David C. Holt (Bar No. 137951) 1 LAW OFFICES OF DAVID C. HOLT 18400 Von Karman, Suite 300 2 Irvine, California 92612 (949) 852-5980 Telephone: 3 (949) 852-5989 Facsimile: ļ In Association With: į 200 410000 Telephone: Facsimile: (949) 852-5989 0458851981 13 14 15 16 ٧. 17 18 19 20 21 COUNTY RIFES THE CASE NUMBER COUNTY RIFES. 22 23 24 25 1. 26

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ALAN SLATER, Examino Officer/Clerk BY L. Bridge

Lana Feldman (Bar No. 76373) LAW OFFICES OF LANA J. FELDMAN 18400 Von Karman, Suite 300 Irvine, California 92612 (949) 852-5980

Attorneys for Plaintiff LINDA L. HALL, D.V.M.

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

FOR THE COUNTY OF ORANGE

C744V

LINDA L. HALL, D.V.M.,

Plaintiff,

ROBERT LEE ROOKS, an individual; م كر. ANIMAL CRITICAL CARE CENTER, INC a California Corporation; ALL CARE ÁNIMÁL REFERRAL CENTER, form of entity unknown;) ANIMAL CANCER CENTER form of entity unknown; and DOES 1-20, Inclusive,

Defendants.

CASE NO. 797398

COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES FOR:

- FRAUD--PROMISE MADE (1) WITH NO INTENT TO PERFORM:
- UNJUST ENRICHMENT BASED ON FRAUD:
- PROMISSORY ESTOPPEL; (3)
- (4) ESTOPPEL BY CONDUCT;
- CONSTRUCTIVE FRAUD; (5)
- CONSTRUCTIVE WRONGFUL (6)DISCHARGE;
- BREACH OF THE IMPLIED COVENANT OF GOOD FAITH AND FAIR DEALING; and
- HARASSMENT BASED ON SEX

JUDGE NOMOTO SCHUMANN

DEPT. 16

Plaintiff LINDA L. HALL, D.V.M. hereby alleges as follows:

GENERAL ALLEGATIONS

Plaintiff LINDA L. HALL, D.V.M. (hereinafter referred to as "Plaintiff" or

"HALL") is, and at all relevant times during the circumstances and events alleged herein was, a resident of the State of California, County of Orange.

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- 2. Defendant ROBERT LEE ROOKS (hereinafter "ROOKS") is, and at all relevant times during the circumstances and events alleged herein was, an individual residing in and doing business in the County of Orange, State of California.
- 3. Plaintiff is informed and believes and based upon such information and belief alleges that Defendant ANIMAL CRITICAL CARE CENTER, INC. was and is a corporation duly organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the State of California, and was, at all relevant times during the circumstances and events alleged herein, and is, doing business from its principal place of business at 18440 Amistad Street in the City of Fountain Valley, County of Orange, State of California.
- 4. Plaintiff is informed and believes and based upon such information and belief alleges that Defendant ALL CARE ANIMAL REFERRAL CENTER is a business entity, form unknown, utilizing the same tax identification number as ANIMAL CRITICAL CARE CENTER, INC. and was, at all relevant times during the circumstances and events alleged herein, and is, doing business from its principal place of business at 18440 Amistad Street in the City of Fountain Valley, County of Orange, State of California.
- 5. Plaintiff is informed and believes and based upon such information and belief alleges that Defendant ANIMAL CANCER CENTER is a business entity, form unknown, and was, at all relevant times during the circumstances and events alleged herein, and is, doing business from its principal place of business at 18440 Amistad Street in the City of Fountain Valley, County of Orange, State of California.
- 6. Defendants ROOKS, ANIMAL CRITICAL CARE CENTER, INC., ALL CARE ANIMAL REFERRAL CENTER and ANIMAL CANCER CENTER, and each of them, are individually or collectively referred to in this complaint as "Defendant(s)."
- 7. The legal capacities of Defendants ALL CARE ANIMAL REFERRAL CENTER and ANIMAL CANCER CENTER, and each of them, are stated on information and belief.

 Plaintiff will seek leave of court to amend this complaint to set forth the true capacities of such entities of presently unknown form when ascertained.

- 8. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that Defendant ROOKS is, and at all times relevant hereto was, the president, sole shareholder and/or owner of Defendants ANIMAL CRITICAL CARE CENTER, INC., ALL CARE ANIMAL REFERRAL CENTER and ANIMAL CANCER CENTER, and each of them.
- 9. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that there exists, and at all times relevant herein there existed, a unity of interest and ownership between Defendant ROOKS and Defendants ANIMAL CRITICAL CARE CENTER, INC., ALL CARE ANIMAL REFERRAL CENTER and/or ANIMAL CANCER CENTER, and each of them, such that ROOKS and these entities form a single enterprise and that any individuality and separateness between them did not or ceased to exist, and that Defendants ANIMAL CRITICAL CARE CENTER, INC., ALL CARE ANIMAL REFERRAL CENTER and/or ANIMAL CANCER CENTER, and each of them, are the alter egos of defendant ROOKS for the reasons set forth below and those which Plaintiff will provide at the time of trial herein.
- 10. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that at all times relevant hereto, Defendants ANIMAL CRITICAL CARE CENTER, INC., ALL CARE ANIMAL REFERRAL CENTER and/or ANIMAL CANCER CENTER, and each of them, were mere shells and sham, without capital, assets, stock or stockholders and/or were conceived, intended and used by Defendant ROOKS as a device to avoid individual liability and for the purpose of substituting financially insolvent entities in the place and stead of ROOKS himself.
- 11. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that Defendants ANIMAL CRITICAL CARE CENTER, INC., ALL CARE ANIMAL REFERRAL CENTER and/or ANIMAL CANCER CENTER, and each of them, are, and at all times relevant hereto were, mere shells, instrumentalities and conduits through which ROOKS carried on his business under corporate name, exercising complete control and dominance of such entities to such an extent that any individuality or separateness between Defendants ANIMAL CRITICAL CARE CENTER, INC., ALL CARE ANIMAL REFERRAL CENTER, and/or ANIMAL CANCER CENTER, or any of them, and Defendant ROOKS does not, and, all times relevant hereto, did not exist.

Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that Defendants ANIMAL 12. CRITICAL CARE CENTER, INC., ALL CARE ANIMAL REFERRAL CENTER and ANIMAL CANCER CENTER, and each of them, are, and at all times mentioned hereto were, controlled, dominated and operated by Defendant ROOKS as his individual business and alter ego, in that the activities and businesses of ANIMAL CRITICAL CARE CENTER, INC., ALL CARE ANIMAL REFERRAL CENTER and/or ANIMAL CANCER CENTER, and each of the them, were carried out without the holding of directors' or shareholders' meetings, and/or without the preparation or maintenance of records, reports or minutes of any corporate proceedings, and/or Defendant ROOKS entered into personal transactions with ANIMAL CRITICAL CARE CENTER, INC., ALL CARE ANIMAL REFERRAL CENTER and/or ANIMAL CANCER CENTER, and each of them, and commingled his own funds with the funds of such entities, diverted assets and accounts receivable belonging to such entities by converting them to his own personal use without any accountability, bookkeeping or repayment or repayment plan, and without treating such withdrawals as salary or dividends, and treated his own personal expenses as if they were the expenses of such entities, i.e., grocery bills, dry cleaning bills, housekeeper charges, personal clothing items, home furnishings, acquisition of "antiques," and house payments on various homes that ROOKS owns.

- 13. Adherence to the fiction of the separate existence of ANIMAL CRITICAL CARE CENTER, INC., ALL CARE ANIMAL REFERRAL CENTER and/or ANIMAL CANCER CENTER, or any of them, as entities distinct from Defendant ROOKS will permit an abuse of the corporate privilege and would sanction fraud and/or promote injustice by sheltering ROOKS from his obligations when, in fact, the obligations were entered into under the corporate shell only for the purpose of sheltering and protecting ROOKS as an individual.
- 14. Defendants DOES 1 20, inclusive, are sued herein under fictitious names. Their true names and capacities are unknown to Plaintiff at this time. When their true names and capacities are ascertained, Plaintiff will seek leave to amend this complaint by inserting their true names and capacities. Plaintiff is informed and believe and thereon alleges that each of the

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fictitiously-named defendants is responsible in some manner for the occurrences herein alleged, and that Plaintiff's damages herein alleged were proximately caused by each of said defendant's acts and/or omissions. Each reference in this complaint to "Defendant" or to a specifically-named defendant shall be deemed to refer also to defendants sued under such fictitious names.

15. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that at all times herein mentioned, each of the named or fictitiously-designated defendants was the agent, employee, independent contractor or alter ego of the other defendants, and each of them. Plaintiff is further informed and believes and thereon alleges that in doing the things alleged herein, each of the named or fictitiously-designated defendants was acting within the course and scope of said agency, employment, independent contractor or alter ego relationship, and with the permission and consent of the remaining defendants, and each of them.

PRELIMINARY ALLEGATIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL CAUSES OF ACTION

- 16. Plaintiff LINDA L. HALL is a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine licenced to practice veterinary medicine in the State of California.
- 17. In or about 1987 plaintiff first met defendant ROOKS, who is also a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine licenced to practice veterinary medicine in the State of California. During the period 1988-1992, ROOKS had extended Plaintiff offers to work for Defendants on four separate occasions, each of which she turned down. As a result of her contacts with ROOKS, however, Plaintiff and ROOKS established a personal relationship of a romantic nature, and in or about July of 1994 Plaintiff moved in with ROOKS in one of his houses located in the City of Huntington Beach, State of California.
- 18. In or about July of 1994 Plaintiff was employed with County Line Animal Hospital in La Habra as chief veterinarian and manager of its hospital facilities, earning a guaranteed base salary plus a percentage of the gross receipts and other benefits, and in the process of discussing a buy-in arrangement with such employer.
- 19. In or about September of 1994, ROOKS asked Plaintiff to quit her well-paying job with County Line Animal Hospital in order to come and work for Defendants as a veterinarian in

the internal medicine department, also assigned to perform anesthesiology in complex cases and various administrative responsibilities, including duties pertaining to the growth and stability of the practice. As an inducement to come and work for Defendants, ROOKS offered Plaintiff a compensation package consisting of \$9,000.00 per month guaranteed income, plus guaranteed health insurance, life insurance, association dues and license fee payments, plus an immediate 331/3 percent interest in Defendants' business, with ROOKS himself to also hold a 331/3 percent interest and Craig Bergstrom, also a doctor of veterinary medicine, to hold a 331/3 percent interest, for a total of 100 percent. In offering Plaintiff this compensation package, ROOKS represented that the "mission plan" of the Defendants was for the three principals, namely, ROOKS, Plaintiff and Doctor Bergstrom to work together, invest in the growth of the Defendants' business, sell the business in 5 years' time and split the proceeds of the sale of the business among themselves in accordance with the above percentages. ROOKS further represented to Plaintiff that she and Dr. Bergstrom would be receiving equal compensation, inclusive of their equity status. Plaintiff was loathe to leaving her satisfying position with County Line Animal Hospital, and asked ROOKS to make sure that he had a solid and secure position to offer Plaintiff; ROOKS assured Plaintiff that he did. Relying upon ROOKS' promises and representations, Plaintiff accepted ROOKS'S proposal, quit her job with County Line Animal Hospital and went to work for Defendants in or about September, 1994, and pursuant to the "mission plan" outlined by ROOKS began investing all of her time and labor in the Defendants' business. Initially, she worked 5 days per week, typically 12 hours per day; however, within only a few months of commencing her employment, Plaintiff received a promotion and became Defendants' principal veterinarian in internal medicine week to 6-7 days per week, 14 hours per day.

and critical care, in addition to performing hospital management duties, and increased her work week to 6-7 days per week, 14 hours per day.

20. Once Plaintiff went to work for Defendants, however, ROOKS offered Plaintiff various reasons to avoid actually paying her the "guaranteed" \$9,000.00 monthly portion of Plaintiff's compensation package. For example, for approximately the first six months of 1995, Plaintiff received an average of only \$4,000.00 per month gross out of the \$9,000.00 promised;

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26 27 ROOKS justification to Plaintiff for this was that the difference was being "invested" in the growth of Defendants' business and that she would eventually recover it in the future. For the next twelve months, Defendants paid Plaintiff only sporadically, if at all. Again, ROOKS told Plaintiff that it was necessary for her to "invest" most of her salary back into Defendants' business, this time because of the physical expansion of the facilities taking place, the need to acquire additional equipment, and the added case load. Plaintiff agreed to make these ongoing monetary contributions to the business and to devote nearly all of her waking energies in the growth and success of the business enterprise because of the personal relationship of trust and confidence that then existed between her and ROOKS, the fact that Plaintiff understood that she had an equity interest in Defendants' business and would ultimately receive a percentage of the proceeds of the expanded business upon its sale, and the reality that ROOKS continued to acknowledge Plaintiff's percentage ownership of the business to Plaintiff herself, as well as to third parties (referring to Plaintiff as his business partner), which lent credibility to ROOK'S statements. ROOKS also continued to acknowledge that Plaintiff's performance was exemplary, that she was capably performing each and every condition of her employment and that she was a member of the team.

In or about January of 1996, ROOKS brought an individual named William 21. Bookout into Defendants' business to act as "CEO" in order to help manage its operations and plan of growth. ROOKS now approached Plaintiff and requested her consent to change her equity position in Defendants' business by allocating the percentage splits upon the sale of the business at the end of the 5-year period in September, 1999, as follows:

> Craig Bergstrom-20% Linda Hall-20%

20% William Bookout-

ROOKS-40%.

Plaintiff agreed to this change in order to bring in the needed management skills of Mr. Bookout and to further the "mission plan" of maximizing the growth of Defendants' business for its intended sale which would redound to the ultimate financial benefit of Plaintiff as well as the other equity participants. Dr. Bergstrom also verbally agreed to the new equity split. Approximately one month after Mr. Bookout arrived, ROOKS called a pep talk meeting attended by Plaintiff, Dr. Bergstrom and Mr. Bookout. In this meeting, ROOKS praised Mr. Bookout for the job he was doing, outlined the previously-stated goal of maximizing the growth of the business before its sale in 1999, told everyone that he expected them to make sacrifices to achieve the financial success he envisioned, and repeated, with all of the principal participants present, how the proceeds of Defendants' business would be split at that time, i.e., Dr. Bergstrom-20%; Plaintiff-20%; William Bookout-20%; ROOKS-40%. Everyone present at the meeting agreed to these proposals.

- 22. Beginning in or about the Spring of 1996, ROOKS behavior became increasingly hostile, erratic, abusive and, at times, violent toward Plaintiff personally. First, at home, ROOKS began screaming at Plaintiff, throwing objects, chasing Plaintiff away, and slapping her. He would typically disappear between 8 p.m. and 12 midnight. ROOKS' excuse for this behavior was that he was under "stress" due to business activities. Unbeknownst to Plaintiff at that time, ROOKS had already told Mr. Bookout that he was interested in other women and wanted to get out of his relationship with Plaintiff, all the while making degrading comments about women in general. He instructed Mr. Bookout to "make it go away" for him.
- 23. In or about the beginning of July of 1996, ROOKS called Plaintiff from his cellular phone and ordered her to immediately pack her belongings and leave their home. Plaintiff complied and left ROOK'S house and moved back into the condominium she had owned prior to and throughout her relationship with ROOKS. Within three days, Plaintiff was back at the animal hospital, working her customary 6-7 days a week, 14 hour a day shifts. ROOKS enlisted William Bookout to act as mediator with respect to certain disputes between ROOKS and Plaintiff consequent to the termination of their personal relationship. As part of this role, Mr. Bookout also undertook to ensure that Plaintiff was paid some steady stream of monthly compensation for work she performed for the Defendants, eventually securing for Plaintiff the \$9,000.00 per month guaranteed income that ROOKS promised Plaintiff back in 1994. Throughout this time, ROOKS reaffirmed Plaintiff's 20% equity position in the business, continuing to refer to Plaintiff, Mr.

Bergstrom and Mr. Bookout as his "partners."

- However, despite ROOK'S disingenuous statements to third parties that he wanted 24. Plaintiff to stay and work as a veterinarian in Defendants' business, beginning in or about March of 1997 ROOKS embarked on a deliberate and, over time, escalating course of action, over many months, to force her out of the practice by, inter alia, humiliating her in front of co-workers and clients; falsely accusing her of professional incompetency and of killing animals; arbitrarily moving her from one assignment to the next; pulling her off cases; removing Plaintiff from having client contact by fabricating an excuse that she lacked communication skills; handing off cases to her after he, himself, or Dr. Bergstrom, had failed to render proper and professional follow up care on a timely basis and then, in the subject instances, falsely accusing Plaintiff of misfeasance; and yelling at Plaintiff and calling her "stupid" or accusing her of not knowing what she was doing. No reasonable person could be expected to endure, on a continuous basis, the vile attacks ROOKS made on Plaintiff, which were antithetical to Plaintiff's job and the oath she had taken as a veterinarian, and designed to destroy her self-confidence as a physician. ROOK'S manipulative conduct and vituperative attacks against Plaintiff were and are but part of a pattern and practice of conduct ROOKS has manifested towards other individuals he has successfully forced out of the practice after making promises he never intended to fulfill or from whom he has fraudulently extracted money or other financial assistance to build or enhance Defendants' practice.
- 25. ROOKS intentionally created such an intolerable, hostile and stressful work environment for Plaintiff that in August of 1997 Plaintiff could no longer work in the atmosphere ROOKS created and was forced by his conduct to take a medical leave of absence so that she could try to formulate a plan to deal with ROOKS and continue to perform her work-related responsibilities. Having determined that there was no rational way to handle ROOKS' destructive behavior, on September 1, 1997, Plaintiff tendered her resignation to Defendants, effective September 30, 1997.
- 26. Since Plaintiff's constructive termination from her employment, Plaintiff has failed to secure comparable employment.

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FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

(Fraud--Promise Made With No Intent to Perform, Against Defendants Robert Lee Rooks,
Animal Critical Care Center, Inc., All Care Animal Referral Center, Animal Cancer Center and
Does 1-20, Inclusive)

- 27. Plaintiff incorporates by reference paragraphs 1 through 26, inclusive, as though fully set forth herein.
- 28. In first inducing Plaintiff to quit her job with County Line Animal Hospital and then throughout the period of Plaintiff's employment with Defendants, ROOKS frequently acknowledged to Plaintiff and to third parties that she had an equity interest in Defendants' business. In addition, up to the time ROOKS embarked on his campaign to squeeze Plaintiff out of the business, he acknowledged that Plaintiff had made great sacrifices and investments towards the growth of the business, that her worth and contribution to Defendants' business greatly exceeded the sporadic remuneration she received, and that she would be compensated for such efforts in the future. He also represented to Plaintiff that she and Dr. Bergstrom were entitled to equal compensation, inclusive of their respective equity interests.
- 29. In fact, Plaintiff has not reaped any of the financial benefits promised by ROOKS, but only pain, misery and significant financial loss after ROOKS exercised his dominance and control over Defendants' enterprise and dumped her after he had extracted from her an extraordinary amount of professional labor and investment in his business for virtually nothing. In addition, Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that contrary to the representations of ROOKS, Defendants did not treat her and Dr. Bergstrom equally in terms of the terms and conditions of compensation, but that Dr. Bergstrom was paid significantly more.
- 30. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that ROOKS had no intent to perform his obligations at the time he made promises to Plaintiff concerning the financial terms of her employment with Defendants, and particularly her equity interest in Defendants' business. Such promises were false and untrue, and were made with the specific intent to deceive and defraud Plaintiff and to induce her to come and work for Defendants and invest in the expansion of

their business and to continue to perform such activities.

- Plaintiff HALL reasonably relied on Defendant ROOKS promises in accepting and continuing her employment with Defendants given the trust and confidence that originally existed between Plaintiff and ROOKS, ROOK'S status as controlling head of Defendants' enterprise, Defendants' constant repetition to Plaintiff and to third parties that Plaintiff was his "partner" and held an equity interest in the Defendants' business, and the reality that significant advances were, in fact, made during Plaintiff's tenure to expand the business in accordance with the "mission plan" articulated by ROOKS.
- 32. As a direct and proximate result of ROOK'S intentionally false promises, and Plaintiff's reasonable reliance on them, Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer monetary damages represented by the loss of her percentage share in Defendants' business and other compensation that remains unpaid, all to her damage in an amount in excess of the minimum jurisdiction of this Court, the precise amount of which will be proven at trial.
- 33. As a further direct and proximate result of the aforesaid conduct of Defendants, and each of them, Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer severe emotional distress including, but not limited to humiliation, embarrassment, and mental anguish, in an amount according to proof.
- 34. The aforementioned conduct of Defendants was intentional, and done for the purpose of benefitting Defendants at the expense of Plaintiff, and constitutes misrepresentation, deceit, concealment of material facts know to Defendants, with the intention on the part of Defendants of depriving Plaintiff of property or legal rights, or otherwise causing Plaintiff injury, and was malicious and despicable conduct that has subjected Plaintiff to cruel and unjust hardship in conscious disregard of Plaintiff's rights. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that ROOKS, hiding behind his doctor's credentials and image, has made it a pattern and practice of his for many years to engage in substantially the same kind of conduct towards other individuals for the purpose of defrauding and conning them out of money in order to enhance his own business and personal fortune. Accordingly, Plaintiff is entitled to recover punitive damages from Defendants, and each of them, in an amount according to proof, in order to punish and set an

example of the Defendants, and to deter them from engaging in similar conduct in the future.

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION

(Unjust Enrichment Based on Fraud Against Defendants Robert Lee Rooks, Animal Critical Care Center, Inc., All Care Animal Referral Center, Animal Cancer Center and Does 1-20, Inclusive)

- 35. Plaintiff incorporates by reference paragraphs 1 through 34, inclusive, as though fully set forth herein.
- 36. Through the fraudulent misrepresentations and wrongful conduct of ROOKS,
 Defendants, and each of them, have received and will receive in the future monies that Plaintiff
 herself would otherwise have been entitled to receive. Defendants have thus been and are
 continuing to be unjustly enriched at Plaintiff's expense through their own fraudulent conduct and
 Defendants are constructive trustees of such monies, in an amount according to proof.
- 37. As a further direct and proximate result of the aforesaid conduct of Defendants, and each of them, Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer severe emotional distress including, but not limited to humiliation, embarrassment, and mental anguish, in an amount according to proof.
- 38. The aforementioned conduct of Defendants was intentional, and done for the purpose of benefitting Defendants at the expense of Plaintiff, and constitutes misrepresentation, deceit, concealment of material facts know to Defendants, with the intention on the part of Defendants of depriving Plaintiff of property or legal rights, or otherwise causing Plaintiff injury, and was malicious and despicable conduct that has subjected Plaintiff to cruel and unjust hardship in conscious disregard of Plaintiff's rights. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that ROOKS, hiding behind his doctor's credentials and image, has made it a pattern and practice of his for many years to engage in substantially the same kind of conduct towards other individuals for the purpose of defrauding and conning them out of money in order to enhance his own business and personal fortune. Accordingly, Plaintiff is entitled to recover punitive damages from Defendants, and each of them, in an amount according to proof, in order to punish and set an example of the Defendants, and to deter them from engaging in similar conduct in the future.

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THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

(Promissory Estoppel Against Defendants Robert Lee Rooks, Animal Critical Care Center, Inc., All Care Animal Referral Center, Animal Cancer Center and Does 1-20, Inclusive)

- 39. Plaintiff incorporates by reference paragraphs 1 through 38, inclusive, as though fully set forth herein.
- Defendants' business and other guaranteed remuneration, and by continuing throughout Plaintiff's employment to repeat such promises in order to encourage her to continue invest money and an inordinate amount of time and labor for the purpose of maximizing such interest, Defendants, and each of them, could reasonably foresee that Plaintiff would quit her job with County Line Animal Hospital in order to work for Defendants, forego her guaranteed compensation from Defendants when asked by ROOKS to do so for business expansion purposes or to solve cash flow problems, and perform work activities commensurate with the concept of Plaintiff having an equity position in Defendants' business.
- 41. Had Plaintiff known, in fact, that ROOKS intended to lure Plaintiff to work for Defendants through artifice and deceit, Plaintiff would never have quit her well-paying job, invested the substantial portion of her guaranteed income in Defendants' business, and worked the inordinate number of hours that she did in order to carry out Defendants' "mission plan" as outlined by ROOKS.
- 42. Injustice can only be avoided by enforcing the promises made to Plaintiff by ROOKS, and therefore Defendants, and each of them, are estopped to deny such promises.
- 43. As a direct and proximate result of ROOK'S intentionally false promises, and Plaintiff's reasonable reliance on them, Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer monetary damages represented by the loss of her percentage share in Defendants' business and other compensation that remains unpaid, all to her damage in an amount in excess of the minimum jurisdiction of this Court, the precise amount of which will be proven at trial.

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44. As a further direct and proximate result of the aforesaid conduct of Defendants, and each of them, Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer severe emotional distress including, but not limited to humiliation, embarrassment, and mental anguish, in an amount according to proof.

45. The aforementioned conduct of Defendants was intentional, and done for the purpose of benefitting Defendants at the expense of Plaintiff, and constitutes misrepresentation, deceit, concealment of material facts know to Defendants, with the intention on the part of Defendants of depriving Plaintiff of property or legal rights, or otherwise causing Plaintiff injury, and was malicious and despicable conduct that has subjected Plaintiff to cruel and unjust hardship in conscious disregard of Plaintiff's rights. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that ROOKS, hiding behind his doctor's credentials and image, has made it a pattern and practice of his for many years to engage in substantially the same kind of conduct towards other individuals for the purpose of defrauding and conning them out of money in order to enhance his own business and personal fortune. Accordingly, Plaintiff is entitled to recover punitive damages from Defendants, and each of them, in an amount according to proof, in order to punish and set an example of the Defendants, and to deter them from engaging in similar conduct in the future.

FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Estoppel By Conduct Against Defendants Robert Lee Rooks, Animal Critical Care Center, Inc., All Care Animal Referral Center, Animal Cancer Center and Does 1-20, Inclusive)

- 46. Plaintiff incorporates by reference paragraphs 1 through 45, inclusive, as though fully set forth herein.
- 47. By leading Plaintiff to believe by words and by conduct that she would have an immediate equity interest in Defendants' business and other guaranteed remuneration, without condition, and by continuing throughout Plaintiff's employment to repeat such assurances in order to encourage her to invest money and an inordinate amount of time and labor for the purpose of maximizing such interest, Defendants, and each of them, could reasonably foresee that Plaintiff would quit her job with County Line Animal Hospital in order to work for Defendants, forego her guaranteed compensation from Defendants when asked by ROOKS to do so for business

expansion purposes or to solve cash flow problems, and perform work activities commensurate with the concept of Plaintiff having an equity position in Defendants' business.

- 48. Had Plaintiff known, in fact, that ROOKS intended to lure Plaintiff to work for Defendants through artifice and deceit, Plaintiff would never have quit her well-paying job, invested the substantial portion of her "guaranteed" income in Defendants' business, and worked the inordinate number of hours that she did in order to carry out Defendants' "mission plan" as outlined by ROOKS.
- 49. Defendants, and each of them, are estopped from contradicting the effect of the words and/or conduct expressly communicated to Plaintiff by ROOKS with the intention that Plaintiff act on same to her detriment.
- 50. As a direct and proximate result of ROOK'S words and conduct, and Plaintiff's reasonable reliance on such words and conduct, Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer monetary damages represented by the loss of her percentage share in Defendants' business and other compensation that remains unpaid, all to her damage in an amount in excess of the minimum jurisdiction of this Court, the precise amount of which will be proven at trial.
- 51. As a further direct and proximate result of the aforesaid conduct of Defendants, and each of them, Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer severe emotional distress including, but not limited to humiliation, embarrassment, and mental anguish, in an amount according to proof.
- 52. The aforementioned conduct of Defendants was intentional, and done for the purpose of benefitting Defendants at the expense of Plaintiff, and constitutes misrepresentation, deceit, concealment of material facts know to Defendants, with the intention on the part of Defendants of depriving Plaintiff of property or legal rights, or otherwise causing Plaintiff injury, and was malicious and despicable conduct that has subjected Plaintiff to cruel and unjust hardship in conscious disregard of Plaintiff's rights. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that ROOKS, hiding behind his doctor's credentials and image, has made it a pattern and practice of his for many years to engage in substantially the same kind of conduct towards other individuals for the purpose of defrauding and conning them out of money in order to enhance his

own business and personal fortune. Accordingly, Plaintiff is entitled to recover punitive damages from Defendants, and each of them, in an amount according to proof, in order to punish and set an example of the Defendants, and to deter them from engaging in similar conduct in the future.

FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Constructive Fraud Against Defendants Robert Lee Rooks, Animal Critical Care Center, Inc., All Care Animal Referral Center, Animal Cancer Center and Does 1-20, Inclusive)

- 53. Plaintiff incorporates by reference paragraphs 1 through 52, inclusive, as though fully set forth herein.
- 54. At all times relevant and material hereto, a fiduciary and/or confidential relationship existed between Plaintiff and Defendants, and each of them, incident to Plaintiff's employment/quasi-partnership relationship to Defendants. As a result of such relationship, Defendants, and each of them, had a duty to Plaintiff to be absolutely fair, straightforward and truthful to Plaintiff with respect to such relationship, not to conceal facts in connection with the relationship, and not to take advantage of Plaintiff or to mislead her in connection with the relationship to her detriment.
- 55. Defendants, and each of them, breached their duty to Plaintiff by falsely leading her to believe that she had an equity interest in Defendants' business and that her extraordinary investment of labor and investment of money in the business by foregoing substantial amounts of "guaranteed" income would result in her being able to cash out such equity interest in accordance with the 5-year mission plan outlined by ROOKS prior to the commencement of her employment with Defendants and to obtain financial security. The reality was that ROOKS realized that he had the power to take advantage of Plaintiff professionally because of his personal relationship with the Plaintiff, could get her to work for him and help build up his business for virtually no compensation with the promise that the business would be sold in five years and that they would retire together, and that when ROOKS got tired of Plaintiff he could simply drive her out, as he had done with others, and be done with her.

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- 56. As a direct and proximate result of ROOK'S breach, Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer monetary damages represented by the loss of her percentage share in Defendants' business and other compensation that remains unpaid, all to her damage in an amount in excess of the minimum jurisdiction of this Court, the precise amount of which will be proven at trial.
- 57. As a further direct and proximate result of the aforesaid conduct of Defendants, and each of them, Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer severe emotional distress including, but not limited to humiliation, embarrassment, and mental anguish, in an amount according to proof.
- 58. The aforementioned conduct of Defendants was intentional, and done for the purpose of benefitting Defendants at the expense of Plaintiff, and constitutes misrepresentation, deceit, concealment of material facts know to Defendants, with the intention on the part of Defendants of depriving Plaintiff of property or legal rights, or otherwise causing Plaintiff injury, and was malicious and despicable conduct that has subjected Plaintiff to cruel and unjust hardship in conscious disregard of Plaintiff's rights. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that ROOKS, hiding behind his doctor's credentials and image, has made it a pattern and practice of his for many years to engage in substantially the same kind of conduct towards other individuals for the purpose of defrauding and conning them out of money in order to enhance his own business and personal fortune. Accordingly, Plaintiff is entitled to recover punitive damages from Defendants, and each of them, in an amount according to proof, in order to punish and set an example of the Defendants, and to deter them from engaging in similar conduct in the future.

SIXTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Constructive Wrongful Discharge Against Defendants Robert Lee Rooks, Animal Critical Care Center, Inc., All Care Animal Referral Center, Animal Cancer Center and Does 1-20, Inclusive)

- 59. Plaintiff incorporates by reference paragraphs 1 through 58, inclusive, as though fully set forth herein.
- 60. Plaintiff HALL entered into an employment relationship with Defendants in or about September, 1994, as heretofore alleged, pursuant to which she agreed to work for

Defendants and for which Defendants agreed to pay Plaintiff compensation -- including the receipt of an immediate equity interest in Defendants' business which, it was agreed, would be sold in 5 years at which time Plaintiff would realize her interest. During the entire course of Plaintiff's employment with Defendants, there existed an implied-in-fact employment contract between Plaintiff and Defendants, and each of them, which at the time of Plaintiff's constructive discharge included, but was not limited to, the following terms and conditions:

- (a) Plaintiff would be able to continue her employment with Defendants indefinitely so long as she carried out her duties in a proper and competent manner;
- (b) Plaintiff would not be demoted, discharged or otherwise disciplined, nor would Plaintiff's job functions be reassigned for other than good cause with notice and opportunity to improve;
- (c) Defendants would not evaluate Plaintiff's performance in an arbitrary, untrue, or capricious manner;
- (d) Defendants would provide Plaintiff with competent support so that she could properly carry out her responsibilities.
- 61. This total employment agreement was evidenced by various written documents, oral representations to Plaintiff HALL by Defendant ROOKS, and the parties' entire course of conduct, including the following:
- (a) Defendants established policy which was known to Plaintiff and relied upon by her, that an employee such as Plaintiff, who had performed services as a good and faithful employee, would have secure employment tenure with Defendants; that an employee such as Plaintiff would be permitted to continue employment unless discharged for good and sufficient cause; and that an employee such as Plaintiff would not be demoted, discharged or disciplined without good and sufficient cause;
- (b) Up until the time ROOKS pattern of vile, arbitrary and abusive conduct towards Plaintiff began, as set forth in ¶ 24 above, ROOKS had throughout Plaintiff's employment expressly told Plaintiff that her performance was exemplary, that she was a team player in the

efforts to expand the business, and that she could expect to realize her equity interest in Defendants' business when it was sold. As a result of the above representations, Plaintiff came reasonably to expect and to rely on the promise of job security in Defendants' veterinarian practice. Such statements and acts of ROOKS communicated to Plaintiff the idea that she had performed her job satisfactorily and that her job was secure. Plaintiff in good faith relied upon these representations and believed them to be true;

- (c) Plaintiff's reliance on, belief in, and acceptance in good faith of all the assurances, promises and representations of ROOKS, as listed in ¶¶ 19-21 above, led Plaintiff to reasonably believe that her employment was secure and that there existed a contract of continuous employment with Defendants.
- 62. Plaintiff HALL undertook and continued employment and duly performed all of the conditions of the oral contract to be performed by her. Plaintiff at all times has been ready, willing and able to perform, and has offered to perform, all of the conditions of the contract to be performed by her.
- 63. Despite the representations made to Plaintiff by Defendants and the reliance she placed upon them, Defendants failed to carry out their responsibilities under the terms of the employment agreement in the following ways:
- (a) After ROOKS' decided to get rid of Plaintiff, he implemented of a deliberate and, over time, escalating course of action over many months to force her out of the practice by, *inter alia*, humiliating her in front of clients; falsely accusing her of professional incompetency; arbitrarily moving her from one assignment to the next; pulling her off cases; removing Plaintiff from having client contact by fabricating an excuse that she lacked communication skills; handing off cases to her after he, himself, had failed to render proper and professional follow up care on a timely basis and then falsely accusing Plaintiff of misfeasance; and calling her "stupid."
- (b) By creating, through the relentless and unwarranted personal attacks described in ¶ 63(a) above, a work environment so hostile that no reasonable person, and

particularly a professional responsible on a daily basis to care for seriously ill or injured animals, could be expected to endure it, forcing Plaintiff's resignation and constructive termination

As a proximate result of Defendants' breach of the implied employment agreement, Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer substantial losses in earnings and other compensation and employment benefits which she would have received had Defendants not breached said agreement, all to her damage in an amount in excess of the minimum jurisdiction of this Court, the precise amount of which will be proven at trial.

SEVENTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Breach of the Implied Covenant of Good Faith and Fair Dealing Against Defendants Robert Lee Rooks, Animal Critical Care Center, Inc., All Care Animal Referral Center, Animal Cancer Center and Does 1-20, Inclusive)

- 65. Plaintiff incorporates by reference paragraphs 1 through 64, inclusive, as though fully set forth herein.
- 66. The employment agreement between Plaintiff and Defendants contained an implied covenant of good faith and fair dealing by which Defendants, and each of them, promised to give full cooperation to Plaintiff HALL in her performance under said employment agreement and to refrain from doing any act which would prevent or impede Plaintiff's enjoyment of the fruits of said contract. Said covenant of good faith and fair dealing required Defendants to fairly, honestly and reasonably perform the terms and conditions of said agreement.
- 67. Defendants breached the covenant of good faith and fair dealing in the employment agreement by constructively terminating Plaintiff's employment unfairly, in bad faith and for reasons extraneous to the contract.
- As a proximate result of Defendants' breach of the implied employment agreement, Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer substantial losses in earnings and other compensation and employment benefits which she would have received had Defendants not breached said agreement, all to her damage in an amount in excess of the minimum jurisdiction of this Court, the precise amount of which will be proven at trial.

EIGHTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Harassment Based On Sex Against Defendants Robert Lee Rooks, Animal Critical Care Center, Inc., All Care Animal Referral Center, Animal Cancer Center and Does 1-20, Inclusive)

- 69. Plaintiff incorporates by reference paragraphs 1 through 68, inclusive, as though fully set forth herein.
- 70. Defendants are subject to suit under the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, Government Code § 12900, et seq. (hereinafter "FEHA") in that Defendants regularly employ five or more persons.
- 71. Defendants, through ROOKS, engaged in a course of intentional and malicious conduct towards Plaintiff, a female, which included, but is not limited to the following;
- (a) Verbal abuse, including yelling at Plaintiff, calling her "stupid" and "incompetent," stating that she thinks "like a nurse," and falsely accusing Plaintiff of professional misfeasance when, in fact, in the subject instances, it was ROOKS himself, or Dr. Bergstrom, who had let their patients' conditions seriously deteriorate before ROOKS belatedly handed off such cases to Plaintiff for handling;
- (b) Arbitrarily removing Plaintiff from work she was qualified to do in order to humiliate and degrade her;
 - (c) Refusing to assign Plaintiff to work she was qualified to do;
 - (d) Interfering with Plaintiff's job duties and responsibilities;
- (e) Latching onto Plaintiff as a sexual partner with the ulterior and fraudulent motive of involving Plaintiff in Defendants' business in order to extract Plaintiffs' labor at grossly less than her fair market value;
- (f) Lying to Plaintiff by telling her that the terms and conditions of her employment were equal with those of Dr. Craig Bergstrom; and
 - (g) Constructively terminating Plaintiff.
- 72. Despite Plaintiff's demands to ROOKS himself to cease his harassment of her and complaints to Bill Bookout as one of Defendants' principals that <u>he</u> take steps to control and

curtail ROOKS' behavior, ROOKS' abusive behavior only continued and escalated.

- 73. As a proximate result of Defendants' harassment against plaintiff, as alleged above, Plaintiff has been harmed in that Plaintiff has suffered the loss of the wages, salary, benefits and additional amounts of money, including prejudgment interest, Plaintiff would have received if she had not been harassed, from the start of her employment and continuing throughout her employment until her eventual constructive termination, all in an amount according to proof at trial.
- 74. As a further proximate result of Defendants' harassment of Plaintiff, as alleged above, Plaintiff has been harmed in that Plaintiff has suffered humiliation, mental anguish, nervousness, emotional distress and anxiety, all in an amount according to proof.
- 75. The aforementioned conduct of Defendants was intentional, and done for the purpose of benefitting Defendants at the expense of Plaintiff, and constitutes misrepresentation, deceit, concealment of material facts know to Defendants, with the intention on the part of Defendants of depriving Plaintiff of property or legal rights, including her rights under the FEHA, or otherwise causing Plaintiff injury, and was malicious and despicable conduct that has subjected Plaintiff to cruel and unjust hardship in conscious disregard of Plaintiff's rights. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that ROOKS, hiding behind his doctor's credentials and image, has made it a pattern and practice of his for many years to engage in substantially the same kind of conduct towards other individuals for the purpose of defrauding and conning them out of money in order to enhance his own business and personal fortune. Accordingly, Plaintiff is entitled to recover punitive damages from Defendants, and each of them, in an amount according to proof, in order to punish and set an example of the Defendants, and to deter them from engaging in similar conduct in the future.
- 76. As a direct result of the conduct of Defendants, and each of them, as set forth above, Plaintiff was forced to incur substantial attorneys' fees, which are recoverable under Government Code § 12965(b).

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1	77.	On January 18, 1998,	and within one year of the then last date of the harassment
2	and discrimination herein alleged by Plaintiff against Defendants, Plaintiff filed charges of		
3	discrimination, including discrimination/harassment based on sex (female), with the DFEH (Case		
4	Nos. E-9798-K-0849-00c and E-9798-K-0849-01c.) Copies of these charges are attached hereto as		
5	Exhibits "A" and "B," and are incorporated herein by this reference.		
6	78.	Effective January 26,	1998, the DFEH issued to Plaintiff notices of right to bring a
7	civil action based on the charges that are attached as Exhibits "A" and "B." Copies of the Notices		
8	of Case Closure are attached hereto as Exhibits "C" and "D," and are incorporated herein by this		
9	reference.		
10	WHEREFORE, Plaintiff Linda L. Hall prays for judgment against Defendants, and each of		
11	them, as follows:		
12	1.	For compensatory and	l consequential damages, according to proof;
13	2.	For general damages,	according to proof;
14	3.	For punitive and exen	aplary damages against defendants, and each of them, under
15		the First, Second, Thi	rd, Fourth, Fifth and Eighth Causes of Action;
16	4.	For reasonable attorned	eys' fees and other costs of suit allowed under California law,
17		according to proof at	the time of trial;
18	5.	For prejudgment inter	rest; and
19	6.	For such other and fur	rther relief as the court may deem just and proper.
20			
21	DATED: Ju	ly <u>27</u> , 1998	LAW OFFICES OF DAVID C. HOLT LAW OFFICES OF LANA J. FELDMAN
22			
23			By: / and folder
24			LANA FELDMAN Attorneys for Plaintiff LINDA L. HALL
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26			
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