



**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

June 18, 2026

Eric Evans  
Edgecombe County Manager  
201 Andrew Street  
Tarboro, NC 27886  
and  
Sheriff Atkinson  
3005 Anaconda Rd.  
Tarboro, NC 27886  
Via Hand Delivery

**NOTICE of CIVIL PENALTY and NOTICE of WARNING**

**Re: CIVIL PENALTY ASSESSMENT for VIOLATIONS of NC GENERAL STATUTE (“NCGS”) § 19A-32.1(a) and TITLE 02 N.C. ADMINISTRATIVE CODE (“NCAC”) CHAPTER 52J SECTION .0418(8) and NOTICE of WARNING for VIOLATIONS of 02 NCAC 52J .0101(4) and (6); .0201(r); 0203(e); .0207(a) and (d)(5); .0301(c); .0801; and .0803(16) and (17).**

**AWS-CP-2026-7**

**Facility: Edgecombe Animal Shelter**  
**Registration Number: 473**

Dear Sheriff Atkinson and County Manager Evans:

Pursuant to NCGS § 19A-40, I am issuing this notice that Edgecombe County/Edgecombe County Sheriff’s Office, as the owner/operator of the Edgecombe County Animal Shelter (“the shelter”), is hereby assessed a civil penalty of \$3,000.00 as provided in the enclosed Notice of Violation.

With regard to the civil penalty, within 60 days from the date of receipt 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 at 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 from 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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Patricia Norris DVM MS".

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 EDGECOMBE

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

IN THE MATTER of )  
 )  
EDGECOMBE COUNTY/ )  
 )  
EDGECOMBE COUNTY )  
 )  
SHERIFF’S OFFICE as )  
 )  
OWNER/OPERATOR of )  
 )  
EDGECOMBE COUNTY )  
 )  
ANIMAL SHELTER )  
 )

NOTICE of VIOLATION and ASSESSMENT of  
CIVIL PENALTY for VIOLATIONS of NC  
GENERAL STATUTE (“NCGS”) §19A-32.1(a),  
and TITLE 02 NC ADMINISTRATIVE  
CODE (“NCAC”) CHAPTER 52J SECTION  
.0418(8), and NOTICE of WARNING for  
VIOLATIONS of NCGS §19A-32.1(i) and  
02 NCAC 52J SECTIONS .0101(4) and (6);  
.0201(r); .0203(e); .0207(a) and (d)(5); .0301(c);  
) .0801; and .0803(16) and (17).

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, the Edgecombe Animal Shelter (“the shelter”), owned/operated by Edgecombe County/Edgecombe County Sheriff’s Office, was an animal shelter registered pursuant to NCGS §19A-26.
2. On June 10, 2026, AWS Veterinary Program Specialist Lynn (“Inspector Lynn”) conducted a Facility Compliance Inspection (“FCI”) of the shelter. The following information was obtained during this FCI:
  - a. In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0101(4) and (6), the record for the shepherd mix dog (Intake number 26-245) was inaccurate and failed to document the name of the person to whom the dog was returned. The animal’s record only noted that it was returned to “John Doe.”
  - b. In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0201(r), the facility did not have a current plan of action for the continuity of care and/or evacuation of animals in the event of a natural or manmade disaster developed or maintained. A review of the shelter’s 2026-2027 Animal Shelter Registration renewal application dated May 21, 2026 checked “Yes” to the question: Does your facility have an emergency plan?;
  - c. In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0203(e), the play yards did not have adequate protection from inclement weather and sun;
  - d. In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0207(a), the feral cat room was not being properly cleaned a minimum of two times per day;
  - e. In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0207(d)(5), the food and water receptacles were not being sanitized daily with hot water, detergent, and disinfectant;

- f. In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0301(c), the interior of the animal holding space of the Animal Control truck had not been properly cleaned after the transport of each animal. The staff stated that it was not their protocol to clean/sanitize the dog transport areas between animals;
- g. In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0418(8), 5 puppies (Intake numbers 26-232, 26-236, 26-237, 26-238, and 26-239) were improperly euthanized with Euthasol® via intraperitoneal (IP) injections. The use of this euthanasia product in an IP injection and the use of an IP injection for the sizes/ages of these 5 puppies was not in accordance with the rules of the NC Animal Welfare Act (“AWA”);
- h. In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0801, the shelter’s euthanasia policy and procedure manual was not current;
- i. In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0803(16), the shelter’s euthanasia manual did not include information detailing the signs and symptoms associated with human exposure to the agents used for euthanasia at the facility;
- j. In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0803(17), the shelter’s euthanasia manual did not include the information detailing first aid for people accidentally exposed to the agents used for euthanasia at the facility;
- k. In violation of NCGS § 19A-32.1(a), 2 stray animals (Intake numbers 26-246 and 26-248) were not held for the minimum 72-hour hold prior to being adopted;
- l. In violation of NCGS § 19A-32.1(i), the shelter failed to obtain the required information from the persons to whom 3 animals were transferred. The Intake numbers for the 3 animals were: 26-245, 26-246, and 26-247; and
- m. This FCI was “Disapproved” due to the number of violations and the improper euthanasia of the 5 puppies.

## 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 the AWS investigation, AWS finds that the shelter violated the following provisions:

02 NCAC 52J .0101(4) and (6), the shelter failed to document the name and address of the person to whom the shepherd mix dog (Intake number 26-245) was returned as noted on June 10, 2026. The shelter’s record for this animal was inaccurate as it noted that the dog was returned to “John Doe.”

02 NCAC 52J .0201(r), the shelter failed to have a current plan of action for the continuity of care and/or evacuation of animals in the event of a natural or manmade disaster developed or maintained as noted on June 10, 2026.

02 NCAC 52J .0203(e), the shelter failed to provide the play yards with adequate protection from inclement weather and sun as noted on June 10, 2026.

02 NCAC 52J .0207(a), the shelter failed to properly clean the feral cat room a minimum of two times per day as noted on June 10, 2026.

02 NCAC 52J .0207(d)(5), the shelter failed to sanitize the food and water receptacles daily with hot water, detergent, and disinfectant as noted on June 10, 2026.

02 NCAC 52J .0301(c), the shelter failed to properly clean the interior of the animal holding space of the Animal Control truck after the transport of each animal as noted on June 10, 2026.

02 NCAC 52J .0418(8), the shelter failed to euthanize 5 puppies in accordance with the rules of the AWA as noted on June 10, 2026.

02 NCAC 52J .0801, the shelter failed to have a current euthanasia policy and procedure manual as noted on June 10, 2026.

02 NCAC 52J .0803(16), the shelter failed to include information detailing the signs and symptoms associated with human exposure to the agents used for euthanasia at the facility in the shelter's euthanasia manual as noted on June 10, 2026.

02 NCAC 52J .0803(17), the shelter failed to include in the shelter's euthanasia manual the information detailing first aid for people accidentally exposed to the agents used for euthanasia at the facility as noted on June 10, 2026.

NCGS §19A-32.1(a), the shelter failed to hold 2 stray animals for the minimum 72-hour hold prior to disposition of the animals noted on June 10, 2026.

NCGS §19A-32.1(i), the shelter failed to obtain the required information from the persons to whom 3 animals were transferred as noted on June 10, 2026.

Pursuant to NCGS §§ 19A-30 and 19A-40, these violations can result in the suspension, revocation, or refusal to renew a registration for any animal shelter and/or the assessment of a civil penalty of up to \$5,000 per violation.

### **CIVIL PENALTIES**

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 violations listed above.

Accordingly, Edgecombe County/Edgecombe County Sheriff's Office, as the owner/operator of the Edgecombe County Animal Shelter, is hereby assessed a civil penalty for the following violations:

\$2,500.00 for 5 violations (\$500 per violation) of 02 NCAC 52J .0418(8), for failure to euthanize 5 puppies in accordance with the rules of the NC Animal Welfare Act as noted on June 10, 2026.

\$500.00 for 2 violations (\$250.00 per violation) of NCGS §19A-32.1(a) for failure to hold 2 stray animals for the minimum 72-hour hold prior to the disposition of the animals as noted on June 10, 2026.

**\$3,000.00 TOTAL AMOUNT ASSESSED**

Continued or future violation of the statutes or regulations referenced in this letter will be considered a willful disregard or violation of the N.C. Animal Welfare Act and the rules issued pursuant thereto. Such

willful disregard or violation may result in action against your facility's registration pursuant to NCGS § 19A-30 and/or the assessment of a civil penalty of up to \$5,000.00 per violation under NCGS § 19A-40.

### NOTICE of WARNING

As to the remaining violations of NCGS §19A-32.1(i) and 02 NCAC 52J .0101(4) and (6); .0201(r); 0203(e); .0207(a) and (d)(5); .0301(c); .0801; and .0803(16) and (17), this Warning Letter serves as written notice indicating in which respects the shelter may have violated the NC Animal Welfare Act and the rules issued pursuant thereto.

Continued or future violations of these statutes or regulations will be considered a willful disregard or violation of the N.C. Animal Welfare Act and the rules issued pursuant thereto. Such a willful disregard or violation may result in action against your facility's registration pursuant to N.C. General Statute § 19A-30 and/or the assessment of a civil penalty of up to \$5,000.00 per violation under N.C. General Statute § 19A-40.

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

June 18, 2026  
Date



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

## Appendix

### REFERENCED STATUTES AND REGULATIONS

#### **§ 19A-26. Certificate of registration required for animal shelter.**

No person shall operate an animal shelter unless a certificate of registration for such animal shelter shall have been granted by the Director. Application for such certificate shall be made in the manner provided by the Director. No fee shall be required for such application or certificate. Certificates of registration shall be valid for a period of one year or until suspended or revoked and may be renewed for like periods upon application in the manner provided.

#### **§ 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-32.1. Minimum holding period for animals in animal shelters; public viewing of animals in animal shelters; disposition of animals.**

- (a) Except as otherwise provided in this section, all animals received by an animal shelter or by an agent of an animal shelter shall be held for a minimum holding period of 72 hours, or for any longer minimum period established by a board of county commissioners, prior to being euthanized or otherwise disposed of.
- (i) An animal shelter shall require every person to whom an animal is released to present one of the following valid forms of government-issued photographic identification: (i) a drivers license, (ii) a special identification card issued under G.S. 20-37.7, (iii) a military identification card, or (iv) a passport. Upon presentation of the required photographic identification, the shelter shall document the name of the person, the type of photographic identification presented by the person, and the photographic identification number.

**§ 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.

**02 NCAC 52J .0101 RECORDS; ANIMAL SHELTERS, ETC.**

Operators of all animal shelters, pet shops, public auctions, and dealers shall maintain records on all dogs and cats showing the following:

- (4) disposition of animals including name and address of person to whom animal is sold, traded, transferred, or adopted, and the date and time of such transaction; name and address of intermediary transporter if used; in the event of death, the record shall show the date, signs of illness, and cause of death if identified; if euthanized, the record shall show date and type of euthanasia;
- (6) all records shall be created and/or updated within 48 hours of the occurrence of procedures, including but not limited to intake, change of location, medication or treatment administration and/or disposition. The record shall be accurate; creation of a misleading record or deliberate or non-incident falsification of a record including medication administration documentation during or after an investigation or inspection shall be considered a violation of this regulation.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 19A-24; Eff. April 1, 1984; Amended Eff. January 1, 2005; April 1, 1985; Readopted Eff. September 1, 2022.*

**02 NCAC 52J .0201 GENERAL**

(r) All licensed and registered facilities must develop and maintain a plan of action for the continuity of care and/or evacuation of animals in the event of a natural or manmade disaster.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 19A-24; 19A-30(3); Eff. April 1, 1984; Amended Eff. January 1, 2005; Readopted Eff. October 1, 2022.*

**02 NCAC 52J .0203 OUTDOOR FACILITIES**

(e) Dogs and cats in outdoor areas shall be provided adequate protection from inclement weather and the Sun. This protection shall be sufficient to protect all animals simultaneously in the exercise area. If an animal cannot maintain its normal body temperature in an outdoor exercise area, the animal shall not be placed in an outside exercise area.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 19A-24; Eff. April 1, 1984; Amended Eff. March 23, 2009; January 1, 2005; Readopted Eff. September 1, 2022.*

**02 NCAC 52J .0207 SANITATION**

(a) Waste shall be removed from primary enclosures, exercise areas and common areas to prevent contamination of the dogs or cats contained therein and to reduce disease hazards and odors. Enclosures and exercise areas for dogs and cats shall be properly cleaned a minimum of two times per day. The animal must be able to walk or lie down without coming in contact with any waste or debris.

(d) Sanitation shall be as follows:

- (5) food and water receptacles shall be sanitized daily with hot water, detergent, and disinfectant. The disinfectant shall be used consistent with the manufacturer's directions;

*History Note: Authority G.S. 19A-24; Eff. April 1, 1984; Amended Eff. January 1, 2005; April 1, 1985; Readopted Eff. September 1, 2022.*

**02 NCAC 52J .0301 VEHICLES**

(c) The interior of the animal holding space shall be properly cleaned after the transport of each animal. The holding space shall be sanitized between use for shipments.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 19A-24; Eff. April 1, 1984; Readopted Eff. October 1, 2022.*

**02 NCAC 52J .0418 DUTIES**

A Certified Euthanasia Technician shall:

- (8) Euthanize animals in accordance with the rules of this Section; and

*History Note: Authority G.S. 19A-24; Eff. March 23, 2009; Readopted Eff. October 1, 2022.*

**02 NCAC 52J .0801 MANUAL REQUIRED**

Any certified facility performing euthanasia shall have a current policy and procedure manual about euthanasia.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 19A-24; Eff. March 23, 2009; Readopted Eff. September 1, 2022.*

**02 NCAC 52J .0803 ADDITIONAL CONTENTS**

A certified facility's policy and procedure manual shall be kept consistent with the publications listed below and reflect the current information for each. The manual shall include:

- (16) Information detailing the signs and symptoms associated with human exposure to the agents used for euthanasia at the facility;
- (17) Information detailing First Aid for people accidentally exposed to the agents used for euthanasia at the facility; and

*History Note: Authority G.S. 19A-24; Eff. March 23, 2009; Readopted Eff. September 1, 2022.*