

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of Determining the Proper
Carrier Classification of, and Complaint
for Penalties Against

DOCKET TE-210665

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

AJ’S WINE TOUR &
TRANSPORT LLC, D/B/A AJ’S
WINE TOURS & MORE LLC

I. INTRODUCTION

1 The regulatory staff (Staff) of the Washington Utilities and Transportation
Commission (Commission) and AJ’s Wine Tour & Transport LLC, d/b/a AJ’s Wine Tours
& More LLC, (AJ’s Wine Tour or Company), through their authorized representatives, enter
into the following settlement agreement (Settlement) to resolve the issues raised in Docket
TE-210665.

2 This Settlement is a “full multiparty settlement” as that term is defined in WAC 480-
07-730(3)(a) because it resolves all issues raised in this docket among Staff and AJ’s Wine
Tour (the Parties). It is subject to review and disposition by the Commission to determine
whether it complies with the applicable legal requirements and whether approval of the
Settlement is consistent with the public interest.¹

II. BACKGROUND

3 On October 28, 2021, the Commission entered Order 01, Order Instituting Special
Proceeding; Complaint Seeking to Impose Penalties; and Notice of Mandatory Appearance

¹ WAC 480-07-740, -750.

at Hearing (Complaint), pursuant to RCW 81.04.510, initiating this docket on its own motion. The Complaint alleges that AJ's Wine Tour violated RCW 81.70.220 on at least two occasions by (1) offering and (2) advertising to provide charter party or excursion carrier service. Specifically, on August 27, 2021, Staff discovered advertisements on www.facebook.com/AJs-Wine-Tour-LLC-2035049523481723 for AJ's Wine Tour that offered to provide charter party or excursion carrier service within the state of Washington. On August 23, 2021, Staff contacted the Company using an assumed name and obtained a quote for charter party or excursion carrier service to various wineries in the Walla Walla, Washington area.

III. TERMS OF AGREEMENT

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The Parties have reached an agreement on the issues raised in Docket TE-210665 and present this Settlement for the Commission's consideration and approval. The Parties therefore adopt the following Settlement, which they enter into voluntarily, to resolve the matters in dispute between them and to expedite the orderly disposition of this proceeding:

- Admission – AJ's Wine Tour admits that it violated RCW 81.70.220 on two occasions by (1) offering and (2) advertising to provide charter party or excursion carrier service.
- Classification – AJ's Wine Tour admits that it operated as a charter party or excursion service carrier subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission.
- Penalty – AJ's Wine Tour will pay a penalty of \$1,000. This amount will be due and payable upon the Commission's approval of the Settlement.
- Suspended Penalty – AJ's Wine Tour will accept the imposition of a \$9,000 suspended penalty. The Commission shall waive the suspended penalty after a period of two years from the effective date of this agreement, provided that AJ's

Wine Tour does not operate as a charter party or excursion service carrier without authority from the Commission.

- Payment Plan – The Parties agree that AJ’s Wine Tour should be allowed to pay the penalty on a payment plan. The Parties agree that AJ’s Wine Tour will pay the \$1,000 balance immediately due and owing as a result of the Settlement over eight months with monthly payments of \$125, as follows:

Due Date	Amount
January 4, 2022	\$125
February 4, 2022	\$125
March 4, 2022	\$125
April 4, 2022	\$125
May 4, 2022	\$125
June 6, 2022	\$125
July 5, 2022	\$125
August 4, 2022	\$125

- The Parties agree that if a payment is missed, the entire amount of the penalty, including the suspended portion of \$9,000, will become due and payable the day after the missed penalty was due. The Parties further agree that AJ’s Wine Tour may make payments in advance of the due date to discharge its payment obligation. Any prepayment of the penalty amount will be credited to the last date an installment is due and will not relieve the Company of its obligation to make its next scheduled payment.

IV. GENERAL PROVISIONS

5 Public interest: The Parties submit that this Settlement promotes the public interest, and that it is appropriate for the Commission’s acceptance without conditions under WAC 480-07-750(2)(a).

6 Effective date: This Settlement is effective on the service date of a final Commission order approving this Settlement, or on the date that an initial order approving

this Settlement becomes a final order pursuant to WAC 480-07-825(7), whichever occurs first.

7 Advocacy: The Parties agree to cooperate in submitting this Settlement promptly to the Commission for acceptance. The Parties agree to support adoption of this Settlement in proceedings before the Commission. No party to this Settlement or its agents, employees, consultants, or attorneys will engage in advocacy contrary to the Commission's adoption of this Settlement.

8 Construction: This Settlement shall not be construed against any party solely because that party was a drafter of the Settlement.

9 Other proceedings: This Settlement shall have no precedential or preclusive effect in other proceedings except in a proceeding to enforce its terms. In the event this Settlement does not become effective, this Settlement shall be null and void, with no binding effect on the Parties and with no precedential or preclusive effect on the Parties regarding the continued litigation in Docket TE-210665. In the event that the Commission rejects all or any portion of this Settlement, or accepts the Settlement with conditions not proposed in this Settlement, each party reserves the right to withdraw from this Settlement by written notice to the other party and the Commission. Written notice must be served within 10 business days of service of the order rejecting part or all of this Settlement or imposing conditions not proposed in this Settlement. In such event, no party will be bound or prejudiced by the terms of this Settlement, and the Parties agree to cooperate in developing a procedural schedule.

10 Settlement discussions: The Parties have entered into this Settlement to avoid further expense, inconvenience, uncertainty, and delay. As such, conduct, statements, and documents disclosed during negotiations of this Settlement shall not be admissible as evidence in this or any other proceeding, except in any proceeding to enforce the terms of this Settlement or any Commission order fully adopting those terms.

11 Final agreement: The Parties have negotiated this Settlement as an integrated document to be effective upon execution. This Settlement supersedes all prior oral and written agreements on issues addressed herein.

12 Counterparts: The Parties may execute this Settlement in counterparts and as executed shall constitute one agreement. A signed signature page sent by facsimile or email is as effective as an original document.

13 Authorized representatives: Each person signing this Settlement warrants that he or she has authority to bind the party that he or she represents.

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DATED this 30th day of November 2021.

AJ'S WINE TOUR & TRANSPORT
LLC, D/B/A AJ'S WINE TOURS &
MORE LLC

/s/ Jose Sanchez Michel

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WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND
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