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LAW BULLETIN MEDIA

## Clifford provides pro bono work to keep homeless shelter open

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A team of lawyers at Clifford Law Offices worked over the last month to help keep an Orland Park church shelter open and operational.

Beginning in October, Hope Covenant Church opened its doors as an overnight shelter every Tuesday night, welcoming anywhere between 30 to 50 people. The church partners with BEDS Plus, an organization that operates overnight homeless shelters at different locations in southwest suburban Cook County each night.

On Nov. 7, the village of Orland Park filed a lawsuit against the church and argued the shelter should be closed — citing several health and safety code violations.

When Kevin P. Durkin, a partner at Clifford Law Offices and an Orland Park resident, found out what was going on he

knew he wanted to find a way to help the church.

Durkin, along with fellow Clifford attorneys Kristofer S. Riddle, retired judge Henry R. Simmons, James C. Pullos and Tracy A. Brammeier, assisted the church by providing pro bono legal services.

Durkin said his parents were volunteers for BEDS Plus and he knew “it was a real quality program.”

“I just felt that a municipality shouldn’t be suing a church for helping homeless people,” he said. “[The city] really hadn’t given them an opportunity to work it out.”

On Nov. 18, Cook County Circuit Judge Eve M. Reilly denied a temporary restraining order and, in the meantime, both parties were able to reach an agreement allowing the shelter to remain open.

As a result of the agreement, the lawsuit was dismissed on Monday. Durkin said the



**Kevin P. Durkin**

church agreed to obtain a special use permit with the village’s assistance and meet any safety code standards going forward.

The village was represented by Howard C. Jablecki and Dennis G. Walsh of Klein, Thorpe & Jenkins Ltd.

The case is *Village of Orland Park v. Southwest Evangelical Covenant Church*, 19 CH 12944.