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 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 	TATIANA CHAHOIAN, Plaintiff, vs. COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipality, GEORGE GASCÓN, in his official and individual capacities, and DOES 1 to 49, inclusive, Defendants.	Case No. COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF: 1. WHISTLEBLOWER RETALIATION (LABOR CODE § 1102.5) 2. INTENTIONAL INFLICTION OF EMOTIONAL DISTRESS 3. DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION – FAILURE TO ACCOMMODATE (GOV. CODE, § 12940(m)) 4. DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION – FAILURE TO ENGAGE IN INTERRACTIVE PROCESS (GOV. CODE 12940(n)) DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

DHILLON LAW GROUP INC.

Plaintiff Tatiana Chahoian ("Plaintiff" or "Chahoian"), by and through her attorneys, Dhillon Law Group Inc., brings this action against Defendants County of Los Angeles (also referred to as "Los Angeles County"), George Gascón, in both his official and individual capacities, and DOES 1 to 49 (collectively, "Defendants"), seeking damages and injunctive relief for whistleblower retaliation (Lab. Code, § 1102.5), intentional infliction of emotional distress, and disability discrimination, and alleges as follows:

INTRODUCTION

1. This case concerns a victim of the systemic culture of retaliation and lawlessness within the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office ("LADA"), in which laws passed to promote public safety are flagrantly disregarded or ignored by the very people sworn to uphold them, and those who speak up against this perverse abuse of the public trust are subjected to intimidation, retaliation, and workplace hostility.

2. Specifically, it involves Deputy District Attorney ("DDA") Tatiana Chahoian, a prosecutor who notified the public about dangerous new instructions being advanced by District Attorney George Gascón.

3. As a direct result of Chahoian's public statements, Gascón dispatched armed LADA investigators to her home—where she was working remotely while watching her children—with a non-urgent notice of supposed policy violations. Although many LADA employees publicly criticized Gascón's policies, only Chahoian received a hand-delivered notice by armed officers. Directed by Gascón, this tactic was designed to intimidate and silence her for disclosing unlawful and unethical conduct.

4. Following this incident, on April 17 and 18, 2024, Gascón continued to retaliate against Chahoian by denying her promotion. Chahoian was the only eligible DDA from her class whom Gascón passed over for promotion. Gascón even promoted DDAs from the class hired after Chahoian to Grade III because he needed to fill additional vacancies. And out of more than 70 filing deputies employed by LADA, Chahoian is the only one ranked as "Grade II" in the LADA hierarchy; all other filing deputies are either Grade III or Grade IV, reflecting the experience and judgment required for the position.

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5. Rather than passively endure Gascón's oppressive tactics and retaliation, Chahoian instead has elected to invoke her rights under the law and pursue claims against the County of Los Angeles and Gascón for retaliation, intentional infliction of emotional distress, and disability discrimination, as detailed below.

THE PARTIES

6. Plaintiff Tatiana Chahoian is a resident of California and, as of the filing of this Complaint, employed as a Deputy District Attorney ("DDA") by the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office ("LADA").

7. Defendant County of Los Angeles is a public entity duly organized and existing under the laws of the State of California. LADA falls within the jurisdiction and is a subsidiary agency of Los Angeles County.

8. Defendant George Gascón is the District Attorney ("D.A.") of Los Angeles County, sued in his official and individual capacities. Chahoian is informed and believes, and on that basis alleges, that Defendant Gascón resides in Los Angeles County.

9. The true names or capacities, whether individual, corporate, associate or otherwise, of Defendants Doe One to Doe Forty-Nine, inclusive, are unknown to Chahoian, who therefore sues said Defendants by such fictitious names. Chahoian will amend her complaint by inserting the true names or capacities, with appropriate charging allegations, when the same is ascertained. Chahoian is informed, believes, and based thereon alleges, that each of the Defendants named herein as a Doe is negligently or in some other manner responsible for the events and happenings herein referred to and were a cause of the injury and damages to Chahoian alleged herein.

10. Chahoian has complied with and exhausted any applicable claims statutes, administrative remedies, internal remedies, and grievances procedures, or is excused from complying therewith. Although she filed a government claim with the County on June 24, 2024, the County failed to respond within 45 days, and is therefore deemed to have rejected her claims on August 8, 2024. *See* Gov. Code, §§ 912.4(a), (c), 945.6(a)(2); *see also Cavey v. Tualla* (2021) 69 Cal.App.5th 310, 330.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

11. Jurisdiction is proper in the County of Los Angeles because it has general subject matter jurisdiction and no statutory exceptions to jurisdiction exist.

12. Venue is proper in this Court pursuant to County of Los Angeles Local Rule ("L.R.")2.3(a)(1)(B) because the employment contract at issue was performed in the North District of Los Angeles County.

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

13. Tatiana Chahoian graduated from the University of Southern California in 2013, and received her law degree from Loyola Law School in 2016, with a concentration in Criminal Justice.

14. Upon graduating law school, LADA hired Chahoian as a law clerk.

15. From 2017 to 2019, Chahoian worked as a private criminal defense attorney.

Chahoian Begins Her Career with LADA

16. On April 4, 2019, LADA hired Chahoian as a Deputy District Attorney.

17. Throughout her ongoing tenure with LADA, Chahoian has performed a preliminary hearing assignment at the Van Nuys Office, two misdemeanor trial assignments at the Glendale Office and Santa Clarita Office, respectively, and a misdemeanor and felony trial assignment at the Antelope Valley Office.

18. At the start of her career, Chahoian was thrilled at the chance to serve her local community while working for the largest prosecutorial office in the nation.

19. But her job radically changed when George Gascón took over as DA on December 7, 2020. Under Gascón, LADA adopted a host of lenient policies that many prosecutors believed placed the interests of the accused over those of the victim. Although Chahoian, like a majority of her colleagues, took issue with many of Gascón's directives, she did her best to follow them to the extent that doing so would not conflict with the law or her prosecutorial oath to protect the public.

LADA Fails to Accommodate Chahoian's Health Issues

20. In April 2022, Chahoian experienced symptoms of a seizure when driving home from work. She then took six weeks of medical leave to recover.

Complaint

21. When Chahoian returned to work, understaffing at the Antelope Valley Office led to her being assigned an overwhelming workload. She was assigned to two misdemeanor courtrooms per day, and handled between 30 and 50 cases per courtroom.

22. To illustrate this demanding schedule, Chahoian's presence was required in so many places that she could not even use the restroom without first asking permission.

23. In May 2023, Chahoian was assigned a felony trial where the defendant faced up to 20 years in prison if convicted, while simultaneously managing misdemeanor courts in the mornings and preparing for trial late into the night. Even for a prosecutor like Chahoian, who is accustomed to working long hours, the stress of this extreme workload exacerbated her preexisting health issues.

24. Consequently, Chahoian experienced severe anxiety, depression, and chronic fatigue, frequently feeling as if she was going to faint.

25. During this period, Chahoian's weight dropped to 89 pounds, down 21 pounds from her usual weight of 110 pounds.

26. Despite raising these issues with LADA management and the Association of Deputy District Attorneys, and highlighting that some DDAs in Antelope Valley were not assigned to multiple courtrooms while others were not assigned to any courtroom, LADA took no action to accommodate Chahoian's documented health issues.

27. Unsurprisingly, in July 2023, Chahoian was forced to request another medical leave to address her health issues.

28. Chahoian's doctors informed her that extreme stress was the cause of her chronic health problems, and prescribed her antidepressants and anti-anxiety medication.

29. Chahoian returned to work in September 2023, but the ongoing understaffing at the Antelope Valley Office made her work just as challenging, if not more challenging, than it had been before.

30. In October 2023, Chahoian was again compelled to take medical leave in order to recover.

31. When Chahoian returned to work on November 22, 2023, she sent LADA's Employee Relations division a note from her doctor stating that her driving should be restricted to no more than 15 minutes at a time due to the frequent symptoms that occurred during her commute.

32. For the first three days following Chahoian's return from medical leave, her Head Deputy respected her doctor's instructions and allowed her to work from home.

33. But after these first few days, short staffing at the Antelope Valley Office and a limited amount of available remote work compelled Chahoian to resume her commute to the office.

34. Meanwhile, Chahoian anxiously awaited word from LADA on how it would accommodate her doctor's instructions regarding her health issues.

35. On November 29, 2023, LADA held an interactive meeting regarding Chahoian's request to reduce her commute time, but adopted no immediate solution.

36. On December 4, Chahoian requested an update on the status of her accommodations and submitted a specific request that she be transferred to the Charge Evaluation Division ("CED") as a Filing Deputy.

37. LADA did not update Chahoian on the status of her request until December 6—one week after her initial meeting, and two weeks after she had submitted her doctor's instructions—when she was invited to a virtual meeting the following day with Priscilla Musso, acting director of LADA's Employee Relations Division, and Silva Mamarbashi, LADA's Alternate ADA Coordinator.

38. During the meeting on December 7, Chahoian was informed, for the first time, that her doctor needed to fill out a medical questionnaire for her accommodations request to be evaluated.

39. Finally, on December 18, 2023, after three separate medical leaves and over a year of emotional and physical suffering, LADA acquiesced to Chahoian's request that she be transferred to CED as a Filing Deputy. By then, LADA had required Chahoian to commute to the Antelope Valley Office—a roughly 55-minute drive each way—for nearly four weeks *after* it had received a signed note from her doctor stating that her health did not permit her to drive for more than 15 minutes at a time.

40. Once Chahoian began her position at CED, Chahoian performed exceptionally well, quickly clearing the backlog of cases and receiving positive feedback from LADA Staff, her Assistant Head Deputy Rose DeMattia, and various Sheriff's Department detectives.

LADA Encourages Chahoian to Recommend Light Sentences in Cases Involving Street Racing, Street Takeovers, or Reckless Driving

41. In February 2024, the Rebecca Grossman trial captured the attention of many in L.A. County. Grossman, a socialite who was dating former Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Scott Erickson, faced charges of second degree murder, vehicular manslaughter with gross negligence, and one felony count of hit-and-run driving resulting in a death, based on allegations that she had been traveling 71 mph in a 45 mph zone when she struck and killed two brothers, aged 11 and 8.

42. On February 20, 2024—while the Grossman case was nearing closing arguments— Chahoian received an email from John Harlan, her Head Deputy, encouraging consideration of Prefiling Deferral of Prosecution ("PDP") for cases involving "reckless driving" and "street racing/takeovers."

43. Chahoian was shocked and appalled by the timing and content of the email, as the Grossman case was at the forefront of the public's attention, and these offenses had increased dramatically in frequency and become a dangerous nuisance in L.A. County, often resulting in fatalities.

44. While Chahoian understood that the PDP procedure—essentially a stern "talking to" that places conditions on dropping charges that are rarely enforced—was appropriate for less serious offenses, allowing those engaged in "reckless driving" and "street racing/takeovers" to be eligible for PDP struck her as inconsistent with LADA's duty to the public to address cases that involve inherently dangerous activities like street racing and street takeovers.

45. In addition, Chahoian was concerned that the email had been selectively sent to filing deputies, not to the office at large or those actually involved in the rehabilitation of the offenders. Chahoian and the other filing deputies were well-aware of the PDP procedure and often recommended it where appropriate. But this "encouragement" by the Gascón administration struck her as a clear directive from her boss to decline charges in cases involving reckless driving, street racing, or street takeovers, even in cases that customarily warranted filing such charges, or at a minimum, that filing such charges would be more trouble than it was worth.

46. In short, Gascón was encouraging filing deputies to avoid recommending the appropriate charges, which would necessarily require them to ignore relevant evidence in order to assist persons credibly accused of criminal activity. If filing deputies were to charge such cases appropriately, they

would have to disobey Gascón and risk any undesirable repercussions on their careers that may result.
The predicable outcome was that filing deputies, like most employees in any industry, would heed their
boss's direction, even when that direction was communicated informally rather than being memorialized
as an official department policy.

47. However, Chahoian reasonably understood that Gascón's "encouragement" to avoid filing the appropriate charges violated **Government Code § 26540** ("A district attorney shall not during his incumbency . . . assist in the defense of . . . any person accused of any crime in any county"); **ABA Standards for Criminal Justice: Prosecution Function, 3-1.2, Functions and Duties of the Prosecutor** ("The primary duty of the prosecutor is to seek justice within the bounds of the law . . . The prosecutor serves the public interest and should act with integrity and balanced judgment to increase public safety. . . . The prosecutor should avoid an appearance of impropriety in performing the prosecution function"); and Marsy's law (Cal. Const., Art. 1, § 28) ("[R]elevant evidence shall not be excluded in any criminal proceeding, including pretrial and post-conviction motions and hearings, or in any trial or hearing of a juvenile for a criminal offense, whether heard in juvenile or adult court").

48. Alarmed by the dangers posed by Gascón's unlawful "encouragement," Chahoian sought to notify the public.

Chahoian Goes Public

49. On February 26, 2024, Chahoian recorded an interview with Gina Silva of Fox 11 Los Angeles in which she discussed LADA's email encouraging DDAs to avoid filing appropriate charges in cases of reckless driving, street racing, or street takeovers, and to instead file such cases as PDP.¹

50. At no point in the interview or in any public statement did Chahoian claim that Gascón issued a formal policy *prohibiting* charges for reckless driving or street takeovers, or *mandating* that such cases be filed as PDP. Rather, she has consistently maintained that Gascón's encouragement to avoid filing these charges where appropriate was itself unlawful.

51. The following day, Chahoian sent an email to DA Gascón explaining that she strongly disagreed with his email and felt compelled to speak to the media as a whistleblower. Nothing could have prepared her for Gascón's response.

¹ "Prosecutors pressured to not file charges in street racing cases: Deputy DA," Fox 11 Los Angeles (Feb. 27, 2024), YouTube <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-wACbNZQlp0</u> (accessed June 4, 2024).

Gascón Attempts to Intimidate Chahoian

52. On February 28, 2024, Chahoian was working from home when she received a panicked phone call from her husband telling her not to open the door. After receiving a notification from the family's Ring doorbell system, her husband had observed strangers suspiciously pacing back-and-forth in front of their home. Chahoian's husband advised her to bring her firearm for self-defense if she felt the need to answer the door.

53. When she peered outside to assess the situation, Chahoian immediately recognized that the unknown individuals had arrived in law enforcement vehicles. Assuming that the visit must have been work-related, she dropped her guard and opened the door.

54. To Chahoian's surprise, Gascón had sent armed LADA investigators to her home for the purpose of hand-delivering a notice stating she had violated LADA policies by participating in the Fox 11 interview.

55. Notably, the letter did not set forth any disciplinary actions—it was simply a notice of alleged violations of LADA policy.

56. These accusations of policy violations against Chahoian were baseless and served as a pretext to justify the retaliatory actions later taken by Gascón and LADA.

57. Of the many DDAs who have made public statements critical of Gascón's policies, none have had LADA investigators hand-deliver a notice to their home. This glaring discrepancy underscores the retaliatory motive behind LADA's actions taken against Chahoian.

58. Simply put, there is no conceivable reason other than intimidation for Gascón to have directed that the notice be hand-delivered when it could have easily been sent via email or postal mail.

59. This intimidation tactic by Gascón had its desired effect—Chahoian understandably developed a fear that she was being watched, and experienced severe and debilitating emotional distress. She feared for her son's safety and waited after dropping him off at school to ensure no one was following him. Even during trips to the pharmacy, she felt the need to look over her shoulder to ensure that her medical privacy was not being compromised.

60. Further, the distress caused by Gascón's intimidation exacerbated Chahoian's existing health conditions, leading to chronic fatigue, severe anxiety, and weight gain.

61. The same day that LADA investigators appeared unannounced at her home, Chahoian received a follow up text from Silva of Fox 11 asking how she was doing. When Chahoian informed her of Gascón's intimidation tactic, Silva asked if she would be willing to sit for another interview to discuss it. After much contemplation, Chahoian concluded that the best way to get Gascón to stop his harassment was to publicize it. She agreed to do a second interview on February 29, 2024, where she exposed Gascón's intimidation tactic of sending investigators to her home.²

62. On March 1, 2024, Chahoian filed a California State Bar Complaint against Gascón based on the tactics he employed in attempting to silence her.

63. To date, she has not received a response from the State Bar.

64. On March 6, 2024, Chahoian met with her supervisors, Harlan and DeMattia, as requested by the hand-delivered notice.

65. Chahoian's supervisors were genuinely perplexed as to what the meeting was supposed to cover, so they just spent 49 minutes going through the headings of the LADA Filing Manual. They did not even discuss the media policy violations outlined in the hand-delivered notice.

66. In short, the meeting was unproductive and a waste of time for all involved, and further revealed that Gascón's hand-delivered notice had no practical purpose other than to intimidate Chahoian.

Gascón Retaliates Against Chahoian by Denying Her Promotion

67. On April 17 and 18, 2024, Gascón made promotion calls to 33 DDAs, advising them of their promotion from Grade II to Grade III.

68. Chahoian was the only eligible DDA from her class whom Gascón passed over for promotion. Some DDAs from the class hired *after* Chahoian were even promoted to Grade III because of additional vacancies.

69. The close temporal proximity between Chahoian's interview with Fox 11 and the retaliatory actions—including the home visit and the denial of her promotion—clearly indicates that these actions were motivated by her whistleblower activities.

² "LA County DA George Gascón accused of using 'mafia tactics'," Fox 11 Los Angeles (Mar. 1, 2024), YouTube <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMwbAFbaJQc</u> (accessed June 4, 2024).

70. Out of more than 70 filing deputies employed by LADA, Chahoian is the *only* Grade II. All other filing deputies are either Grade III or Grade IV, reflecting the experience and judgment required for the position.

71. If LADA believes Chahoian is capable of serving as a filing deputy, there is no rational basis to deny her promotion to Grade III, the minimum rank of all other filing deputies.

72. The only reasonable explanation for LADA's refusal to promote Chahoian to Grade III is Gascón's retaliatory animus against her.

The Toll of Gascón's Retaliation and Intimidation

73. Gascón's refusal to promote Chahoian has caused her significant financial loss and reputational damage: despite her competence and performance, it falsely suggests that she was unfit to be a Grade III DDA, and further, it severely limits her salary, cost of living adjustments, and step raises in pay for the remainder of her career.

74. Due to Gascón's intimidation and retaliation, Chahoian has had to adjust her medication regimen and add new medications, has struggled with focus, and has gained 30 pounds despite consistent physical activity. She has suffered a significant and costly setback in her professional career, and her personal health issues have only been exacerbated by Gascón's actions. Chahoian is significantly distraught and stressed, and simply wishes to be restored to where she was before Gascón's vendetta against her wreaked havoc on her career, family, and emotional and physical well-being.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

Whistleblower Retaliation (Labor Code, § 1102.5)

(Against Defendant County of Los Angeles)

75. Chahoian incorporates every allegation contained in the preceding paragraphs, as though set forth fully herein.

76. As an employee of LADA, Chahoian was bound by her duty as a prosecutor to act in the best interest of public safety and in compliance with the law.

77. On February 26, 2024, Chahoian participated in an interview with Gina Silva of Fox 11 Los Angeles, where she disclosed directives issued by District Attorney George Gascón that encouraged leniency in cases involving reckless driving, street racing, and street takeovers. Chahoian reasonably

believed these directives were violations of laws designed to protect public safety, including policies that should not have been compromised by political agendas. These disclosures were made in good faith, as she had reasonable cause to believe the directives violated California law and public safety standards.

78. Immediately following her public disclosures, Defendants engaged in a series of retaliatory actions. On February 28, 2024—just two days after her interview—Gascón, acting on behalf of LADA, sent armed investigators to Chahoian's home to hand-deliver a notice accusing her of violating LADA policies by participating in the Fox 11 interview. This notice, which included neither disciplinary action nor legitimate policy violations, could have been delivered by less invasive means such as email or mail, and was clearly intended to intimidate and harass her. This visit was an unjustified retaliatory act aimed at silencing her for exercising her right to disclose information she reasonably believed violated the law.

79. On April 17 and 18, 2024, Gascón made promotion calls to 33 Deputy District Attorneys, notifying them of their promotion from Grade II to Grade III. Chahoian, despite being fully eligible and having received a perfect score on the promotion exam, was intentionally passed over. She was the only eligible DDA from her class to be denied a promotion, while less experienced colleagues were promoted. This action was clearly a retaliatory measure taken in response to her whistleblower disclosures.

80. The close temporal proximity between Chahoian's protected disclosures and the adverse employment actions demonstrate that her whistleblowing activities were a substantial motivating factor in the LADA's decision to retaliate.

81. As a direct result of these retaliatory actions, Chahoian has suffered financial harm, including lost wages and benefits due to the denial of her promotion. She has also experienced severe emotional distress, including anxiety, fear for her safety, and exacerbation of her existing health issues. These harms are directly attributable to LADA's retaliatory actions and its attempt to punish her for exposing unlawful directives.

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SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION

Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress

(Against All Defendants)

82. Chahoian incorporates every allegation contained in the preceding paragraphs, as though set forth fully herein.

83. LADA and George Gascón deliberately engaged in a campaign of intimidation and harassment against Chahoian with the intent or reckless disregard of causing her severe emotional distress.

84. Defendants' conduct in sending armed officers to Chahoian's home was entirely devoid of any legitimate purpose. The reasons Defendants provided for this intimidation technique—alleged policy violations—were pretextual, as evidenced by the fact that no other similarly situated DDAs who voiced concerns about Gascón's policies were subjected to such extreme measures. The sole purpose of these actions was to retaliate against Chahoian for her whistleblower activities, making the conduct all the more outrageous.

85. These actions were not only outrageous but also calculated to inflict severe emotional distress. As a result, Chahoian experienced a drastic decline in her mental and physical health, including severe anxiety, depression, weight fluctuations, and a compromised immune system. The stress from these actions directly impacted her ability to perform her job and maintain her well-being.

86. Defendants were fully aware of the emotional and physical toll their actions would likely have on Chahoian, given her well-documented health issues and the nature of the retaliation she was facing. Despite this knowledge, they chose to proceed with actions designed to intimidate and humiliate her. This demonstrates not only a reckless disregard for her well-being but also a malicious intent to inflict emotional distress.

87. Gascón's conduct was a substantial factor in causing this severe emotional distress, and it was done with malicious intent, warranting an award of punitive damages against Gascón.

Complaint

THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

Disability Discrimination – Failure to Accommodate (Gov. Code, § 12940(m)) (Against Defendant County of Los Angeles)

88. Chahoian incorporates every allegation contained in the preceding paragraphs, as though set forth fully herein.

89. LADA was fully aware of Chahoian's medical condition that caused seizures and restricted her ability to drive for more than 15 minutes at a time.

90. On November 22, 2023, after returning from medical leave, Chahoian submitted a doctor's note to LADA's Employee Relations division, clearly stating that her driving should be restricted to no more than 15 minutes at a time due to her condition. Despite this clear medical directive, LADA did not take immediate action to accommodate her needs.

91. For the first three days following her return, from November 22 to November 24, 2023, Chahoian was permitted to work from home, respecting her doctor's instructions. However, starting on November 27, 2023, she was forced to resume commuting to the Antelope Valley Office, a roughly 55minute drive each way, due to short staffing and a lack of available remote work.

92. On December 4, 2023, frustrated by the lack of accommodation, Chahoian submitted a formal request for reassignment to the CED as a Filing Deputy, a position that would significantly reduce her commute time and align with her medical restrictions.

93. LADA did not respond to this request until December 7, 2023, when she was informed that her doctor needed to complete additional medical documentation. Despite the urgency of her medical needs, it wasn't until December 18, 2023—nearly a month after she provided her initial doctor's note—that LADA finally accommodated her request and transferred her to the CED position.

94. The accommodation requested by Chahoian—a transfer to the CED to reduce her commute—was both reasonable and achievable. LADA had the resources and ability to provide this accommodation promptly, yet chose to delay the process without justification.

95. Throughout the accommodation process, LADA failed to keep Chahoian adequately informed about the status of her request. This lack of communication added to her anxiety and uncertainty, further exacerbating her emotional distress and health issues.

96. During the nearly four-week period in which LADA failed to provide the requested accommodation, Chahoian experienced a significant deterioration in her health, including increased anxiety, chronic fatigue, and further exacerbation of her medical condition due to the stress and physical strain of commuting against her doctor's orders.

97. LADA's failure to accommodate her condition in a timely manner was a substantial factor in causing her harm.

FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION

Disability Discrimination – Failure to Engage in Interactive Process (Gov. Code, § 12940(n)) (Against Defendant County of Los Angeles)

98. Chahoian incorporates every allegation contained in the preceding paragraphs, as though set forth fully herein.

99. LADA, as Chahoian's employer, was fully aware of her physical condition and the medical necessity for accommodations, as evidenced by the doctor's note she submitted on November 22, 2023.

100. Chahoian's medical condition required urgent action, as her doctor's note clearly indicated that her health would be at risk if she continued to commute more than 15 minutes each way. Despite the urgency of the situation, LADA failed to take prompt and effective steps to accommodate her needs.

101. On November 29, 2023, LADA held an initial interactive meeting with Chahoian to discuss her request for accommodation. However, despite the meeting, no immediate solutions were adopted, and LADA failed to engage in a meaningful, good-faith interactive process.

102. On December 4, 2023, after receiving no updates, Chahoian submitted a specific request for reassignment to the CED as a Filing Deputy, a position that would align with her medical restrictions. It wasn't until December 7, 2023, that LADA informed her that her doctor needed to complete additional medical documentation—a request that could and should have been made earlier.

103. Even after receiving this additional documentation, LADA did not finalize the accommodation until December 18, 2023. During this nearly four-week period, from November 22 to

December 18, 2023, Chahoian was forced to commute to the Antelope Valley Office in violation of her doctor's orders.

104. LADA's near month of inaction—despite already having sufficient information to make a timely accommodation—underscores LADA's lack of good faith in engaging with the interactive process.

105. As a result of LADA's delay in engaging in the interactive process and providing the necessary accommodation, the Plaintiff's health deteriorated further. She experienced increased anxiety, chronic fatigue, and worsening of her medical condition due to the prolonged commuting, which was in direct contradiction to her doctor's orders.

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106. LADA's failure to engage in a timely and good-faith interactive process-despite clear evidence of Chahoian's medical needs-was a substantial factor in causing her ongoing harm, including exacerbation of her health issues and emotional distress.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff Tatiana Chahoian prays for judgment against Defendants as follows:

- 1. For temporary, preliminary, and permanent injunctive relief against Defendants requiring them to cease and desist their harassment and retaliation against Chahoian in response to her whistleblowing activities;
 - 2. For general damages, according to proof;
 - 3. For special damages, according to proof;
 - 4. For punitive damages against Defendant Gascón, in an amount to be determined by the Court according to proof;
 - 5. For an award of attorneys' fees and costs incurred herein;
 - 6. For an award of post-judgment interest for the maximum amount allowed by law; and
 - 7. For any and all other relief the Court deems just and proper.

1	Dated: October 30, 2024	Respectfully submitted,
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1	1 REQUEST FOR JURY TRIAL	
2	Plaintiff Chahoian hereby dem	ands a trial by jury on all claims and issues so triable.
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4	Dated: October 30, 2024	Respectfully submitted,
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