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**MADIGAN SUES DOG GROOMING SCHOOL FOR DEFRAUDING STUDENTS*****Attorney General Madigan Seeks Immediate Turnover of Student Records and Full Refunds***

**Chicago** — Attorney General Lisa Madigan filed a lawsuit today against a suburban Cook County dog grooming school for defrauding Chicago-area students out of more than \$85,000.

Madigan filed the lawsuit in Cook County Circuit Court against the Academy of Dog Grooming Arts Ltd., located in Arlington Heights, Ill., as well as its owner and president, Sharron Panther and secretary, Mike Panther. Madigan's lawsuit seeks full refunds for students defrauded by the school in addition to civil penalties.

Madigan's lawsuit alleges the Panthers, who are married, misrepresented the school's qualifications to potential students when it operated without a permit necessary for students to obtain the appropriate certificate. The Panthers accepted applications, application fees, tuition fees, health care fees and equipment fees totaling more than \$6,000 per student in some cases, and provided certificates for "Professional Groomer" and "Groomer's Assistant" without a permit, rendering the certificates worthless. The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) ordered the school closed earlier this year. IBHE also ordered the Panthers to turn over all academic records, which they have not. Madigan's lawsuit seeks immediate turnover of student records in addition to full refunds of all money students paid and penalties.

"This school took advantage of students who paid thousands of dollars to pursue a career in animal grooming, but only received a worthless certificate," Madigan said.

Assistant Attorneys General Agnes Ptasznik and Jennifer Crespo are handling the case for Madigan's Consumer Fraud Bureau.

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