

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

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Superior Court Order Will End Illegal Hotel and Party Venue Rentals at Home in Dupont Circle

Attorney General Filed Suit in Response to Numerous Complaints by Neighbors; Swift Action Results in Shutdown of Illegal Business

WASHINGTON, D.C. – D.C. Superior Court Judge Maurice Ross today ordered the owner of a Dupont Circle-area home to cease unlawfully operating an unlicensed residential housing business, public hall, boarding house, bed and breakfast, and general business by renting the large luxury home for parties, weddings and concerts.

The court order comes in response to a lawsuit that the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) filed against owner Douglas G. Jefferies for creating a hazard to public safety and a nuisance to neighbors. Jefferies had been using vacation-rental websites to rent the property at 2220 Q Street NW, despite the owner and the venue not being properly licensed or outfitted for such events.

“Assuming Mr. Jefferies abides by the terms of the consent order, this agreement will bring an end to the dangerous, illegal, and troublesome use of this property to host large and noisy events,” Attorney General Karl A. Racine said. **“I want to thank the residents of the community who registered complaints, the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs for investigating, and the attorneys and staff in our Neighborhood and Victim Services Section who worked hard to ensure that this problem was resolved in a way that protects public safety and returns peace to the neighborhood. In particular, attorney Ebony Robinson and Section Chief Vanessa Natale have done excellent work in this case.”**

“Today’s action sends a strong message to individuals who seek to unlawfully conduct lodging and entertainment businesses without proper licenses,” Attorney General Racine said. **“Such activity is illegal, is a nuisance to law-abiding residents, and will be investigated.”**

Judge Ross ordered Mr. Jefferies to:

- Cease all business activity at the property – including concerts, weddings, and parties – unless and until he receives the proper business license and Certificate of Occupancy from the District’s Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA);

- Schedule, within 10 days of the issuance of the order, an inspection of the property with DCRA to identify any issues that would render the property unsuitable for rentals;
- Abate any of those issues prior to licensure for rentals;
- Should the property be deemed suitable for business purposes by DCRA, not allow any more than eight persons at a time to occupy the property while it is being used as a rental property;
- Pay \$8,000 in fines to the District for violations;
- Ensure he is compliant with the District’s Office of Tax and Revenue prior to the issuance of any license; and
- Not allow any loud or unreasonable noise to come from the property between the hours of 10 p.m. and 7 a.m.

Jefferies consented to the preliminary injunction, and the Court entered an order agreed upon by the parties. The order is in effect until further notice.

OAG filed a lawsuit against Mr. Jefferies after an investigation by DCRA officials, who had received numerous complaints about the home. The investigation uncovered an ad for the property, described as the “Celebrity House Hunter Mansion,” on the vacation-rental site Airbnb.com. The home was described as a 6,000-square-foot property that could accommodate families, convention groups, weddings, private concerts and celebrity guests – including room for 400 guests inside and another 100 guests outdoors. The investigation also revealed ads for the home on other party- and vacation-rental sites, including Homeaway.com.

A copy of the court order as entered by the judge will be available Monday, May 18.

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