

A bill for an act
relating to public health; providing regulation of commercial breeders to protect
public health and animal welfare; requiring registration; establishing fees;
requiring rulemaking; providing penalties; appropriating money; proposing
coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 145.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. **[145.371] DEFINITIONS.**

Subdivision 1. **Terms.** The definitions in this section apply to sections 145.371 to 145.379.

Subd. 2. **Animal.** "Animal" means a dog or a cat.

Subd. 3. **Board.** "Board" means the State Board of Veterinary Medicine.

Subd. 4. **Broker.** "Broker" means a person, firm, partnership, corporation, or association that purchases animals for resale to other brokers or pet dealers.

Subd. 5. **Cat.** "Cat" means a mammal that is wholly or in part of the species *Felis domesticus*. An adult cat is a cat 24 weeks of age or older. A kitten is a cat under 24 weeks of age.

Subd. 6. **Commercial breeder.** "Commercial breeder" means a person, other than a hobby breeder, who possesses or has an ownership interest in animals and is engaged in the business of breeding animals for sale or for exchange in return for consideration, and who possesses 20 or more adult intact animals and who produces more than five total litters of puppies or kittens per year.

Subd. 7. **Confinement area.** "Confinement area" means a structure used or designed for use to restrict an animal to a limited amount of space, such as a room, pen, cage, kennel, compartment, crate, or hutch.

Subd. 8. **Dog.** "Dog" means a mammal that is wholly or in part of the species *Canis familiaris*. An adult dog is a dog 24 weeks of age or older. A puppy is a dog under 24 weeks of age.

Subd. 9. **Facility.** "Facility" means the place used by a commercial breeder for breeding animals, and includes all buildings, property, confinement areas, and vehicles.

Subd. 10. **Hobby breeder.** "Hobby breeder" means a person who possesses or has an ownership interest in animals and is engaged in the business of breeding animals for sale or for exchange in return for consideration, and who possesses fewer than 20 adult intact animals or who produces five or fewer total litters of puppies or kittens per year.

Subd. 11. **Local animal control authority.** "Local animal control authority" means an agency of the state, county, municipality, or other political subdivision of the state that is responsible for animal control operations in its jurisdiction.

Subd. 12. **Person.** "Person" means a natural person, firm, partnership, corporation, or association, however organized.

Subd. 13. **Pet dealer.** "Pet dealer" means a person, including a commercial breeder, who is required to collect sales tax for the sale of animals to the public. Pet dealer does not include a humane society, nonprofit organization performing the functions of a humane society, or local animal control authority.

Subd. 14. **Possess.** "Possess" means to have custody of or have control over.

Subd. 15. **Veterinarian.** "Veterinarian" means a veterinarian in good standing and licensed in the state under chapter 156.

Subd. 16. **Zoonotic disease.** "Zoonotic disease" means a disease, including, but not limited to, rabies, giardia, ringworm, and roundworm, caused by an infectious agent that can be transmitted between humans and animals.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective July 1, 2012.

Sec. 2. **[145.372] LICENSING AND INSPECTIONS.**

Subdivision 1. **Licensing.** (a) The board may grant an operating license to a commercial breeder and shall enforce sections 145.371 to 145.379.

(b) Beginning July 1, 2012, a commercial breeder must obtain an annual license for each facility it owns or operates. More than one building on the same premises is considered one facility. The board shall establish by rule a range for the initial license fee for each facility where a commercial breeder possesses adult breeding animals. The range must increase the fee paid by a commercial breeder in relationship to the number of adult breeding animals possessed by the commercial breeder at each facility.

3.1 (c) The board shall inspect a commercial breeder's facility before an initial license
3.2 is issued. An announced initial prelicense inspection must be performed no more than
3.3 30 days before filing a license application. The initial prelicense inspection fee must be
3.4 included with the prelicense application. The application must include an inspection
3.5 certificate signed by the inspector in a format approved by the board.

3.6 (d) The license application must indicate if a commercial breeder operates under
3.7 more than one name from a single location or has an ownership interest in any other
3.8 facility. License holders must keep separate records for each business name.

3.9 (e) The application must include a notarized statement that includes the following
3.10 information:

3.11 (1) whether any license held by an applicant under this section or under any other
3.12 federal, state, county, or local law, ordinance, or other regulation relating to dealing in or
3.13 handling cats or dogs was ever suspended, revoked, or denied;

3.14 (2) whether the applicant was ever convicted of animal cruelty; and

3.15 (3) the estimated number of adult animals that will be kept, housed, and maintained
3.16 by the applicant at the location that is the subject of the application and the estimated
3.17 number of puppies and kittens to be kept, housed, and maintained during the term of
3.18 the license.

3.19 (f) An application from a partnership, corporation, or limited liability company must
3.20 include the name and address of all partners, directors, officers, or members and must
3.21 include a notation of any partners, directors, officers, members, or others authorized to
3.22 represent the partnership, corporation, or limited liability company.

3.23 (g) A nonresident applicant must consent to adjudication of any violation under the
3.24 laws of Minnesota and in Minnesota courts.

3.25 (h) A license issued under this section is not transferable.

3.26 (i) A license holder must apply for license renewal annually by submitting a renewal
3.27 application on a form approved by the board. The license renewal application must be
3.28 postmarked by July 1 of each year. A late renewal is subject to a 50 percent penalty fee. If
3.29 a license is not renewed by August 1, the license holder must reapply for an initial license.

3.30 (j) By August 1, a commercial breeder must submit to the board an annual report on
3.31 a form prepared by the board. The form must include the current number of cats and dogs
3.32 at the facility on the date of the report; the number of animals during the preceding year
3.33 that were sold, traded, bartered, leased, brokered, given away, euthanized, or deceased
3.34 from other causes; and any other information required by the board.

3.35 (k) If a commercial breeder is required to be licensed by the United States
3.36 Department of Agriculture (USDA), USDA inspection reports and records relating to

animal care plans and veterinary care must be made available during an inspection, upon request.

(l) A commercial breeder must prominently display the commercial breeder's license at each facility.

(m) A commercial breeder's state license number must be included in all of the commercial breeder's advertisements or promotions that pertain to animals being sold or traded, including, but not limited to, all newspapers, Internet, radio, or flyers.

(n) A commercial breeder must notify the board by certified mail within ten days of any change in address, name, management, or substantial control and ownership of the business or operation.

(o) Upon inspection, a commercial breeder must provide the board with current rabies vaccination records for each animal of appropriate age for vaccination.

(p) The board shall refuse to issue an initial license when a commercial breeder:

(1) has violated any provision of chapter 343 or 346;

(2) has failed to meet any of the requirements of this section and section 145.373;

(3) has failed to meet any of the requirements of a local ordinance governing the license holder;

(4) has been convicted of cruelty to animals under Minnesota law or under the laws of another jurisdiction;

(5) has been denied a similar license issued by another authority, either federal or state, or if the license has been revoked or suspended; or

(6) has falsified any material information requested by the board.

(q) A person who has been an officer, agent, direct family member, or employee of a commercial breeder whose license was revoked or suspended and who was responsible for or participated in the violation that was a basis for the revocation or suspension may not be licensed while the revocation or suspension is in effect.

Subd. 2. Inspections. (a) The board shall inspect each licensed facility at least annually. The unannounced inspection must be during normal business hours and with the commercial breeder or an agent of the commercial breeder present. The inspector must submit an inspection report to the board within ten days of each inspection on a form prepared by the board. The inspection report form must list separately each law, rule, regulation, and ordinance the facility is not in compliance with and what correction is required for compliance. The inspection report form must document the animal inventory on the date of the inspection.

(b) If a license to operate is suspended, revoked, or denied, the board shall have access to the facility during normal business hours to verify that it is not operating.

Subd. 3. **Fees; rules.** The board shall adopt rules to establish the license fees required by this section.

Subd. 4. **Enforcement reimbursement to local units of government.** The board may fully or partially reimburse local units of government for costs incurred by the local unit of government if it provides assistance in a seizure action. A local unit of government seeking reimbursement must apply to the board for reimbursement on forms provided by the board.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective July 1, 2012.

Sec. 3. **[145.373] STANDARDS OF CARE.**

(a) A commercial breeder must comply with the following:

(1) chapters 343 and 346; and

(2) the requirements of an applicable local ordinance governing the license holder.

(b) A commercial breeder must ensure that animals that are part of the commercial breeder's breeding business operations are cared for as follows:

(1) cats must not be housed in outdoor confinement areas;

(2) animals exercised in groups must be compatible and free of illness;

(3) females in estrus must not be housed with unneutered males, except for breeding purposes;

(4) animals must be provided daily socialization with human beings and compatible animals;

(5) animals must not be sold, traded, or given away before the age of eight weeks;

(6) the commercial breeder must provide identification and tracking for each animal, which is not transferable to another animal; and

(7) the commercial breeder must provide adequate staff to maintain the facility and properly care for the animals.

(c) A commercial breeder must not knowingly hire staff or independent contractors who have been convicted of cruelty to animals under the law of any jurisdiction.

(d) A commercial breeder must comply with any additional standards the board considers necessary to protect the public health, including, but not limited to, reduction of the risk of transmission of zoonotic diseases, and welfare of animals covered under sections 145.371 to 145.375. The standards must be established by rule.

(e) A United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) licensed breeder or dealer who is in compliance with the minimum USDA regulations governing the license holder as they relate to animal confinement areas as of July 1, 2012, does not have to comply with the minimum confinement area measurements under section 346.39, subdivision 4, for

existing confinement areas in each facility the breeder or dealer owns. If a USDA-licensed breeder or dealer builds a new confinement area after July 1, 2012, those minimum standards must meet or exceed the minimum specifications as they relate to confinement area size under section 346.39, subdivision 4.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective July 1, 2012.

Sec. 4. **[145.374] INVESTIGATIONS.**

The board, a local animal control authority, a peace officer, or a humane agent appointed under section 343.01 may initiate an investigation upon receiving a formal complaint alleging violations of section 145.372 or 145.373.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective July 1, 2012.

Sec. 5. **[145.375] SEIZURE.**

A seizure action may be initiated for violation of section 145.373 for animals determined to be cruelly treated under section 343.21. Section 343.235 applies to the disposition of animals seized under this section.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective July 1, 2012.

Sec. 6. **[145.376] CIVIL ENFORCEMENT.**

Subdivision 1. **Correction orders.** (a) The board may issue a correction order requiring a commercial breeder to correct a violation of statutes, rules, and regulations governing breeding facilities. The correction order must state the deficiencies that constitute the violation; the specific statute, rule, or regulation violated; and when the violation must be corrected.

(b) A commercial breeder may ask the board to reconsider any portion of the correction order that the commercial breeder believes is in error. The request for reconsideration must be made in writing by certified mail within seven days after receipt of the correction order. The request for reconsideration does not stay the correction order. The board must respond to the request for reconsideration within 15 days after receiving a request. The board's disposition of a request for reconsideration is final. The board may extend the time for complying with a correction order after receiving a request for reconsideration if necessary.

(c) The board shall reinspect the facility within 15 days after the time for correcting the violation has passed to determine whether the violation has been corrected. If the

violation has been corrected, the board shall notify the commercial breeder in writing that the commercial breeder is in compliance with the correction order.

Subd. 2. Administrative penalty orders. After the inspection required under subdivision 1, paragraph (c), the board may issue an order requiring violations to be corrected and administratively assessing monetary penalties for violations. The administrative penalty order must include a citation of the statute, rule, or regulation violated; a description of the violation; and the amount of the penalty for each violation. A single correction order may assess a maximum administrative penalty of \$5,000.

Subd. 3. Injunctive relief. In addition to any other remedy provided by law, the board may bring an action for injunctive relief in the district court in Ramsey County or in the county in which a violation of the statutes, rules, or regulations governing the breeding of cats and dogs occurred to enjoin the violation.

Subd. 4. Cease and desist. The board must issue an order to cease a practice if its continuation would result in an immediate risk to animal welfare or public health, including, but not limited to, the risk of transmission of zoonotic diseases. An order issued under this subdivision is effective for a maximum of 72 hours. The board or its designated agent must seek an injunction or take other administrative action authorized by law to restrain a practice beyond 72 hours. The issuance of a cease-and-desist order does not preclude other enforcement action by the board.

Subd. 5. Refusal to reissue license; license suspension or revocation. (a) The board may suspend, revoke, or refuse to renew a license as follows:

- (1) for failure to comply with a correction order;
- (2) for failure to pay an administrative penalty;
- (3) for failure to meet the requirements of section 145.372 or 145.373; or
- (4) for falsifying information requested by the board.

A license suspension, revocation, or nonrenewal may be appealed through the Office of Administrative Hearings. A notice of intent to appeal must be filed in writing with the board within 20 days after receipt of the notice of suspension, revocation, or nonrenewal.

(b) The board shall revoke a license if a commercial breeder has been convicted of cruelty to animals under Minnesota law or the laws of another jurisdiction, or for the denial, revocation, or suspension of a similar license by another federal or state authority. A license revocation under this subdivision may be appealed through the Office of Administrative Hearings. A notice of intent to appeal must be filed in writing with the board within 20 days after receipt of the notice of revocation.

(c) A commercial breeder whose license is revoked may not reapply for licensure for two years after the date of revocation. The license is permanently revoked if the basis for the revocation was a gross misdemeanor or felony conviction for animal cruelty.

(d) A commercial breeder whose license is suspended or revoked three times is permanently barred from licensure.

Subd. 6. **Administrative hearing rights.** (a) Except as provided in paragraph (b), if the board proposes to refuse to renew, suspend, or revoke a license, the board must first notify the commercial breeder in writing of the proposed action and provide an opportunity to request a hearing under the contested case provisions of chapter 14. If the commercial breeder does not request a hearing within 20 days after receipt of the notice of the proposed action, the board may proceed with the action without a hearing.

(b) The contested case provisions of chapter 14 do not apply when the board denies a license based on an applicant's failure to meet the minimum qualifications for licensure.

(c) A commercial breeder may appeal the amount of an administrative penalty order through the Office of Administrative Hearings pursuant to the procedures in chapter 14. A commercial breeder wishing to file an appeal must notify the board in writing within 20 days after receipt of the administrative penalty order.

Subd. 7. **Other jurisdictions.** The board may accept as prima facie evidence of grounds for an enforcement action under this section any enforcement or disciplinary action from another jurisdiction if the underlying violation would be grounds for a violation under this section.

Subd. 8. **Appeals.** A final order by the board may be appealed to the Minnesota Court of Appeals.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective July 1, 2012.

Sec. 7. [145.377] PENALTIES.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b), a violation of section 145.372 or 145.373 is a misdemeanor.

(b) A violation of section 145.372 or 145.373 that results in cruelty or torture to an animal, as those terms are defined in section 343.20, subdivision 3, is subject to the penalties in section 343.21, subdivisions 9 and 10, relating to pet or companion animals.

(c) It is a misdemeanor for a broker or pet dealer to knowingly purchase or trade a dog or cat for the purpose of resale or trade to another person from a person required to be licensed but who does not have a valid license.

(d) It is a misdemeanor for a pet dealer who is not the commercial breeder of any animal to knowingly possess an animal under the age of eight weeks. This restriction does

not apply to humane societies, nonprofit organizations performing the functions of a humane society, or a local animal control authority.

(e) It is a misdemeanor to falsify information in a license application, annual report, or records.

(f) It is a misdemeanor for an unlicensed commercial breeder to advertise animals for sale.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective July 1, 2012.

Sec. 8. [145.378] DOG AND CAT BREEDERS LICENSING ACCOUNT; APPROPRIATION.

Subdivision 1. **Fees and penalties.** A dog and cat breeders licensing account is created in the special revenue fund. All fees and penalties collected by the board under sections 145.371 to 145.379 must be deposited in the state treasury and credited to the dog and cat breeders licensing account in the special revenue fund. Money in the account, including interest on the account, is annually appropriated to the board to administer those sections.

Subd. 2. **Donations for licensing and inspection program.** The board may accept donations and contributions from private parties for the development and administration of the licensing program under sections 145.371 to 145.379. Money received under this section must be deposited in the dog and cat breeders licensing account established under subdivision 1.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective the day following final enactment.

Sec. 9. [145.379] REGISTRATION.

Beginning July 1, 2011, until June 30, 2012, a commercial breeder must register each facility it owns or operates by paying a registration fee per facility to the board. Fees collected under this section must be deposited under Minnesota Statutes, section 145.378.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective the day following final enactment.
The Board of Animal Health shall implement and enforce section 9 only after deposit of at least \$50,000 of private contributions in the dog and cat licensing account established in section 8.