

NEWS RELEASE

For release: Immediately

Contact: Kay Anderle
Managing Partner

Address: 18300 Von Karman Ave., Suite 930
Irvine, California 92612-1057
Ph. 949.476.8700
Fax 949.476.0900
kanderle@kelleranderle.com
www.kelleranderle.com

Costa Mesa Prevails in Sober Living Operators Lawsuit Challenging City Regulations



IRVINE, CA, DECEMBER 10, 2018 --- Keller/Anderle LLP secured a complete jury victory Friday for the City of Costa Mesa in a federal lawsuit challenging its group home ordinance. The City's law, passed in 2014, was written to balance the rights of all citizens - including residents of group homes - to live in and enjoy Costa Mesa's single family neighborhoods.

Over the last six years, Costa Mesa has seen explosive growth in the number of sober living homes in the city's residential neighborhoods, with some cul-de-sacs or blocks having as many as six of these homes on them. Some operators had been packing 15 or more residents in single family homes to maximize profits. The City designed its ordinance to protect both the residents in these homes and others in the community by regulating unlicensed operators to prevent overcrowding, establish minimum standards, and require that group home operators and employees not have serious criminal convictions in the recent past.

Two sober living home operators and an industry trade group brought the suit in the Central District of California in 2014, arguing that any regulation, no matter how favorable to the disabled, was discriminatory. Other cities had lost lawsuits challenging their own ordinances, settled them, or had been intimidated into not passing ordinances at all. [The Costa Mesa City Council hired Keller/Anderle in March of this year](#), when it was clear the City would need a complete victory at trial in order to preserve the ability to enforce reasonable regulations on group home operators.

After a four week trial before the Honorable James Selna, the eight person jury deliberated for half a day on Friday before returning a unanimous verdict on all counts for the City of Costa Mesa. The jury agreed with the City that the law is not discriminatory and does not violate the Fair Housing Act. Costa Mesa's law will likely be a model for many Orange County cities that have been awaiting the results of this case as they consider how to regulate this industry.

[Jennifer Keller](#) and [Chase Scolnick](#) were co-lead counsel and [Anand Sambhwani](#) was second chair, backed by [Michael Schachter](#) and [Nahal Kazemi](#). "The Costa Mesa City Council stood tall and refused to be intimidated by the Plaintiffs," Ms. Keller said. She added: "This is a victory not just for the people of Costa Mesa and those in recovery homes, but also for every city in California."

About the firm: [Keller/Anderle LLP](#) is among the premier boutique trial firms in California, with a record second to none, and local, statewide and national recognition of the firm's success. The firm handles high-stakes litigation of all types including commercial, intellectual property, securities, bad faith, class actions, white collar criminal defense, and entertainment/sports. Keller/Anderle LLP attorneys have won over \$925 million in judgments, and successfully defended many other high stakes cases. Members of the firm have over 400 jury trials among them. Unique among law firms handling high profile, bet-the-company cases of such a caliber is that both name partners are women, and the firm is [100% women-owned](#).