

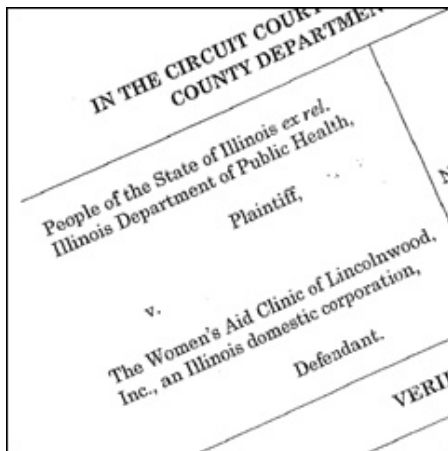


# SLAPPED WITH \$36,000 FINE, JUDGE WILLING TO LET ABORTION CLINIC PAY \$77 TO GET OFF THE HOOK

 John Jansen  
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Imagine you run a shoddy abortion clinic that amasses a \$36,000 fine by your state's health department. You file for bankruptcy, but your case is dismissed. Then, you close out your bank account, dissolve your old company, change your name, and move to a different location.

When the state comes calling, you say the old company doesn't exist anymore, so the state's out of luck.

You couldn't get away with that, could you?

Believe it or not, a judge in Chicago is about to let an Illinois abortion clinic do just that by requiring the owner to pay a mere \$77.

## **Abortion Clinic Owner Felt "Victimized" by "Unfair" Health Department Inspection**

To understand how things got to this point, we have to back up a few years.

On September 6-7, 2011, inspectors with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) visited the Women's Aid Clinic abortion facility, located in the northern Chicago suburb of Lincolnwood, for the first time in 15 years.

What they found shocked them. According to the IDPH:

The condition of the facility has deteriorated to a point where "the public interest, health, safety, or welfare imperatively requires" that the facility's license be suspended on an emergency basis. (210 ILCS 5/10f(c)).

The full report from the IDPH's 2011 inspection of Women's Aid Clinic is posted here [PDF] (<https://prolifeaction.org/docs/2012/2011-09-07WomensAidInspectionReport.pdf>). (It's also worth noting that Women's Aid owner Larisa Rozansky later told an AP reporter (<http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1N1-13C779BA3235D608.html>) that she felt "victimized by the surprise inspection," which she called "unfair.")

Six weeks later, on October 21, 2011 the state assessed [PDF] (<https://prolifeaction.org/docs/2012/2011-09-07WomensAidInspectionReport.pdf>) Women's Aid Clinic with a fine of \$36,000 for a host of serious violations, including failure to perform CPR [PDF] on 18-year old Antonessa Ross (<http://ebookbrowse.net/antonessa-ross-wrongful-death-lawsuit1-pdf-d333772834>), who died following an abortion. The state also suspended the license of Women's Aid to operate as a pregnancy termination specialty center (PTSC) and prohibited the facility from performing surgical abortions—although it is still permitted to perform medical abortions (i.e., RU-486).

Knowing a fine was coming, Women's Aid owner Larisa Rozansky filed for bankruptcy [PDF] (<https://prolifeaction.org/docs/2013/WomensAidBankruptcyFiling.pdf>) on October 10, but her case was dismissed ([https://www.pacermonitor.com/public/case/80973/Womens\\_Aid\\_Clinic\\_of\\_Lincolnwood,\\_Inc](https://www.pacermonitor.com/public/case/80973/Womens_Aid_Clinic_of_Lincolnwood,_Inc)) a few weeks later.

And although Rozansky wrote a letter to the IDPH stating [PDF] (<https://prolifeaction.org/docs/2012/2011-09-07WomensAidInspectionReport.pdf>) that Women's Aid Clinic would be closing on November 10, 2011, Women's Aid Clinic continued to advertise surgical abortions and do business under the very name "Women's Aid Clinic" for several months thereafter.

In January 2012, activists working with the Pro-Life Action League notified (<https://prolifeaction.org/hotline/2012/womensaid-2/>) the IDPH that Women's Aid was continuing to advertise surgical abortions. Following a cease and desist letter from the the IDPH's William Bell in March 2012, Women's Aid eventually took it down from its website.

### **Owner Claims Abortion Clinic "Does Not Exist"**

In that letter [PDF] (<https://prolifeaction.org/docs/2012/WilliamBelltoLarisaRozansky.pdf>), the IDPH also reminded Rozansky that if she did not pay the \$36,000 fine, the matter would be turned over to the Illinois Attorney General's Office. Rozansky responded with a letter [PDF] (<https://prolifeaction.org/docs/2012/LarisaRozanskytoWilliamBell.pdf>) saying that "Women's Aid Clinic does not exist and does not have any assets or associated bank accounts."

([https://prolifeaction.org/hotline/2012/womensaid-2/womens-aid-clinic\\_outside\\_2/](https://prolifeaction.org/hotline/2012/womensaid-2/womens-aid-clinic_outside_2/))

On April 5, 2012, I reported that Women's Aid Clinic was still very much in operation

(<https://prolifeaction.org/hotline/2012/womensaid-2/>), and spoke with William Bell at the Illinois

Department of Public Health. Per his request, I put my concerns in writing and asked him to forward them to

the Illinois Attorney General's Office and urge their office to begin proceedings against Women's Aid to collect the \$36,000 fine.



The following month, Women's Aid Clinic was evicted [PDF]

(<https://prolifeaction.org/hotline/2013/wac/>) from its Lincolnwood location by its landlord, Hunter Properties, for failing to pay \$50,000 in back rent.

In June 2012, Women's Aid Clinic moved

(<https://prolifeaction.org/hotline/2012/womensaidclinic/>) from Lincolnwood to its current location in Chicago and changed its name to Women's Aid Center.

In August 2012, the state Attorney General's office filed suit [PDF]

(<https://prolifeaction.org/docs/2013/2012-08-12IDPHVWomensAid.pdf>) against Women's Aid in Cook County Court in Chicago to begin collection proceedings. The wheels of justice turn slowly, and after numerous continuances in the case, Rozansky's attorney, Scott Skaletsky, requested an evidentiary hearing, which was held on December 3, 2013.

I attended that hearing, during which Rozansky admitted to Assistant Attorney General Vincent Kan that Women's Aid Center (the "new" corporation) still used the same phone number and website as Women's Aid Clinic (the "old" corporation), and for a period of time processed credit cards via the same Merchant Services Account number as Women's Aid Clinic (the "old" corporation that incurred the \$36,000 fine).

Clearly, Kan argued, this shows that Women's Aid Center was a successor company to Women's Aid Clinic, and that funds from the new Women's Aid Center should be turned over to pay the fine.

Following that hearing, the case was continued until yesterday, January 14, so I was once again in court to hear the attorneys make their closing arguments.

Skaletsky, Rozansky's attorney, argued that Women's Aid Clinic and Women's Aid Center were two "totally different businesses," and that when Women's Aid Clinic closed in March 2012, it had a mere \$77 in its bank account. Skaletsky then told Cook County Judge Alexander White that Rozansky would be willing to write a check to the state for \$77 to "make this go away."

Shockingly, Judge White bought that argument, and ordered Rozansky to send a check for \$77 ([https://w3.courtlink.lexisnexis.com/cookcounty/FindDock.asp?NCase=2012-L-009696&SearchType=0&Database=2&case\\_no=&PLtype=1&sname=&CDate=](https://w3.courtlink.lexisnexis.com/cookcounty/FindDock.asp?NCase=2012-L-009696&SearchType=0&Database=2&case_no=&PLtype=1&sname=&CDate=)) to the Illinois Department of Public Health.

Now it's up to the Illinois Attorney General's office and the Illinois Department of Public Health as to whether to keep pushing to collect more money from Women's Aid Clinic-now-it's-Women's Aid Center.


But they may think that's futile and just give up. If that happens, Larisa Rozansky would pay a mere \$77 – two-tenths of one percent of the original fine amount of \$36,000 – and that would, in the words of her attorney, “make this go away.” And a judge is willing to let that happen.


### **A Dangerous Precedent**


This doesn't even come close to being a slap on the wrist. It's getting off scot-free.

If the AG's office and the IDPH decline to pursue the matter, think of the very dangerous precedent this sets. You can run a shoddy, dangerous abortion clinic, and even if you rack up tens of thousands of dollars in fines by state health inspectors, you can weasel your way out of it by draining your bank account, closing down, declaring the business no longer exists, moving, and reopening under a different name (albeit with the same phone number, website, and Merchant Services account number), employing stall tactics at every opportunity throughout the protracted legal process— **and you can get away with it.**

Apparently, this is justice the Chicago way.

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Pro-Life Action League  
6160 North Cicero Avenue, Suite 600  
Chicago, IL 60646

Tel: 773-777-2900  
Newsline: 773-777-2525