



CITY OF BRYAN, OHIO

Carrie M. Schlade, Mayor



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of Bryan Responds to Bryan Municipal Court Decision on Fire Code Violation Case

Bryan, OH – January 21, 2025 – In response to the recent ruling from Bryan Municipal Court, the City of Bryan wishes to remind the public that the ongoing legal challenges regarding Dad's Place have been in progress since October 2023. The city remains committed to addressing homelessness within the community and continues to collaborate with appropriate agencies. At the same time, the city is dedicated to upholding laws related to public safety, particularly fire code enforcement, which is critical to ensuring the well-being of all residents.

Bryan Municipal Court Judge Kent North issued a ruling today confirming that the fire code has been violated by Dad's Place. The City of Bryan has consistently emphasized that public safety regulations, including fire codes, must be adhered to, regardless of any other circumstances. This decision follows earlier rulings by three separate courts that found no violation of religious freedom rights in this case.

I appreciate the professionalism shown by our employees in enforcing not only the City of Bryan's laws and ordinances but also those of the State of Ohio. While we anticipate an appeal, we remain firm in our commitment to ensuring that our community's safety comes first. Since October 2023, Dad's Place has continued to operate in violation of the fire code, despite prior notifications of noncompliance. The complaint for violation of Bryan Municipal Code 1501.06(a) was filed on April 26, 2024, but delays from the defense led to the eventual guilty verdict being rendered today.

The Williams County Common Pleas Court has previously stated that "the City of Bryan's enforcement of the fire code and zoning regulations do not require Dad's Place to violate its worthwhile and necessary religious beliefs to 'serve' others. It merely requires Dad's Place to do so safely to protect the citizens it serves, their neighbors, and others using or living in any adjacent buildings or property."

The City of Bryan reiterates that no decision has been made to prevent Dad's Place from operating as a church. However, the residential operations of the facility must cease until proper building and fire code applications are filed and approved by the State of Ohio.

The city will continue to work with the appropriate agencies to address homelessness and support faith-based organizations in fulfilling their missions while ensuring the safety of the broader community.

Mayor Carrie M. Schlade