



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

December 19, 2025

Siglinda Scarpa
Owner, The Goathouse Refuge
680 Alton Alston Road
Pittsboro, NC 27312
and via email:
siglinda@goathouserefuge.org

**NOTICE of SUSPENSION of ANIMAL SHELTER CERTIFICATE of REGISTRATION for The
GOATHOUSE REFUGE ANIMAL SHELTER**

**Facility: The Goathouse Refuge
Registration Number 264**

Dear Ms. Scarpa:

Pursuant to N.C. General Statute ("NCGS") § 19A-30(2), (3), and (8), the Animal Welfare Section ("AWS"), North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services ("NCDA&CS"), provides you this notice that the animal shelter certificate of registration for The Goathouse Refuge Animal Shelter ("the shelter") is hereby **SUSPENDED** due to the shelter's severe, repeated, and willful violations of the North Carolina Animal Welfare Act ("AWA") and its associated rules as set forth in the attached documentation.

Given the severity of the violations, the imminent danger to the animals in the care and custody of the shelter due to those violations, and the immediate public health and welfare concerns posed by the operation of the shelter, the certificate of registration is summarily suspended effective upon the date of this notice. Pursuant to NCGS § 19A-30, the shelter has 5 days in which to surrender the certificate of registration for the shelter issued thereunder to the AWS Director.

Therefore, you are notified to immediately to **CEASE AND DESIST** operation of the shelter located at 680 Alton Alston Road, Pittsboro, NC. You have a grace period of 30 days from the date of this Notice of **SUSPENSION** to find suitable accommodation for all animals in the care and custody of the shelter by either surrendering the animals to a registered animal shelter or transferring to a rescue that is in compliance with the AWA. As the shelter is required by the AWA and its associated rules to retain records of the disposition of the animals, the records of the disposition of these animals are to be maintained by the shelter and are subject to review by AWS.

As the animal shelter certificate of registration is **SUSPENDED**, the shelter may not intake any additional animals as of the date of this notice. The care and housing of these animals and other animals in the care

and custody of the shelter pending placement to other facilities must be in compliance with the AWA and its associated rules.

If the shelter continues to operate as a shelter or conducts any other related shelter activity other than continuing to house animals in its care and custody while finding suitable accommodations, AWS has the authority to seek legal relief and to impose a civil penalty of up to five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) per violation pursuant to NCGS § 19A-40. Further, in the above-described permitted activities, the shelter must house or care for the animals in compliance with the AWA and maintain records for the disposition of the animals. If the shelter fails to do so, AWS has the authority to seek legal relief and to impose a civil penalty of up to five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) per violation pursuant to NCGS § 19A-40.

You may contest this decision by filing a Petition for a Contested Case Hearing, pursuant to the North Carolina Administrative Procedure Act, within five (5) days of the date of this Notice of Revocation (see below, "Appeal").

Pursuant to NCGS § 150B-22, either party to a dispute may initiate informal settlement negotiations at any time. To negotiate a settlement, you may contact me by telephone at (919) 707-3280 or via email at patricia.norris@ncagr.gov. Settlement offers do not extend the 5-day deadline for filing of a contested case petition.

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 5 days from your receipt 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

If the violations which resulted in the revocation are of a continuing or repeating nature, NCDA&CS reserves the right to take additional enforcement action against you.

Your immediate attention to this matter is required.

Sincerely,

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

Patricia Norris, DVM, MS
Director, Animal Welfare Section

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 CHATHAM

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

IN THE MATTER of)	NOTICE of SUSPENSION for VIOLATIONS
)	of NC GENERAL STATUTE ("NCGS")
SIGLINDA SCARPA)	§19A-32.1(j) and TITLE 02 NC
)	ADMINISTRATIVE CODE ("NCAC") CHAPTER
OWNER of THE GOATHOUSE)	52J SECTIONS .0101(1), (4), (5) and (6); .0103;
)	.0201(a), (b), (j), (m) and (q); .0202(a)(2) and;(d);
REFUGE)	.0203(a)(2), (b)(2) and (c); .0204(a), (b), and(c);
)	.0207(a) and (e); .0209(6) and (7)(a); and .0210(d)
)	and (h).
)	
)	

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 Goathouse Refuge ("the shelter"), was an animal shelter registered pursuant to NCGS § 19A-26.
2. On September 22, 2025, AWS received a complaint containing multiple allegations of violations against the shelter. 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. On September 24, 2025, AWS Veterinary Program Coordinator Shore and AWS Veterinary Program Specialist Bowes ("Inspectors Shore and Bowes") conducted a site visit at the shelter as part of the investigation. The following information was obtained from the site visit:
 - a) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0101(1), a review of the available records showed that the shelter failed to maintain records of the origin of several animals;
 - b) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0101(5), the shelter failed to maintain records of veterinary care as the records for multiple animals were missing the required information for the administration of medications, dewormers, and vaccinations;
 - c) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0103, the shelter was unable match each animal to its record when requested;
 - d) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0103, the shelter failed to provide required records upon request;
 - e) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0201(a), the outer fencing around the property was moved and now areas were present that were not secure enough to contain the cats;
 - f) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0201(b), the shelter failed to cover the electrical outlets so that the cats did not have access to them;

- g) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0201(j), the shelter failed to allow inspection of all areas of a facility. The shelter owner admitted that there were shelter cats in her residence that were receiving veterinary care, but she refused to allow the Inspectors access to this area to check on the welfare of the animals and the conditions of their housing. This refusal was repeated on the October 9, 2025 follow-up site visit;
- h) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0201(q), the shelter failed to provide smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms to the facility. This violation was also previously cited in the November 13, 2023 and November 19, 2024 Facility Compliance Inspection (“FCI”) reports;
- i) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0202(d), the shelter failed to maintain surfaces with which animals come in contact impervious to moisture and able to be readily sanitized. The paint on the floors in the enclosed patio area of the main building was chipped and peeling. This violation was also previously cited in the November 13, 2023, February 28, 2024, and November 19, 2024 FCI reports;
- j) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0203(a)(2), the shelter failed to maintain a minimum depth of 6” of gravel in the enclosed yard off the green room of the main building. This violation was also previously cited in the November 13, 2023, February 28, 2024, and November 19, 2024 FCI reports;
- k) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0203(b)(2), the shelter failed to maintain a minimum depth of 6” of gravel throughout the yards and walkways. This violation was also previously cited in the November 13, 2023, February 28, 2024, and November 19, 2024 FCI reports;
- l) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0203(c), the shelter failed to maintain a minimum depth of 6” of gravel in the outside yards such that sand is now the groundcover in these areas. This violation was also previously cited in the November 13, 2023, February 28, 2024, and November 19, 2024 FCI reports;
- m) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0204(a), the shelter failed to maintain surfaces in the primary enclosures and exercise areas so that they are impervious to moisture. Examples included rust on wire crates, carpeted/wood accessories, unsealed flooring in the kitten cabana, damaged doors in the intake building, and rusted metal legs on the crate stands. This violation was also cited in the November 19, 2024 FCI report;
- n) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0204(b), the shelter failed to remove wood from the animals’ access. Examples included wood beams in the main building, kitten room, and green room, wood posts of the crate support tables in the outbuilding, and the wood floor of the metal storage building that was accessible to the cats. This violation was also previously cited in the November 19, 2024 FCI report;
- o) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0204(c), the shelter failed to maintain primary enclosures and exercise areas in good repair and in a manner to prevent injury to animals as evidenced by the damaged metal flashing and siding with exposed sharp edges that posed a risk of injury to the cats;
- p) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0207(a), the shelter failed to properly clean or sanitize all the doors to the outbuildings;
- q) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0209(6), the shelter failed to designate an isolation area for animals being treated or observed for communicable diseases. The shelter owner said that her residence was being used as the isolation area for the shelter but then refused to allow the Inspectors access to inspect this area so that the shelter’s compliance with the rules related to isolation of animals could not be verified;
- r) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0209(7)(a), the shelter failed to document the provision of daily social interaction and enrichment to the long-term care animals. The shelter owner stated that

the shelter would not comply with this rule as there was not enough time for staff to do so. This violation was also previously cited in the April 12, 2023, November 13, 2023, February 28, 2024, and November 19, 2024 FCI reports;

- s) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0210(d), the shelter did not allow verification of the provision of adequate veterinary care in a timely manner. The shelter owner stated that ill and injured animals requiring veterinary care were housed in her residence. The shelter owner then refused to allow the Inspectors access to inspect this area so that the shelter's compliance with the rules related to the provision of veterinary care could not be verified; and
- t) In violation of NCGS §19A-32.1(j), the shelter failed to make animal records available for inspection when requested.

4. On October 9, 2025, Inspector Shore conducted a follow-up site visit. The following information was obtained from this site visit:

- a) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0101(4), a review of the shelter's records showed that the shelter failed to document the escape of the cat named Patch. Shelter staff relayed that Patch had escaped approximately 2 weeks prior to this site visit;
- b) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0103, the shelter was unable to match each animal to its record when requested; and
- c) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0201(m), the shelter owner failed to be truthful during this investigation as she stated that there were only 2 shelter cats, Cupid and Love, that were housed in her residence. During the November 20, 2025 site visit, the shelter staff relayed that following the October 9, 2025 site visit, the shelter owner told the staff to move the shelter cats from her house back to the shelter. They stated that approximately 15-20 cats were removed from the shelter owner's house and moved back to the shelter.

5. On November 20, 2025, Inspector Shore and AWS Veterinary Program Coordinator Bradley ("Inspector Bradley") conducted another follow-up site visit. The following information was obtained from this site visit:

- a) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0101(5), the shelter failed to maintain records of the veterinary care to the cat named Smudge. Smudge was prescribed amoxicillin to be given from July 18 – August 2, 2025. This medication administration record for Smudge does not record the administration of the amoxicillin to Smudge from July 31 – August 2, 2025. Smudge was then prescribed doxycycline to be administered from August 2 – 30, 2025. This medication administration record for Smudge does not record the administration of doxycycline to Smudge from August 16-30, 2025;
- b) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0103, the shelter was unable to produce the records of the veterinary care being provided to 3 kittens suffering from Upper Respiratory Infection ("URI") at the time of the site visit;
- c) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0101(6), the shelter staff deliberately falsified the records of the 3 kittens noted in 5.a. above when they provided the records on November 25, 2025. In a conversation with the shelter staff on November 26, 2025 concerning the discrepancies in these records, the staff admitted to falsifying the records before sending them to the AWS Inspectors;
- d) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0101(6), the records of the 3 kittens noted above were not updated within 48 hours of the administration of medications as required;
- e) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0101(6), the shelter failed to maintain accurate records as Smudge's record showed that he was documented as a female when he is a male. Smudge's

record noted that he was being isolated after his neuter surgery on November 12 or 14, 2025, and as of November 26, 2025, Smudge had not been neutered. Smudge was prescribed cephalexin on November 14, 2025, but his medication administration record shows the medication was administered on November 12, 2025;

- f) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0202(a)(2), the shelter failed to maintain the temperature inside the refuge facility between 50 - 85 °F as it was above 85°F due to the operation of the wood-burning stove;
 - g) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0204(c), the shelter failed to maintain primary enclosures and exercise areas in good repair and in a manner to prevent injury to animals as evidenced by the broken windowpane in the kitten room of the refuge building that posed a significant risk of injury to the cats;
 - h) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0207(e), the shelter failed to properly maintain the premises as mushrooms were found growing in the outdoor exercise area that could be toxic to the free-roaming shelter cats;
 - i) In violation of 02 NCAC 52J .0210(h), a review of the shelter records showed that cats either had an expired or no rabies vaccination. A list of cats provided by the shelter to the Chatham County Sheriff's Office and given to Inspector Shore on November 19, 2025 showed that at least 91 cats were without a current rabies vaccination.
6. During the October 9, 2025 and November 20, 2025 follow-up site visits, no corrective actions had been initiated or completed to address the violations of 02 NCAC 52J .0101(1) and (5); .0103; 0201(a), (b), (j), and (q); .0202(d); .0203(a)(2), (b)(2), and (c); .0204(a), (b), and (c); .0207(a); 0209(6) and (7)(a); .0210(d) and (h) and NCGS §19A-32.1(j).
7. On December 8, 2025, AWS issued a Notice of Violation and Notice of Intent to Suspend the Animal Certificate of Registration to The Goathouse Refuge. In this Notice, the shelter was informed that prior to AWS issuing a final decision as to the suspension, the shelter had 5 business days from the receipt of the notification to submit any information that showed the shelter's compliance with all lawful requirements for retention of the animal shelter certificate of registration.
8. Other than an email sent on December 11, 2025 by someone who said they had been given permission by the shelter owner to present a plan to address violations noted in the shelter's Disapproved November 20, 2025 Facility Compliance Inspection (FCI"), the shelter has failed to respond to the request for information to reconsider the suspension. The December 11, 2025 email did not address the December 8, 2025 Notice or indicate in any way that the email was a response to 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 the AWS investigation, AWS finds that the shelter, either by act or omission, violated the following provisions:

02 NCAC 52J .0101(1) for failure to maintain records of the origin of several animals as noted on September 24, 2025. This is the SECOND violation of this rule as the shelter owner was assessed a Civil Penalty for violation of this rule on December 12, 2023.

02 NCAC 52J .0101(4) for failure to maintain records of the disposition of the cat named Patch as the cat had escaped from the shelter approximately 2 weeks prior as noted on October 9, 2025. This is the SECOND violation of this rule as the shelter owner was assessed a Civil Penalty for violation of this rule on December 12, 2023.

02 NCAC 52J .0101(5) for failure to maintain records of veterinary care as the records for multiple animals were missing the required information for the administration of medications, dewormers, and vaccinations as noted on September 24, 2025. This is the THIRD violation of this rule as the shelter owner was assessed a Civil Penalty for the SECOND violation of this rule on December 12, 2023.

02 NCAC 52J .0101(5) for failure to maintain records of veterinary care of Smudge pertaining to the administration of prescribed medications for 17 days as noted on November 20, 2025. This is the THIRD violation of this rule as the shelter owner was assessed a Civil Penalty for the SECOND violation of this rule on December 12, 2023.

02 NCAC 52J .0101(6) for deliberate falsification of shelter records and creation of a falsified record during an AWS investigation as noted on November 26, 2025.

02 NCAC 52J .0101(6) for failure to maintain accurate shelter records as noted on November 26, 2025.

02 NCAC 52J .0101(6) for failure to update the records of the 3 kittens being treated for URI within 48 hours of the administration of medications. This is the SECOND violation of this rule as the shelter owner was assessed a Civil Penalty for violation of this rule on December 12, 2023.

02 NCAC 52J .0103 for failure to match each animal to its record upon request as noted on September 24, 2025. This violation was repeated on October 9, 2025, and November 20, 2025. This is the SECOND violation of this rule as the shelter owner was assessed a Civil Penalty for violation of this rule on December 12, 2023.

02 NCAC 52J .0103 for failure to provide required records upon request as noted on September 24, 2025. This violation was repeated on October 9, 2025, and November 20, 2025. This is the SECOND violation of this rule as the shelter owner was assessed a Civil Penalty for violation of this rule on December 12, 2023.

02 NCAC 52J .0201(a) for failure to maintain the outer fencing in a secure manner to contain the cats as noted on September 24, 2025, October 9, 2025, and November 20, 2025.

02 NCAC 52J .0201(b) for failure to cover the electrical outlets so that the cats did not have access to them as noted on September 24, 2025, October 9, 2025, and November 20, 2025.

02 NCAC 52J .0201(j) for failure to allow inspection of all areas of a facility as noted on September 24, 2025 and October 9, 2025.

02 NCAC 52J .0201(m) for failure to be truthful during an AWS investigation as noted on September 24, 2025. This is the SECOND violation of this rule as the shelter owner was assessed a Civil Penalty for violation of this rule on December 12, 2023.

02 NCAC 52J .0201(q) for failure to provide smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms to the facility as noted on September 24, 2025, October 9, 2025, and November 20, 2025. This is the SECOND violation of this rule as the shelter owner was assessed a Civil Penalty for violation of this rule on December 12, 2023. This violation was also previously cited in the November 13, 2023 and November 19, 2024 FCI reports.

02 NCAC 52J .0202(a)(2) for failure to maintain the temperature inside the refuge facility between 50 - 85°F as noted on November 20, 2025.

02 NCAC 52J .0202(d) for failure to maintain surfaces with which animals come in contact impervious to moisture and able to be readily sanitized as noted on September 24, 2025, October 9, 2025, and November 20, 2025.

02 NCAC 52J .0203(a)(2) for failure to maintain a minimum depth of 6" of gravel in the outdoor primary enclosures and exercise areas as noted on September 24, 2025, October 9, 2025, and November 20, 2025. This violation was also previously cited in the November 13, 2023, February 28, 2024, and November 19, 2024 FCI reports.

02 NCAC 52J .0203(b)(2) for failure to maintain a minimum depth of 6" of gravel throughout the yards and walkways as noted on September 24, 2025, October 9, 2025, and November 20, 2025. This violation was also previously cited in the November 13, 2023, February 28, 2024, and November 19, 2024 FCI reports.

02 NCAC 52J .0203(c) for having sand as a ground cover in the outside yards as noted on September 24, 2025, October 9, 2025, and November 20, 2025. This violation was also previously cited in the November 13, 2023, February 28, 2024, and November 19, 2024 FCI reports.

02 NCAC 52J .0204(a) for failure to maintain surfaces in the primary enclosures and exercise areas so that they are impervious to moisture as noted on September 24, 2025, October 9, 2025, and November 20, 2025. This violation was also previously cited in the November 19, 2024 FCI report.

02 NCAC 52J .0204(b) for failure to remove wood from the animals' access as noted on September 24, 2025, October 9, 2025, and November 20, 2025. This violation was also previously cited in the November 19, 2024 FCI report.

02 NCAC 52J .0204(c) for failure to maintain primary enclosures and exercise areas in good repair and in a manner to prevent injury to animals as noted on September 24, 2025, October 9, 2025, and November 20, 2025.

02 NCAC 52J .0207(a) for failure to properly clean or sanitize all the doors to the outbuildings as noted on September 24, 2025, October 9, 2025, and November 20, 2025.

02 NCAC 52J .0207(e) for failure to properly maintain the premises as mushrooms were found to be growing in the exercise area that could be toxic to the free-roaming shelter cats as noted on November 20, 2025.

02 NCAC 52J .0209(6) for failure to designate an isolation area for animals being treated or observed for communicable diseases as noted on September 24, 2025, October 9, 2025, and November 20, 2025.

02 NCAC 52J .0209(7)(a) for failure to document the provision of daily social interaction and enrichment to the long-term care animals as noted on September 24, 2025, October 9, 2025, and November 20, 2025. This is the SECOND violation of this rule as the shelter owner was assessed a Civil Penalty for violation of this rule on December 12, 2023. This violation was also previously cited in the April 12, 2023, November 13, 2023, February 28, 2024, and November 19, 2024 FCI reports.

02 NCAC 52J .0210(d) for failure to provide adequate veterinary care in a timely manner to the cat named Smudge as noted on September 24, 2025.

02 NCAC 52J .0210(d) for failure to provide adequate veterinary care in a timely manner as the shelter owner refused access to the area housing the ill and injured animals as noted on September 24, 2025 and October 9, 2025.

02 NCAC 52J .0210(h) for failure to have all animals in compliance with the North Carolina rabies law, NCGS §130A, as 91 cats were noted to be not current on their required rabies vaccinations as noted on November 20, 2025.

NCGS §19A-32.1(j) for failure to make animal records available for inspection when requested as noted on September 24, 2025, October 9, 2025, and November 20, 2025.

Based upon a review of all information available to AWS, AWS concludes that:

- a) The shelter willfully disregarded and violated the N.C. Animal Welfare Act (“AWA”) and rules issued pursuant thereto as noted above;
- b) The shelter failed to provide adequate sanitizing and housing practices consistent with the intent of the AWA or its rules issued pursuant thereto;
- c) The shelter fails to possess the necessary qualifications to meet the requirements of the AWA for the holding of an animal shelter certificate of registration; and
- d) The shelter fails to meet the requirements of the AWA and its rules issued pursuant thereto for the holding of an animal shelter certificate of registration.

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

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

SUSPENSION OF ANIMAL SHELTER CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION

Accordingly, pursuant to NCGS § 19A-30(2), (3), and (8), and due to the severity and number of violations of the AWA and its associated regulations noted above, I am hereby suspending the animal shelter certificate of registration held by The Goathouse Refuge.

Given the severity of the violations, the imminent danger to the animals in the care and custody of the shelter due to those violations, and the immediate public health and welfare concerns posed by the operation of this shelter, the animal shelter certificate of registration is summarily suspended effective upon the date of this notice.

AWS will allow the shelter a grace period of up to 30 days from the receipt of this Notice to find suitable accommodations for animals in its care and custody as defined above. By the end of this 30-day period, the shelter is to provide AWS with copies of the location and disposition of all animals in its care and custody at the time of the receipt of this Notice.

This suspension shall remain in effect until such time as the shelter:

1. Effectively implements corrective actions so that the shelter is in compliance with all AWA statutes and their associated rules (02 NCAC 52J Sections .0100 - .0800). AWS strongly recommends the development and implementation of written protocols that are compliant with the AWA and its rules to assist with compliance with these statutes and rules; and
2. Commits, in writing, that all agents of the shelter will be truthful with NCDA&CS employees during all phases of inspections and investigation; and
3. Submits to and passes an AWS Facility Compliance Inspection.

After notification from the shelter of the completion of the requirements detailed above, AWS will review the status of the shelter. Should the shelter fail to comply with the requirements detailed above, additional action may be taken against the shelter's certificate of registration.

Pursuant to N.C. General Statute § 19A-26 no person shall operate an animal shelter unless a certificate of registration for such animal shelter shall have been granted by the AWS Director.

Continued or future violations of the statutes or regulations referenced in this letter will be considered a willful disregard or violation of the NC Animal Welfare Act and the rules issued pursuant thereto. Such willful disregard or violation may result in action against your facility's certificate of 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.

December 19, 2025

Date



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

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

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-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:

- (1) origin of animals (including names and addresses of consignors) and date animals were received;
- (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;
- (5) record of veterinary care including medications, treatments, procedures, and immunizations. The record shall include: diagnosis(es), diagnostic testing and results, date and time of administration or procedure, description of medication and initials of person administering any product, medication or procedure. The description of the medication shall include the name, strength or concentration, dosage, and dosing regimen. The dosage regimen shall include the frequency, duration to include the number of dosages or days to be given and the reason for the administration; and
- (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-incidental 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 .0103 INSPECTION OF RECORDS

All operators of animal shelters, pet shops, boarding kennels, public auctions, and persons operating as dealers shall make all required records available to the Director or his or her authorized representative on request, during the business and cleaning hours listed on the license application and/or during an inspection of the facility or an investigation. The operator must be able to match each animal to its record upon request. Records shall be maintained for a period of one year after the animal is released from a boarding kennel or sold from a pet store or public auction. Animal shelters shall maintain records required by the Animal Welfare Act or this Subchapter for a period of three years after the disposition of the animal.

History Note: Authority G.S. 19A-24; 19A-25; Eff. April 1, 1984; Amended Eff. January 1, 2005; April 1, 1985; Readopted Eff. September 1, 2022.

02 NCAC 52J .0201 GENERAL

- (a) Housing facilities for dogs and cats shall be structurally sound and maintained in good repair to protect the animals from injury, contain the animals and restrict the entrance of other animals and people.
- (b) All light fixtures and electrical outlets in animal areas shall be in compliance with the State Building Code. Electrical appliances, light fixtures, electrical outlets, and electrical cords shall be located or protected in such a way that animals do not have access to them.
- (j) All areas of a facility are subject to review or inspection by North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services ('NCDA&CS') employees during normal business hours (8:00 a.m. through 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday).
- (m) A licensee or registrant and all agents of the facility shall be truthful with NCDA&CS employees during all phases of inspections or investigations.
- (q) All facilities shall be equipped with an operational smoke alarm and carbon monoxide alarm and shall have a means of fire suppression, such as functional fire extinguishers or a sprinkler system on the premises.

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 .0202 INDOOR FACILITIES

- (a) Heating and cooling of indoor facilities:
 - (2) the ambient temperature shall not be allowed to fall below 50 degrees F or exceed 85 degrees F; and
- (d) Interior building surfaces of indoor facilities with which animals come in contact shall be constructed and maintained so that they are impervious to moisture and can be readily sanitized.

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

02 NCAC 52J .0203 OUTDOOR FACILITIES

- (a) In outdoor facilities that are subject to the Animal Welfare Act, primary enclosures, common areas and walkways with which an animal comes in contact:
 - (2) may use gravel for groundcover so long as it is maintained at a minimum depth of six inches and maintained in a sanitary manner as prescribed in Rule .0207 of this Subchapter.
- (b) Exercise areas of outdoor facilities:
 - (2) use gravel for groundcover so long as it is maintained at a minimum depth of six inches and kept in a sanitary manner; and/or
- (c) Sand and organic materials such as mulch, pine straw, or other similar non-approved material shall not be used as ground cover in primary enclosures, common areas, exercise areas and/or walkways.

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 .0204 PRIMARY ENCLOSURES

(a) Primary enclosures and exercise areas shall be constructed so as to prevent contamination from waste and wastewater from animals in other enclosures. All surfaces with which an animal comes in contact shall be impervious to moisture excluding the ground cover options of gravel and grass allowed for in Rule .0203 of this Section.

(b) For primary enclosures and exercise areas placed into service on or after January 1, 2005, no wood shall be within the animal's reach. For primary enclosures and exercise areas in use in a licensed or registered facility prior to January 1, 2005, any damaged wood shall be replaced in a manner that does not permit contact with wood by the animal.

(c) Primary enclosures and exercise areas for dogs and cats shall be structurally sound and maintained in good repair and in a manner to prevent injury to animals and keep other animals out.

with adult dogs other than their dams without supervision; this includes any animals owned by the staff or operator of the facility.

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 .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.

(e) Premises (buildings and grounds) shall be kept clean and in good repair in order to protect the animals from injury and to facilitate the prescribed husbandry practices set forth in this Rule. Premises shall remain free of accumulations of trash, junk, waste products, and discarded matter. Weeds, grasses, and bushes must be controlled so as to facilitate cleaning of the premises and to improve pest control, and to protect the health and well-being of the animals.

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 .0209 CLASSIFICATION AND SEPARATION

(6) All facilities shall designate an isolation area for animals being treated or observed for communicable diseases. Dogs or cats in isolation that are being treated for a communicable disease shall be separated from other dogs or cats and other susceptible species of animals in such a manner as to minimize dissemination of such disease. A sign shall be posted at the cage or isolation area when in use, giving notice of a communicable disease, including the identification of the disease. Accessories, cleaning equipment and supplies used in isolation areas shall not be used in other areas of the facility.

(7) Animals in long term care must be provided with human interaction other than interaction for enclosure cleaning, same species social interaction, opportunity for play and exercise, and environmental enrichment daily. The provision of these daily interactions and enrichment shall be adequate for the animal's species, age, size and behavior needs. In addition:

(a) The provision of the daily social interactions and enrichment shall be documented in the animal's records and the records maintained for three years; and

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

02 NCAC 52J .0210 VETERINARY CARE

(d) Each dog and cat shall be observed daily by the animal caretaker who has been adequately trained or is experienced in animal care or is under the direct supervision of a person who has such training or experience. Sick or diseased, injured, lame, or blind dogs or cats shall be provided with adequate veterinary care in a timely manner or be euthanized, provided that the euthanasia shall not affect compliance with any state or local law requiring the holding, for a specified period, of animals suspected of being diseased. If an animal cannot be euthanized due to a required holding period and does not meet the criteria of G.S. 19A-32.1(b)(2), then adequate veterinary care shall be provided to the animal.

(h) All animals in a licensed or registered facility shall be in compliance with the North Carolina rabies law, G.S. 130A, Article 6, Part 6. This subsection shall not apply to animals which have been in the facility less than 15 days.

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