



**TJ Englewood, Corp., D/B/A La Mezza,
Nova Brown and John Hanna,
Owners and Individually
Petitioners,**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

v.

**New Jersey Department of Labor and
Workforce Development,
Respondent.**

**FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
OF THE
COMMISSIONER**

**OAL DKT. NO LID 10898-22
AGENCY DKT. NO. GE-333-0622-DAS**

Issued: April 15, 2025

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (the Department or respondent) served notice upon TJ Englewood Corp., D/B/A La Mezza, Nova Brown and John Hanna, Owners and Individually (La Mezza or petitioners), for violations of N.J.S.A. 34:11-56a4 (Minimum wage), N.J.S.A. 34:11-56a4 (Overtime), N.J.S.A. 34:11-56a20 and N.J.A.C. 12:56-4.1 (Incomplete records), N.J.S.A. 34:11-56a21 (Notification posting), N.J.S.A. 34:11D-6 (Earned Sick Leave – Records), N.J.S.A. 34:11D-7 (Earned Sick Leave – Notification posting), N.J.S.A. 34:11-4.2 (Unpaid wages/Late payment), N.J.S.A. 34:2-21.7 (Minors – No employment certificate), N.J.S.A. 34:2-21.3 (Minors – Over 40 working hours per week), and N.J.S.A. 34:2-21.6 (Minors – Records). Based on these violations, the Department assessed petitioners for \$28,176.43 in unpaid wages, \$16,125.00 in penalties and a \$2,817.64 administrative fee.

Petitioners requested a hearing regarding the assessment of wages, penalties and an administrative fee. The matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law, where it was scheduled for a hearing before Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) Matthew G. Miller.

Prior to a hearing, the Department filed a motion before the ALJ, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 1:1-12.5, for summary decision. The ALJ granted the Department's motion for summary decision, finding the following:

- “1. [T]he findings, conclusions and assessed penalties made by respondent's investigators are supported by the evidence and both administrative and statutory law, and
2. [T]hose findings, determinations and legal conclusions have not been contravened, at any time, by any competent evidence or argument by petitioners.”¹

Therefore, the ALJ recommended that the Department's assessment against petitioners be affirmed and that petitioners' appeal be dismissed. No exceptions were filed.

Upon *de novo* review of the record, and after consideration of the ALJ's initial decision, I hereby accept and adopt the findings of fact, conclusions and recommendation contained in the ALJ's initial decision

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that petitioners' appeal be dismissed and that they immediately pay to the Department \$28,176.43 for wages owed, plus \$16,125.00 in penalties and a \$2,817.64 administrative fee.

This is the final administrative determination in this matter. Any further review should be pursued in a judicial forum.

¹ Petitioners filed no formal opposition to the Department's motion for summary decision. Instead, petitioners submitted an “Employer Statement,” which contains explanations of and excuses for the above-listed violations, but no assertion that the violations did not occur. In fact, within the “Employer Statement,” petitioners concede that they paid their employees less than the required minimum wage, failed to keep accurate time and payroll records, failed to provide employees with any earned sick leave, and failed to post the required employee notifications.

DECISION RENDERED BY
THE COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT
OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Asaro-Angelo', with a horizontal line underneath.

Robert Asaro-Angelo, Commissioner
Department of Labor and Workforce Development

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