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# NJ Labor Department Issues Stop-Work Order to Nutley Restaurant for Wage Violations

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 29, 2022

**TRENTON** – The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) stopped work at Bella Luce Restaurant and Bar in Nutley after owner Joseph Capasso of Bella Luce/GLO L.L.C. failed to pay more than \$100,000 in back wages, fines, and penalties resulting from a 2018 complaint that workers were not receiving appropriate credit card tips. The restaurant was also more recently fined in a separate case for paying workers below the minimum wage, as well as other violations.

Investigators from the NJDOL’s Division of Wage and Hour and Contract Compliance delivered the stop-work notice to the restaurant at 507 Franklin Avenue in Nutley on September 21.

After the 2018 complaint was filed with the NJDOL, the restaurant owner did not appear for an initial inspection, and was then issued a subpoena. Payroll records indicated workers were not paid minimum wage or overtime, and point of sale records proved workers were not given the tips owed to them.

An NJDOL audit confirmed \$95,653.12 was due in back wages to 19 workers. The company was cited for violations relating to records, minimum wage, overtime, hindering the investigation, and unpaid wages, and was fined \$9,565.31 in fees and \$5,000 in penalties. A judgement was entered and the collection process began in 2019, which the company failed to satisfy.

“The NJDOL will not rest until New Jersey workers are paid every penny they are rightfully due,” said Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo. “New Jersey is one of the most pro-worker states in the nation, and everyone doing a job here deserves the fair treatment, respect, and dignity that comes with our state’s strong policies.”

An additional case against Bella Luce Restaurant and Bar was opened recently after a complaint was filed with the department alleging further wage violations. Records showed the employer did not maintain total daily and weekly hours nor earned sick leave records, and payroll records verified that employees were not paid minimum wage. The investigation concluded that 14 employees are due a total of \$15,557.88 in back wages.

The employer was cited in this case for violations involving records, minimum wage, unpaid wages, and earned sick leave records, and fined \$2800.24 in fees and \$16,500 in penalties.

Stop-work orders are initiated by NJDOL to halt work being performed in a manner that exploits workers, or is otherwise noncompliant with state laws and regulations. An employer may appeal a stop-work order, in which case the NJDOL has seven days to schedule a hearing. The NJDOL continues to monitor locations where stop-work orders have been issued, and can assess civil penalties of \$5,000 per day against an employer conducting business in violation of the order. The stop-work order may be lifted if and when any remaining back wages and penalties have been paid and all related issues have been resolved.

For more information on New Jersey’s wage and hour laws, please visit [myworkrights.nj.gov](#).

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**NJ Labor Department**   
@NJJaborDept · Oct 31

WHAT A TREAT!  
It's been 4 years since NJ's earned sick leave laws employees with up to 40 hours of sick leave per y  
  
(But maybe still go easy on the candy tonight!)  
  
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