



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 27, 2023**

Contact: Richard Jackoway at  
[rjackoway@saniego.gov](mailto:rjackoway@saniego.gov) or (619) 533-5896

## **C Street Inn Owners Ordered to Pay \$332,000**

*City to be reimbursed for its cost in relocating 66 residents of unsafe hotel*

San Diego City Attorney Mara W. Elliott announced today that the owners of the C Street Inn have been ordered to reimburse the City of San Diego more than \$300,000 which the City paid for temporary housing for tenants who were relocated from the hotel for their safety.

The owners, Jack Shah Rafiq and Jax Properties LLC, were also ordered to pay a \$10,000 penalty for failing to timely pay relocation benefits and \$11,022 in administrative costs.

Last year, the City relocated 66 residents of the Inn after the Code Enforcement Division uncovered numerous building and fire code violations. The City issued a notice to the owners requiring correction of the code violations and ordering payment of relocation benefits to the occupants, many whom were elderly and disabled, but Rafiq refused to pay to relocate the occupants.

**“This ruling places the burden exactly where it belongs, on a landlord who endangered his tenants, actively impeded the City’s efforts to protect them from the imminent hazards he created, and then refused to pay relocation costs,”** City Attorney Mara W. Elliott said. **“Our Office will always step in when the health and welfare of San Diegans are imperiled by the callous actions of others.”**

The six-story hotel was found to have extensive building code and extreme fire safety violations. It had been the subject of numerous inspections by fire officials and code enforcement investigators since 2011 and, without the City’s intervention, would have remained a firetrap.

Local and state law violations which Rafiq refused to correct presented an imminent danger to the tenants. They included:

- a non-functioning fire alarm system
- fire escape routes leading to locked exits
- broken fire doors

---

Recent City Attorney media releases can be accessed on the San Diego City Attorney’s home page located on the Internet at <https://www.sandiego.gov/cityattorney>

You can find the City Attorney’s Office on Instagram here [San Diego City Attorney Mara W. Elliott \(@sdcityattorney\)](https://www.instagram.com/sdcityattorney) • [Instagram photos and videos](#)

**1200 Third Avenue, Suite 1620, San Diego, California 92101-4188 (619) 236-6220**

- missing emergency lighting, exit signs, and smoke detectors
- non-permitted modifications to the sprinkler system
- uncovered electrical boxes, including one installed in a shower area
- dilapidated stairs and stairs without required guardrails
- expired fire extinguishers
- mold and rodent infestations
- openings in fire-safe walls that would speed the spread of flames, and
- numerous non-permitted modifications to the building and its water supply lines.

Once relocated, the tenants were each eligible for \$4,720 in relocation costs. The City advanced the relocation funds and sought reimbursement from Rafiq. The San Diego Housing Commission and the San Diego City Attorney's Office through a victim services coordinator assisted residents.

The C Street Inn, located at 630-636 C St., has been the subject of 18 Code Enforcement cases in recent years, and the San Diego Police Department has spent more than 550 hours responding more than 220 times since May 2019 to address criminal and nuisance activity.

The case to recover the costs advanced by the City was prosecuted by Deputy City Attorney Scott Frazee of the Community Justice Division, under the supervision of Gabriela Brannan, Chief Deputy City Attorney in charge of the Nuisance Abatement Unit.

The City Attorney's Nuisance Abatement Unit was established in 1984 to address nuisance properties and blight throughout San Diego. This unit works in partnership with the Code Enforcement Division of the City Development Services Department, the San Diego Police Department, the Fire-Rescue Department, other local agencies, and the community to identify and aggressively address problem properties.

###