

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Parties

This Settlement Agreement is entered into by and between Audrey Donaldson (“Donaldson”) and Creative Co-Op, Inc. (“Creative Co-Op”), with Donaldson and Creative Co-Op each individually referred to as a “Party” and collectively as the “Parties.” Donaldson is an individual residing in the State of California who seeks to promote awareness of exposures to toxic chemicals and to improve human health by reducing or eliminating hazardous substances used in consumer products. Donaldson alleges that Creative Co-Op employs ten or more persons and is a person in the course of doing business for purposes of the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, California Health and Safety Code section 25249.6 *et seq.* (“Proposition 65”).

1.2 General Allegations

Donaldson alleges that Creative Co-Op manufactures, sells, and distributes for sale in California, ceramic dishes with decorations containing lead. Lead is listed pursuant to Proposition 65 as a chemical known to cause birth defects and other reproductive harm. Donaldson alleges that Creative Co-Op failed to provide the health hazard warning required by Proposition 65 for exposures to lead.

1.3 General Allegations

The products covered by this Settlement Agreement are ceramic dishes with decorations containing lead that are manufactured, sold, or distributed for sale in California by Creative Co-Op including, but not limited to, the “*Creative Co-Op Ceramic Christmas Tree Dish*”; *Item # XM2327A; UPC 1 91009 11958 6* (hereinafter referred to as “Products”).

1.4 Notice of Violation

On December 20, 2019, Donaldson served Creative Co-Op and the requisite public enforcement agencies with a 60-Day Notice of Violation, alleging that Creative

Co-Op violated Proposition 65 when it failed to warn its customers and consumers in California of the health hazards associated with exposures to lead from its Products. No public enforcer has commenced and is diligently prosecuting the allegations set forth in the Notice.

1.5 No Admission

Creative Co-Op denies the material, factual, and legal allegations contained in the Notice and maintains that all of the products that it has sold and distributed in California, including the Products, have been, and are, in compliance with all laws. Nothing in this Settlement Agreement shall be construed as an admission by Creative Co-Op of any fact, finding, conclusion, issue of law, or violation of law, nor shall compliance with this Settlement Agreement constitute or be construed as an admission by Creative Co-Op of any fact, finding, conclusion, issue of law, or violation of law, such being specifically denied by Creative Co-Op. This Section shall not, however, diminish or otherwise affect Creative Co-Op's obligations, responsibilities, and duties under this Settlement Agreement.

1.6 Effective Date

For purposes of this Settlement Agreement, the term "Effective Date" shall mean March 16, 2020.

2. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF: REFORMULATION

2.1 Reformulation Standards

"Reformulated Products" are defined as those Products that: (a) contain no more than 100 parts per million ("ppm") lead in any decoration, colored artwork, designs and/or marking on the surface of the Products when analyzed pursuant to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency testing methodologies 3050B or equivalent methodologies utilized by federal or state agencies for the purpose of determining lead content in a solid substance *and* (b) yield no more than 1.0 microgram of lead on any surface sampled and analyzed pursuant to the NIOSH 9100 testing protocol.

If the decoration is tested after it is affixed to the Product, the percentage of the lead by weight must related only to the decorating materials and must not include any quantity attributable to non-decorating material (e.g., ceramic substrate).

2.2 Reformulation Commitment

As of the Effective Date, Creative Co-Op shall not manufacture, import, distribute, sell or offer the Products for sale in the State of California unless they are Reformulated Products pursuant to Section 2.1.

3. MONETARY SETTLEMENT TERMS

3.1 Civil Penalty Payment

Pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 25249.7(b)(2), and in settlement of all claims alleged in the Notice or referred to in this Settlement Agreement, Creative Co-Op agrees to pay \$3,000 in civil penalties no later than the Effective Date. The penalty payment will be allocated in accordance with California Health and Safety Code section 25249.12(c)(1) & (d), with 75% of the penalty amount remitted to the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (“OEHHA”) and the remaining 25% of the penalty amount paid to Donaldson, and delivered to the address in Section 3.3 herein. Creative Co-Op will provide its payment in two checks as follows: (1) “OEHHA” in the amount of \$2,250; and (2) “Audrey Donaldson” in the amount of \$750.

3.2 Attorneys’ Fees and Costs

The Parties acknowledge that Donaldson and her counsel offered to resolve this dispute without reaching terms on the amount of fees and costs to be reimbursed to them, thereby leaving the issue to be resolved after the material terms of the agreement had been settled. Shortly after the other settlement terms had been reached, Creative Co-Op expressed a desire to resolve Donaldson’s fees and costs. The Parties reached an accord on the compensation due to Donaldson’s counsel under general contract principles and the private attorney general doctrine codified at Code of Civil Procedure section 1021.5

for all work performed in this matter. Under these legal principles, on or before the Effective Date, Creative Co-Op agrees to pay \$15,000, in the form of a check made payable to "Voorhees & Bailey, LLP," for all fees and costs incurred investigating, bringing this matter to the attention of Creative Co-Op's management, and negotiating a settlement.

3.3 Payment Address

All payments under this Settlement Agreement shall be delivered to the following address:

Voorhees & Bailey, LLP
990 Amarillo Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94303

4. CLAIMS COVERED AND RELEASED

4.1 Donaldson's Release of Proposition 65 Claims

Donaldson acting on her own behalf, and *not* on behalf of the public, releases Creative Co-Op, its parents, subsidiaries, affiliated entities under common ownership, directors, officers, agents employees, attorneys, and each entity to whom Creative Co-Op directly or indirectly distributes or sells the Products, including, but not limited, to downstream distributors, wholesalers, customers, retailers, franchisees, cooperative members, importers, and licensees (collectively, "Releasees"), from all claims for violations of Proposition 65 through the Effective Date based on unwarned exposures to lead in the Products. The Parties understand and agree that this Section 4.1 release shall not extend upstream to any entities that manufactured the Products or any component parts thereof, or any distributors or suppliers who sold the Products or any component parts thereof to Creative Co-Op.

4.2 Donaldson's Individual Release of Claims

Donaldson, in her individual capacity only and *not* in her representative capacity, provides a release herein which shall be effective as a full and final accord and satisfaction, as a bar to all actions, causes of action, obligations, costs, expenses,

attorneys' fees, damages, losses, claims, liabilities, and demands of Donaldson of any nature, character, or kind, whether known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected, including but not limited to all failure to warn claims, arising out of alleged or actual exposures to lead in the Products manufactured, imported, distributed, or sold by Creative Co-Op prior to the Effective Date. The Parties understand and agree that this Section 4.2 release shall not extend upstream to any entities that manufactured the Products, or any component parts thereof, or any distributors or suppliers who sold the Products, or any component parts thereof to Creative Co-Op. Nothing in this Section affects Donaldson's right to commence or prosecute an action under Proposition 65 against a Releasee that does not involve Creative Co-Op's Products.

4.3 Creative Co-Op's Release of Donaldson

Creative Co-Op, on its own behalf, and on behalf of its past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors, and/or assignees, hereby waives any and all claims against Donaldson and her attorneys and other representatives, for any and all actions taken or statements made by Donaldson and her attorneys and other representatives, whether in the course of investigating claims, seeking to enforce Proposition 65 against it in this matter, or with respect to the Products.

5. SEVERABILITY

If, subsequent to the execution of this Settlement Agreement, any provision of this Settlement Agreement is deemed by a court to be unenforceable, the validity of the remaining provisions shall not be adversely affected.

6. GOVERNING LAW

The terms of this Settlement Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of California and apply within the State of California. In the event that Proposition 65 is repealed or is otherwise rendered inapplicable by reason of law generally, or as to the Products, then Creative Co-Op may provide written notice to Donaldson of any asserted

change in the law and shall have no further injunctive obligations pursuant to this Settlement Agreement with respect to, and to the extent that, the Products are so affected.

7. NOTICE

Unless specified herein, all correspondence and notice required to be provided pursuant to this Settlement Agreement shall be in writing and sent by: (a) personal delivery; (b) first-class, registered or certified mail, return receipt requested; or (c) a recognized overnight courier on any Party by the other at the following addresses:

For Creative Co-Op:

President / CEO
Creative Co-Op, Inc.
6000 Freeport Ave, Ste 101
Memphis, TN 38141

For Donaldson:

Audrey Donaldson
c/o Voorhees & Bailey, LLP
990 Amarillo Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Any Party may, from time to time, specify in writing to the other a change of address to which all notices and other communications shall be sent.

8. COUNTERPARTS; FACSIMILE SIGNATURES

This Settlement Agreement may be executed in counterparts and by facsimile or portable document format (PDF) signature, each of which shall be deemed an original, and all of which, when taken together, shall constitute one and the same document.

9. COMPLIANCE WITH HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 25249.7(f)

Donaldson and her attorneys agree to comply with the reporting form requirements referenced in California Health and Safety Code section 25249.7(f).

10. MODIFICATION

This Settlement Agreement may be modified only by written agreement of the Parties.

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11. AUTHORIZATION

The undersigned are authorized to execute this Settlement Agreement on behalf of their respective Parties and have read, understand, and agreed to all of the terms and conditions of this Settlement Agreement.

AGREED TO:

AGREED TO:

Date:

Date: 3/9/20

By: _____
Audrey Donaldson

By: _____
Creative Co-Op, Inc.

11. **AUTHORIZATION**

The undersigned are authorized to execute this Settlement Agreement on behalf of their respective Parties and have read, understand, and agreed to all of the terms and conditions of this Settlement Agreement.

AGREED TO:

AGREED TO:

Date: 3-10-20

Date:

By: 

Audrey Donaldson

By: _____
Creative Co-Op, Inc.