1 2 3 4 5 THE HONORABLE RONALD B. LEIGHTON 6 7 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON AT TACOMA 8 9 **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT**) CASE NO.: C04-5627 RBL OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION, 10 **INTERVENORS' FIRST AMENDED COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES** Plaintiff, 11 12 CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG) 1. RACE DISCRIMINATION AND **RACIAL HARASSMENT IN** TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN 13 VIOLATION OF TITLE VII OF THE GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER, **CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964, 42** 14 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq. Defendants. 15 2. RETALIATION IN VIOLATION OF LORRAINE MOORE, CATHY WISE, 16 TITLE VII OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS KESHA GANTT, SADARAH ACT OF 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq. YARBROUGH, BARBARA BERSHELL,) 17 VERONICA BRADY, and NORMA 18 3. RACE DISCRIMINATION AND BALLARD, **RACIAL HARASSMENT IN** 19 **VIOLATION OF RCW 49.60** Plaintiffs in Intervention,) 20 CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG 4. RETALIATION IN VIOLATION OF 21 TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN **RCW 49.60** GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER; 22 DONNA STROMSKI, individually and) 5. NEGLIGENT SUPERVISION 23 the marital community thereof with **AND/OR RETENTION** JOHN DOE STROMSKI; MARIETTA 24 **DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL** ANDREASEN, individually and the marital community thereof with JOHN 25 DOE ANDREASEN, and DOES 1-10 26 inclusive. Defendants in Intervention 27 INTERVENORS' FIRST AMENDED COMPLAINT The Law Offices of GRANT & ASSOCIATES The Law Dome 28

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COME NOW, Plaintiffs in Intervention, LORRAINE MOORE, CATHY WISE, KESHA GANTT, SADARAH YARBROUGH, BARBARA BERSHELL, VERONICA BRADY, and NORMA BALLARD by and through their attorneys of record, submit their first amendment to their Complaint for Damages, which was initially filed on October 18, 2004. Defendants have not yet been served.

I. NATURE OF THE CASE

- 1. This case involves race discrimination, racial harassment, and retaliation by Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER and its agents. Plaintiffs in Intervention alleges CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER; DONNA STROMSKI, individually and the marital community thereof with JOHN DOE STROMSKI; MARIETTA ANDREASEN, individually and the marital community thereof with JOHN DOE ANDREASEN engaged in a pattern and practice of overt race discrimination and of ignoring and even condoning the racial harassment.
- 2. Plaintiffs contend that they were subjected to racial harassment in that employees and patients of Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER referred to them as "niggers" and "colored."
- 3. Plaintiffs assert claims under federal and state anti-discrimination and civil rights laws. Plaintiffs seek legal redress for injuries inflicted upon them by Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER; DONNA STROMSKI, individually and the marital

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community thereof with JOHN DOE STROMSKI; MARIETTA ANDREASEN, individually and the marital community thereof with JOHN DOE ANDREASEN, and DOES 1-10.

4. Plaintiffs believe that as a result of the egregious and repetitive discriminatory acts, a sizeable punitive damage award may be required to punish Defendants for past discrimination and deter such behavior in the future.

II. JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 5. Jurisdiction is proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331 based upon a federal question under the laws of the United States. Specifically, this Court has jurisdiction over Plaintiffs' claims under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1991, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e *et seq*.
- 6. Supplemental jurisdiction exists pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1367(a) for state statutory claims under RCW § 49.60.010 *et seq.* and other torts.
- 7. Venue is proper under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(1) and (2); and 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-5(f)(3).

III. STATUTORY PREREQUISITES

- 8. Plaintiffs in Intervention has an absolute right, under 42 USC §2000e-5(f)(1), to intervene in this action brought by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (hereinafter "EEOC").
- 9. In or about January 2004, Plaintiff MOORE filed an EEOC Charge based on race discrimination against Defendant LINDEN GROVE, EEOC Charge No. 380-

2004-00919.

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On May 24, 2004, the EEOC issued a reasonable cause determination to 10. Plaintiff MOORE. The EEOC found that Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER violated Title VII by subjecting Plaintiff MOORE to discriminatory work assignments due to her race, African American.

- 11. On January 26, 2004, Plaintiff WISE filed an EEOC Charge based on race discrimination against Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER, EEOC Charge No. 380-2004-01339.
- 12. On May 25, 2004, the EEOC issued a reasonable cause determination to Plaintiff WISE. The EEOC found that Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER violated Title VII by subjecting Plaintiff WISE to discriminatory work assignments and terms and conditions of employment. Further, EEOC found reasonable cause to believe Plaintiff WISE was denied promotional opportunities.
- 13. In or about January 2004, Plaintiff GANTT filed an EEOC Charge based on race discrimination against Defendant LINDEN GROVE, EEOC Charge No. 380-2004-01340.
- 14. On May 25, 2004, the EEOC issued a reasonable cause determination to Plaintiff GANTT. The EEOC found Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER violated Title VII by subjecting Plaintiff GANTT was subjected to discriminatory work assignments and terms and conditions of employment, and that she was subjected to harassment in violation of Title VII.

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15. On May 17, 2004, Plaintiff YARBROUGH filed an EEOC Charge based on race discrimination against Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER, EEOC Charge No. 380-2004-02551. EEOC issued a Notice of Right to Sue on October 29, 2004.

- 16. On June 28, 2004, Plaintiff BARBARA BERSHELL filed an EEOC Charge based on race discrimination against Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER, EEOC Charge No. 380-2004-03043. EEOC issued a Notice of Right to Sue on November 1, 2004.
- 17. On July 2, 2004, Plaintiff VERONICA BRADY filed an EEOC Charge based on race discrimination against Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER, EEOC Charge No. 380-2004-03124. EEOC issued a Notice of Right to Sue on October 29, 2004.
- 18. On September 24, 2004, Plaintiff NORMA BALLARD filed an EEOC Charge based on race discrimination against Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER, EEOC Charge No. 380-2004-04143. EEOC issued a Notice of Right to Sue on November 1, 2004.

IV. <u>PARTIES</u>

A. Plaintiffs

19. At all times material hereto, Plaintiff MOORE has been a citizen of the United States and a resident of the State of Washington and has been entitled to protection under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1991, 42 U.S.C.

§ 2000e et seq., 42 U.S.C. § 13981, RCW 49.60, and the common law of the State of

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20. At all times material hereto, Plaintiff WISE has been a citizen of the United States and a resident of the State of Washington and has been entitled to protection under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1991, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e *et seq.*, 42 U.S.C. § 13981, RCW 49.60, and the common law of the State of Washington.

- 21. At all times material hereto, Plaintiff GANTT has been a citizen of the United States and a resident of the State of Washington and has been entitled to protection under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1991, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e *et seq.*, 42 U.S.C. § 13981, RCW 49.60, and the common law of the State of Washington.
- 22. At all times material hereto, Plaintiff YARBROUGH has been a citizen of the United States and a resident of the State of Washington and has been entitled to protection under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1991, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e *et seq.*, 42 U.S.C. § 13981, RCW 49.60, and the common law of the State of Washington.
- 23. At all times material hereto, Plaintiff BERSHELL has been a citizen of the United States and a resident of the State of Washington and has been entitled to protection under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1991, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e *et seq.*, 42 U.S.C. § 13981, RCW 49.60, and the common law of the State of Washington.

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24. At all times material hereto, Plaintiff BRADY has been a citizen of the United States and a resident of the State of Washington and has been entitled to protection under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1991, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e *et seq.*, 42 U.S.C. § 13981, RCW 49.60, and the common law of the State of Washington.

25. At all times material hereto, Plaintiff BALLARD has been a citizen of the United States and a resident of the State of Washington and has been entitled to protection under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1991, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e *et seq.*, 42 U.S.C. § 13981, RCW 49.60, and the common law of the State of Washington.

B. Named Defendant Corporations

- 26. Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER and DOES 1-5 have at all relevant times been an employer as defined by 42 U.S.C. § 2000e(b), in that they have employed fifteen (15) or more persons in each of twenty (20) or more calendar weeks in the current or preceding year.
- 27. Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER and DOES 1-5 are employers under R.C.W. 49.60.040, in that they employs eight (8) or more persons.
- 28. Defendant CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER conduct business in the State of

Washington.

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C. Named Individual Defendants

- 29. It is believed and is herein alleged that Defendant DONNA STROMSKI is and has been a citizen of the United States and a resident of the State of Washington at all times material hereto.
- 30. Defendant STROMSKI at all times material herein acted as an agent for Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER in that she is the Administrator of Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER. Defendant STROMSKI was at all relevant times a managerial agent of Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER.
- 31. On information and belief, Defendants STROMSKI and JOHN DOE STROMSKI reside in the State of Washington, which is within this judicial district.
- 32. Defendant STROMSKI is married to JOHN DOE STROMSKI and all acts done by her were done on behalf of or in furtherance of the interests of the marital community.
- 33. It is believed and is herein alleged that Defendant MARIETTA ANDREASEN is and has been a citizen of the United States and a resident of the State of Washington at all times material hereto.

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34. Defendant ANDREASEN at all times material herein acted as an agent for Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER in that she was Director of Nursing Services.

- 35. On information and belief, Defendants ANDREASEN and JOHN DOE ADREASEN reside in the State of Washington, which is within this judicial district.
- 36. Defendant ANDREASEN is married to JOHN DOE ANDREASEN and all acts done by him were done on behalf of or in furtherance of the interests of the marital community.

D. Doe Defendants

- 37. The true names and capacities, whether individual, corporate, associate, governmental or otherwise, of Defendants sued herein as DOES 1-5, inclusive, are currently unknown to Plaintiffs, who therefore sue said Defendants by such fictitious names.
- 38. The true names and capacities of individual Defendants sued herein as DOES 6-10, inclusive are currently unknown to Plaintiffs, who therefore sue said Defendants by such fictitious names.
- 39. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and based thereon allege, that each of the Defendants designated as a DOES 1-10 are legally responsible in some manner for the events, incidents, and happenings described herein, and caused injuries and damages to Plaintiffs. Plaintiffs will seek leave of court to amend this Complaint to substitute the true names and capacities for the Defendants designated herein as DOES

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1-10 when the true names have been ascertained or in the alternative dismiss said DOES 1-10 if their identities cannot be ascertained.

- 40. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and based thereon alleges, that at all times mentioned herein, Defendants DOES 1-10 allowed, aided, encouraged and incited others, including agents and employees of Defendant CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER to engage in the acts of discrimination and retaliation alleged herein.
- 41. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and based thereon allege that at all relevant times the individual DOE Defendants *viz*, Does 6-10, are and have been residents of the United States and the State of Washington.
- 42. Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER; DONNA STROMSKI, individually and the marital community thereof with JOHN DOE STROMSKI; MARIETTA ANDREASEN, individually and the marital community thereof with JOHN DOE ANDREASEN, and DOES 1-10 are hereinafter collectively referred to as "DEFENDANTS." Unless specified otherwise, whenever this Complaint refers to "Defendant" or "Defendants," such allegation shall be deemed to mean the acts of Defendants acting individually, jointly and/or severally as so designated.
- 43. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and based thereon alleges, that at all times mentioned herein, each of the Defendants were the agents, servants and

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employees, co-venturers or co-conspirators of each of the remaining Defendants, and were acting within the course, scope, and purpose of their employment, joint venture or conspiracy, with the consent, knowledge, ratification and authorization of such agency, employment, joint venture or conspiracy.

V. **GENERAL ALLEGATIONS**

Α. Plaintiff LORRAINE MOORE alleges the following:

- 44. Plaintiff MOORE was subjected to racial harassment, race discrimination; retaliation in that she was constructively discharged. Plaintiff MOORE worked for Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER as a part-time Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) from October 11, 2001 to March 12, 2002.
- 45. In December 2003, Plaintiff MOORE was assigned to care for the patients on Hall 1 and Hall 2. Plaintiff MOORE was later assigned to work the North Wing twice a week. On December 24, 2003, Plaintiff MOORE noticed the note posted at the nurses' station stating, "no caregivers of color at any time" to care for Patient 1. Two days later, the note remained posted on the office work board. Plaintiff MOORE believed the note was wholly offensive and inappropriate. She also discovered a notation in the patient's file, which stated that the resident prefers Caucasian caregivers only. She submitted a written complaint to Defendant ANDREASEN, stating that she was disappointed in the facility for posting a "racist note". Defendant ANDREASEN ignored Plaintiff MOORE's complaints, as she never responded to Plaintiff MOORE. After two full days, the note was taken down on December 26, 2003.

Plaintiffs allege Defendant ANDREASEN did not instruct anyone to remove the

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posting. Instead, a Caucasian LPN took the note down as she believed that the note was inappropriate and should not have ever been posted.

- 46. Since December 28, 2003, Plaintiff MOORE never worked on Hall 2, where Patient 1 resided. Plaintiff MOORE was also forced to work the North Wing twice each week. She was placed under closer scrutiny soon after complaining about the racist note.
- 47. Plaintiff MOORE began receiving phone calls at home for insignificant issues, for which a phone call was not warranted. At that point Plaintiff MOORE was afraid of losing her license because of the possibility of Defendants lodging a bogus complaint in retaliation for complaining about the discrimination. She witnessed other African-American employees being falsely accused of patient abuse and subsequently terminated.
- 48. Plaintiff MOORE could no longer work in an environment that condoned discrimination and she could no longer afford to work only 32-hours each week. Plaintiff MOORE alleges she was retaliated against for complaining about the racist note and was eventually constructively discharged from her position at Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER.
- 49. Additionally, Defendants denied Plaintiff MOORE's requests to work the day or evening shift. Plaintiff MOORE first worked at Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER for five months on a part-time basis between October 2001 and March 2002. She returned to Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE

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CENTER to work full-time in April 22, 2003. When she was first hired, she was assigned the night shift, which only allowed her to work 32-hours-per-week. Plaintiff MOORE requested the evening or day shift, which would provide her with 40 hours each week.

50. Plaintiff MOORE was a single mother desperately needing to receive a 40-hour-per-week paycheck. Despite her repeated request for the evening or day shift, Defendants hired other Caucasian LPNs for the evening or day shift.

B. Plaintiff CATHY WISE alleges the following:

- 51. Plaintiff WISE was subjected to racial harassment, race discrimination and retaliation. Plaintiff WISE is a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) who has worked for Defendants since June 22, 2000.
- 52. Plaintiff WISE alleges she was denied promotional opportunities because of her race. She applied for a Staffing Coordinator position twice, in May 2002 and in May 2003. Plaintiff WISE was denied the promotion both times.
- 53. In May 2002, Plaintiff WISE and another Caucasian employee, were the top two candidates for the Staffing Coordinator position. While Sheila had no staffing experience, Plaintiff WISE had two years of prior staffing experience. Defendants promoted the Caucasian employee. When the Caucasian employee quit in May 2003, it was well known amongst Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER employees that Plaintiff WISE should finally be promoted to the Staffing Coordinator position.

54. Instead, Defendants promoted another Caucasian employee, who did not even apply for the position. The Caucasian employee had less seniority and less experience than Plaintiff WISE. The EEOC has determined Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER has denied Plaintiff WISE promotional opportunities because of her race.

- 55. Plaintiff WISE was also subjected to a hostile work environment. From 1999 through 2002, Plaintiff WISE provided patient care to a Caucasian patient, Patient 2, who frequently referred to African-American employees as "niggers." Plaintiff WISE was offended by the comments.
- 56. Plaintiff Wise complained to her immediate supervisor, a Caucasian LPN. Defendants took no remedial action. Similarly, Caucasian patient, Patient 3, often used the term "Nigger," he sometimes stated, "Fuckin' nigger." Despite Defendants' knowledge of the racial epithets, Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER managers ignored its patients' inappropriate behavior, therefore condoning racial harassment in the workplace.
- 57. Since filing her EEOC Charge in January 2004, Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER managers have retaliated against Plaintiff WISE by closely scrutinizing her. For instance, in April 2004, Defendant DONNA STROMSKI, Administrator, and DEFENDANT MARIETTA ANDREASEN, Director of Nursing Services, accused Plaintiff WISE of "bullying" a patient in giving her an Easter basket filled with food. While it is not uncommon for caregivers to receive food from patients

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and patients' families at Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER, Defendants made it an issue in Plaintiff WISE's case. Plaintiff WISE insisted that the Easter basket was a gift. The patient's family subsequently confirmed that they bought the basket as a token of their appreciation.

- 58. In June 2004, Defendant ANDREASEN summoned Plaintiff WISE and another Caucasian LPN to her office to discuss a conflict that ensued between them. The Caucasian LPN falsely accused Plaintiff WISE of not doing her job. Defendant ANDREASEN told the women to try to work things out. She dismissed Plaintiff WISE from her office and told her she still needed to talk to the Caucasian LPN.
- 59. Plaintiff WISE walked out of the office and closed the door behind her. As Plaintiff WISE stood outside the office, she heard Defendant ANDREASEN say something to the effect of, "Don't worry, she won't be here long." Plaintiff WISE believes she has been subjected to retaliation for complaining about the discrimination. EEOC has also determined Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER has subjected Plaintiff WISE to unlawful retaliation.

C. Plaintiff KESHA GANTT alleges the following:

60. Plaintiff GANTT was subjected to pervasive racial harassment, race discrimination, and retaliation in that she was constructively discharged. Plaintiff GANTT worked as a Certified Nursing Assistant for Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER from April 2003 through February 2004.

- 61. Plaintiff GANT alleges Caucasian employees frequently referred to African-Americans as "colored." The use of the term was not endearing. Plaintiff GANTT was offended and objected to the term. Nevertheless, even Caucasian charge nurses continued to use the term, "colored," when referring to all African-Americans. For instance, a Caucasian nurse would see an African-American entertainer on the television, Plaintiff GANTT heard her refer to the entertainer as "colored".
- 62. Other Caucasian employees made comments about the physical features of African-Americans. For instance, in the summer 2003, Plaintiff GANTT appeared for her shift with braids in her hair. Helen Shepard, Caucasian RN, comment to the effect of, "I wish I could wear my hair like that but I can't because those guys (referring to African-Americans) don't wash their hair everyday so they can do that. We (referring to Caucasians) wash our hair everyday." Helen Shepard's comments initiated an unsolicited "roundtable discussion" among several Caucasian employees about African-Americans' hair. Plaintiff GANTT was offended by the discussion.
- 63. Helen Shepard continued to make inappropriate race-based comments. In or about September 2003, a Caucasian employee commented that Plaintiff GANTT looked as if she was gaining weight. Helen Shepard stated to the effect of "All African-American girls are built with booty." Plaintiff GANTT was offended by her comments, but felt that complaining was futile because race-based comments were common and pervasive in the workplace.

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64. Plaintiff GANTT eventually resigned her position at Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER on February 2004. She found the working environment was intolerable because in or about November 2003, a Caucasian patient falsely accused Plaintiff GANTT of verbal abuse. Her immediate supervisor, Theresa Duggins, Caucasian LPN, warned Plaintiff GANTT not to go into the patient's room. Plaintiff GANTT complied. However, the same allegations were made against her the following day. Plaintiff GANTT complained to Defendant ANDREASEN, who acknowledged that she was "aware of racial issues." Defendant ANDREASEN told Plaintiff GANTT not to worry about the allegations.

65. However, one month later, Plaintiff GANTT received a letter from the State stating that it initiated an investigation, which subsequently found no misconduct stemming from the verbal abuse allegations. She also saw other African-American employees being terminated based on false allegations. Plaintiff GANTT observed how the African-American employees were treated differently than the Caucasian employees and eventually resigned from Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER.

66. The EEOC investigated Plaintiff GANTT's discrimination claims and found reasonable cause to believe that Plaintiff GANTT was subjected to discriminatory work assignments and terms and conditions of employment, and that she was subjected to harassment in violation of Title VII.

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67. Plaintiff YARBROUGH was also subjected to repeated race-based comments by Caucasian employees and Caucasian patients, race discrimination and retaliation. Plaintiff YARBROUGH has been a Certified Nursing Assistant for Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER since September 2003.

- 68. Defendants failed to take prompt corrective action and ignored the racial comments that were common in the work place. Plaintiff YARBROUGH was present when a Caucasian employee who worked on the North Wing made an inappropriate comment regarding another African-American employee's hair. She complained about how the African-American employee's hair was "too" kinky and that she should take a comb and comb through her hair.
- 69. Plaintiff YARBROUGH heard Caucasian employees commonly use the term "colored" in the workplace. For instance, in or about December 2003, a Caucasian CNA told Plaintiff YARBROUGH that she could not go into Patient 1's room because she did not want any "colored people" to go in there. Plaintiff YARBROUGH was offended by the use of the derogatory term, but like the other Plaintiffs, believed it was futile to complain because "colored" was frequently used when referring to African-American employees. Additionally, she saw the racist note posted at the nurses' station stating no "caregivers of color" allowed to provide care for Patient 1.
- 70. Plaintiff YARBROUGH also contends she was subjected to discriminatory work assignments. Like the other Plaintiffs, she believed she was assigned to inferior

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job tasks. For instance, Plaintiff YARBROUGH was assigned to the utility room, which meant she was in charge of cleaning all the bedpans and urinals by the end of her shift. She noted that the Caucasian CNAs were rarely assigned the utility room's urinal cleaning duties.

71. In January 2004, Plaintiff YARBROUGH transferred to the North Wing to work as a shower aid. As a shower aid, her job was to shower the patients in North Wing in addition to her duties as a CNA. More than six months later, in July 2004, Plaintiff YARBROUGH learned she was entitled to a raise because of her additional shower aid duties. Plaintiff YARBROUGH did not receive her retroactive pay until seven months later.

E. Plaintiff BARBARA BERSHELL alleges the following:

- 72. Plaintiff BERSHELL was subjected to racial harassment and race discrimination. She worked for Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER as a Certified Nursing Assistant from May 2003 through December 2003. A review of her personnel file revealed she performed her duties satisfactory. In fact, she was often called to work extra shifts when there was a shortage of staff. Nevertheless, Plaintiff BERSHELL was terminated on December 24, 2003 based on false allegations of patient abuse. Plaintiff alleges she was terminated because of her race.
- 73. On December 24, 2003, Plaintiff BERSHELL arrived for her shift and was sitting at the nurses station when she saw the note restricting "caregivers of color" to care for Patient 1. She was told to leave immediately because a patient had accused her of patient abuse. A patient allegedly complained that Plaintiff BERSHELL bruised her

arm as Plaintiff BERSHELL was attempting to maneuver her.

74. A few days later, Plaintiff BERSHELL called to inquire about her employment. She spoke to Defendant ANDREASEN'S assistant, who told Plaintiff BERSHELL that the bruise was not caused by her, but from another caregiver blood that was drawn several weeks prior. Nevertheless, Plaintiff BERSHELL was told she was terminated because she *could have* injured the patient. Plaintiff BERSHELL alleges that her termination was a pretext for discrimination.

75. While employed at Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER, Plaintiff BERSHELL was also subjected to racial harassment. Like the other Plaintiffs, she also heard Caucasian employees use the term "colored" or "coloreds" when referring to African-Americans at least two to three each times a week. When Plaintiff BERSHELL objected, a Caucasian LPN stated to the effect of, "I like colored people. I have nothing against colored people." Plaintiff BERSHELL believed complaining would be an exercise in futility, as "colored" was a common term in the workplace.

76. Plaintiff BERSHELL also requested to work the evening shift. When she was first hired she requested the evening shift, because she was afraid to work late nights and she would be guaranteed 40 hours each week on the evening shift as opposed to 32 hours each week on the night shift. She was told she would work the night shift until there was an opening on the evening shift. As in Plaintiff Moore's case, other Caucasian CNAs were subsequently hired to work the evening shifts, despite

Plaintiff BERSHELL's repeated requests for the evening shift.

Plaintiff BRADY was subjected to racial harassment and race

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78. Caucasian employees and Caucasian patients subjected Plaintiff BRADY to derogatory comments. Plaintiff BRADY was terminated for allegedly "double padding" patients, a process in which two pads are placed under a patient. Plaintiff BRADY alleges she was terminated because of her race.

discrimination. Plaintiff BRADY was a Certified Nursing Assistant for Defendant

LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER from September 2002 through December

79. The State's investigation did not find any violation. Nevertheless, Defendants terminated Plaintiff BRADY on December 8, 2003. Defendants are now stating that Plaintiff BRADY was terminated for falsifying her employment application by omitting one of her previous employers. While Plaintiff BRADY did omit a previous employer, she later informed Defendants of her previous employer in or about July 2003, and was not terminated until December 2003.

80. On or about July 7, 2003, Plaintiff BRADY hand delivered to Debbie Lacefield a copy of the Stipulation to Informal Disposition. Evidence shows that Plaintiff Brady brought the document to work as soon as she received it from the State. The complaints from a previous employer originated *after* she started to work for Defendants.

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81. The Stipulation to Informal Disposition provided Plaintiff BRADY be placed on two years probation and reimburse the Nursing Assistant Program \$500.00. She did not lose her license due to misconduct.

- 82. Additionally, the reasons for Plaintiff BRADY's termination remain unclear. The form from unemployment indicated that Plaintiff BRADY was not terminated, but "suspended pending license review." In contrast, Defendant STROMKI'S letter dated July 14, 2004 indicated that Plaintiff BRADY was terminated on December 8, 2003 for "falsification of her employment application and the outstanding DSHS complaint."
- 83. Plaintiff BRADY was never told she was suspended pending the license review and she immediately informed Defendants as soon as she became aware of an inquiry action regarding her license. Plaintiff BRADY alleges the reasons for her termination were pretext for discrimination.
- 84. While Plaintiff BRADY was employed at Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER, she has also been subjected to discriminatory actions. Like Plaintiffs MOORE and BERSHELL, Plaintiff BRADY requested to work the day or evening shift. She again requested to work the day or evening shift in the summer 2003, however two Caucasian CNAs were subsequently hired in the fall 2003.
- 85. Plaintiff BRADY also heard Caucasian employees and Caucasian patients make racist comments. "Colored" was frequently used among Caucasian CNAs and Caucasian patients. Ellen Norris, a Caucasian CNA, always referred to Plaintiff BRADY

as "that colored girl" or "that black girl" when talking to the patients. Plaintiff BRADY complained about Ellen Norris' discriminatory behavior to her immediate supervisor, Theresa Duggin, Caucasian LPN, and subsequently to Defendant ANDREASEN. Despite Plaintiff BRADY's complaints, no prompt action was taken.

86. Plaintiff BRADY was also assigned to provide care to a Caucasian Patient who often referred to her as "Black Bitch." Plaintiff BRADY was uncomfortable working with this patient and complained to her immediate supervisor and Defendant ANDREASEN. However, she was still forced to provide care to this patient, without employer intervention and corrective remedial action.

G. Plaintiff NORMA BALLARD alleges the following:

- 87. Plaintiff BALLARD was subjected to discriminatory work assignments, terms and conditions of employment and harassment due to her race, African-American and Filipino. Plaintiff BALLARD further alleges she was terminated based on her race.
- 88. Plaintiff BALLARD was employed with Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER as a Certified Nursing Assistant from December 14, 2002 to December 24, 2003, when she was wrongfully terminated.
- 89. During her employment, Caucasian patients and employees would make derogatory race-based comments to her. For instance, a Caucasian patient referred to Plaintiff BALLARD as "nigger," while a Caucasian employee referred to her as "colored."

- 90. Another Caucasian employee referred to Plaintiff BALLARD as a "dorper", which is an animal developed in South Africa in the 1930s by crossing Horned Dorsets with Black Headed Persians. Plaintiff BALLARD was offended by the derogatory name-calling as she was part African-American and part Filipino. The other Caucasian employees laughed when Plaintiff BALLARD was referred to as a "dorper." Plaintiff BALLARD alleges Defendants should have known about the racial harassment, but failed to take prompt corrective action.
- 91. Plaintiff BALLARD was assigned arduous job duties based on her race. Defendant LINDEN GROVE's nurse supervisors frequently assign Plaintiff BALLARD inferior jobs. For instance, Plaintiff BALLARD was repeatedly assigned to clean the day room. Even though Plaintiff BALLARD was not assigned to work the day room, she was instructed to clean up for another Caucasian CNA.
- 92. Plaintiff BALLARD alleges it was a common practice for Caucasian nurses to order her to take care of patients who were not initially assigned to her care. Caucasian nurses would relieve the Caucasian CNAs from taking care of "hoyer" patients, who were patients that needed an easy lift. Plaintiff BALLARD repeatedly complained about being assigned inferior jobs, but no action was taken.
- 93. Plaintiff BALLARD alleges she worked in a hostile work environment based on her race. She further alleges she was terminated based on her race. Defendant LINDEN GROVE terminated Plaintiff BALLARD for violating its "no call no show"

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policy. Plaintiff BALLARD contends its reasons are pretext for discrimination as Caucasian employees were not terminated under similar circumstances.

VI. FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

RACE DISCRIMINATION AND RACIAL HARASSMENT IN VIOLATION OF TITLE VII OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq.

(PLAINTIFFS AGAINST DEFENDANTS CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER AND DOES 1-5)

Plaintiffs MOORE, WISE, GANTT, YARBROUGH, BERSHELL, BRADY, and BALLARD reallege each and every allegation as set forth in the preceding paragraphs 1 thru 93 with the same force and effect as though fully set forth herein.

- 94. Plaintiffs MOORE, WISE, GANTT, YARBROUGH, BERSHELL, BRADY, and BALLARD were subjected to severe and pervasive racial harassment, including but not limited to racial comments and discriminatory work assignments.
- 95. Plaintiffs complained about the hostile work environment and discriminatory conduct to Defendants. Despite Defendants' knowledge of the hostile work environment and the race discrimination, Defendants failed to take prompt corrective action.
- 96. The racial harassment was so severe and pervasive, it adversely impacted Plaintiffs' abilities to perform their work.
- 97. As a direct and proximate result of the above mentioned harassment and discriminatory acts and omissions by Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER and Does 1-5, Plaintiffs' emotional well-being have been substantially injured.

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98. Plaintiffs have suffered, and will continue to suffer pain and suffering, extreme mental anguish and emotional distress because of the above-described acts and omissions of Defendants. Plaintiffs have also suffered, and will continue to suffer, loss of earnings, nonpecuniary losses and job opportunities as a result of the actions and omissions of Defendants.

VII. SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION RETALIATION IN VIOLATION OF TITLE VII OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq. (Plaintiffs WISE, MOORE, and GANTT against Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER and DOES 1-5)

Plaintiffs WISE, MOORE, and GANTT reallege the preceding paragraphs 1 thru 98 with the same force and effect, and incorporates the same as though fully set forth herein.

- 99. Plaintiffs WISE, MOORE, and GANTT allege they engaged in protected activity when they complained about racial harassment and race discrimination.
- 100. Plaintiffs MOORE, WISE, and GANTT further allege they engaged in protected activity when they filed their Charges of Discrimination alleging racial harassment and discrimination with the EEOC.
- 101. As a result of complaining about the racial harassment and race discrimination, Plaintiffs experienced adverse employment actions.
- 102. Plaintiffs MOORE and GANTT allege they were constructively discharged. Plaintiff MOORE could no longer work at Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER because it continued to refuse her requests for a 40-hour

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week.

work week. Instead, Defendants hired Caucasian LPNs to work the 40-hour work

- 103. Plaintiff GANTT observed how African-American employees were treated differently than Caucasian employees in that the African-American employees were constantly accused of patient abuse. Plaintiff GANTT was also falsely accused of patient abuse in which the State's investigation revealed the allegations were unsupported. Plaintiff GANTT eventually resigned because of the continued hostile work environment and for fear of losing her license.
- 104. Plaintiff MOORE alleges they were closely scrutinized soon after complaining about the discrimination.
- 105. Plaintiffs MOORE, WISE, and GANTT allege that their opposition to the discrimination and/or hostile work environment was a substantial factor in the adverse employment actions.
- 106. As a direct and proximate result of the retaliation referred to above, Plaintiffs have suffered and will continue to suffer damages including, but not limited to, earnings and employment benefits, as well as physical, emotional, and mental distress.

VIII. THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION RACE DISCRIMINATION AND RACIAL HARASSMENT IN VIOLATION OF RCW 49.60

(PLAINTIFFS AGAINST DEFENDANTS CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER; DONNA STROMSKI, individually and the marital community thereof with JOHN DOE STROMSKI; MARIETTA ANDREASEN, individually and the marital community thereof with JOHN DOE ANDREASEN and DOES 1-10)

Plaintiffs MOORE, WISE, GANTT, YARBROUGH, BERSHELL, BRADY, and

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paragraphs 1 thru 106 with the same force and effect as though fully set forth herein.

107. Plaintiffs MOORE, WISE, GANTT, YARBROUGH, BERSHELL, BRADY, and BALLARD allege that a substantial factor in the above-referenced hostile working environment and discriminatory behavior was because of Plaintiffs' race, African-

BALLARD reallege each and every allegation herein set forth above in the preceding

- 108. The acts of Defendants as described herein violate RCW 49.60 *et seq.* as they violate Plaintiffs' right to be free from racial harassment and race discrimination in employment.
- 109. The above-described hostile comments, and disparate treatment occurred because of Plaintiffs' race.
- 110. The above-described hostile comments, and disparate treatment were unwelcome to Plaintiffs and were sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the terms and conditions of Plaintiffs' employment, creating a hostile working environment.
- 111. Defendants had actual, imputed, and/or constructive knowledge of the unlawful actions of its managerial, supervisory, and other employees, but failed to take prompt and effective remedial action.

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IX. FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION

RETALIATION IN VIOLATION OF RCW 49.60 (Plaintiffs MOORE, WISE, YARBROUGH, and GANTT against DEFENDANTS CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER; DONNA STROMSKI, individually and the marital community thereof with JOHN DOE STROMSKI; MARIETTA ANDREASEN and **DOES 1-10)**

Plaintiffs MOORE, WISE, YARBROUGH and GANTT reallege the preceding paragraphs 1 thru 111 with the same force and effect, and incorporates the same as though fully set forth herein.

- 112. Because of the above-referenced opposition activity, Defendants and their employees subjected Plaintiffs MOORE, WISE, YARBROUGH and GANTT to adverse employment actions.
- 113. Plaintiffs MOORE and GANTT allege they were constructively discharged. Plaintiff MOORE could no longer work at Defendant LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER because it continued to refuse her requests for a 40-hour work week. Instead, Defendants hired Caucasian LPNs to work the 40-hour work week.
- 114. Plaintiff GANTT observed how African-American employees were treated differently than Caucasian employees in that the African-American employees were constantly accused of patient abuse. Plaintiff GANTT was also falsely accused of patient abuse in which the State's investigation revealed the allegations were unsupported. Plaintiff GANTT eventually resigned because of the continued hostile work environment and for fear of losing her license.

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scrutinized soon after complaining about the discrimination.

- Plaintiffs allege that in violation of RCW 49.60, their opposition activity 116. was a substantial factor in the above-referenced adverse employment action.
- 117. As a direct and proximate result of the retaliation referred to above, Plaintiffs have suffered and will continue to suffer damages including, but not limited to, earnings and employment benefits, as well as physical, emotional, and mental distress.

Χ. FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION **NEGLIGENT SUPERVISION and/or RETENTION** (PLAINTIFFS against Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER, and DOES 1-5)

Plaintiffs MOORE, WISE, GANTT, YARBROUGH, BERSHELL, BRADY, and BALLARD reallege the preceding paragraphs 1 thru 117 with the same force and effect, and incorporate the same as though fully set forth herein.

- As Plaintiffs' employer, Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG 118. TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER and DOES 1-5 owed and breached duties to Plaintiffs including, but not limited to: 1) the duty not to employ or retain employees whom it knows or should know to be unfit or dangerous, 2) the duty to exercise care appropriate to the circumstances in supervising and/or retaining employees, 3) the duty to exercise due diligence to determine whether an employee is or has become unfit or dangerous.
- 119. Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER and DOES 1-5 failed to exercise care

appropriate to the circumstances in retaining its employees and patients who subjected Plaintiffs to racial harassment.

- 120. Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER and DOES 1-5 had actual, constructive and/or imputed notice and knowledge of the unfitness of employees and Defendants DOES 6-10, who have subjected Plaintiffs to repeated racial harassment.
- 121. Such notice and knowledge made foreseeable the injuries these employees and patients inflicted upon Plaintiffs.
- 122. Despite such notice and knowledge, Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER and DOES 1-5 failed to exercise ordinary care to discipline its employees and/or Defendants DOES 6-10.
- 123. At all times material herein, Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER and DOES 1-5 had the power, ability, authority, and duty to so intervene, monitor, review, evaluate, control, regulate, discipline, restrict, and/or penalize the conduct of themselves, their agents, and employees.
- 124. Despite said knowledge, power, and duty, Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER and DOES 1-5 negligently failed to act so as to prevent, supervise, monitor, review, evaluate, control, regulate, discipline, and/or penalize such conduct, acts, and

1 | failures to act or to otherwise protect Plaintiffs.

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125. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and based thereon alleges, that each of the Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER and DOES 1-5 designated as a DOE is legally responsible in some manner for the events, incidents, and happenings described herein, and caused injury and damage to Plaintiffs.

126. As a direct and proximate result of the failure of Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER and DOES 1-5 to protect Plaintiffs and to adequately monitor, review, evaluate, control, regulate, discipline, and/or otherwise penalize the conduct, acts, and failures to act by Defendant themselves, their agents, and employees, as alleged herein, said conduct, acts, and failures to act were perceived by said Defendants, its agents, and employees as, and in fact had the effect of, ratifying, encouraging, condoning, exacerbating, increasing, and/or worsening said conduct, acts, and failures to act, thereby causing reasonably foreseeable injury.

127. Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC. d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER and DOES 1-5 are responsible for the acts of their employees alleged herein.

128. Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER and DOES 1-5 failure to exercise ordinary care breached the above-referenced duties of care, proximately causing the injury and

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damages to Plaintiffs referenced herein.

129. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC., d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER and DOES 1-5 breach of the duties owed to Plaintiffs, Plaintiffs suffered substantial emotional injuries in an amount to be proven at trial.

- 130. As a further direct and proximate result of Defendants CENTRAL PARK LODGES LONG TERM CARE, INC. d/b/a LINDEN GROVE HEALTH CARE CENTER and DOES 1-5 actions and omissions, Plaintiffs have suffered and will continue to suffer mental anguish and severe emotional distress.
- 131. Therefore, Plaintiffs are entitled to general and compensatory damages for their emotional injuries in an amount to be proven at trial.

XI. PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs pray that judgment be entered in their favor and against Defendants as specified in all causes of action as follows:

- That all Defendants be ordered to pay Plaintiffs actual, compensatory, general and punitive damages according to proof at trial and as allowable by law;
- 2. That Plaintiffs be awarded their costs of suit including reasonable attorneys' fees;
- 3. That Plaintiffs be awarded prejudgment interest; and

1 That this Court award such further relief as the Court deems just and 4. 2 proper. 3 DATED this 10th day of November, 2004 4 Law Offices of GRANT & ASSOCIATES 5 ___/s/__ Artis C. Grant, Jr., WSBA No. 26204 6 Roxanne L. Rarangol, WSBA No. 30340 7 Attorneys for Lorraine Moore, Cathy Wise, Kesha Gantt, Sadarah Yarbrough, 8 Barbara Bershell, Veronica Brady, and 9 Norma Ballard 3002 South 47th Street 10 Tacoma, WA 98409 Telephone: (253) 472-6213 11 Facsimile: (253) 473-9695 12 E-mail: agrant@lawdome.com E-mail: rrarangol@lawdome.com 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 INTERVENORS' FIRST AMENDED COMPLAINT The Law Offices of GRANT & ASSOCIATES