

# ***A State Justice Orders Creation of 750 Beds For Bowery Homeless***

**By CHARLES KAISER**

A State Supreme Court justice in Manhattan has ordered the city and the state to create 750 new beds for the "helpless and hopeless men of the Bowery."

The judge, Justice Andrew R. Tyler, acted in response to a class-action lawsuit filed by two volunteer Legal Aid Society attorneys on behalf of three destitute men. City officials said they had not yet decided whether they would appeal the judge's order.

The Rev. Edward M. O'Brien, executive director of the Holy Name Center for Homeless Men, at 18 Bleecker Street, said in the suit that during previous winters, "indigent, homeless men living on or near the Bowery have suffered frostbite and, in several instances, death from exposure."

Justice Tyler said in his ruling Friday that a sufficient number of shelters was mandated "by the Constitutions of the United States and the State of New York."

## **Suit Names Carey and Koch**

The suit, filed by Robert Hayes and Wendy Addis — the Legal Aid attorneys — named Governor Carey and Mayor Koch as defendants.

Robert Trobe, deputy administrator of Family and Adult Services for the city's Department of Social Services, said the city currently placed 900 men in cheap hotels on and near the Bowery. He said that on cold nights up to 250 others sleep in the "big room" at the Men's Shelter, at 8 East Third Street, where there are no beds.

To increase the number of beds available for such men, the state has agreed to let the city use the Keener Building on Wards Island temporarily. The state has certified the former mental health facility for use by up to 180 men.

Mr. Trobe said it cost \$1.6 million a year to staff a center that can house 150 men. "We've made no decision as to what to do about the judge's order," Mr. Trobe said. "There is enormous community opposition to the placement of these men, we have serious financial restraints and now we have a court order telling us we have to do something."

The judge also forbade the city from closing the Men's Shelter on East Third Street.

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