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IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS
COUNTY DEPARTMENT, CHANCERY DIVISION

LEROY PAYTON and KYNDRA BYRD;
on behalf of themselves and all
others similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

v.

AUTUMN RIDGE APARTMENTS I, LP;
THE FERNDAL REALTY GROUP, LLC;
THE FERNDAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
GROUP, LLC; and
ALON Z. YONATAN;

Defendants.

Case No. 2021-CH-01769

Hon. Allen P. Walker

Calendar 03

PRELIMINARY APPROVAL ORDER

This matter having come before the Court on Plaintiffs' Unopposed Motion in Support of Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlement (the "Motion"), the Court having reviewed in detail and considered the Motion and memorandum in support of the Motion, the Class Action Settlement Agreement ("Settlement Agreement") between Plaintiffs Leroy Payton and Kyndra Byrd and Defendants Autumn Ridge Apartments I, LP; The Ferndale Realty Group, LLC; The Ferndale Property Management Group, LLC; and Alon Z. Yonatan ("Defendants") (together, the "Parties"), and all other papers that have been filed with the Court related to the Settlement Agreement, including all exhibits and attachments to the Motion and the Settlement Agreement, and the Court being fully advised in the premises,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED AS FOLLOWS:

1. Capitalized terms used in this Order that are not otherwise defined herein have the same meaning assigned to them as in the Settlement Agreement.

2. The terms of the Settlement Agreement are preliminarily approved as fair, reasonable, and adequate. There is good cause to find that the Settlement Agreement was negotiated at arms-length between the Parties, who were represented by experienced counsel.

3. For settlement purposes only, the Court finds that the prerequisites to class action treatment under Section 2-801 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure—including numerosity, commonality and predominance, adequacy, and appropriateness of class treatment of these claims—have been preliminarily satisfied.

4. The Court hereby conditionally certifies, pursuant to Section 2-801 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, and for the purposes of settlement only, the following Settlement Class consisting of:

All persons in the United States whose fingerprint was collected, captured, or otherwise obtained by any Defendant, in Illinois, at any time during the Class Period.

5. The following people are excluded from the Class: (1) any judge presiding over the action and their families and staff; (2) Defendants and its owners, officers, directors, parents, subsidiaries, successors, and predecessors; (3) Plaintiffs' and Defendants' counsel and their staffs; and (4) all persons who timely elect to exclude themselves from the Settlement Class.

6. For settlement purposes only, Plaintiffs Leroy Payton and Kyndra Byrd are appointed as Class Representatives.

7. For settlement purposes only, the following counsel are hereby appointed as Class Counsel:

Michael Drew
Neighborhood Legal, LLC
20 N. Clark St. #3300
Chicago, IL 60602

Michael Wood
Celetha Chatman
Community Lawyers, LLC
980 N. Michigan Ave. #1400
Chicago, IL 60611

8. The Court recognizes that, pursuant to the Settlement Agreement, Defendants retain all rights to object to the propriety of class certification in the Litigation in all other contexts and for all other purposes should the Settlement not be finally approved. Therefore, as more fully set forth below, if the Settlement is not finally approved, and the Litigation resumes, this Court's preliminary findings regarding the propriety of class certification shall be of no further force or effect whatsoever, and this Order will be vacated in its entirety.

9. The Court approves, in form and content, the short form notice and long form class notice, attached to the Settlement Agreement as Exhibits A and B, respectively, and finds that they meet the requirements of Section 2-803 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure and satisfy Due Process.

10. The Court finds that the planned notice set forth in the Settlement Agreement meets the requirements of Section 2-803 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure and constitutes the best notice practicable under the circumstances, where Class Members' identities are contained in Defendants' records and may be readily ascertained, satisfying fully the requirements of Due Process, and any other applicable law, such that the Settlement Agreement and Final Approval Order will be binding on all Settlement Class Members. In addition, the Court finds that no notice other than that specifically identified in the Settlement Agreement is necessary in this

action. The Parties, by agreement, may revise the Class Notice and Claim Form in ways that are not material, or in ways that are appropriate to update those documents for purposes of accuracy or formatting for publication.

11. American Legal Claims, LLC is hereby appointed Settlement Administrator to supervise and administer the notice process, as well as to oversee the administration of the Settlement, as more fully set forth in the Settlement Agreement. Total administration costs are estimated to be \$9,000.00.

12. The Settlement Administrator may proceed with the distribution of Class Notice as set forth in the Settlement Agreement.

13. Settlement Class Members shall be bound by all determinations and orders pertaining to the Settlement, including with respect to Class Released Claims as set forth in the Settlement Agreement, whether favorable or unfavorable, unless such persons request exclusion from the Settlement Class in a timely and proper manner, as hereinafter provided. Settlement Class Members who do not timely and validly request exclusion shall be so bound even if they have previously initiated other litigation or proceedings against Defendants or the Released Parties relating to the claims released under the terms of the Settlement Agreement.

14. Any Person within the Settlement Class may request exclusion from the Settlement Class by expressly stating his/her/their request in a written exclusion request. Such exclusion requests must be sent to the address specified in the Class Notice in written form and postmarked by **February 13, 2023**.

15. To exercise the right to be excluded, a person within the Settlement Class must timely send a written request for exclusion to the Settlement Administrator providing his/her/their name and address, his/her/their personal signature, the name and case number of the Litigation (*Payton*

v. Autumn Ridge Apartments I, LP, No. 2021-CH-01769 (Cook County Cir. Ct.)), and a statement that he or she or they wish to be excluded from the Settlement Class. Any request for exclusion submitted via mail must be personally signed by the person requesting exclusion. No person within the Settlement Class, or any person acting on behalf of, in concert with, or in participation with that person within the Settlement Class, may request exclusion from the Settlement Class of any other person within the Settlement Class.

16. Any person in the Settlement Class who elects to be excluded shall not: (i) be bound by any orders or the Final Approval Order; (ii) be entitled to relief under the Settlement Agreement; (iii) gain any rights by virtue of this Settlement Agreement; or (iv) be entitled to object to any aspect of the Settlement Agreement.

17. Class Counsel shall file any motion seeking an award of attorneys' fees, costs and expenses, as well as an Incentive Awards for the Class Representatives, in accordance with the terms of the Settlement Agreement, no later than **January 23, 2023**.

18. Any Settlement Class Member who has not requested exclusion from the Settlement Class and who wishes to object to any aspect of the Settlement Agreement, including the amount of the attorneys' fees, costs, and expenses that Class Counsel intends to seek and the payment of the Incentive Awards to the Class Representatives, may do so, either personally or through an attorney, by filing a written objection, together with the supporting documentation set forth below in Paragraph 19 of this Order, with the Clerk of the Court, and mailed or delivered to Class Counsel, Defendants' Counsel, and the Settlement Administrator, postmarked no later than: **February 13, 2023**.

Addresses for Class Counsel, Defendants' Counsel, the Settlement Administrator, and the Clerk of Court are as follows:

<p>Class Counsel: Michael Drew Neighborhood Legal, LLC 20 N. Clark #3300 Chicago, IL 60602</p>	<p>Defendants' Counsel: Johner T. Wilson III Dinsmore & Shohl LLP 222 W. Adams Street #3400 Chicago, IL 60606 JT.Wilson@dinsmore.com</p> <p>Jason M. Rosenthal Laura Elkayam Much Shelist, P.C. 191 N. Wacker Drive #1800 Chicago, IL 60606 jrosenthal@muchlaw.com lelkayam@muchlaw.com</p>
<p>Settlement Administrator: Payton v. Autumn Ridge Apartments c/o American Legal Claim Services LLC PO Box 23459 Jacksonville FL. 32241-3459</p>	<p>Clerk of Court: Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County Chancery Division 50 W. Washington Street, #802 Chicago, IL 60602</p>

19. Any Settlement Class Member who has not requested exclusion and who intends to object to the Settlement must state, in writing, all objections and the basis for any such objection(s), and must also state in writing:

- a. his/her/their full name, address, telephone number, and email address; (ii) the case name and case number of this Litigation (*Payton v. Autumn Ridge Apartments I, LP*, No. 2021-CH-01769 (Cook County Cir. Ct.);
- b. all grounds for the objection, with factual and legal support for the stated objection, including any supporting materials;
- c. the identification of any other objections he/she/they has filed, or has had filed on his/her/their behalf, in any other class action cases in the last four years; and
- d. the objector's signature.

Objections not filed and served in accordance with this Order shall not be received or considered by the Court. Any Settlement Class Member who fails to timely file and serve a

written objection in accordance with this Order shall be deemed to have waived, and shall be forever foreclosed from raising, any objection to the Settlement, to the fairness, reasonableness, or adequacy of the Settlement, to the payment of attorneys' fees, costs, and expenses, to the payment of Incentive Awards, and to the Final Approval Order and the right to appeal same.

20. A Settlement Class Member who has not requested exclusion from the Settlement Class and who has properly submitted a written objection in compliance with the Settlement Agreement, may appear at the Final Approval Hearing in person or through counsel to show cause why the proposed Settlement should not be approved as fair, reasonable, and adequate. Attendance at the hearing is not necessary; however, persons wishing to be heard orally in opposition to the approval of the Settlement and/or Plaintiffs' Counsel's Fee and Expense Application and/or the request for an Incentive Award to the Class Representatives are required to indicate in their written objection their intention to appear at the Final Approval Hearing on their own behalf or through counsel. For any Settlement Class Member who files a timely written objection and who indicates his/her/their intention to appear at the Final Approval Hearing on their own behalf or through counsel, such Settlement Class Member must also include in his/her/their written objection the identity of any witnesses he/she may call to testify, and all exhibits he/she intends to introduce into evidence at the Final Approval Hearing, which shall be attached.

21. No Settlement Class Member shall be entitled to be heard, and no objection shall be considered, unless the requirements set forth in this Order and in the Settlement Agreement are fully satisfied. Any Settlement Class Member who does not make his or her or their objection to the Settlement in the manner provided herein, or who does not also timely provide copies to Counsel for the Parties at the addresses set forth herein, shall be deemed to have waived any such

objection by appeal, collateral attack, or otherwise, and shall be bound by the Settlement Agreement, the releases contained therein, and all aspects of the Final Approval Order.

22. Pending the final determination of the fairness, reasonableness, and adequacy of the proposed Settlement, no Settlement Class Member may prosecute, institute, commence, or continue any lawsuit (individual action or class action) with respect to the Released Claims against any of the Released Parties.

23. No later than **March 28, 2023** Class Counsel shall file with the Court and post on the Settlement Website their Motion for Final Approval of Class Settlement.

24. A hearing (the “Final Approval Hearing”) shall be held before the Court on **April 11,**

2023 at 11:00AM by Zoom videoconference [Meeting ID: 955 0046 1687

Password: 640378] (or at such other time or location, or such other manner, as the Court may

direct and which shall be identified on the Settlement Website) for the following purposes:

- a. to finally determine whether the applicable prerequisites for settlement class action treatment under 735 ILCS 5/2-801 have been met;
- b. to determine whether the Settlement is fair, reasonable and adequate, and should be approved by the Court;
- c. to determine whether the judgment as provided under the Settlement Agreement should be entered, including an order prohibiting Settlement Class Members from further pursuing Released Claims as set forth in the Settlement Agreement;
- d. to consider the application for an award of attorneys’ fees, costs and expenses of Class Counsel;
- e. to consider the application for Incentive Awards to the Class Representatives;
- f. to consider the distribution of the Settlement Fund pursuant to the Settlement Agreement; and
- g. to consider any Objections that have been properly and timely filed;
- h. to rule upon such other matters as the Court may deem appropriate.

25. The Final Approval Hearing may be postponed, adjourned, transferred or continued by order of the Court without further notice to the Settlement Class. At or following the Final Approval Hearing, the Court may enter a judgment approving the Settlement Agreement and a Final Approval Order in accordance with the Settlement Agreement that adjudicates the rights of all Settlement Class Members.

26. Settlement Class Members do not need to appear at the Final Approval Hearing or take any other action to indicate their approval.

27. All discovery and other proceedings in the Litigation as between Plaintiffs and Defendants are stayed and suspended until further order of the Court except such actions as may be necessary to implement the Settlement Agreement and this Order.

28. For clarity, the deadlines set forth above and in the Settlement Agreement are as follows:

Notice to be completed by: Friday, January 27, 2023

Fee and Expense Application: Monday January 23, 2023

Objection/Exclusion Deadline: Monday, February 13, 2023

Final Approval Motion Due: Tuesday March 28, 2023

Final Approval Hearing: Tuesday, April 11, 2023

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Allen Price Walker
Associate Judge

Dec. 29, 2022

Circuit Court - 2071

Hon. Allen Price Walker