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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Bed Bugs, Dangerous Conditions & Civil Rights Violations Plague
Residents of Brooklyn Adult Home
*Judge Grants Temporary Restraining Order to Prevent Retaliation
after Residents File Class Action Lawsuit***

BROOKLYN, N.Y., May 2, 2012 — Yesterday, residents of the Surf Manor Home for Adults filed a class action lawsuit against the facility to address longstanding violations of their rights, including poor conditions, a perennial bed bug infestation, a lack of essential services, and verbal abuse and retaliation. MFY Legal Services, Inc. and the law firm of DLA Piper LLP (US) represent the residents.

The lawsuit alleges that Surf Manor, which is an adult care facility located in Coney Island, Brooklyn, has breached residents' admissions agreements and the implied warranty of habitability and violated the New York Social Services Law and New York Human Rights Law. The lawsuit requests injunctive relief and damages to remedy hazardous conditions in the home and require Surf Manor to provide residents with services they are entitled to under the law.

Kings County Supreme Court Justice David B. Vaughan granted residents a Temporary Restraining Order preventing Surf Manor's administration and staff from retaliating against residents for filing this lawsuit. The residents will be requesting that the court issue a preliminary injunction ordering Surf Manor to repair dangerous conditions and to provide residents with the case management services that the home is required to provide under the regulations governing adult homes.

"Residents here have long suffered from unhealthy and dangerous conditions and assaults on their dignity and rights. Stopgap solutions to systemic problems, like covering up leaks with tiles that then fall down, do not hide the underlying and longstanding neglect of the facility and its urgent case management responsibilities to residents," said Norman Bloomfield, President of the Surf Manor Residents' Council.

The New York State Department of Health, the agency which licenses and regulates adult homes, has documented Surf Manor's persistent regulatory violations in a series of scathing inspection reports dating back to 2009 and has even assessed fines against the facility. In an inspection report issued in late 2011, a health inspector documented that residents' rooms contained "hundreds of bed bugs" and "blood entrails" from bed bugs leaving "dozens of blood stains on the mattress

and pillow sheets [and] skin casts which formed into small cakes of solid matter encased in the seams of the mattresses and box springs.” Still, bed bugs and other hazardous conditions persist in the facility.

In addition to these poor conditions, the lawsuit claims that Surf Manor has failed to provide residents with basic case management services. As a result, some residents have been penniless for months at a time and others have unnecessarily waited up to a year for medical appointments and surgeries. Residents also claim that the facility’s administrator, Joshua Teller, and his staff, routinely threaten and intimidate residents who request remedies to serious problems.

“The situation at Surf Manor is a graphic illustration of the problems that continue to be experienced by the thousands of people with disabilities who are warehoused in institutional adult homes in New York City,” said Shelly Weizman, an MFY attorney who represents the residents. “The residents are standing up to ensure that Surf Manor be held accountable for its blatant and discriminatory disregard of their rights.”

MFY Legal Services’ Adult Home Advocacy Project advocates on behalf of people with mental illness who reside in adult homes throughout New York City.

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Residents of Surf Manor are available for interviews.