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Today's Orange County business briefs

Class-action sought against repair chain

Irvine auto-repair chain **Caliber Collision Centers** is being sued, facing accusations of failing to pay minimum wage or the proper overtime compensation.

According to the complaint, filed in Los Angeles Superior Court on March 23, Caliber also failed to provide breaks or meal periods and falsified the number of hours worked. In addition, the suit alleges that Caliber did not pay back wages or accrued vacation time owed to workers who left the company.

The suit seeks class-action status and is being brought on behalf of Caliber workers who worked for the repair chain as hourly employees on a shift of more than 3-1/2 hours from 1992 to 2004. "We believe the class is going to span all of their 38 stores or about 600 workers," said Anthony N. Luti, one of the plaintiff's attorneys.

"We've only had the suit for a couple of days. We have passed it along to our attorneys," said John Walcher, vice president of Caliber.

Luti said the suit seeks compensation for the workers, but could not yet attach a dollar amount to the complaint.

Last August, Caliber agreed to pay the state \$5.8 million and reimburse or redo its work to settle a consumer- fraud lawsuit. That suit was filed after a three-year investigation, which originally sought \$50 million in civil penalties.

Register staff writers contributed to this report.