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## In a First for Columbus, City Strikes Down Three Drug Houses in One Day

*West side properties shut down in a series of coordinated raids were the scene of close to 100 police runs for domestic violence, suicide attempts, shots fired, narcotics complaints, drug overdoses, fighting, burglary, stolen vehicles, and more*

**COLUMBUS, OH**—Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein announced today that the City of Columbus set precedent earlier this afternoon by shutting down three west side properties—including two on the same street—after obtaining emergency court orders to stop the illegal drug activity occurring at the premises. The properties were the targets of separate, covert police investigations following a series of community complaints. Records indicate that officers responded to the properties dozens of times for incidents including narcotics trafficking, drug overdoses, burglary, assault, shots fired, domestic violence, and suicide attempts.

The City Attorney's office filed three motions for *ex parte* temporary restraining orders in the Franklin County Environmental Court to board up [65 North Chase Avenue](#), [437 South Warren Avenue](#) and [589 South Warren Avenue](#)—all of which are located on the Hilltop within a mile and a half of each other. The Columbus Division of Police and other city agents descended on the properties in a series of coordinated raids to enforce the court orders starting around noon today.

**“It took a lot of planning and coordination to take out three drug operations in rapid-fire succession in one afternoon and we would like to thank the Columbus Division of Police and other city agents for working closely with our office to make it happen,”** said Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein. **“Clearly we’re continuing to deal with a serious drug epidemic, especially on the west side, where five out of the nine drug houses we’ve boarded-up this year have been located.”**

### 65 North Chase Avenue

According to court documents, Columbus Police responded to this property at least 58 times in the last two years for complaints that included domestic violence, suicide attempts, shots fired, theft, drug overdoses, fighting, narcotics complaints, burglary, suspicious persons, a person with a knife almost “the size of a sword,” and other disturbances.

On April 25, 2018 police were dispatched to the premises on a report of an accidental overdose. The victim was transported to Mt. Carmel West Hospital in stable condition. On May 22, 2018 officers responded to a report of an assault and encountered a victim who said he was leaving the premises when he was punched in the throat and struck in the back with a heavy object.

On June 27, 2018, officers responded to another drug overdose. After a series of other incidents at the premises, including five fights and several fugitive arrests on active warrants, narcotics detectives began conducting covert purchases of heroin and crack cocaine earlier this year. Police officials issued a certified letter to the property owner, Daniel Brown, notifying him of his legal responsibility to abate the nuisance drug activity occurring at the premises. The letter was signed as received on March 28, 2019, but the illegal conduct continued through this week.

#### 437 South Warren Avenue

Columbus Police responded to this property more than 30 times in the last two years for complaints ranging from drug trafficking to domestic violence and a person with a gun. During an incident in late 2017 when paramedics arrived to treat someone in cardiac arrest, the owner of the property, John Humphrey, admitted that his sister, Melissa Humphrey, was selling drugs from the premises.

Officers made several drug-related arrests at the property throughout 2018. In March 2019, narcotics detectives made covert purchases of heroin and subsequently obtained a court-ordered warrant to search the premises. During the ensuing raid, detectives seized crack cocaine and arrested two out of the 18 individuals they found inside the premises at the time.

Illegal drug activity continued at the property and narcotics detectives executed a second search warrant on May 9, 2019. They arrested seven out of 18 people once again found inside the premises at the time on various outstanding felony and misdemeanor warrants.

#### 589 South Warren Avenue

This property came to the attention of the Columbus Division of Police in April 2018 after officers responded to a report of a drug overdose. An unconscious victim was found lying on the bathroom floor with a syringe and tie-off cord nearby. The victim was revived with a total of three doses of Narcan. Police subsequently received a community complaint that as many as 30-50 cars a day approach the premises to purchase drugs.

Narcotics detectives began surveillance of the property and conducted several covert purchases of heroin and crack cocaine. In April this year, officers arrested an individual who had just bought crack cocaine from someone at the premises who the individual identified simply as "Josh." The individual also told officers that it was common for buyers to exchange guns for drugs, and that "Josh" would then sell the guns.

**"We greatly appreciate the court granting all three of these emergency board-up orders on the same day," said Assistant City Attorney Zach Gwin, who is assigned to Police Zone Three on the west side. "We especially want to thank the Columbus Division of Police and the other city personnel for their highly coordinated efforts to board up these houses without incident all on the same afternoon."**

Hearings for preliminary and permanent injunctive relief against all three properties are scheduled for May 22, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.

Copies of the court orders for [65 North Chase Avenue](#), [437 South Warren Avenue](#) and [589 South Warren Avenue](#) are available online.