1	J. Edward Kerley (175695) Dylan L. Schaffer (153612)	ELECTRONICALLY FILED		
2	Kerley Schaffer LLP 1939 Harrison Street, #500	Superior Court of California County of Sonoma		
3	Oakland, California 94612 Telephone: (510) 379-5801	5/13/2020 9:10 PM Arlene D. Junior, Clerk of the Court		
4	Facsimile: (510) 228-0350	By: Cyndi Nguyen, Deputy Clerk		
5	Attorneys for Plaintiff			
6	Spaghettini, A California Limited Partnership, d/b/a/ Spaghettini Italian Grill			
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8	SUPERIOR COURT FOR TH	SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA		
9	FOR THE COUN	FOR THE COUNTY OF SONOMA		
10				
11	Spaghettini, a California Limited	Case No SCV-266378		
12	Partnership, d/b/a Spaghettini Italian Grill, a California limited partnership,			
13	Plaintiff,	COMPLAINT AND DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL		
14	V.			
15	Fireman's Fund Insurance Company, a California corporation, and DOES 1 through			
16	20,			
17	Defendants.			
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- 1. Defendant Fireman's Fund Insurance Company was once a proud American firm, founded in the late 19th Century. The company's headquarters was destroyed in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, along with all of the documents proving the existence of policies. But the carrier nevertheless was so focused on its customers that it took their word, and paid all claims out of company cash and stock.
- 2. Unfortunately, Fireman's Fund no longer has any reason to be proud. Now, when its customers face a similar crisis, the carrier has focused on its profits, not its policyholders' well-being.
- 3. In 2015, the company was purchased by Allianz SE ("Allianz"), a global conglomerate headquartered in Germany. As relates to the recent global pandemic, here is what Allianz has to say: "A Friend in Need As the coronavirus pandemic impairs lives and livelihoods across the world, how are Allianz entities supporting customers and communities in their battle for survival? . . . Allianz, as a company well-aware of its responsibilities, has always strived to support customers and communities in the best possible ways. The current situation is no different. Our motto, We secure your future, is more important today than it has ever been."
- 4. Plaintiff, a beloved Orange County institution that has been in business for more than three decades, relied on the promise that Fireman's Fund, and its new parent company, Allianz, would live up to that promise in a time of crisis. Plaintiff relied on the promise that its insurer would help the restaurant weather the brutal storm that is COVID-19, so that it can continue to provide jobs and health insurance to hundreds of California residents. Instead, when after years of paying tens of thousands of dollars in premiums to Fireman's Fund, Spaghettini sought benefits under its insurance policy to sustain its business, the carrier refused to investigate the loss, never visited the property, and paid nothing.

PARTIES1

- 5. Plaintiff Spaghettini, A California Limited Partnership, d/b/a Spaghettini Italian Grill ("Spaghettini"), is a California limited partnership organized and authorized to do business in the State of California. Plaintiff owns and operates the restaurant known as Spaghettini Italian Grill located at 3005 Old Ranch Parkway in Seal Beach, Orange County, California ("Spaghettini" or the "Property").
- 6. Fireman's Fund Insurance Company ("FFIC") is a California corporation licensed to conduct business in the State of California.
- 7. The true names and capacities of Defendants DOES 1 20 are unknown; they are therefore sued by fictitious names. Each of the DOE Defendants is, in some manner, responsible for the damages alleged.

VENUE AND JURISDICTION

8. Venue is proper in the Superior Court of California for the County of Sonoma. The allegations and claims for relief set forth in this Complaint arise out of unlawful acts committed in that county. The contract of insurance at issue in this Complaint was formed in that county. FFIC's principle place of business is in Sonoma County. The acts alleged to have been committed in breach of the contract occurred in that county. Venue is based on Defendant FFIC's location, the place of contract formation, the site of FFIC's unlawful conduct, FFIC's transacting business in Sonoma County, and its deriving substantial revenue from its activities in Sonoma County.

ALLEGATIONS COMMON TO ALL CAUSES OF ACTION

9. COVID-19 is a deadly infectious disease caused by the recently discovered coronavirus, known as SARS-CoV-2. Because the virus is highly transmissible, it has been and is rapidly spreading throughout the world, including in Orange County, California, and

¹ All allegations in this Complaint are based upon information and belief, except those allegations which pertain to Plaintiff, which are based on personal knowledge. The allegations of this Complaint stated on information and belief are likely to have evidentiary support after a reasonable opportunity for further investigation and discovery.

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consequences.

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On March 18, 2020, the County Health Officer for Orange County, California where Spaghettini is located—issued an order revising its March 17, 2020 Order ("March 18 Orange County Order)³, prohibiting public or private gatherings as defined by the California Department of Public Health ("CDPH").

applies to the residents of Orange County, California, where Spaghettini is located.

As of the filing of this Complaint, Orange County's "Coronavirus COVID-19 14. Guidance for Restaurant/Cafeteria" provides that "Restaurants and other facilities that prepare and serve food may remain open, but only for delivery or take-out or drive-through ordering. All on-site dining shall be closed as well as any self-service food operations."4

The coronavirus that causes COVID-19 is contained in and transmitted by

The coronavirus can remain infectious on a variety of surfaces and objects for an

On March 12, 2020, California Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order

physical droplets that land indiscriminately on the surfaces of property with potentially fatal

unknown period, but at least hours to many days. The United States Center for Disease Control

has reported that the coronavirus was detected on various surfaces inside the cruise ship cabins

of both symptomatic and asymptomatic passengers 17 days after the cabins had been vacated.²

N-25-20 ("March 12 Executive Order"), ordering that: "All residents are to heed any orders and

guidance of state and local public health officials, including but not limited to the imposition of

March 12, 2020, and has remained continuously in effect through the date of this Complaint, and

social distancing measures, to control the spread of COVID-19." This Order took effect on

On March 19, 2020, the State of California issued an Order of the State Public 15.

² See Leah E. Moriary, et al., "Public Health Responses to COVID-19 Outbreaks on Cruise Ships — Worldwide, February-March 2020," 69 Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report 347 (released online Mar. 23, 2020), available at https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/pdfs/mm6912e3-H.pdf

³ https://www.ochealthinfo.com/phs/about/epidasmt/epi/dip/prevention/covid_19_order

⁴ http://www.ocfoodinfo.com/documents/FoodFacilityCovid19RestaurantGuidance41320.pdf

Health Officer, which set baseline statewide restrictions on non-essential business activities effective until further notice.

- 16. On that same date, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-33-20, expressly requiring California residents to follow the March 19 Order of the State Public Health Officer, and incorporating by reference California Government Code 8665, which provides that "[a]ny person . . . who refuses or willfully neglects to obey any lawful order . . . issued as provided in this chapter, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punishable by a fine of not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or by imprisonment for not to exceed six months or by both such fine and imprisonment" (Cal. Gov. Code § 8665). The March Order of the State Public Health Officer and Executive Order N-33-20 (collectively, the "Statewide Shelter Orders") took immediate effect on March 19, 2020, and both have remained continuously in effect through the date of this Complaint.
- 17. Spaghettini consists of more than 11,000 square feet of interior space and substantial exterior grounds. It is located in one of the most heavily trafficked areas in Southern California, which includes attractions such as the Old Ranch Country Club, Leisure World, the Naval Weapons Station, and the Seal Beach Pier. It is also adjacent to a large business park.
 - 18. From March 1, 2020 through March 15, 2020:
 - (a) The restaurant was open to customers at least 85 hours a week and—given off-hours use of the premises by staff, vendors, and cleaning crews—was occupied by people approximately 100 hours a week;
 - (b) approximately 180 non-customer persons were on the restaurant premises for differing periods, including employees, vendors, and contractors such as musicians and outside catering staff; and
 - (c) the restaurant had more than 3,000 customers on its premises.
- 19. A large number of potential carriers of communicable disease, including COVID-19, passed through Spaghettini and its immediate environs in the weeks prior to closure.
- 20. Of the people who were in Spaghettini in the two weeks prior to its closure, at least one and likely several were infected with COVID-19, and came into contact with surfaces

and persons both at the restaurant and within a one-mile radius around it.

- 21. Given the significant human traffic through the restaurant premises, its owners concluded the 11,000-plus square-foot restaurant interior space, and its contents, were contaminated.
- 22. Due to the contamination, for the safety of its employees and customers, Spaghettini closed its doors to the public on March 16, 2020.
- 23. Separately, and independently, Spaghettini closed due to the orders of Civil Authorities, including California and Orange County, which prevented and precluded public access to the restaurant for the foreseeable future.
- 24. Since closing the restaurant, Plaintiff has discovered that at least one regular employee who was on premises routinely from March 1, 2020 until the restaurant closed, tested positive for COVID-19.
- 25. It is probable that a number of people on the restaurant premises from March 1 to March 15, 2020, were positive for COVID-19, and thereby distributed the virus to the premises and its contents.
- 26. It is probable that between March 1, 2020 and March 15, 2020, a number of people who passed through the one-mile radius of the restaurant were positive for COVID-19, and thereby distributed the virus to the objects and surfaces in that area, including in the interior of buildings, and the surfaces of outside spaces.
- 27. FFIC entered an insurance contract with Plaintiff whereby Plaintiff agreed to make payments to FFIC in exchange for FFIC's promise to indemnify Plaintiff for losses, including but not limited to business income losses at its restaurant, and damage to the physical property.
- 28. The Policy (policy number USC013120200) (the "Policy") is attached to this Complaint as **Exhibit A**; its terms are incorporated here by reference as if set forth in full.
- 29. The Policy provides coverage for damage to business personal property, business income and extra expense, and other coverages for the period 2/3/2020 to 2/3/2021, up to the Policy limit of \$7,373,900, with applicable sub-limits as set forth in the Policy.

- FFIC fraudulently promised and represented to Plaintiff that it would be insured for losses caused by communicable disease up to \$250,000, and for losses relating to orders of any Civil Authority which prevented it from operating up to \$500,000. FFIC intended Plaintiff to rely on those promises, but FFIC did not intend to perform those promises.
- As a clear indicator that FFIC never intended to make good on its promises and
 deny Plaintiff the promised benefits, FFIC failed to undertake any type of
 investigation—let alone a full, thorough, objective one as it is required to do by
 California law—of whether and the extent to which the coronavirus caused
 Plaintiff direct physical harm or damage.
- Moreover, as a result of FFIC's false promises, the restaurant—a long-standing contributor to the community, which has employed 100 Californians on a long-term basis—sits contaminated, with all of the physical damage and physical loss caused by the virus uncorrected; it cannot maintain its once-thriving business despite having paid FFIC premiums to support the Policy that was to act as a safeguard during this unforeseen catastrophe, given the acute financial pressure resulting from the forced, abrupt closure of the restaurant and furloughing of most of the restaurant's employees.
- FFIC denied the claim in a short time, in an email, in violation of 10 CCR §2695.7;
- FFIC became aware that at least one COVID-positive employee was on the
 restaurant premises prior to the closure, but did nothing to inspect or investigate
 the impact of that potential contamination at the restaurant;
- FFIC knew that the failure to pay benefits properly due under the Policy had a
 high probability of forcing Spaghettini to close permanently, thus causing
 between 50 and 100 California residents to lose their jobs, and health insurance,
 but nevertheless failed to investigate all bases for coverage and failed to pay the
 claims; and

- FFIC has an institutional practice of failing to investigate communicable disease claims, and denying those claims without regard for evidence in support of the claims.
- 66. Plaintiff is therefore entitled to exemplary damages in an amount in accordance with the evidence introduced at trial.
- 67. As further evidence that the various acts of bad faith, malice, fraud, and oppression set forth above were done knowingly, deliberately, and intentionally, each of the acts of bad faith, malice, fraud, and oppression set forth above are part of a pattern of institutional bad faith by FFIC, designed to reduce claims costs and expenses, and increase profits for its parent company, Allianz —even while Allianz touts that its "business is about trust" and "[g]oing 'above and beyond' on our clients behalf."
- 68. Specifically, in the event of claims by business owners for direct physical loss and damage, property damage, and business interruption, caused by communicable disease, and/or by the actions of Civil Authority, FFIC routinely engages in the following acts of bad faith, which violate California law:
 - (a) failing to conduct and diligently pursue thorough, fair, and objective investigations of claims in violation of 10 CCR §2695.7(d);
 - (b) unreasonably, maliciously, and without proper cause, failing to pay and delaying payment of policy benefits in violation of §790.03(h)(5); and
 - requiring insureds to obtain counsel and file a lawsuit in order to obtain amounts owed under the Policy in violation of Insurance Code §790.03(h)(6).
- 69. FFIC claims personnel, including managers and supervisors, who participated in the investigation and adjusting of Plaintiff's claims are likewise part of FFIC's institutional bad faith and have themselves engaged in each of the foregoing practices deliberately designed by FFIC to increase its profitability and the profitability of its parent company, Allianz SE, by reducing indemnity payments and claims expenses.

⁵ http://www.allianzusa.com/companies/allianz-global-corporate-specialty/

1	70.	David Melton, Paul Blanchard, and Scott Shumaker, among others, either made,		
2	authorized, or ratified all of the investigation, claims handling, claims adjustment, and payment			
3	decisions vis a vis Plaintiff's Claims. They are the managing agents of FFIC and/or DOES 1-20			
4	pursuant to (pursuant to Civil Code §3294 because they exercised substantial independent authority and		
5	judgment in their corporate decision-making such that their decisions ultimately determined			
6	corporate policy for Plaintiff's Claims.			
7	:	SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION		
8	BREACH OF CONTRACT			
9	(AGAINST FFIC AND DOES 1-20)			
10	71.	Plaintiff incorporates by reference the preceding paragraphs as though fully set		
11	forth here in this second cause of action against Defendants FFIC and DOES 1-20.			
12	72.	Plaintiff suffered losses covered under the Policy.		
13	73.	Plaintiff provided timely notice of the losses to FFIC.		
14	74.	As a direct and proximate result of FFIC's and DOES 1-20's breach, Plaintiff		
15	sustained an uncompensated loss.			
16	75.	As a direct and proximate result of FFIC's and DOES 1-20's breach, Plaintiff		
17	suffered foreseeable consequential damages.			
18	76.	As a direct and proximate result of FFIC's and DOES 1-20's breach, Plaintiff has		
19	been damage	d in the amount of coverage to which it is entitled under the Policy, in an amount to		
20	be proved at 1	trial, and for which Plaintiff seeks compensatory damages with interest thereon.		
21		THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION		
22	FALSE PROMISE			
23		(AGAINST FFIC AND DOES 1-20)		
24	77.	Plaintiff incorporates by reference the preceding paragraphs as though fully set		
25	forth here in this third cause of action against Defendants FFIC and DOES 1-20.			
26	78.	On or about February 3, 2020, FFIC falsely promised Plaintiff that it would be		
27	insured for losses caused by communicable disease up to \$250,000.			
28	79.	On or about February 3, 2020, FFIC falsely promised Plaintiff that it would be 13		

1	insured up to \$500,000 for losses relating to the orders of any Civil Authority which prevented		
2	the restaurant from operating.		
3	80. FFIC intended Plaintiff to rely on those promises.		
4	81. FFIC did not intend to perform the promised acts.		
5	82. Plaintiff reasonably relied on the promises that it would receive benefits for		
6	property and business interruption losses for the perils covered under the Policy, as FFIC had		
7	promised.		
8	83. As a result of the foregoing false promises, Plaintiff was harmed, in that it		
9	suffered uninsured losses, including costs of investigation, costs for remediation, costs of		
10	clearance testing, and business interruption.		
11	84. Plaintiff's reliance on the false promises was a substantial factor in causing the	ie	
12	harm suffered.		
13	85. In doing the things set forth above, FFIC acted intentionally and with fraud,		
14	malice, and oppression. Specifically, FFIC and its managing agents made, approved, and ratified		
15	the misrepresentations. Plaintiff is therefore entitled to exemplary damages in an amount in		
16	accordance with the evidence introduced at trial.		
17	FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION		
18	NEGLIGENT MISREPRESENTATION		
19	(AGAINST FFIC AND DOES 1-20)		
20	86. Plaintiff incorporates by reference the preceding paragraphs as though fully se	:t	
21	forth here in this fourth cause of action against Defendants FFIC and DOES 1-20.		
22	87. FFIC and DOES 1-20 made affirmative misrepresentations to and concealed		
23	material facts to Plaintiff.		
24	88. On or about February 3, 2020, FFIC falsely informed Plaintiff that it would be		
25	insured for losses caused by communicable disease up to \$250,000.		
26	89. On or about February 3, 2020, FFIC falsely informed Plaintiff that it would be		
27	insured up to \$500,000 for losses relating to the orders of any Civil Authority which prevented		
28	the restaurant from operating.		

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2	Date: May 13, 2020	Kerley Schaffer LLP
3	Date. May 13, 2020	Dylan L. Schaffer
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5		Dylan L. Schaffer Attorneys for Plaintiff
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