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FEDERAL JUDGE ORDERS CHICAGO LIMO COMPANY TO PAY MORE THAN \$381K IN BACK WAGES DAMAGES

Town & Country Limousine failed to pay overtime to 34 drivers

CHICAGO – A federal judge has ordered a Chicago limo company to pay 34 drivers \$190,716 in back wages and an equal additional amount in liquidated damages, totaling \$381,432, after finding the company violated the overtime and recordkeeping provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Investigators from the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division found that Town & Country Limousine Inc. incorrectly categorized the drivers as exempt from overtime under the motor carrier exemption. While some drivers met the requirements for the exemption in some workweeks, most were legally entitled to time-and-a-half for hours worked beyond 40 in a workweek.

The investigation found that the company did not compensate drivers for time spent prepping and cleaning their vehicles, driving to and from the corporate garage and waiting for their customers to arrive. When these unpaid hours resulted in drivers working beyond 40 hours, overtime was legally due. The employer also failed to record and maintain legally mandated time and payroll records.

"This judgment is a win for these drivers who worked long hours without legally required overtime compensation. All employers are responsible for learning and complying with the regulations that apply to their businesses. Ignorance of the law is no excuse for violations," said Tom Gauza, district director for the Wage and Hour Division in Chicago. "Other employers in this industry should take note of this investigation, and other workers who are being paid in this manner should give the Wage and Hour Division a call. We are committed to ensuring that workers are paid every penny they have rightfully earned."

The judgment resolves a lawsuit filed in March of 2015, and in addition to ordering the payment of back wages and damages, the judge permanently enjoined the company, John Jansen, the chief executive officer and William Lynch, the chief operating officer, from violating the FLSA in the future.

For more information about federal wage laws administered by the Wage and Hour Division, call the agency's toll-free helpline at 866-4US-WAGE (487-9243). Information also is available at <http://www.dol.gov/whd>.

Court: U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, Chicago

Civil Action Number: 15-cv-02010, Perez v. DT & C Global Management LLC d/b/a/ Town & Country Limousine, John Jansen, William Lynch

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