

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Parties

This Settlement Agreement is entered into by and between Audrey Donaldson (“Donaldson”) and Simple Symbol Ltd. (“Simple Symbol”), with Donaldson and Simple Symbol 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 Simple Symbol 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 Simple Symbol manufactures, sells, and distributes for sale in California, certain mugs with exterior 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 Simple Symbol failed to provide the health hazard warning required by Proposition 65 for exposures to lead.

1.3 Product Description

The products covered by this Settlement Agreement are specifically identified as, and limited to, *Happy Holidays 14 oz. Ceramic Mug With Deer and Black and White Checkerboard Design*; UPC: 0 18068 04841 4, that are manufactured, sold, or distributed for sale in California by Simple Symbol (hereinafter referred to as “Products”).

Donaldson represents and warrants that she is not currently aware of any additional Simple Symbol products, with UPC: 0 18068 04841 4, that violate Proposition 65 and, therefore, does not presently intend to bring any claim under Proposition 65

relating to any Simple Symbol products with UPC: 0 18068 04841, other than the Products with the checkerboard deer design that are covered by this Settlement.

1.4 Notice of Violation

On December 9, 2020, Donaldson served 99 Cents Only Stores LLC and the requisite public enforcement agencies with a 60-Day Notice of Violation, alleging that 99 Cents Only Stores LLC violated Proposition 65 when it failed to warn its customers and consumers in California of the health hazards associated with exposures to lead from the Products. Thereafter, Donaldson was contacted by counsel for Simple Symbol and informed that Simple Symbol was the manufacturer/distributor of the Products and wanted to resolve certain claims covered by the Notice. No public enforcer has commenced and is diligently prosecuting the allegations set forth in the Notices.

1.5 No Admission

Simple Symbol 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 Simple Symbol 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 Simple Symbol of any fact, finding, conclusion, issue of law, or violation of law, such being specifically denied by Simple Symbol. This Section shall not, however, diminish or otherwise affect Simple Symbol'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 April 12, 2021.

2. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF: REFORMULATION

2.1 Reformulation Standards

“Reformulated Products” are defined as those Products that: (a) contain no more than 90 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; (b) yield a result of non-detect (defined as no more than 25 ppm by weight of lead) for any decorations located in the upper 20 millimeters of a Product, i.e., the “Lip-and-Rim” area, when analyzed pursuant to EPA testing methodologies 3050B and 6010B, or equivalent methodologies used by state and federal agencies to determine lead content in a solid substance; *and* (c) 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, Simple Symbol 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 certain claims alleged in the Notice or referred to in this Settlement Agreement, Simple Symbol agrees to pay \$3,600 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. Simple Symbol will provide its payment in two checks as follows: (1) “OEHHA” in the amount of \$2,700; and (2) “Audrey Donaldson” in the amount of \$900.

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, Simple Symbol 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, Simple Symbol agrees to pay \$19,400, 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 Simple Symbol’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 Simple Symbol, its parents, subsidiaries, affiliated entities under common ownership, directors, officers, agents employees, attorneys, and each entity to whom Simple Symbol

directly or indirectly distributes or sells the Products, including, but not limited to, downstream distributors, wholesalers, customers, retailers including, but not limited to, 99 Cents Only Stores LLC, franchisees, cooperative members, 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 further 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 Simple Symbol.

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, limited to and arising out of alleged or actual exposures to lead in the Products manufactured, imported, distributed, or sold by Releasees prior to the Effective Date. The Parties further 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 Simple Symbol. Nothing in this Section affects Donaldson’s right to commence or prosecute an action under Proposition 65 against a Releasee that does not involve Simple Symbol’s Products.

4.3 Simple Symbol’s Release of Donaldson

Simple Symbol, 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 relating to the Products, whether in the course of investigating claims, seeking to enforce Proposition 65 against it in this matter, or with respect to the Products.

4.4 Public Benefit

It is the Parties' intent and understanding that the commitments agreed to herein, and actions to be taken by Simple Symbol under this Settlement Agreement, confer a significant benefit to the general public, as set forth in Code of Civil Procedure § 1021.5 and Cal. Admin. Code tit. 11, § 3201. As such, it is the intent of the Parties that to the extent any other private party serves a notice and/or initiates an action alleging a violation of Proposition 65 with respect to Simple Symbol's alleged failure to provide a warning concerning actual or alleged exposure to lead prior to use of the Products it has manufactured, distributed, sold, or offered for sale in California, such private party action would not confer a significant benefit on the general public as to the Products, provided that Simple Symbol is in compliance with this Settlement Agreement.

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, excluding its conflict of law rules. In the event that Proposition 65 is repealed or is otherwise rendered inapplicable by reason of law generally, or as to the Products, then Simple Symbol 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 Simple Symbol Ltd.:

Joseph D. Lee, Esq.
Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP
350 South Grand Ave.; 50th floor
Los Angeles, CA 90071-3426

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 signed by all 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.

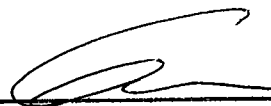
AGREED TO:

AGREED TO:

Date: Apr 9, 2021

Date: April 12, 2021

By: 
AUDREY DONALDSON

By: 
Simple Symbol Ltd.
(Name) Lawrence Tang
Its (title) CFO