



**ZACH KLEIN**  
COLUMBUS CITY ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Friday, May 31, 2019

Contact: Meredith Tucker, 614.965.0203  
Email: [mctucker@columbus.gov](mailto:mctucker@columbus.gov)  
FCSO: Marc Gofstein, 614.525.4774 (direct); 614.557.3481 (cell)  
Email: [marcgofstein@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:marcgofstein@franklincountyohio.gov)

# City Attorney, Sheriff Team Up to Shut Down Another Illegal Massage Parlor

*North Columbus business listed on ‘Rub Maps’—a website known to rate the ‘best’ Asian spas for potential sexual conduct*

**COLUMBUS, OH**—Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein and Franklin County Sheriff Dallas Baldwin announced today that their offices’ joint efforts led to an emergency court order to immediately vacate and shutter a north side massage parlor that investigators say was a front for illegal sex acts. It’s the second time in two months that the City Attorney and Sheriff have partnered to use civil litigation authorized under Ohio’s nuisance abatement code to shut down a potential human trafficking ring operating out of a local massage parlor. In April, a judge granted the joint task force’s request to **board up** the Sunflower Asian Spa on the city’s far west side. The City Attorney’s office also helped advise the City of Hilliard when it filed similar nuisance cases against two other illegal massage parlors.

In a hearing earlier this morning in the Franklin County Environmental Court, City Attorney Klein requested an *ex parte* temporary restraining order to board up Purple Clouds Spa, located at 5322 North High Street, near the border between Columbus and Worthington. In a surprise raid following the hearing, city and county agents enforced the judge’s order, evacuating the premises and boarding it up. Representatives from [Asian American Community Services](#) were onsite to assist any of the workers who were in need of help.

**“We’re going to continue aggressively going after these businesses that really are nothing more than illegal fronts for human trafficking and prostitution,”** said Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein. **“I want to thank the Franklin County Sheriff’s office for working with us on these cases, and hope that we’re sending a message to the rest of the bad operators out there: our task force is looking for you and if you don’t clean up your act, it’s only a matter time before we find you and shut you down.”**

Detectives from the Sheriff’s special investigations unit began investigating the spa in February for potential prostitution and human trafficking after finding the business listed on Rub Maps. Rub Maps is known by investigators to list Asian spas and review the “best establishments to visit for possible sexual favors.”

According to court documents, investigators obtained consistent evidence that sexual conduct in exchange for money was occurring regularly at the premises from the point of their investigation

on February 27, 2019 through the latest covert operation last week.

Patrons paid \$60 upfront for an hour-long massage and were led to a dimly lit back room. The patrons were then asked to remove all their clothing and lie face down. During the course of the massage, workers would begin to perform illegal sex acts, with one individual offering an undercover detective a coupon for \$5 off his next visit. Detectives also noted that at no time did they observe any signage inside the premises stating “No Sexual Activity.”

On March 7, 2019, law enforcement officials sent a certified letter to the property owner, Dorothy Hadler of Northwest Columbus, notifying her of the illegal activity occurring at the premises. The letter was signed as received. Xiaohong Jiang of Hilliard is listed as the agent for Purple Clouds Spa, Inc., which is registered with the City of Columbus as the massage license holder.

**“Working in partnership with City Attorney Klein’s office demonstrates to everyone in Franklin County that we are all committed to closing down any business that deals in human trafficking or prostitution,” said Franklin County Sheriff Dallas Baldwin. “Today’s action is the culmination of the great work done, once again, by our special investigations unit over the past several months. I am proud of their accomplishment.”**

In filing a civil motion for injunctive relief along with the emergency TRO request, the City Attorney’s office is seeking to prove that the owner/operators are guilty of maintaining a nuisance by establishing that they, as owners of the premises, “knew of, participated in, or acquiesced to the activity which constituted the nuisance” as prescribed by [Chapter 3767](#) of the Ohio Revised Code.

A hearing for preliminary and permanent injunctive relief is scheduled for 12:00 p.m. on June 10, 2019.

If the property is ultimately declared to be a statutorily defined public nuisance, state law grants the court authority to order the premises shut down for up to one year following the permanent injunction hearing.

###