

**NOTICE OF PENDENCY AND SETTLEMENT OF  
CLASS ACTION; SETTLEMENT  
HEARING; AND EXCLUSION PROCEDURES**

Jennel Gonzalez v. Charlotte Russe, Inc.  
San Diego County Superior Court No. GIC 835807

TO: All current and former employees of Charlotte Russe, Inc. ("Charlotte Russe") who were employed by Charlotte Russe in California in a Store Manager position from September 15, 2000 to May 28, 2005 ("Plaintiffs").

\* \* \* \*

THIS NOTICE AFFECTS YOUR RIGHTS. PLEASE READ THIS NOTICE CAREFULLY.

**I.**

**INTRODUCTION**

If you were employed by Charlotte Russe in California in a Store Manager position at any time from September 15, 2000 through May 28, 2005 (the "Class Period"), you are a member of the proposed settlement class in this class action lawsuit (the "Action") and your rights will be affected as set forth in the proposed settlement described in this Notice (the "Settlement"). On August 12, 2005, the Court preliminarily approved the Settlement and conditionally certified a settlement class. You have received this Notice because Charlotte Russe's records show you were a member of the class of employees employed by Charlotte Russe in California in a Store Manager position at some time during the Class Period.

**II.**

**NATURE OF THE ACTION**

On September 15, 2004, a complaint was filed by Jennel Gonzalez ("Gonzalez" or "Named Plaintiff") and Cheryl Tubig in the San Diego County Superior Court. On August 12, 2005, Tubig was dismissed as representative plaintiff in the Action and the operative Complaint in this matter, the First Amended Complaint, was filed in the San Diego County Superior Court. The Named Plaintiff generally alleges Charlotte Russe misclassified the Plaintiffs as exempt from overtime requirements, and therefore failed to pay Plaintiffs for all overtime to which they were entitled under California law. Named Plaintiff also alleges Charlotte Russe misclassified Plaintiffs for purposes of federal law and failed to pay Plaintiffs overtime to which they were entitled under the Fair Labor Standards Act ("FLSA"), the federal law that regulates the payment of wages. The Named Plaintiff further alleges these alleged practices constituted unfair competition, and that Charlotte Russe owes waiting time penalties associated with these allegations (collectively, the "Claims").

**III.**

**POSITIONS OF THE PARTIES**

The Named Plaintiff's contentions are summarized above.

Charlotte Russe has denied and continues to deny each of the claims and contentions alleged by Plaintiffs in the Action. Charlotte Russe has repeatedly asserted and continues to assert defenses thereto, and has expressly denied and continues to deny any wrongdoing or legal liability arising out of any of the facts or conduct alleged in the Action. Charlotte Russe also has denied and continues to deny, inter alia, the allegations that the Plaintiffs have suffered damage; that Charlotte Russe misclassified any of the Plaintiffs as exempt from overtime requirements; that Charlotte Russe failed to pay any of the Plaintiffs for all overtime to which they were entitled; that Charlotte Russe engaged in any unlawful, unfair or fraudulent business practices; that Charlotte Russe owes any penalties to Plaintiffs; or that the Plaintiffs were harmed by the conduct alleged in the Action. Neither the Settlement discussed here, nor any document referred to herein, nor any action taken to carry out the Settlement, is, shall be, may be construed as, or may be used as an admission, concession or indication by or against Charlotte Russe of any fault, wrongdoing or liability whatsoever.

Counsel for the Named Plaintiff and the Plaintiffs ("Class Counsel") have extensively investigated and researched the facts and circumstances underlying the issues raised in the Action, and the law applicable thereto. Class Counsel recognizes the expense and length of continued proceedings necessary to continue the litigation against Charlotte Russe through trial and through any possible appeals. Class Counsel has also taken into account the uncertainty and the risk of the outcome of further litigation, and the difficulties and delays inherent in such litigation.

Class Counsel is also aware of the burdens of proof necessary to establish liability for the Claims, of Charlotte Russe's defenses thereto, and of the difficulties in establishing damages for the Plaintiffs. Class Counsel also has taken into account the extensive settlement negotiations conducted by Plaintiffs and Charlotte Russe (the "Parties"). Based on the foregoing, Class Counsel believes the proposed Settlement is fair, adequate and reasonable and in the best interests of the Plaintiffs.

Charlotte Russe is also aware of the inherent risk of any litigation, and has likewise concluded that the further defense of this litigation would be protracted and expensive for all Parties. Charlotte Russe has, therefore, agreed to settle this Action in the manner and upon the terms set forth in the proposed Settlement, to put to rest all claims that are or could have been asserted against it in the Action.

For purposes of the Settlement, the Court has certified a Class consisting of all current and former Charlotte Russe employees who were employed by Charlotte Russe in California in a Store Manager position from September 15, 2000 to May 28, 2005.

#### IV.

#### THE SETTLEMENT

The following is only a summary of the provisions of the proposed Settlement between the Named Plaintiff, the Plaintiffs and Charlotte Russe. The specific and complete terms of the proposed Settlement are described in the Stipulation and Settlement Agreement of Class Action Claims ("Settlement Agreement"), a copy of which is available for your review as set forth at the end of this Notice.

Charlotte Russe shall make the following Settlement Payments: (1) Settlement Awards to the Settlement Class Members; (2) a Fees Award to Class Counsel; (3) an Incentive Award to Gonzalez; and (4) costs of administration. The Fees Award, Incentive Award and costs of administration are explained in Section VI below.

As explained above, all current and former employees of Charlotte Russe who were employed by Charlotte Russe in California in a Store Manager position from September 15, 2000 to May 28, 2005 are defined as "Plaintiffs." All Plaintiffs are receiving this Notice. All Plaintiffs who do not request to be excluded from the Settlement as set forth in Section VIII below will be "Class Members." As a Class Member, if you wish to participate in the monetary recovery, you must sign and return the enclosed Claim Form/FLSA Consent Form as set forth below in Section V. You will then be a "Settlement Class Member." Charlotte Russe has agreed to make available a maximum of \$345,000 for distribution to, or for the benefit of, Settlement Class Members. Each Settlement Class Member will receive payment based on the number of overtime hours the Settlement Class Member reported to Charlotte Russe he or she worked for Charlotte Russe in California during the Class Period. Each Settlement Class Member's gross payment is called his or her "Gross Settlement Amount." Your Gross Settlement Amount will be approximately «Gross Amt». Fifty percent of each Settlement Class Member's Gross Settlement Amount will be considered wages, and fifty percent will be considered miscellaneous income. From the fifty percent considered wages, payroll deductions will be made, for state and federal withholding taxes and any other applicable payroll deductions owed by Charlotte Russe and the Settlement Class Member as a result of the payment. The amount remaining after these deductions will be the Settlement Class Member's "Net Settlement Amount." The Net Settlement Amount that will be paid to each Settlement Class Member is that Settlement Class Member's "Settlement Award." The Settlement Awards will be paid within 10 days after the Settlement becomes fully final and effective (the "Effective Date" as defined in the Settlement Agreement).

#### V.

#### CLAIM PROCEDURE FOR MONETARY RECOVERY/FLSA

#### CONSENT PROCEDURE

A. The Settlement of this action includes claims under both California state law and federal law. All Plaintiffs receiving this Notice will be bound by the Settlement as to their state law claims unless they request exclusion as set forth below in Section VIII. However, only Plaintiffs who complete, sign and return the enclosed Claim Form/FLSA Consent Form will become Settlement Class Members and receive payment. Federal law provides that Plaintiffs will not be bound by the Settlement of this action as to their federal claims unless they complete the enclosed Claim Form/FLSA Consent Form. This means that when you complete, sign and return the Claim Form/FLSA Consent Form, you are doing two things: (1) requesting a monetary award and (2) consenting to join the federal action and to be represented by the Named Plaintiff and her counsel. You therefore have three options:

- If you wish to receive a Settlement Award, you must complete, sign and return the Claim Form/FLSA Consent Form as outlined below in subsection B. This will also indicate your consent to join the FLSA portion of the action. You will be bound by the Settlement as to both your state and federal claims.
- If you do not return the Claim Form/FLSA Consent Form or request exclusion, you will be bound by the Settlement as to your state claims but not as to your federal claims, and you will not receive a Settlement Award.
- If you wish to be excluded from the Settlement, you must follow the procedures outlined below in Section VIII. You will not be bound by the Settlement as to either your state or federal claims, and you will not receive a Settlement Award.

B. As a Class Member, if you wish to receive a recovery and consent to join the FLSA action, you must complete, sign and return in a proper and timely fashion the Claim Form/FLSA Consent Form to Desmond, Marcello and Amster ("Claims Administrator"), located at 6060 Center Drive, Suite 825, Los Angeles, CA 90045 via first class U.S. mail or equivalent, postage paid, postmarked on or before October 1, 2005. Any Claim Form/FLSA Consent Form that is not submitted by first class mail or equivalent, is postmarked after the applicable date, is not completely and legibly filled out, is not addressed to the proper address, or is not signed by the Class Member, will not constitute a valid claim and will be denied unless otherwise ordered by the Court.

The Claims Administrator shall review each Claim Form/FLSA Consent Form received and shall verify each form to reasonably ensure its validity and accuracy as may be reasonably necessary.

Each Class Member who submits a valid Claim Form/FLSA Consent Form shall be paid by check. The checks shall remain valid and negotiable for ninety (90) days from issuance and may thereafter automatically be canceled if not cashed.

## VI.

### CLASS COUNSEL'S FEES AWARD, CLASS REPRESENTATIVE INCENTIVE AWARD AND CLAIMS ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES

As part of the preliminary approval of the Settlement, Harris & Kaufman ("Class Counsel") requested attorneys' fees and costs of \$132,500 (the "Fees Award"); the Court will determine whether this request is reasonable at the Settlement Hearing discussed below in Section IX. Class Counsel shall not be permitted to petition the Court for any additional payments for fees, costs or interest and the award shall be for all claims for attorneys' fees and costs past, present and future incurred in the Action. The Fees Award shall be paid by Charlotte Russe. As part of the Settlement, you will not be required to pay Class Counsel for their representation of you in the Action.

As part of the preliminary approval of the Settlement, the Court has preliminarily approved an Incentive Award of \$12,500 to Gonzalez for her time and effort spent pursuing this Action to be paid by Charlotte Russe.

Expenses of the administration of this Settlement will be paid by Charlotte Russe.

## VII.

### BINDING EFFECT/RELEASE OF CLAIMS

#### A. Release Of Claims Affecting All Class Members

All Class Members, *i.e.*, all Plaintiffs who have not validly requested exclusion, will be bound by the terms of the proposed Settlement with regard to their state law claims if it is approved and if the Final Judgment of the Court dismissing the Action is entered and becomes final. If the proposed Settlement is approved, all Class Members will have released the "Released Parties" from the "Released Claims" as defined below and will be permanently barred from suing or otherwise making a claim against any of the Released Parties that is in any way related to the Released Claims. This is more completely set forth as follows:

Release As To All Class Members. As of the Effective Date, the Class Members, including the Named Plaintiff, release Charlotte Russe and each of its past or present officers, directors, shareholders, employees, agents, principals, heirs, representatives, accountants, auditors, attorneys, consultants, insurers and reinsurers, and its and their respective successors and predecessors in interest, subsidiaries, affiliates, parents and each of their company-sponsored employee benefit plans and all of their respective officers, directors, employees, administrators, fiduciaries, trustees and agents (the "Released Parties"), from the "Released Claims." For purposes of this Agreement, the "Released Claims" are defined as:

all claims, demands, rights, liabilities, and causes of action of every nature and description whatsoever, known or unknown, asserted or that might have been asserted, whether in tort, contract, or for violation of any state or federal constitution, statute, rule or regulation, including state wage and hour laws, whether for economic damages, non-economic damages, restitution, penalties or liquidated damages, arising out of, relating to, or in connection with: (1) any and all facts, transactions, events, policies, occurrences, acts, disclosures, statements, omissions or failures to act, which are or could be the basis of claims that Charlotte Russe failed to compensate Plaintiffs for all hours worked in accordance with California law, including claims: (a) that Charlotte Russe did not pay the Plaintiffs all amounts due for work that was performed by the Plaintiffs for Charlotte Russe, including but not limited to overtime work and/or off-the-clock work; and/or (b) that Charlotte Russe owes wages, commissions, penalties (specifically including but not limited to waiting time penalties), interest, attorneys' fees or other damages of any kind based on a failure to comply with any state wage and hour laws, at any times on or before the last day of the Class Period (whether based on California state wage and hour law, contract, or otherwise); and/or (2) the causes of action asserted in the Class Action, including any and all claims for alleged failure to pay overtime and, as related to the foregoing, for alleged unlawful, unfair and/or fraudulent business practices under California Business and Professions Code § 17200, *et seq.*

The Released Claims include any unknown claims that the Class Members do not know or suspect to exist in their favor at the time of the release, which, if known by them, might have affected their settlement with, and release of, the Released Parties or might have affected their decision not to object to this Settlement. With respect to the Released Claims, the Class Members stipulate and agree that, upon the Effective Date, the Class Members shall be deemed to have, and by operation of the Final Judgment shall have, expressly waived and relinquished, to the fullest extent permitted by law, the provisions, rights and benefits of Section 1542 of the California Civil Code, or any other similar provision under federal or state law, which Section provides:

**A general release does not extend to claims which the creditor does not know or suspect to exist in his favor at the time of executing the release, which if known by him must have materially affected his settlement with the debtor.**

The Class Members may hereafter discover facts in addition to or different from those they now know or believe to be true with respect to the subject matter of the Released Claims, but upon the Effective Date, shall be deemed to have, and by operation of the Final Judgment shall have, fully, finally, and forever settled and released any and all of the Released Claims, whether known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected, contingent or non-contingent, which now exist, or heretofore have existed, upon any theory of law or equity now existing or coming into existence in the future, including, but not limited to, conduct that is negligent, intentional, with or without malice, or a breach of any duty, law or rule, without regard to the subsequent discovery or existence of such different or additional facts. Nothing herein shall be construed to release any claims not within the scope of "Released Claims" as defined herein.

The Class Members agree not to sue or otherwise make a claim against any of the Released Parties that is in any way related to the Released Claims.

**B. Release Of Claims Affecting Only Class Members Who Return A Claim Form/FLSA Consent Form**

All Settlement Class Members, *i.e.*, all Plaintiffs who have submitted a valid Claim Form/FLSA Consent Form, will be bound by the terms of the proposed Settlement with regard to their federal law claims if it is approved and if the Final Judgment of the Court dismissing the Action is entered and becomes final. If the proposed Settlement is approved, all Settlement Class Members will have released the "Released Parties" from the "Released Federal Claims" as defined below and will be permanently barred from suing or otherwise making a claim against any of the Released Parties that is in any way related to the Released Federal Claims. This is more completely set forth as follows:

As of the Effective Date (as defined in the Settlement Agreement), "all claims, demands, rights, liabilities, and causes of action of every nature and description whatsoever, known or unknown, asserted or that might have been asserted, whether in tort, contract, or for violation of any state or federal constitution, statute, rule or regulation, including federal wage and hour laws, whether for economic damages, non-economic damages, restitution, penalties or liquidated damages, arising out of, relating to, or in connection with: (1) any and all facts, transactions, events, policies, occurrences, acts, disclosures, statements, omissions or failures to act, which are or could be the basis of claims that Charlotte Russe failed to compensate Plaintiffs for all hours worked in accordance with federal law, including claims: (a) that Charlotte Russe did not pay the Plaintiffs all amounts due for work that was performed by the Plaintiffs for Charlotte Russe, including but not limited to overtime work and/or off-the-clock work; and/or (b) that Charlotte Russe owes wages, commissions, penalties, interest, attorneys' fees or other damages of any kind based on a failure to comply with any federal wage and hour laws, at any times on or

before the last day of the Class Period (whether based on federal wage and hour law, contract, or otherwise); and/or (2) the causes of action asserted in the Class Action, including any and all claims for alleged failure to pay overtime.

The Released Federal Claims include any unknown claims that the Settlement Class Members do not know or suspect to exist in their favor at the time of the release, which, if known by them, might have affected their settlement with, and release of, the Released Parties or might have affected their decision not to object to this Settlement. With respect to the Released Federal Claims, the Settlement Class Members stipulate and agree that, upon the Effective Date, the Settlement Class Members shall be deemed to have, and by operation of the Final Judgment shall have, expressly waived and relinquished, to the fullest extent permitted by law, the provisions, rights and benefits of Section 1542 of the California Civil Code, or any other similar provision under federal or state law, which Section provides:

**A general release does not extend to claims which the creditor does not know or suspect to exist in his favor at the time of executing the release, which if known by him must have materially affected his settlement with the debtor.**

The Settlement Class Members may hereafter discover facts in addition to or different from those they now know or believe to be true with respect to the subject matter of the Released Federal Claims, but upon the Effective Date, shall be deemed to have, and by operation of the Final Judgment shall have, fully, finally, and forever settled and released any and all of the Released Federal Claims, whether known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected, contingent or non-contingent, which now exist, or heretofore have existed, upon any theory of law or equity now existing or coming into existence in the future, including, but not limited to, conduct that is negligent, intentional, with or without malice, or a breach of any duty, law or rule, without regard to the subsequent discovery or existence of such different or additional facts. Nothing herein shall be construed to release any claims not within the scope of "Released Federal Claims" as defined herein.

The Settlement Class Members agree not to sue or otherwise make a claim against any of the Released Parties that is in any way related to the Released Federal Claims.

## VIII.

### PROCEDURE FOR EXCLUSION

Plaintiffs may exclude themselves from the Settlement as to their state law claims by mailing to Desmond, Marcello and Amster ("Claims Administrator"), located at 6060 Center Drive, Suite 825, Los Angeles, CA 90045 via first class U.S. mail or equivalent, postage paid, postmarked on or before October 1, 2005, a written statement expressing their desire to be excluded from the Gonzalez et. al. v. Charlotte Russe, Inc. et. al. litigation Settlement as to their state law claims in the litigation. If you wish to request exclusion from the Settlement as to your state law claims in this class action lawsuit, your written statement must include your name (and former names, if any), current address, telephone number, the last four digits of your social security number, and the dates of your employment by Charlotte Russe. In addition, it must be postmarked on or before October 1, 2005. Requests for exclusion that do not include all required information, or that are not submitted on a timely basis, will be deemed null, void and ineffective. Persons who are eligible to and do submit valid and timely requests for exclusion from the Settlement as to their state law claims will not receive Settlement Awards, and will not be bound by the terms of the proposed Settlement as to their state law claims, if it is approved, or the Final Judgment in this Action.

## IX.

### SETTLEMENT HEARING/OBJECTIONS TO THE PROPOSED SETTLEMENT

A hearing (the "Settlement Hearing") will be held before the Honorable William C. Pate on November 16, 2005 at 3:00 p.m. at the Superior Court of California for the County of San Diego, 330 West Broadway, San Diego, CA 92101 (the "Court"), to determine whether the proposed Settlement of the Action is fair, adequate and reasonable and should be approved by the Court and whether the Action should be dismissed on the merits with prejudice. The hearing may be adjourned by the Court from time to time as the Court may without further notice direct.

Any Class Member may appear in person or through counsel at the Settlement Hearing and be heard as to why the proposed Settlement of the Action should not be approved as fair, adequate and reasonable, or why a Final Judgment dismissing the Action against Charlotte Russe with prejudice should or should not be entered. No Class Member, however, shall be heard or entitled to object and no papers or briefs submitted by any such person shall be received or considered by the Court unless written notice of intention to appear at the Settlement Hearing, together with copies of all papers and briefs proposed to be submitted to the Court at the Settlement Hearing, shall have been filed with the Court

and have been served personally on or before October 1, 2005, or if by mail then postmarked no later than October 1, 2005, upon all of the following:

William E. Harris  
Harris & Kaufman  
15260 Ventura Blvd., Suite 2250  
Sherman Oaks, California 91403  
(818) 990-1999  
wharris@harriskaufman.com

Julie A. Dunne  
Samantha D. Hardy  
Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP  
501 W. Broadway, 19th Floor  
San Diego, California 92101

Any member of the Settlement Class who does not make and serve his or her written objections in the manner provided above shall be deemed to have waived such objections and shall be foreclosed from making any objections (by appeal or otherwise) to the proposed Settlement.

Any Class Member who is satisfied with the proposed Settlement need not appear at the Settlement Hearing.

**X.**

**EXAMINATION OF PAPERS AND INQUIRIES**

The foregoing is only a summary of the Action and the proposed Settlement and does not purport to be comprehensive. For a more detailed statement of the matters involved in the Action and the proposed Settlement, you may refer to the pleadings, the Stipulation and Settlement Agreement of Class Action Claims, and other papers filed in the Action, which may be inspected at the Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of California for the County of San Diego, 330 West Broadway, San Diego, CA 92101, during regular business hours of each Court day.

All inquiries by Plaintiffs regarding this Notice and/or the Settlement should be directed to counsel for the Settlement Class, William E. Harris, Harris & Kaufman, 15260 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 2250, Sherman Oaks, California 91403, (818) 990-1999, wharris@harriskaufman.com.

**PLEASE DO NOT CONTACT THE CLERK OF THE COURT, THE JUDGE, CHARLOTTE RUSSE, OR CHARLOTTE RUSSE'S ATTORNEYS WITH INQUIRIES.**

Dated: August 18, 2005

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WILLIAM C. PATE  
JUDGE, SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA FOR  
THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO