

1 Joseph R. Saveri (SBN 130064)
2 Steven N. Williams (SBN 175489)
3 Gwendolyn R. Giblin (SBN 181973)
4 Kevin Rayhill (SBN 267496)
5 Kyle Quackenbush (SBN 322401)
6 **JOSEPH SAVERI LAW FIRM, INC.**
7 601 California Street, Suite 1000
8 San Francisco, CA 94108
9 Telephone: (415) 500-6800
10 Facsimile: (415) 395-9940
11 jsaveri@saverilawfirm.com
12 swilliams@saverilawfirm.com
13 ggiblin@saverilawfirm.com
14 krayhill@saverilawfirm.com
15 kquackenbush@saverilawfirm.com

Attorneys for Plaintiffs and the Proposed Class
Additional counsel on signature page

12 SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
13 COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

15 **SELENA SCOLA, ERIN ELDER, GABRIEL**
16 **RAMOS, APRIL HUTCHINS, KONICA**
17 **RITCHIE, ALLISON TREBACZ, JESSICA**
18 **SWARNER, and GREGORY SHULMAN,**
individually and on behalf of all others similarly
situated,

19 *Plaintiffs,*

20 v.

21 **FACEBOOK, INC.,**

22 *Defendant.*

Civil Action No. 18CIV05135

**PLAINTIFFS' NOTICE OF MOTION AND
MOTION FOR (1) PRELIMINARY
APPROVAL OF SETTLEMENT; (2)
PROVISIONAL CERTIFICATION OF
SETTLEMENT CLASS; (3)
APPOINTMENT OF CLASS COUNSEL; (4)
APPROVAL OF NOTICE PLAN; (5)
APPROVAL OF SETTLEMENT
ADMINISTRATOR; and (6) APPROVAL OF
BELAIRE NOTICE; MEMORANDUM OF
POINTS AND AUTHORITIES IN
SUPPORT THEREOF**

Assigned for All Purposes to
Hon. V. Raymond Swope, Dept. 23

Trial Date: None Set
Complaint Filed: September 21, 2018

28 Civil Action No. 18-CIV-05135

**PLAINTIFFS' NOTICE OF MOTION AND MOTION FOR (1) PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF SETTLEMENT; (2) PROVISIONAL
CERTIFICATION OF SETTLEMENT CLASS; (3) APPOINTMENT OF CLASS COUNSEL; (4) APPROVAL OF NOTICE PLAN; (5)
APPROVAL OF SETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATOR; and (6) APPROVAL OF BELAIRE NOTICE**

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1 NOTICE OF MOTION AND MOTION

2 TO THE COURT, THE PARTIES, AND ALL COUNSEL OF RECORD:

3 Please take notice that, on [] at [], or as soon thereafter as the parties may be
4 heard, in Department 23 of the Superior Court, County of San Mateo, 400 County Center, Redwood
5 City, CA 94063, Plaintiffs Selena Scola, Erin Elder, Gabriel Ramos, April Hutchins, Konica Ritchie,
6 Allison Trebacz, Jessica Swarner, and Gregory Shulman (“Plaintiffs”) will and hereby do move for an
7 order granting preliminary approval of the settlement of this class action lawsuit against Defendant
8 Facebook, Inc. (“Facebook”). By this motion, Plaintiffs request that the Court enter an Order:

- 9 (1) Granting preliminary approval of the Settlement Agreement;
10 (2) Provisionally certifying the Settlement Class;
11 (3) Appointing Plaintiffs’ counsel as Class Counsel;
12 (4) Approving the proposed Notice Plan;
13 (5) Approving the Settlement Administrator;
14 (6) Approving the proposed Belaire Notice; and
15 (7) Scheduling a hearing for final approval of the settlement, the application for an award of
16 attorneys’ fees and expenses, service awards for Plaintiffs, and entry of final judgment.

17 This motion is based on California Rule of Court 3.769(c), the following memorandum of points
18 and authorities, the declarations of Steven N. Williams, Daniel Charest, Sonya Norman, Ph.D., Patricia
19 Watson, Ph.D., and the Hon. Rebecca Westerfield (Ret.) submitted herewith, the argument and
20 evidence the Court may permit at the hearing, and the complete files and record in this action.

21
22 Dated: May 8, 2020

Respectfully Submitted,

Steven N. Williams

23
24 Joseph R. Saveri (SBN 130064)
Steven N. Williams (SBN 175489)
25 Gwendolyn Giblin (SBN 181973)
Kevin Rayhill (SBN 267496)
26 Kyle Quackenbush (SBN 322401)
JOSEPH SAVERI LAW FIRM, INC.
27 601 California Street, Suite 1000
San Francisco, CA 94108
Telephone: (415) 500-6800
28 Facsimile: (415) 395-9940
jsaveri@saverilawfirm.com

Civil Action No. 18-CIV-05135

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swilliams@saverilawfirm.com
ggiblin@saverilawfirm.com
krayhill@saverilawfirm.com
kquackenbush@saverilawfirm.com

Korey A. Nelson (admitted *pro hac vice*)
knelson@burnscharest.com
Lydia A. Wright (admitted *pro hac vice*)
lwright@burnscharest.com
Amanda Klevorn (admitted *pro hac vice*)
aklevornA@burnscharest.com
BURNS CHAREST LLP
365 Canal Street, Suite 1170
New Orleans, LA 70130
Telephone: (504) 799-2845
Facsimile: (504) 881-1765

Warren Burns (admitted *pro hac vice*)
wburns@burnscharest.com
Kyle Oxford (admitted *pro hac vice*)
koxford@burnscharest.com
BURNS CHAREST LLP
900 Jackson St., Suite 500
Dallas, Texas 75202
Telephone: (469) 904-4550
Facsimile: (469) 444-5002

William Most (SBN 279100)
williammost@gmail.com
LAW OFFICE OF WILLIAM MOST
201 St. Charles Ave. Suite 114 #101
New Orleans, LA 70170
Telephone: (504) 509-5023

Attorneys for Plaintiffs and the Proposed Class

1 I. INTRODUCTION

2 Plaintiffs Selena Scola, Erin Elder, Gabriel Ramos, April Hutchins, Konica Ritchie, Allison
3 Trebacz, Jessica Swarner, and Gregory Shulman (“Plaintiffs”) request that the Court preliminarily
4 approve the settlement¹ of this class action lawsuit against Defendant Facebook, Inc. (“Facebook”).
5 The settlement encompasses all claims Plaintiffs have asserted in their Second Amended Consolidated
6 Complaint² on behalf of themselves and the proposed settlement class, which consists of all persons
7 who performed content moderation work for Facebook in California, Arizona, Texas, or Florida as an
8 employee or subcontractor of one or more of Facebook’s vendors at any time from September 15, 2015
9 to the date of preliminary approval of the proposed class settlement (the “Class”).

10 The settlement reflects an outstanding and unprecedented recovery for the Class Members. It
11 provides for payment of \$52 million by Facebook, from which each Class Member may receive a
12 payment of \$1,000 for medical screening for their exposure to graphic or disturbing material in the
13 course of his or her work as a content moderator. In addition, each Class Member with a Qualifying
14 Diagnosis may seek additional payments for treatment and Other Damages. Facebook also will
15 implement significant reforms addressing the practices alleged in this action including: (1) on-site
16 coaching and standardized resiliency measures for all U.S. content moderators and (2) tooling
17 enhancements to provide reviewers with more control over how imagery is displayed and designed to
18 mitigate the effects of exposure to graphic or disturbing material.

19 The settlement was reached through extensive arms’-length negotiations between competent
20 counsel that was facilitated by the Hon. Rebecca Westerfield (Ret.). Plaintiffs retained two highly

21 _____
22 ¹ The parties’ Settlement Agreement is attached as Exhibit 1 to the Declaration of Steven N. Williams in
23 Support of Plaintiffs’ Motion for (1) Preliminary Approval of Settlement; (2) Provisional Certification of
24 Settlement Class; (3) Appointment of Class Counsel; (4) Approval of Notice Plan; (5) Approval of
Settlement Administrator; and (6) Approval of *Belaire* Notice (“Williams Decl.”). Unless otherwise
indicated, capitalized terms herein refer to the definitions used in the Settlement Agreement.

25 ² On April 9, 2020—two weeks after the Superior Court of California, San Mateo County closed due to
26 the COVID-19 crises—Plaintiffs e-filed the Second Amended Complaint (“SAC”), attaching a joint
27 Stipulation and [Proposed] Order Granting Plaintiffs Leave to File the Second Amended Complaint
28 (“Joint Stipulation”) pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure § 472. The SAC adds April
Hutchins, Konica Ritchie, Allison Trebacz, Jessica Swarner, and Gregory Shulman, who worked in
Arizona, Texas, and Florida, as class representatives. Plaintiffs also filed the SAC and Joint Stipulation
with the Clerk’s Office on April 16, 2020.

1 credentialed experts and worked closely with them to develop a keen understanding of the issues related
2 to the diagnosis and treatment of trauma-related injuries and the safeguards necessary to mitigate future
3 harm. The settlement is reasonable when the strength of the claims and defenses is measured against
4 the cost and risks of further litigation. It satisfies all criteria for preliminary approval.

5 Accordingly, Plaintiffs respectfully request that the Court enter an order:

- 6 (1) Granting preliminary approval of the Settlement;
- 7 (2) Provisionally certifying the Settlement Class;
- 8 (3) Appointing Plaintiffs' counsel as Class Counsel;
- 9 (4) Approving the proposed Notice Plan;
- 10 (5) Approving the Settlement Administrator;
- 11 (6) Approving the proposed Belaire Notice; and
- 12 (7) Scheduling a hearing for final approval of the Settlement, the application for an award of
13 attorneys' fees and expenses, service awards for Plaintiffs, and entry of final judgment.

14 A proposed form of Order is submitted herewith.

15 II. LEGAL STANDARD

16 At the preliminary approval stage, the Court has broad powers to determine if the proposed
17 settlement is fair under the circumstances of the case. *Wershba v. Apple Computer, Inc.* (2001) 91 Cal.
18 App. 4th 224, 234–35, *disapproved on other grounds by Hernandez v. Restoration Hardware, Inc.*, 409 P.3d
19 281 (2018). California Rule of Court 3.769 establishes a two-step process for obtaining court approval.
20 First, “the court preliminarily approves the settlement and the class members are notified as directed
21 by the court.” *Cellphone Termination Fee Cases* (2009) 180 Cal. App. 4th 1110, 1118 (citing C.R.C.
22 3.769(c)–(f)). Then, “the court conducts a final approval hearing to inquire into the fairness of the
23 proposed settlement.” *Id.* (citing C.R.C. 3.769(g)).

24 At the first step, the court reviews the proposed settlement and makes a preliminary
25 determination that the settlement is within the range of reasonableness such that notice should be
26 provided to class members and a fairness hearing be scheduled. *Wershba*, 91 Cal. App. 4th at 234–36.
27 Preliminary approval is “nothing more than [a determination] that ‘there is, in effect, probable cause to
28 submit the proposal to members of the class and to hold a full-scale hearing on its fairness.’” *California*

1 *v. Levi Strauss & Co.* (1986) 41 Cal. 3d 460, 485 (Bird, C.J., concurring) (quoting Manual for Complex
2 Litigation § 1.46 (2d ed. 1982)).

3 Preliminary approval is warranted where, as here, “the proposed settlement appears to be the
4 product of serious, informed, noncollusive negotiations” and “falls within the range of possible
5 approval.” *In re Tableware Antitrust Litig.*, 484 F. Supp. 2d 1078, 1079 (N.D. Cal. 2007) (internal
6 citation and quotation marks omitted); accord *Cho v Seagate Tech. Holdings Inc.* (2009) 177 Cal. App. 4th
7 734, 743 (observing that a court must “reach a reasoned judgment that the agreement is not the product
8 of fraud or overreaching by, or collusion between, the negotiating parties”).³

9 This Court’s assessment of a proposed settlement is to be informed by two general principles.
10 First, “voluntary conciliation and settlement are the preferred means of dispute resolution.” *7-Eleven*
11 *Owners for Fair Franchising v. Southland Corp* (2000) 85 Cal. App. 4th 1135, 1151 (quoting *Officers for*
12 *Justice v. Civil Service Comm’n of City & Cty. of S.F.*, 688 F.2d 615, 625 (9th Cir. 1982)). “This is
13 especially true in complex class action litigation.” *Id.* (quoting *Officers for Justice*, 688 F.2d at 625).
14 Second, “[d]ue regard . . . should be given to what is otherwise a private consensual agreement between
15 the parties.” *Id.* at 1145 (quoting *Dunk v. Ford Motor Co.* (1996) 48 Cal. App. 4th 1794, 1801); see also *Low*
16 *v. Trump Univ., LLC*, (S.D. Cal. 2017) 246 F. Supp. 3d 1295, 1302 (“Where both Parties are
17 represented by experienced counsel, the recommendation of experienced counsel to adopt the terms of
18 the proposed settlement is entitled to great deal of weight.” (internal citation and quotation marks
19 omitted)), *aff’d*, 881 F.3d 1111 (9th Cir. 2018).

20 **III. THE SETTLEMENT MEETS ALL REQUIREMENTS FOR APPROVAL**

21 **A. The Settlement Class**

22 The Settlement Class is defined as:

23 All individuals who performed content moderation work for
24 Facebook in California, Arizona, Texas, or Florida as an employee or
25 subcontractor of one or more of Facebook’s vendors from

26 ³ Ultimately, final approval involves a determination that the settlement is “fair and reasonable in
27 relation to the range of possible results further litigation might have produced, including . . . zero or
28 minimal recovery of damages by class members.” *Chavez v. Netflix, Inc.* (2008) 162 Cal. App. 4th 43, 55.
Final approval is appropriate where “the class settlement is within the ‘ballpark’ of reasonableness.”
Kullar v. Foot Locker Retail, Inc. (2008) 168 Cal. App. 4th 116, 133.

1 September 15, 2015 to the date of preliminary approval of the
2 proposed class settlement.

3 The Settlement Class fulfills the community of interest requirement for certification of a class
4 for settlement purposes. *See Linder v. Thrifty Oil Co.* (2000) 23 Cal. 4th 429, 435. “The community of
5 interest requirement involves three factors: (1) predominant common questions of law or fact; (2) class
6 representatives with claims or defenses typical of the class; and (3) class representatives who can
7 adequately represent the class.” *Id.* (quoting *Richmond v. Dart Indus., Inc.* (1981) 29 Cal. 3d 462, 470 (*en*
8 *banc*)). All three requirements are satisfied here. Although Facebook denies Plaintiffs’ allegations and
9 denies that its conduct violates California law, Facebook has stipulated to the provisional certification
10 of a class for settlement purposes.

11 First, common questions of law and fact predominate. “As a general rule if the defendant’s
12 liability can be determined by facts common to all members of the class, a class will be certified even if
13 the members must individually prove their damages.” *Hicks v. Kaufman & Broad Home Corp* (2001) 89
14 Cal. App. 4th 908, 916 (citing *Emp’t Dev. Dep’t. v. Superior Court* (1981) 30 Cal. 3d 256, 266); *accord*,
15 *Knapp v. AT & T Wireless Services, Inc.* (2011) 195 Cal. App. 4th 932, 941. Here, questions of law and fact
16 common to proposed settlement class members predominate over any individualized questions. These
17 common questions include whether Facebook failed to provide Class Members with a safe review
18 platform and a safe working environment, and whether that failure subjected Class Members to an
19 elevated risk of injury including psychological trauma. The Class Members were employed by third-
20 party vendors to review content on behalf of Facebook, using a review platform provided by Facebook.
21 Thus, the fundamental factual question before the Court is whether Facebook’s conduct, to which all
22 Class Members were subjected, increased their risk of injury such that the need for medical treatment
23 was a reasonably necessary consequence of that conduct.

24 Second, Plaintiffs’ claims are typical of the Class because they arise from the same event,
25 practice, or course of conduct giving rise to the claims of the other Class members and are based on the
26 same legal theories. *Classen v. Weller* (1983) 145 Cal. App. 3d 27, 46–47. Here, Plaintiffs—like all Class
27 Members—allege that Facebook unlawfully failed to provide them with a safe workplace. Plaintiffs—
28

1 like all Class Members—seek relief that includes treatment for injuries caused by Facebook’s conduct
2 and an injunction requiring business practice enhancements going forward.

3 Third, Plaintiffs are adequate class representatives. Adequacy of representation is established
4 where plaintiffs are represented by qualified counsel and “plaintiffs’ interests are not antagonistic” to
5 those of the class. *McGhee v. Bank of Am* (1976) 60 Cal. App. 3d 442, 450–51. Here, Plaintiffs know of no
6 conflicts among themselves and the Class. Plaintiffs’ counsel are experienced in class action litigation
7 and have litigated this matter in the best interests of the class. *See Williams Decl.* ¶¶ 3-8; *Charest Decl.*
8 ¶¶ 3-7.

9 For these reasons, an order certifying a provisional settlement class pursuant to C.R.C. 3.769(d)
10 is appropriate.

11 **B. The Settlement Fund for Medical Treatment and Damages Payments**

12 As detailed more fully in the Settlement Agreement, Facebook has agreed to deposit a non-
13 reversionary payment of \$52 million into a settlement fund as compensation for the release of the Class
14 Members’ claims. *See Settlement Agreement* § 3.1. That payment, which will be made within fifteen
15 days after the Effective Date of the Settlement, will also cover any award for attorneys’ fees and
16 expenses, service awards to the class representatives, and settlement administration costs. *Id.* §§ 3.1,
17 11.1 & app. A, § 1.

18 The parties have agreed that every Class Member will receive a single payment of \$1,000 that
19 the Class Member may use for medical diagnostic screenings. *Id.* app. A, § 2. A Class Member
20 diagnosed with a Qualifying Diagnosis, such as PTSD, will receive a Medical Treatment Payment. *Id.*
21 app. A, § 5. A Class Member diagnosed with a Qualifying Diagnosis will also have the option of
22 submitting a claim for an Other Damages Payment (*i.e.*, further payment for consequential and other
23 damages the Class Member contends were caused by content moderation work for Facebook). *Id.* app.
24 A, § 6. In exchange for an Other Damages Payment, these Class Members will give Facebook a full
25 release of all claims arising from or relating to the conduct alleged in this action. *Id.* § 6.7 & app. A, § 6.
26 The Other Damages Payments will be tiered to reflect the amount of damages allegedly suffered, the
27 strength of the alleged causal connection to Facebook’s conduct, and the strength of any supporting
28 documentation a Class Member submits; the highest-tier Other Damages Payment is capped at

1 \$50,000. *Id.* app. A, § 6.1. Class Members who do not submit claims for Other Damages Payments will
2 retain their right to assert individual Other Damages Claims in a streamlined arbitration but will waive
3 the ability to assert those claims on a class or aggregated basis or in court. *Id.* §§ 6.5, 6.6. The allocation
4 plan proposed by Plaintiffs is designed with the goal that no funds remain following disbursements to
5 Class Members, but if any funds do remain, the plan provides that they will be redistributed to all Class
6 Members if sufficient funds remain or donated to a *cy près* recipient to be approved by this Court if
7 funds are not sufficient to justify the added expense of redistribution. *Id.* app. A, §§ 7, 8. Any Class
8 Member who accepts such a residual distribution also will give Facebook a full release of all claims
9 arising from or relating to the conduct alleged in this action.

10 C. Injunctive Relief

11 Although Facebook denies Plaintiffs' allegations and denies that its conduct violates California
12 law, the parties have agreed to additional non-monetary considerations in the form of business practice
13 enhancements to address Plaintiffs' concerns. These remedies were evaluated by Plaintiffs' counsel in
14 conjunction with retained experts in the treatment of individuals exposed to trauma to track best
15 industry practices. The safeguards plan developed with these experts' input consists of: (1) tooling
16 enhancements designed to provide Content Moderators with more control over how they view content
17 to help mitigate the potential effects of viewing graphic or disturbing content; (2) training and support
18 designed to help Content Moderators build resilience and learn to cope with the stress of viewing
19 graphic or disturbing content; and (3) providing coaching and other support by licensed mental health
20 counselors for those Content Moderators who need it. Among other things, Facebook has agreed to
21 require that Facebook Vendors in the United States implement the following business practice
22 enhancements within 60 days after the Effective Date of the Settlement:

- 23 • Retain clinicians who are licensed, certified, and experienced in the area of mental
24 health counseling in a number sufficient to ensure coverage during all shift hours for
25 Content Moderator review projects involving regular exposure to graphic and
26 objectionable content, Settlement Agreement § 5.1.1(i);
- 27 • Conduct resiliency pre-screening and assessments as part of Content Moderators'
28 recruitment and hiring processes, *id.* § 5.1.1(ii);

- 1 • Make individual one-on-one coaching sessions available to Content Moderators within
2 the first month of onboarding and throughout employment and prioritize scheduling
3 those sessions within one week or less, *id.* § 5.1.1(iii).
- 4 • Make group wellness sessions available to Content Moderators on a monthly basis, *id.* §
5 5.1.1(iv);
- 6 • Make available weekly one-on-one coaching or wellness sessions for Content
7 Moderators on projects involving regular exposure to graphic and objectionable content,
8 each session lasting a minimum of thirty minutes, *id.* § 5.1.1(v);
- 9 • Ensure that Content Moderators on projects involving regular exposure to graphic and
10 objectionable content who request to speak with a clinician on an expedited basis can do
11 so within the next working day, *id.*;
- 12 • Provide Content Moderators with clear guidelines for how and when they may remove
13 themselves from a specific type of content, *id.* § 5.1.1(vi);
- 14 • Provide information regarding these psychological support measures and resources to
15 Content Moderators during onboarding and during ongoing resiliency training, *id.* §
16 5.1.1(vii);
- 17 • Post information regarding these psychological support measures at every Content
18 Moderator’s workstation, *id.* § 5.1.1.(viii); and
- 19 • Provide information for reporting Vendor violations of these business practice
20 enhancements, *id.* § 5.1.3.

21 In addition, Facebook has agreed to implement standardized resiliency requirements across all
22 U.S. Facebook Vendors, *id.* § 5.1.2(i), to require that U.S. Facebook Vendors submit to both formal
23 audits and unannounced on-site compliance reviews, *id.* § 5.1.2(ii), and to allow Content Moderators to
24 use Facebook’s whistleblower hotline to report Vendor’s failure to implement these business practice
25 enhancements, *id.* § 5.1.3.

26 Facebook also will continue to roll out a suite of Well-Being Preference tools on the Single
27 Review Tool platform used by Content Moderators. *Id.* §§ 5.1.5–.7. This will allow Content Reviewers
28 to change default settings according to their preferences to mitigate any exposure to graphic or

1 disturbing material, including:

- 2 • Viewing images in black and white, *id.* § 5.1.5(i);
- 3 • Blurring images, *id.* § 5.1.5(ii);
- 4 • Blocking faces within images posted to Facebook, *id.* § 5.1.5(iii);
- 5 • Blurring video previews, *id.* § 5.1.5(iv);
- 6 • Auto-muting videos on start, *id.* § 5.1.5(v);

7 Facebook also will continue to roll out other tooling enhancements, including:

- 8 • The ability to preview videos using thumbnail images when technically feasible, *id.* §
9 5.1.6(i); and
- 10 • Default settings preventing automatic video playback, *id.* § 5.1.6(ii).

11 These business practice and tooling enhancements are designed to mitigate the effects of
12 exposure to graphic or objectionable material. These measures were evaluated by Plaintiffs' counsel
13 with significant input from two nationally recognized experts in posttraumatic stress. Sonya Norman,
14 Ph.D., is the Director of the PTSD Consultation Program at the VA National Center for PTSD and has
15 authored more than 100 publications related to PTSD and associated problems. Patricia Watson, Ph.D.,
16 is a Senior Educational Specialist for the VA National Center for PTSD, where she has specialized in
17 early intervention and resilience since 1998 and has co-authored several field guides for handling
18 trauma-induced stress, developing resilience, and recovering from traumatic events; these guides have
19 been used by combat soldiers, firefighters, emergency services personnel, law enforcement
20 professionals, and nurses. For over a year, Drs. Norman and Watson advised Plaintiffs' counsel
21 regarding the types of business practice enhancements and resiliency measures that would appropriately
22 address the wrongdoing alleged by Plaintiffs. ⁴

24
25 ⁴ See Declaration of Sonya Norman, Ph.D. in Support of Plaintiffs' Motion for (1) Preliminary Approval of
26 Settlement; (2) Provisional Certification of Settlement Class; (3) Appointment of Class Counsel; (4)
27 Approval of Notice Plan; (5) Approval of Settlement Administrator; and (6) Approval of Belaire Notice,
28 ¶ 2 ("Norman Decl."); Declaration of Patricia Watson, Ph.D. in Support of Plaintiffs' Motion for (1)
Preliminary Approval of Settlement; (2) Provisional Certification of Settlement Class; (3) Appointment
of Class Counsel; (4) Approval of Notice Plan; (5) Approval of Settlement Administrator; and (6)
Approval of Belaire Notice, ¶ 2 ("Watson Decl.").

1 the parties have engaged in substantial discovery regarding certification, merits, and how Facebook’s
2 (and its Vendor’s) practices impacted Class Members.

3 The extensive discovery in this matter included Plaintiffs’ responses to Facebook’s
4 interrogatories and production of documents. Williams Decl. ¶ 6; Charest Decl. ¶ 5. In addition,
5 Plaintiffs Elder and Ramos were deposed by Facebook. Charest Decl. ¶ 5. Class Counsel fought
6 aggressively to obtain relevant discovery from Facebook, meeting and conferring with Facebook’s
7 counsel on numerous occasions, including two sessions at counsel’s office in Palo Alto in which Class
8 Counsel spoke directly with Facebook’s IT personnel in an attempt to come to a proper understanding
9 of Facebook’s data management systems and how they bear on the issues at stake in this litigation.
10 Williams Decl. ¶ 6. As a result, Plaintiffs obtained extensive discovery from Facebook, permitting them
11 to thoroughly evaluate the strength of the case and the risks associated with continued litigation. *Id.*;
12 Charest Decl. ¶ 5. In response to document requests served by Plaintiffs, Facebook produced—and
13 Plaintiffs have thoroughly reviewed—approximately 55,000 documents. Williams Decl. ¶ 6. Plaintiffs
14 also deposed the vice president of operations at Facebook. *Id.*

15 **C. The costs, risks, and likely length of trial and appeal favor preliminary approval.**

16 In assessing the settlement, any possible recovery should be “discounted by the risks and
17 expenses of attempting to establish and collect on those claims by pursuing the litigation.” *Kullar*, 168
18 Cal. App. 4th at 129. Consideration of the costs, risks, and length of ongoing discovery, motions practice,
19 a trial, post-trial proceedings, and subsequent appeal further confirm that the settlement is well within
20 the range of possible approval.

21 The settlement is significant on its own terms, but even more so when measured against the
22 costs, risks, and length of trial and appeal. It provides value by securing immediate relief that otherwise
23 would not have been available for years. *Sykes v. Harris*, No. 09 Civ. 8486 (DC), 2016 WL 3030156, at
24 *14 (S.D.N.Y. 2016) (“[M]uch of the value of a settlement lies in the ability to make funds available
25 promptly.” (internal citation and quotation marks omitted)); *In re Am. Bank Note Holographics, Inc.*, 127
26 F. Supp. 2d 418, 425 (S.D.N.Y. 2001) (“Settlement also confers an immediate benefit. . . . Add on time
27 for a trial and appeals, and the class would have seen no recovery for years. Class counsel properly
28 considered this factor as well.”). The relative speed of the proposed relief, as compared to the estimated

1 time to take this case to trial and through appeal, is especially important in a case involving mental
2 health and well-being.

3 **D. The proposed Notice and Notice Plan adequately inform Class Members of the**
4 **Settlement terms and their rights.**

5 Courts have broad discretion in fashioning an appropriate notice program so long as it satisfies
6 all due process requirements. Cal. Civ. Code § 1781; *Wershba*, 91 Cal. App. 4th at 235; C.R.C. 3.769. The
7 actual form and contents of the notice are within the Court’s discretion. *Wershba*, 91 Cal. App. 4th at
8 251. Notice “must contain an explanation of the proposed settlement and procedures for class members
9 to follow in filing written objections to it and in arranging to appear at the settlement hearing and state
10 any objections to the proposed settlement.” Cal. Rule of Court 3.769(f). The notice must “fairly apprise
11 the . . . members of the class of the terms of the proposed settlement and of the options that are open to
12 them in connection with [the] proceedings.” *Cellphone Termination Fee Cases*, 186 Cal. App. 4th at 1393
13 (quoting *7-Eleven*, 85 Cal. App. 4th at 1164).

14 The proposed Notice⁵ satisfies these requirements. It states in plain language: (1) the nature of
15 the action; (2) the definition of the Class; (3) the claims; (4) the basic terms of the agreement; (5) the
16 ability to enter an appearance through counsel if a Class Member so desires; (6) how to object to the
17 settlement; (7) the time and manner for objecting; (8) the binding effect of a Class judgment and the
18 terms of release; (9) the claim filing process and a description of the allocation plan; and (10) the
19 maximum requests for an award of attorneys’ fees, reimbursement of costs, and a service award to the
20 named Plaintiffs for their work on behalf of the Class. The Notice directs Class Members to a
21 settlement website and provides contact information for the settlement administrator. The notice thus
22 “provide[s] all of the detail required by statute or court rule, in a highly accessible form” and is
23 consistent with notices that have been approved in other cases. *See Chavez*, 162 Cal. App. 4th at 57–58
24 (approving notice and holding that directing class members to a website “was a perfectly acceptable
25 manner of giving notice”).⁶

26 _____
27 ⁵ The proposed Long-Form Notice, Short-Form Notice, and Claim Form are attached as Exhibits 2 to 4.

28 ⁶ *See also Cellphone Termination Fee Cases*, 186 Cal. App. 4th at 1393 (approving notice where the long-
form notice explained that payments would be made on a pro rata basis and explained “the total amount
of the common fund recovery, the nature of the costs and fees to be deducted from the common

1 Plaintiffs propose the following plan for providing Notice to Class members within 30 days after
2 entry of an Order granting preliminary approval of the Settlement:

3 ***E-mail and Postcard Notice.*** Plaintiffs propose that the Settlement Administrator provide Notice
4 though a combination of e-mail and postcard notice substantially in the form attached as Exhibit 3. E-
5 mail notice will be provided to Class Members for whom Facebook’s Vendors have an e-mail address.
6 Postcard notice will be provided to Class Members for whom Facebook’s Vendors do not have an e-mail
7 address; for those Class Members, postcards will be sent to the last known mailing address reflected in
8 the Vendors’ systems as updated through the National Change of Address (“NCOA”) database. The e-
9 mail and postcard notices will provide a link to, or the website address of, the Settlement Website and
10 will provide a telephone number that Class Members can call for information about the Settlement.

11 ***Settlement Website.*** The Settlement Administrator will publish a traditional “long form” notice
12 substantially in the form attached hereto as Exhibit 2 through the creation of a Settlement Website,
13 which will be maintained by the Settlement Administrator in the period beginning three (3) business
14 days before Notice is first disseminated and ending thirty (30) days after the later of (a) the expiration
15 date of any checks for Residual Distributions; and (b) the expiration date of any checks for Other
16 Damages Payments or, if no such checks are mailed, 120 days after any electronic transfers of Other
17 Damages Payments. The Settlement Website will (a) notify Class Members of their rights to object to
18 this Agreement or to opt out of the Settlement Class; (b) notify Class Members that no further notice
19 will be provided to them that the Settlement has been approved; (c) inform Class Members that they
20 should monitor the Settlement Website for further developments; (d) inform Class Members of their
21 right to attend the Fairness Hearing conducted by the Court; (e) include any required notice of any
22 motion(s) made by Class Counsel for any Attorneys’ Fees Award and/or any Class Representative
23 Service Award; (f) include a copy of the Settlement Agreement, the Class Notice, and any other
24 information or materials required by a Class Member to object to the Settlement Agreement or to opt
25 out of the Settlement Class; (g) include copies of the material documents that are filed with the Court in

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fund,” and “[t]he settlement Web site included the “‘Plan of Allocation,’” detailing how payments
would be made to class members”).

1 connection with the Settlement; and (h) include any other information or materials that may be required
2 by the Court.

3 **Phone Line.** The Settlement Administrator will establish a phone line that Class Members can
4 call for answers to questions about the Settlement. The telephone line will be maintained by the
5 Settlement Administrator in the period beginning three (3) business days before Notice is first
6 disseminated until one year after the Effective Date of the Settlement.

7 **Settlement Administrator.** Class Counsel request that Epiq Class Action & Claims Solutions,
8 Inc. (“Epiq”) be appointed as the Settlement Administrator to administer the Settlement, *i.e.*, providing
9 notice to the Class and administering the Initial Payment, the Medical Treatment Payments, the
10 Residual Distributions (if any), and the distribution (if any) to the cy près recipient. Epiq is an
11 experienced and well-regarded settlement administrator who has administered numerous settlements
12 involving complex and sensitive claims.

13 The proposed form of notice adequately explains the settlement terms and options available to
14 class members.

15 **V. THE PROPOSED BELAIRE NOTICE PROTECTS THE PRIVACY INTEREST OF**
16 **SETTLEMENT CLASS MEMBERS**

17 Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and the proposed Settlement Class, request that the Court
18 grant the [Proposed] Order Regarding *Belaire* Notice to Proposed Settlement Class Members, which
19 creates a procedure to disseminate the [Proposed] *Belaire* Notice to Settlement Class Members. The
20 [Proposed] *Belaire* Notice gives Class Members the option of objecting to the disclosure of their names
21 and contact information to Class Counsel and Defense Counsel, thereby protecting Class Members’
22 right to privacy. *See Belaire-West Landscape, Inc. v. Superior Court* (2007) 149 Cal. App. 4th 554, 556.
23 This notice and opportunity to object shall be disseminated in connection with the notice of the
24 Settlement itself and may be incorporated into the form(s) of notice approved for distribution by the
25 Court in its Preliminary Approval Order.
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1 **VI. THE PROPOSED FEE AND EXPENSE AWARD IS FAIR AND REASONABLE**

2 **A. Class representatives' proposed service awards.**

3 The settlement agreement provides for a class representative service awards to Plaintiffs, subject
4 to the Court's approval, in recognition of their efforts and work in prosecuting the class action. If
5 preliminary approval is granted, Plaintiffs will submit declarations explaining the time and input
6 Plaintiffs contributed to the case as well as the risks they faced in doing so.

7 **B. Class Counsel's request for fees and expenses.**

8 Class Counsel has thoroughly investigated and litigated this action and will file a motion for
9 expenses and attorneys' fees to be approved by the Court. Class Counsel will seek no more than \$17
10 million in fees and expenses; this is equivalent to 32.7% of the recovery for the Class. This amount is
11 reasonable in light of the experience of Class Counsel, the contingent risk they undertook, the novelty of
12 the claims pursued (and the attendant uncertainty of success), and the overwhelmingly positive results
13 obtained for the Class Members, including medical screening and treatment, monetary relief, and
14 injunctive relief.

15 **VII. SETTING A SCHEDULE FOR FINAL APPROVAL IS APPROPRIATE**

16 Upon granting preliminary approval to a class settlement, a court's order must include the time,
17 date, and place of the final approval hearing and any other matters deemed necessary for the proper
18 conduct of a settlement hearing. C.R.C. 3.769(e). The parties respectfully propose the following
19 schedule for the final approval hearing:
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Event	Proposed Deadline
Notice campaign to begin, including website, mailing and digital notice	(30 days from date of entry of preliminary approval)
Last day to file motion for attorneys' fees, costs, reimbursement of expenses, and service awards	(14 days before the objection deadline)
Last day for Class members to object to and/or request exclusion from the Class	(30 days from Notice)
Last day for Plaintiffs to file motion in support of final approval of the Settlement and to respond to objections	(14 days after objection deadline)
Fairness hearing	_____, at _____ a.m.

VIII. CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Plaintiffs respectfully request that the Court grant the instant motion in its entirety and preliminarily approve the Settlement Agreement.

Dated: May 8, 2020

Respectfully Submitted,

Steven N. Williams

 Joseph R. Saveri (SBN 130064)
 Steven N. Williams (SBN 175489)
 Gwendolyn Giblin (SBN 181973)
 Kevin Rayhill (SBN 267496)
 Kyle Quackenbush (SBN 322401)
JOSEPH SAVERI LAW FIRM, INC.
 601 California Street, Suite 1000
 San Francisco, CA 94108
 Telephone: (415) 500-6800
 Facsimile: (415) 395-9940
 jsaveri@saverilawfirm.com
 swilliams@saverilawfirm.com
 ggiblin@saverilawfirm.com
 krayhill@saverilawfirm.com
 kquackenbush@saverilawfirm.com

Korey A. Nelson (admitted *pro hac vice*)
 knelson@burnscharest.com
 Lydia A. Wright (admitted *pro hac vice*)
 lwright@burnscharest.com

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Amanda Klevorn (admitted *pro hac vice*)
aklevornA@burnscharest.com
BURNS CHAREST LLP
365 Canal Street, Suite 1170
New Orleans, LA 70130
Telephone: (504) 799-2845
Facsimile: (504) 881-1765

Warren Burns (admitted *pro hac vice*)
wburns@burnscharest.com
Daniel Charest (*pro hac vice* pending)
dcharest@burnscharest.com
Kyle Oxford (admitted *pro hac vice*)
koxford@burnscharest.com
BURNS CHAREST LLP
900 Jackson St., Suite 500
Dallas, Texas 75202
Telephone: (469) 904-4550
Facsimile: (469) 444-5002

William Most (SBN 279100)
williammost@gmail.com
LAW OFFICE OF WILLIAM MOST
201 St. Charles Ave. Suite 114 #101
New Orleans, LA 70170
Telephone: (504) 509-5023

Attorneys for Plaintiffs and the Proposed Class