

Feel free to move ahead to page 5.

## Introduction

Passed by Congress in 1966, the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) sets general standards for humane care and treatment that must be provided for certain animals that are bred for commercial sale, sold sight unseen (Internet sales), exhibited to the public, used in biomedical research, or transported commercially. Congress assigned the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) the responsibility for enforcing the AWA. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is the agency within USDA responsible for ensuring this occurs.

APHIS has published the *Animal Welfare Act and Animal Welfare Regulations*, known as the “Blue Book,” as a tool to improve compliance among our licensees and registrants and to enhance the consistency of inspections by our field inspectors. The Blue Book consolidates into one source the AWA and the applicable regulations and standards.

Text was pulled directly from two official sources: the **Animal Welfare Act** [*United States Code*, Title 7 (Agriculture), Chapter 54 (Transportation, Sale, and Handling of Certain Animals), Sections 2131– 2159]; and the **Animal Welfare Regulations** [*Code of Federal Regulations*, Title 9 (Animals and Animal Products), Chapter 1 (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture), Subchapter A (Animal Welfare), Parts 1–4]. Every effort has been made to ensure that this book is accurate.

The AWA is a Federal law; the associated regulations interpret the law into enforceable standards. USDA can amend existing regulations and/or create new regulations, but only Congress can change the actual law. Prior to altering the regulations in any way, APHIS publicizes the proposed rule and encourages interested parties to provide comments. All comments are reviewed before determining a final course of action.

**CONTROL DATA** Control data is located at the top and bottom of each page to help readers keep track of where they are and to be aware of updates to specific chapters, appendixes, and other sections.

**FOOTNOTES** The footnotes include text, figures, and tables. Text footnotes are located at the bottom of a page. When space allows, footnotes involving figures and tables are located directly below the associated figure

or table. Otherwise, the footnotes are placed as close to the figure or table as possible.

**UPDATES** APHIS maintains an electronic copy of the Blue Book<sup>3</sup> on our agency's Animal Care Web site: **[www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-welfare](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal-welfare)**. The electronic version contains the most up-to-date information.

When the Blue Book is revised, Animal Care notifies interested parties via the USDA-APHIS Stakeholder Registry. To subscribe, please register here: **<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDAAPHIS/subscriber/new>**. You can select the individual topics that interest you, or you can choose to receive all of our agency's messages.

**ORDERING PRINTED COPIES** APHIS encourages you to use the electronic version of the Blue Book, as it will always be the most current, but you can still order printed copies. The link to the APHIS publications ordering page is: **[www.aphis.usda.gov/publications](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications)**.

To order, contact Animal Care **[ace@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:ace@aphis.usda.gov)** or call (970) 494-7478.

**QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS** If you have questions or concerns regarding the Blue Book, please contact Animal Care's National Policy staff at (301) 851-3751.

# Animal Welfare Act As of Jan. 1, 2018

As found in the United States Code

Title 7 – Agriculture  
Chapter 54 – Transportation, Sale,  
and Handling of Certain Animals

Sections 2131 - 2159

NOTE: This copy of the Animal Welfare Act as it appears in the U.S. Code is provided for informational purposes only. Before relying on any portion of the Act as it appears here, reference should be made to the official U.S. Code, 7 U.S.C. Sections 2131 - 2159.

These sections can be found at the U.S. Government Printing Office website:  
<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collectionUSCode.action?collectionCode=USCODE>.



## ANIMAL WELFARE ACT

### § 2131 - Congressional statement of policy

The Congress finds that animals and activities which are regulated under this chapter are either in interstate or foreign commerce or substantially affect such commerce or the free flow thereof, and that regulation of animals and activities as provided in this chapter is necessary to prevent and eliminate burdens upon such commerce and to effectively regulate such commerce, in order –

(1) to insure that animals intended for use in research facilities or for exhibition purposes or for use as pets are provided humane care and treatment;

(2) to assure the humane treatment of animals during transportation in commerce; and

(3) to protect the owners of animals from the theft of their animals by preventing the sale or use of animals which have been stolen.

The Congress further finds that it is essential to regulate, as provided in this chapter, the transportation, purchase, sale, housing, care, handling, and treatment of animals by carriers or by persons or organizations engaged in using them for research or experimental purposes or for exhibition purposes or holding them for sale as pets or for any such purpose or use.

For a full history of all of the Animal Welfare Act amendments, please visit: [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_welfare/downloads/awa/awa.pdf](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/downloads/awa/awa.pdf)

### § 2132 - Definitions

In this chapter:

(a) The term “**person**” includes any individual, partnership, firm, joint stock company, corporation, association, trust, estate, or other legal entity.

(b) The term “**Secretary**” means the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States or his representative who shall be an employee of the United States Department of Agriculture.

(c) The term “**commerce**” means trade, traffic, transportation, or other commerce –

(1) between a place in a State and any place outside of such State, or between points within the same State but through any place outside thereof, or within any territory, possession, or the District of Columbia;

(2) which affects trade, traffic, transportation, or other commerce described in paragraph (1).

(d) The term “**State**” means a State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, or any other territory or possession of the United States.

(e) The term “**research facility**” means any school (except an elementary or secondary school), institution, organization, or person that uses or intends to use live animals in research, tests, or experiments, and that (1) purchases or transports live animals in commerce, or (2) receives funds under a grant, award, loan, or contract from a department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States for the purpose of carrying out research, tests, or experiments: *Provided*, That the Secretary may exempt, by regulation, any such school, institution, organization, or person that does not use or intend to use live dogs or cats, except those schools, institutions, organizations, or persons, which use substantial numbers (as determined by the Secretary) of live animals the principal function of which schools, institutions, organizations, or persons, is biomedical research or testing, when in the judgment of the Secretary, any such exemption does not vitiate the purpose of this chapter.

Does UCI have an animal research facility?

(f) The term “**dealer**” means any person who, in commerce, for compensation or profit, delivers for transportation, or transports, except as a carrier, buys, or sells, or negotiates the purchase or sale of, (1) any dog or other animal whether alive or dead for research, teaching, exhibition, or use as a pet, or (2) any dog for hunting, security, or breeding purposes. Such term does not include a retail pet store (other than a retail pet store which sells any animals to a research facility, an exhibitor, or another dealer).

(g) The term “**animal**” means any live or dead dog, cat, monkey (nonhuman primate mammal), guinea pig, hamster, rabbit, or such other warm-blooded animal, as the Secretary may determine is being used, or is intended for use, for research, testing, experimentation, or exhibition purposes, or as a pet; but such term excludes (1) birds, rats of the genus *Rattus*, and mice of the genus *Mus*, bred for use in research, (2) horses not used for research purposes, and (3) other farm animals, such as, but not limited to livestock or poultry, used or intended for use as food or fiber, or livestock or poultry used or intended for use for improving animal nutrition, breeding, management, or production efficiency, or for improving the quality of food or fiber. With respect to a dog, the term means all dogs including those used for hunting, security, or breeding purposes.

What “animals” are included under this law? Which animals are excluded from protections under this law?

(h) The term “**exhibitor**” means any person (public or private) exhibiting any animals, which were purchased in commerce or the intended distribution of which affects commerce, or will affect commerce, to the public for compensation, as determined by the Secretary, and such term includes carnivals, circuses, and zoos exhibiting such animals whether operated for profit or not; but such term excludes retail pet stores, an owner of a common, domesticated household pet who derives less than a substantial portion

of income from a nonprimary source (as determined by the Secretary) for exhibiting an animal that exclusively resides at the residence of the pet owner, organizations sponsoring and all persons participating in State and country fairs, livestock shows, rodeos, purebred dog and cat shows, and any other fairs or exhibitions intended to advance agricultural arts and sciences, as may be determined by the Secretary.

(i) The term “**intermediate handler**” means any person including a department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States or of any State or local government (other than a dealer, research facility, exhibitor, any person excluded from the definition of a dealer, research facility, or exhibitor, an operator of an auction sale, or a carrier) who is engaged in any business in which he receives custody of animals in connection with their transportation in commerce.

(j) The term “**carrier**” means the operator of any airline, railroad, motor carrier, shipping line, or other enterprise, which is engaged in the business of transporting any animals for hire.

(k) The term “**Federal agency**” means an Executive agency as such term is defined in section 105 of title 5, and with respect to any research facility means the agency from which the research facility receives a Federal award for the conduct of research, experimentation, or testing, involving the use of animals.

(l) The term “**Federal award for the conduct of research, experimentation, or testing, involving the use of animals**” means any mechanism (including a grant, award, loan, contract, or cooperative agreement) under which Federal funds are provided to support the conduct of such research.

(m) The term “**quorum**” means a majority of the Committee members.

(n) The term “**Committee**” means the Institutional Animal Committee established under section 2143(b) of this title.

(o) The term “**Federal research facility**” means each department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States which uses live animals for research or experimentation.

### § 2133 - Licensing of dealers and exhibitors

The Secretary shall issue licenses to dealers and exhibitors upon application therefor in such form and manner as he may prescribe and upon payment of such fee established pursuant to 2153 of this title: *Provided*, That no such license shall be issued until the dealer or exhibitor shall have demonstrated that his facilities comply with the standards promulgated by the Secretary pursuant to section 2143 of this title: *Provided, however*, That a dealer or exhibitor shall not be required to obtain a license as a dealer or exhibitor under this chapter if the size of the business is determined by the

Secretary to be de minimis. The Secretary is further authorized to license, as dealers or exhibitors, persons who do not qualify as dealers or exhibitors within the meaning of this chapter upon such persons' complying with the requirements specified above and agreeing, in writing, to comply with all the requirements of this chapter and the regulations promulgated by the Secretary hereunder.

#### **§ 2134 - Valid license for dealers and exhibitors required**

No dealer or exhibitor shall sell or offer to sell or transport or offer for transportation, in commerce, to any research facility or for exhibition or for use as a pet any animal, or buy, sell, offer to buy or sell, transport or offer for transportation, in commerce, to or from another dealer or exhibitor under this chapter any animals, unless and until such dealer or exhibitor shall have obtained a license from the Secretary and such license shall not have been suspended or revoked.

#### **§ 2135 - Time period for disposal of dogs or cats by dealers or exhibitors**

No dealer or exhibitor shall sell or otherwise dispose of any dog or cat within a period of five business days after the acquisition of such animal or within such other period as may be specified by the Secretary: *Provided*, That operators of auction sales subject to section 2142 of this title shall not be required to comply with the provisions of this section.

Take a look at any section on this page that grabs your interest

#### **§ 2136 - Registration of research facilities, handlers, carriers and unlicensed exhibitors**

Every research facility, every intermediate handler, every carrier, and every exhibitor not licensed under section 2133 of this title shall register with the Secretary in accordance with such rules and regulations as he may prescribe.

#### **§ 2137 - Purchase of dogs or cats by research facilities prohibited except from authorized operators of auction sales and licensed dealers or exhibitors**

It shall be unlawful for any research facility to purchase any dog or cat from any person except an operator of an auction sale subject to section 2142 of this title or a person holding a valid license as a dealer or exhibitor issued by the Secretary pursuant to this chapter unless such person is exempted from obtaining such license under section 2133 of this title.

**§ 2138 - Purchase of dogs or cats by United States Government facilities prohibited except from authorized operators of auction sales and licensed dealers or exhibitors**

No department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States which uses animals for research or experimentation or exhibition shall purchase or otherwise acquire any dog or cat for such purposes from any person except an operator of an auction sale subject to section 2142 of this title or a person holding a valid license as a dealer or exhibitor issued by the Secretary pursuant to this chapter unless such person is exempted from obtaining such license under section 2133 of this title.

Where can U.S. governmental agencies buy dogs and cats for research?

**§ 2139 - Principal-agent relationship established**

When construing or enforcing the provisions of this chapter, the act, omission, or failure of any person acting for or employed by a research facility, a dealer, or an exhibitor or a person licensed as a dealer or an exhibitor pursuant to the second sentence of section 2133 of this title, or an operator of an auction sale subject to section 2142 of this title, or an intermediate handler, or a carrier, within the scope of his employment or office, shall be deemed the act, omission, or failure of such research facility, dealer, exhibitor, licensee, operator of an auction sale, intermediate handler, or carrier, as well as of such person.

**§ 2140 - Recordkeeping by dealers, exhibitors, research facilities, intermediate handlers, and carriers**

Dealers and exhibitors shall make and retain for such reasonable period of time as the Secretary may prescribe, such records with respect to the purchase, sale, transportation, identification, and previous ownership of animals as the Secretary may prescribe. Research facilities shall make and retain such records only with respect to the purchase, sale, transportation, identification, and previous ownership of live dogs and cats. At the request of the Secretary, any regulatory agency of the Federal Government which requires records to be maintained by intermediate handlers and carriers with respect to the transportation, receiving, handling, and delivery of animals on forms prescribed by the agency, shall require there to be included in such forms, and intermediate handlers and carriers shall include in such forms, such information as the Secretary may require for the effective administration of this chapter. Such information shall be retained for such reasonable period of time as the Secretary may prescribe. If regulatory agencies of the Federal Government do not prescribe requirements for any such forms, intermediate handlers and carriers shall make and retain for such reasonable period as the Secretary may prescribe such records with respect to the transportation, receiving, handling, and delivery of animals as the Secretary may prescribe.

Such records shall be made available at all reasonable times for inspection and copying by the Secretary.

### § 2141 - Marking and identification of animals

All animals delivered for transportation, transported, purchased, or sold, in commerce, by a dealer or exhibitor shall be marked or identified at such time and in such humane manner as the Secretary may prescribe: *Provided*, That only live dogs and cats need be so marked or identified by a research facility.

What animals need to be marked/identified by a research facility?

### § 2142 - Humane standards and recordkeeping requirements at auction sales

The Secretary is authorized to promulgate humane standards and recordkeeping requirements governing the purchase, handling, or sale of animals, in commerce, by dealers, research facilities, and exhibitors at auction sales and by the operators of such auction sales. The Secretary is also authorized to require the licensing of operators of auction sales where any dogs or cats are sold, in commerce, under such conditions as he may prescribe, and upon payment of such fee as prescribed by the Secretary under section 2153 of this title.

### § 2143 - Standards and certification process for humane handling, care, treatment, and transportation of animals

#### (a) Promulgation of standards, rules, regulations, and orders; requirements; research facilities; State authority

Here are the standards of the act.

(1) The Secretary shall promulgate standards to govern the humane handling, care, treatment, and transportation of animals by dealers, research facilities, and exhibitors.

(2) The standards described in paragraph (1) shall include minimum requirements –

(A) for handling, housing, feeding, watering, sanitation, ventilation, shelter from extremes of weather and temperatures, adequate veterinary care, and separation by species where the Secretary finds necessary for humane handling, care, or treatment of animals; and

(B) for exercise of dogs, as determined by an attending veterinarian in accordance with general standards promulgated by the Secretary, and for a physical environment adequate to promote the psychological well-being of primates.

(3) In addition to the requirements under paragraph (2), the standards described in paragraph (1) shall, with respect to animals in research facilities, include requirements –

(A) for animal care, treatment, and practices in experimental procedures to ensure that animal pain and distress are minimized, including

adequate veterinary care with the appropriate use of anesthetic, analgesic, tranquilizing drugs, or euthanasia;

(B) that the principal investigator considers alternatives to any procedure likely to produce pain to or distress in an experimental animal;

(C) in any practice which could cause pain to animals –

(i) that a doctor of veterinary medicine is consulted in the planning of such procedures;

(ii) for the use of tranquilizers, analgesics, and anesthetics;

(iii) for pre-surgical and post-surgical care by laboratory workers, in accordance with established veterinary medical and nursing procedures;

(iv) against the use of paralytics without anesthesia; and

(v) that the withholding of tranquilizers, anesthesia, analgesia, or euthanasia when scientifically necessary shall continue for only the necessary period of time;

(D) that no animal is used in more than one major operative experiment from which it is allowed to recover except in cases of –

(i) scientific necessity; or

(ii) other special circumstances as determined by the Secretary;

and

(E) that exceptions to such standards may be made only when specified by research protocol and that any such exception shall be detailed and explained in a report outlined under paragraph (7) and filed with the Institutional Animal Committee.

(4) The Secretary shall also promulgate standards to govern the transportation in commerce, and the handling, care, and treatment in connection therewith, by intermediate handlers, air carriers, or other carriers, of animals consigned by any dealer, research facility, exhibitor, operator of an auction sale, or other person, or any department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States or of any State or local government, for transportation in commerce. The Secretary shall have authority to promulgate such rules and regulations as he determines necessary to assure humane treatment of animals in the course of their transportation in commerce including requirements such as those with respect to containers, feed, water, rest, ventilation, temperature, and handling.

(5) In promulgating and enforcing standards established pursuant to this section, the Secretary is authorized and directed to consult experts, including outside consultants where indicated.

(6)(A) Nothing in this chapter –

(i) except as provided in paragraphs<sup>1</sup> (7) of this subsection, shall be construed as authorizing the Secretary to promulgate rules, regulations, or

<sup>1</sup> So in original. Probably should be "paragraph".

orders with regard to the design, outlines, or guidelines of actual research or experimentation by a research facility as determined by such research facility;

(ii) except as provided<sup>2</sup> subparagraphs (A) and (C)(ii) through (v) of paragraph (3) and paragraph (7) of this subsection, shall be construed as authorizing the Secretary to promulgate rules, regulations, or orders with regard to the performance of actual research or experimentation by a research facility as determined by such research facility; and

(iii) shall authorize the Secretary, during inspection, to interrupt the conduct of actual research or experimentation.

(B) No rule, regulation, order, or part of this chapter shall be construed to require a research facility to disclose publicly or to the Institutional Animal Committee during its inspection, trade secrets or commercial or financial information which is privileged or confidential.

(7)(A) The Secretary shall require each research facility to show upon inspection, and to report at least annually, that the provisions of this chapter are being followed and that professionally acceptable standards governing the care, treatment, and use of animals are being followed by the research facility during actual research or experimentation.

(B) In complying with subparagraph (A), such research facilities shall provide –

(i) information on procedures likely to produce pain or distress in any animal and assurances demonstrating that the principal investigator considered alternatives to those procedures;

(ii) assurances satisfactory to the Secretary that such facility is adhering to the standards described in this section; and

(iii) an explanation for any deviation from the standards promulgated under this section.

(8) Paragraph (1) shall not prohibit any State (or a political subdivision of such State) from promulgating standards in addition to those standards promulgated by the Secretary under paragraph (1).

**(b) Research facility Committee; establishment, membership, functions, etc.**

(1) The Secretary shall require that each research facility establish at least one Committee. Each Committee shall be appointed by the chief executive officer of each such research facility and shall be composed of not fewer than three members. Such members shall possess sufficient ability to assess animal care, treatment, and practices in experimental research as determined by the needs of the research facility and shall represent society's concerns regarding the welfare of animal subjects used at such facility. Of the members of the Committee –

<sup>2</sup> So in original. Probably should be followed by "in".

(A) at least one member shall be a doctor of veterinary medicine;

(B) at least one member –

(i) shall not be affiliated in any way with such facility other than as a member of the Committee;

(ii) shall not be a member of the immediate family of a person who is affiliated with such facility; and

(iii) is intended to provide representation for general community interests in the proper care and treatment of animals; and

(C) in those cases where the Committee consists of more than three members, not more than three members shall be from the same administrative unit of such facility.

(2) A quorum shall be required for all formal actions of the Committee, including inspections under paragraph (3).

(3) The Committee shall inspect at least semiannually all animal study areas and animal facilities of such research facility and review as part of the inspection –

(A) practices involving pain to animals, and

(B) the condition of animals, to ensure compliance with the provisions of this chapter to minimize pain and distress to animals.

Exceptions to the requirement of inspection of such study areas may be made by the Secretary if animals are studied in their natural environment and the study area is prohibitive to easy access.

(4)(A) The Committee shall file an inspection certification report of each inspection at the research facility. Such report shall –

(i) be signed by a majority of the Committee members involved in the inspection;

(ii) include reports of any violation of the standards promulgated, or assurances required, by the Secretary, including any deficient conditions of animal care or treatment, any deviations of research practices from originally approved proposals that adversely affect animal welfare, any notification to the facility regarding such conditions, and any corrections made thereafter;

(iii) include any minority views of the Committee; and

(iv) include any other information pertinent to the activities of the Committee.

(B) Such report shall remain on file for at least three years at the research facility and shall be available for inspection by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and any funding Federal agency.

(C) In order to give the research facility an opportunity to correct any deficiencies or deviations discovered by reason of paragraph (3), the Committee shall notify the administrative representative of the research facility of any deficiencies or deviations from the provisions of this chapter. If, after notification and an opportunity for correction, such deficiencies or

deviations remain uncorrected, the Committee shall notify (in writing) the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the funding Federal agency of such deficiencies or deviations.

(5) The inspection results shall be available to Department of Agriculture inspectors for review during inspections. Department of Agriculture inspectors shall forward any Committee inspection records which include reports of uncorrected deficiencies or deviations to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and any funding Federal agency of the project with respect to which such uncorrected deficiencies and deviations occurred.

**(c) Federal research facilities; establishment, composition, and responsibilities of Federal Committee**

In the case of Federal research facilities, a Federal Committee shall be established and shall have the same composition and responsibilities provided in subsection (b) of this section, except that the Federal Committee shall report deficiencies or deviations to the head of the Federal agency conducting the research rather than to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. The head of the Federal agency conducting the research shall be responsible for –

- (1) all corrective action to be taken at the facility; and
- (2) the granting of all exceptions to inspection protocol.

**(d) Training of scientists, animal technicians, and other personnel involved with animal care and treatment at research facilities**

Each research facility shall provide for the training of scientists, animal technicians, and other personnel involved with animal care and treatment in such facility as required by the Secretary. Such training shall include instruction on –

- (1) the humane practice of animal maintenance and experimentation;
- (2) research or testing methods that minimize or eliminate the use of animals or limit animal pain or distress;
- (3) utilization of the information service at the National Agricultural Library, established under subsection (e) of this section; and
- (4) methods whereby deficiencies in animal care and treatment should be reported.

**(e) Establishment of information service at National Agricultural Library; service functions**

The Secretary shall establish an information service at the National Agricultural Library. Such service shall, in cooperation with the National Library of Medicine, provide information –

- (1) pertinent to employee training;
- (2) which could prevent unintended duplication of animal experimentation as determined by the needs of the research facility; and