



Steven W. Troxler
Commissioner

North Carolina Department of Agriculture
and Consumer Services
Veterinary Division

Christina L. Waggett
Assistant Commissioner
for Consumer Protection

Michael Martin, DVM
State Veterinarian

July 29, 2026

Jharasen Winterbottom
240 Woodset Drive
Forest City, NC 28043
And via email:
itdependsonthedog@gmail.com

NOTICE of CIVIL PENALTY

Re: CIVIL PENALTY ASSESSMENT for VIOLATION of NC GENERAL STATUTE § 19A-28

AWS-CP-2026-10

Facility: In-home boarding kennel
License Number: Unlicensed

Dear Ms. Winterbottom:

Pursuant to NCGS § 19A-40, I am issuing this notice that you as owner and operator of an unlicensed in-home boarding kennel ("the kennel") are hereby assessed a civil penalty of \$2,500.00 as provided in the enclosed Notice of Violation.

With regard to the civil penalty, within 60 days from the date of this Notice, you must do one of the following:

1. Pay the civil penalty assessment;
2. File a written petition for a contested case hearing with the N.C. Office of Administrative Hearings to appeal the penalty assessment; or
3. Pursuant to NCGS § 150B-22, initiate informal settlement negotiations. To negotiate a settlement of this assessment, you may contact me by telephone at (919) 707-3280 or email Patricia.Norris@ncagr.gov. Settlement offers do not extend the 60-day deadline for payment or filing of a contested case petition.

Additional information about your options is provided below:

PAYMENT

To pay the penalty, please send your payment by check or money order made payable to the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to:

North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Dr. Patricia Norris
Director, Animal Welfare Section
1030 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1030

APPEAL

If you file a contested case petition, it must be in writing and in the form prescribed by NCGS § 150B-23. The petition must be filed with the N.C. Office of Administrative Hearings ("OAH") within 60 days of the date of this document. Additionally, the petition must be accompanied by a filing fee of twenty dollars (\$20.00). Payment can be made by cash, money order, certified check or check drawn on an attorney's trust account. Make checks payable to: Office of Administrative Hearings. File the petition and one copy with:

Office of Administrative Hearings
6714 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-6714

Any questions about filing a petition may be directed to the Clerk of OAH by telephone at 919-431-3000.

You must serve NCDA&CS by mailing a copy of the petition to:

Mr. Jonathan Lanier
North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Registered Agent and General Counsel
1001 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1001

Payment of the penalty will not foreclose further enforcement action against you for any new violation. If the violations which resulted in the assessment are of a continuing nature, NCDA&CS reserves the right to assess additional civil penalties in the future or take other enforcement action against you.

Your attention to this matter is appreciated.

Sincerely,



Patricia Norris, DVM, MS
Director, Animal Welfare Section

Attachment: Notice of Violations, Assessment of Civil Penalty

cc: Michael Martin, DVM, State Veterinarian
Jonathan Lanier, General Counsel, NCDA&CS
Christina L. Waggett, Assistant Commissioner, NCDA&CS
Lindsey Spain, Special Deputy Attorney General

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF RUTHERFORD

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER
SERVICES, VETERINARY DIVISION
ANIMAL WELFARE SECTION

IN THE MATTER OF)
)
JHARASEN WINTERBOTTOM,) NOTICE of VIOLATION and
) ASSESSMENT of CIVIL PENALTY
) for VIOLATION of N.C. GENERAL
) STATUTE ("NCGS") § 19A-28.
)

Acting pursuant to NCGS § 19A-40, Dr. Patricia Norris, Director, Animal Welfare Section ("AWS"), North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services ("NCDA&CS") makes the following:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. At all times pertinent to this matter, in-home boarding kennel ("the kennel"), owned and operated by Jharasen Winterbottom, was a boarding kennel that was not licensed with AWS as a boarding kennel pursuant to NCGS § 19A-28.
2. On May 29, 2026, AWS received information from Rutherford County Animal Control that a dog died while being boarded at the kennel. Based on this information, AWS opened an investigation. The investigation centered on possible violation(s) of the N.C. Animal Welfare Act ("AWA") as these statutes and associated regulations are the extent of the jurisdiction of AWS.
3. The investigation found the following:
 - a. On May 10, 2026, 2 dogs, Eddie and Wembley were left for boarding at the residence of Jharasen Winterbottom. The dogs had been boarded at this in-home kennel several times previously;
 - b. On May 11, 2026, the dogs' owner was informed by the kennel owner that Wembley had been killed by another dog while the dogs were in the outdoor exercise area unsupervised. The kennel owner had taken the dog immediately to a nearby veterinary hospital, but Wembley died prior to treatment;
 - c. During a routine Facility Compliance Inspection ("FCI") of the Rutherford County Animal Shelter, an Animal Control ("AC") Officer mentioned the death of Wembley. AWS Veterinary Specialist Eudy ("Inspector Eudy") obtained a copy of the AC report;
 - d. On June 15, 2026, Inspector Eudy contacted Ms. Winterbottom and discussed the incident, informed her of the AWA statutes and rules requiring the licensing of boarding kennels, and explained that facilities, including residences, must be licensed before animals can be boarded;
 - e. On June 23, 2026, Ms. Winterbottom requested a courtesy inspection which was scheduled for July 17, 2026. During this conversation, Inspector Eudy reminded Ms. Winterbottom that she could not board animals until she had obtained a boarding kennel license;
 - f. On July 14, 2026, Inspector Eudy spoke with Ms. Winterbottom, who stated that she was currently boarding someone's dog because it was her only source of income. She also stated that she had accepted a reservation for another dog to board in the near future;
 - g. On July 17, 2026, Inspector Eudy conducted a courtesy FCI of areas of the residence which

Ms. Winterbottom intended to use as a kennel. She discussed the changes that would be required and options for starting small and adding on as resources allowed.

4. A review of AWS documentation showed that an application for a boarding kennel license has not been received by AWS as of the date of this Notice.

CONCLUSIONS

To the extent that the Findings of Fact contain Conclusions of Law, or that the Conclusions of Law are Findings of Fact, they should be so considered without regard to the given labels. Based on the findings of this investigation, AWS concludes that Jharasen Winterbottom as the owner of the in-home residence kennel violated the following provision:

NCGS §19A-28 for operating a boarding kennel without obtaining a license granted by the AWS Director to operate such an establishment. This violation resulted in the death of a dog.

CIVIL PENALTY

As required by NCGS § 19A-40, in determining the amount of the civil penalty, I have considered the degree and extent of harm caused by the violation listed above.

Accordingly, Jharasen Winterbottom, as the owner of the in-home residence kennel, is hereby assessed a civil penalty for the following violation:

\$2,500.00 for the violation of NCGS § 19A-28 for operating a boarding kennel without obtaining a license granted by the AWS Director to operate such an establishment. This violation resulted in the death of a dog.

\$2,500.00 TOTAL AMOUNT ASSESSED

Pursuant to NC General Statute § 19A-33, operation of a boarding kennel without a valid license constitutes a Class 3 misdemeanor with each day of operation constituting a separate offense. In addition, operation of a boarding kennel without a valid license is a violation of the NC Animal Welfare Act and may result in the assessment of a civil penalty of up to \$5,000.00 per violation pursuant to NC General Statute § 19A-40 and/or the suspension, revocation, or denial of a license pursuant to NC General Statute § 19A-30.

(See Appendix for text of referenced General Statutes and Administrative Code)



July 29, 2026
Date

Patricia Norris, DVM, MS
Director, Animal Welfare Section
North Carolina Department of
Agriculture & Consumer Services

Appendix

REFERENCED LAWS AND REGULATIONS

§ 19A-28. License required for public auction or boarding kennel.

No person shall operate a public auction or a boarding kennel unless a license to operate such establishment shall have been granted by the Director. Application for such license shall be made in the manner provided by the Director. The license period shall be the fiscal year and the license fee shall be seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) for each license period or part thereof beginning with the first day of the fiscal year.

§ 19A-30. Refusal, suspension or revocation of certificate or license.

The Director may refuse to issue or renew or may suspend or revoke a certificate of registration for any animal shelter or a license for any public auction, kennel, pet shop, or dealer, if after an impartial investigation as provided in this Article he determines that any one or more of the following grounds apply:

- (1) Material misstatement in the application for the original certificate of registration or license or in the application for any renewal under this Article;
- (2) Willful disregard or violation of this Article or any rules issued pursuant thereto;
- (3) Failure to provide adequate housing facilities and/or primary enclosures for the purposes of this Article, or if the feeding, watering, sanitizing and housing practices at the animal shelter, public auction, pet shop, or kennel are not consistent with the intent of this Article or the rules adopted under this Article;
- (4) Allowing one's license under this Article to be used by an unlicensed person;
- (5) Conviction of any crime an essential element of which is misstatement, fraud, or dishonesty, or conviction of any felony;
- (6) Making substantial misrepresentations or false promises of a character likely to influence, persuade, or induce in connection with the business of a public auction, commercial kennel, pet shop, or dealer;
- (7) Pursuing a continued course of misrepresentation of or making false promises through advertising, salesmen, agents, or otherwise in connection with the business to be licensed;
- (8) Failure to possess the necessary qualifications or to meet the requirements of this Article for the issuance or holding of a certificate of registration or license.

The Director shall, before refusing to issue or renew and before suspension or revocation of a certificate of registration or a license, give to the applicant or holder thereof a written notice containing a statement indicating in what respects the applicant or holder has failed to satisfy the requirements for the holding of a certificate of registration or a license. If a certificate of registration or a license is suspended or revoked under the provisions hereof, the holder shall have five days from such suspension or revocation to surrender all certificates of registration or licenses issued thereunder to the Director or his authorized representative.

A person to whom a certificate of registration or a license is denied, suspended, or revoked by the Director may contest the action by filing a petition under G.S. 150B-23 within five days after the denial, suspension, or revocation.

Any licensee whose license is revoked under the provisions of this Article shall not be eligible to apply for a new license hereunder until one year has elapsed from the date of the order revoking said license or if an appeal is taken from said order of revocation, one year from the date of the order or final

judgment sustaining said revocation. Any person who has been an officer, agent, or employee of a licensee whose license has been revoked or suspended and who is responsible for or participated in the violation upon which the order of suspension or revocation was based, shall not be licensed within the period during which the order of suspension or revocation is in effect.

§ 19A-33. Penalty for operation of pet shop, kennel or auction without license.

Operation of a pet shop, kennel, or public auction without a currently valid license shall constitute a Class 3 misdemeanor subject only to a penalty of not less than five dollars (\$5.00) nor more than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00), and each day of operation shall constitute a separate offense.

§ 19A-40. Civil Penalties.

The Director may assess a civil penalty of not more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000) against any person who violates a provision of this Article or any rule promulgated thereunder. In determining the amount of the penalty, the Director shall consider the degree and extent of harm caused by the violation. The clear proceeds of civil penalties assessed pursuant to this section shall be remitted to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in accordance with G.S. 115C-457.2.