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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TRENTON – Cathy Grimes never thought she'd get paid, and felt she was running out of options. For two months, she and the 12 employees she managed at a Boston Market in East Hanover went without paychecks, though many still dutifully went to work each day. But Grimes promised her coworkers the State of New Jersey would be able to help. After she contacted the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL), other unpaid employees around the state began coming forward, shining a light on a pervasive pattern of denying employees their hard-earned salaries.

After an investigation by NJDOL's Division of Wage and Hour Compliance that resulted in issuing stop-work orders that shuttered the doors of 27 Boston Markets around the state, more than \$630,000 in back wages has been paid to 314 workers – thanks to the department's actions to protect workers.

"What surprised me was how very attentive everyone we dealt with at NJDOL was, and how cared for and respected we felt. We got all the wages – between us about \$15,000. The owner really took notice when the Department of Labor got involved," said Grimes.

"Stories like Cathy's and what was happening to her colleagues at Boston Market are exactly the reason Governor Murphy and our legislators empowered our department to issue stop-work orders against employers that are seemingly willfully operating in bad faith," said Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo. "We're glad this investigation resulted in every dollar making it into the pockets of those who earned the money. Hopefully this action puts other bad actors on notice: 'if you don't pay your workers, we will shut you down.'"

Last month, NJDOL shuttered 27 Boston Market locations across the state, issuing 27 stop-work orders after finding that workers weren't getting paid.

NJDOL lifted the stop-work orders after the employees received all their back pay, which permitted the Boston Markets to reopen.

The investigation was initiated when NJDOL received a complaint in last November from a Boston Market worker at 770 Route 33 in Hamilton Township, Mercer County. Subsequently, nearly three dozen additional complaints were received naming several other New Jersey Boston Market locations.

Other citations included: unpaid/late payment of wages, hindrance of the investigation, failure to pay minimum wage, records violations, failure to pay earned sick leave, and failure to maintain records for earned sick leave.

Findings of the investigation were sent to parent company Boston Chicken of NJ, LLC d/b/a Boston Market headquartered in Golden, Colo., to C.E.O. Jignesh Pandya of Newtown, Pa., and to the registered agent of the company at Princeton South Corporate Center in Ewing. Additional liquidated damages and fees may be levied by the department.

For more information on worker rights in New Jersey, visit [MyWorkRights.nj.gov](https://myworkrights.nj.gov).

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