



Cheetah Gyms Close Due To "Employee Theft"

By [Kevin Wayne](#)

Owner blames employee theft as the popular gyms close in Chicago

Chicago, IL - Locally-owned Cheetah Gym, a small chain of gyms popular within Chicago's LGBT community, abruptly closed Wednesday.

In a letter to customers owner David Wilshire said the closures were "due to employee theft and graft." He also wrote "The degree of corruption was enormous."

Wilshire added, "I tried my hardest to save it and take back control but it was clear I would not be allowed that opportunity. I was forced to employ people I thought should be fired and that placed me in a Catch 22."

He said the "final straw came yesterday" when one manager left payroll incomplete so that employees could not be paid leaving shifts uncovered. Wilshire did not go into great detail about the employees' alleged misconduct but did write "I hope to prosecute the guilty people or at least sue them."

Wilshire indicated most of the problems were at the Bucktown facility, 1934 W. North Ave., and added, "I do not mean to implicate the entire staff. There were many good and honest people that worked at Cheetah."

In addition to the Bucktown location, Cheetah Gym operated locations at 5838 N. Broadway in the Edgewater neighborhood, and 5248 N. Clark St. in the Andersonville neighborhood.

Below is the letter to Cheetah Gym members from David Wilshire as posted on the Cheetah Gym website before the website was taken offline sometime Wednesday.

Dear Members:

Cheetah Gym has been closed due to employee theft and graft. The degree of corruption was enormous. I was left in a position where I could trust no-one or anything. Most of the problems were at the Bucktown facility. Edgewater, I believe, was relatively free of graft. The scams ran the gamut but it looks like I was the sole victim of theft. However, I urge you to get fraud protection as a precaution.

I do not mean to implicate the entire staff. There were many good and honest people that worked at Cheetah.

Some will herald this news as good while others will be sad. Others will be very angry. I tried my hardest to save it and take back control but it was clear I would not be allowed that opportunity. I was forced to have to employ people who should have been fired. I was in a Catch 22. Employ people who were probably bad and stay open or fire them and close. The final straw came yesterday when the RGM left payroll incomplete and I was left to try and finish it as best I could. Many new employees could not be paid because I was not given their information. The RGM should have been the first to be fired. When she quit we were left with many shifts not covered and no-one to cover them. I had hoped to be able to run them long enough to reinstate the infrastructure. But the task was too great.

You will have to do what you need to do to assert your individual interests. I hope to prosecute the guilty people or at least sue them. But I am likely in the same boat the rest of my staff is in. I am unemployed.

It was an honor to serve you.

David Wilshire