and damages described herein.

213. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants are liable to Plaintiffs for compensatory damages and for punitive damages, together with interest and costs.

THIRD CLAIM FOR RELIEF BY ALL PLAINTIFFS
Assault Under New Jersey Law

214. Plaintiffs repeat and reallege each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

215. Defendant Scro's aforementioned actions placed Plaintiffs in apprehension of imminent harmful and offensive bodily contact.

216. As a result of the foregoing, Plaintiffs sustained, *inter alia*, assault, battery, severe emotional distress, embarrassment, humiliation, physical pain and mental anguish, together with shock, fright, and apprehension.

FOURTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF BY ALL PALITIFFS
Battery Under New Jersey Law

217. Plaintiffs repeats and realleges each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

218. Defendant Scro touched Plaintiffs in a harmful and offensive manner.

219. Defendant Scro did so without privilege or consent from Plaintiffs.

220. As a result of the foregoing, Plaintiffs have sustained, *inter alia*, assault, battery, severe emotional distress, embarrassment, humiliation, physical pain and mental anguish, together with shock, fright, and apprehension.

FIFTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF BY ALL PLAINTIFFS
Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress Under New Jersey Law

221. Plaintiffs repeat and reallege each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

222. The aforementioned conduct was extreme and outrageous, and exceeded all reasonable bounds of decency.

223. The aforementioned conduct was intentional and done for the sole purpose of causing severe emotional distress to Plaintiffs, and did, in fact, cause Plaintiffs to suffer severe emotional distress.

224. As a result of the aforementioned conduct, Plaintiffs suffered severe emotional distress, physical and mental injury, together with embarrassment, humiliation, shock, and fright.

SIXTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF BY
PLAINTIFF JAMES KRUZELNICK
(Hostile Work Environment on the Basis of Sexual Orientation in
Violation of the NJLAD)

225. Plaintiffs repeat and reallege each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

226. The NJLAD prohibits discrimination in the terms, conditions, and privileges of employment on the basis of an individual's sexual orientation.

227. Defendants discriminated against Plaintiff James Kruzelnick in violation of the NJLAD by orchestrating and permitting a hostile work environment, in the form of harassment and threats of physical violence based upon Mr. Kruzelnick's sexual orientation.

228. Specifically, Mr. Kruzelnick was subjected to disparaging comments in the workplace such as “Faggot” and “Gay boy” made by Defendant Scro, which gave license to Mr. Kruzelnick’s manager, Richard Soni to berate and discriminate against Mr. Kruzelnick on the basis of his sexual orientation.

229. Plaintiff Kruzelnick made a number of complaints to Defendants, but Defendants’ consistently failed to take any action or perform any meaningful investigations. Instead, Defendants wholly ignored the complaints made by Mr. Kruzelnick. By ratifying the discriminatory conduct of their employees, Defendants created an insufferable and hostile work environment, and then wrongfully discharged Mr. Kruzelnick in retaliation for his complaints.

230. As a result of the aforementioned conduct, Plaintiff Kruzelnick suffered severe emotional distress, physical and mental injury, together with embarrassment, humiliation, shock, and fright.

**SEVENTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF BY
PLAINTIFF JAMES KRUZELNICK AND ANNMARIE STEFANO
(Retaliation in Violation of the NJLAD)**

231. Plaintiffs repeat and reallege each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

232. The NJLAD, and more specifically, N.J.S.A. 10:5-12(d), makes it unlawful for an employer to take reprisals against an employee who has opposed unlawful employment practices, or who has assisted or participated in another employee's claim of discrimination.

233. As set forth above, Defendants retaliated against Plaintiff James Kruzelnick, in violation of the NJLAD, when Mr. Kruzelnick, in good faith, voiced his opposition to Defendants’ unlawful discriminatory practices based on his sexual orientation. Defendants’ intensified their acts of harassment and abuse of Mr. Kruzelnick, and then unlawfully discharged him.

234. As set forth above, Defendants retaliated against Plaintiff AnnMarie Stefano in violation of the NJLAD when Ms. Stefano, in good faith, voiced her opposition to Defendants' unlawful discriminatory practices based on her gender and more specifically the unlawful acts of sexual harassment and assault that Defendant Scro had committed against her. Defendant SCRO then persisted and intensified in his acts of harassment and abuse, and created an intolerable work environment resulting in Ms. Stefano's constructive termination.

235. As a result of the aforementioned conduct, Plaintiff Kruzelnick suffered severe emotional distress, physical and mental injury, together with embarrassment, humiliation, shock, and fright.

236. As a result of the aforementioned conduct, Plaintiff Stefano suffered severe emotional distress, physical and mental injury, together with embarrassment, humiliation, shock, and fright.

237. Defendants' treatment of Plaintiff Kruzelnick was willful and/or reckless disregard of Plaintiff's rights, due to which Plaintiff is entitled to an award of punitive damages against Defendants.

238. Defendants' treatment of Plaintiff Stefano was willful and/or reckless disregard of Plaintiff's rights, due to which Plaintiff is entitled to an award of punitive damages against Defendants.

**EIGHTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF BY
PLAINTIFFS ANNMARIE STEFANO AND KAYLA DOLLAR
(Hostile work environment on the Basis of Gender
in Violation of the NJLAD)**

239. Plaintiffs repeat and reallege each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

240. The NJLAD prohibits discrimination in the terms, conditions, and privileges of employment on the basis of an individual's gender.

241. Defendants discriminated against Plaintiffs AnnMarie Stefano and Kayla Dollar in violation of the NJLAD by orchestrating and permitting a hostile work environment, in the form of harassment and threats of physical violence based upon Mr. Stefano and Ms. Dollar's gender.

242. Specifically, Ms. Stefano and Ms. Dollar were subjected to disparaging comments in the workplace by Defendant Scro, such as "You look hot," or "You need to get bigger boobs."

243. At all times mentioned above, Defendant Scro was the owner and manager at the Mohawk house, with real and apparent authority over Ms. Stefano and Ms. Dollar. Defendants ratified the discriminatory conduct of their employees, and created an insufferable and hostile work environment that culminated in Plaintiffs' constructive discharge.

244. As a result of the aforementioned conduct, Plaintiffs suffered severe emotional distress, physical and mental injury, together with embarrassment, humiliation, shock, and fright.

245. As a result of the foregoing, Plaintiffs sustained, *inter alia*, assault, battery, emotional distress, embarrassment, humiliation, physical pain and mental anguish, together with shock, fright, and apprehension.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs hereby demand judgment against the Defendants on each cause of action as follows:

- A. Awarding compensatory damages in the amount of \$10,000,000;
- B. Awarding punitive damages in the amount of \$5,000,000.00;
- C. Awarding costs and fees of this action, including attorneys' fees to the extent permitted by law;
- D. Awarding prejudgment interest to the extent permitted by law; and
- E. Awarding such other and further relief as to this Court may seem just and proper.

Dated: New York, New York
November 23, 2020

Respectfully submitted,

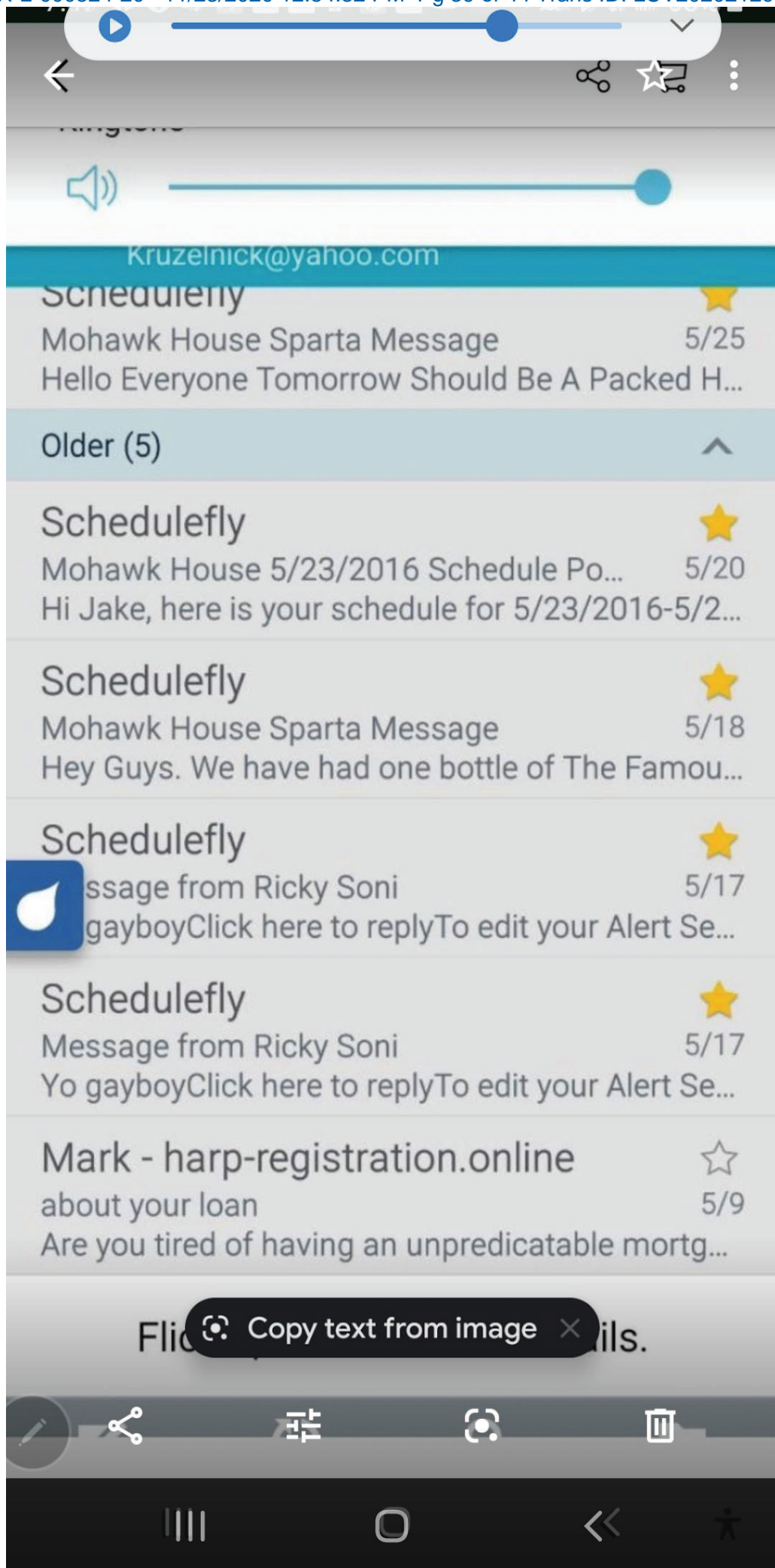
JOSEPH & NORINSBERG, LLC

By :



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Email: diego@norinsberglaw.com

Exhibit A

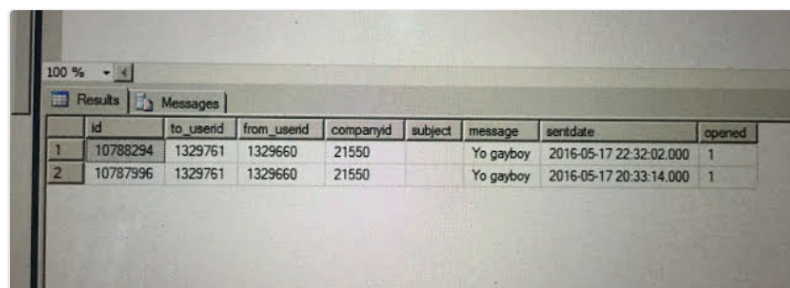


Schedulefly  Inbox**Wil Brawley** 11/21/2017

to me ▾



Jake, here you go. These were sent by Ricky Soni



	id	to_userid	from_userid	companyid	subject	message	senddate	opened
1	10788294	1329761	1329660	21550		Yo gayboy	2016-05-17 22:32:02.000	1
2	10787996	1329761	1329660	21550		Yo gayboy	2016-05-17 20:33:14.000	1



image1.jpeg

**James Kruzelnick** 11/21/2017

to Wil ▾



Received, thank you.

[Show quoted text](#)

 Reply Reply all Forward

Exhibit B

Inbox (53)

Drafts (30)

Sent

Archive

Spam (1)

Trash (3)

Smart Views

Folders (15)

butler
carol
catalog
cigna
doc
healthboost
horizon
isp
kevin
medicare
misc (15)
morris
norton
omg computer
paul
pension
pw
square
SS
Synced Messages
terry
x
yahoo

Recent

A quote only
takes minutes.

GET STARTED
GEICO



Sponsored



InnerSpark online
What to Expect at an Addiction
Rehab Center

james kruzelnick <kruzelnick@yahoo.com>
To: rkruzelnick@yahoo.com

11/19/17 at 12:46 AM

This message contains blocked images. [Show Images](#) [Change this setting](#)

On Sunday, November 19, 2017 12:45 AM, james kruzelnick <kruzelnick@yahoo.com> wrote:

please tell your husband to stop treating me so bad. his lunacy towards me, his aggressive and threatening behavior is unbearable. this is all because the Mohawk house and management has formed an opinion of me. I have mentioned this to management numerous times over the last year and half and to no avail nothing has been addressed or done. I am a 12 year veteran of the Mohawk house I will not be bullied to quit because I am gay. what where you people thinking? well it is obvious to me that since I mentioned this email that my time at the establishment has been painful. I fear the judge and jury that awaits me. Steve can threaten me all he wants about the influence he may have. police, judges prosecutors etc. I will not quit. also Steve not giving me tables, overwhelming me with tables, not scheduling for work, change in my shifts or make me go home or whatever perverse things that he has in store for me. it's all because of the email and other things that has happened at work. it will not be a part of his kangaroo court. frankly I'm gay and proud of it.. this situation is long overdue for an apology and I don't see one in sight. so if you can get back to me I would love to hear your assessment. because sexual harassment or bullying doesn't motivate me. thank you jake

Inline image

⬅ Reply ⬅ Reply to All ➡ Forward ... More

One click away from
your upgraded inbox

Click to Reply, Reply All or Forward

<https://mg.mail.yahoo.com/neo/launch?rand=3h2mbjdc83v92&guccounter=1#6097548693>

1/1

Exhibit C

