

# **City legal action forces Morningside Recovery to shut down three sober living homes**

In response to a civil nuisance abatement legal action filed only 21 days ago on Jan. 2 by the City of Costa Mesa, Morningside Recovery LLC has agreed to shut down its remaining three sober living homes in the city, all of which were in violation of the city's sober living home ordinances, and to pay the city \$20,000 in legal fees and enforcement costs.

"This is a great outcome for the residents of Costa Mesa," said Mayor Pro Tem Allan Mansoor. "We are happy that the group home operator decided to work with us and settle this without significant court costs for either party. Hopefully, this sends a message to others that we will strictly enforce our city ordinances and ensure that our neighborhoods maintain a balance that is good for all residents."

The city had taken the abatement action against Morningside, several related entities and the owner of the properties, Barry Saywitz, LP, for failure to apply for and obtain conditional use permits and otherwise comply with in the city's sober living home ordinances. The city had initially taken code enforcement action against six Morningside's facilities within the city. While three ultimately closed, the properties on Orange Avenue, Peppertree Lane and Pomona Avenue remained in operation.

As a result this settlement, the facilities on Peppertree Lane and Pomona Avenue are required to close immediately, while the one on Orange Avenue is required to close on or before Aug. 31, 2018.

In addition, Morningside agreed that in connection with the closure of its sober living facilities, it will not "curb"

residents onto the city streets and will otherwise comply with the provisions of the city's ordinances relating to eviction of residents.