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Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Regulated Businesses (Licensing and Registration)

New licensing rule published in the Federal Register on **May 13, 2020** is effective as of **November 9, 2020**. [LEARN MORE](#)

Licensing and Registration Information



minutes using the tool.

Launch the Licensing and Registration Assistant to determine your requirements in just 5 to 15 minutes. The Licensing and Registration Assistant is a self-service tool that asks a series of questions to determine your licensing and registration needs, as well as provide links to the pdf application forms specific to your results. People typically spend 5 to 15

Thank you for your interest in using Animal Care's Licensing and Registration Assistant (LRA). Please note that with the implementation of our new licensing rule on November 9, 2020 we have updated our licensing and registration application packets. When using the LRA please navigate back to this page to access the most updated application packets rather than the packet linked on the results page of the LRA. Using the most updated application packets ensures the most timely processing of your application. Additionally, Animal Care is working diligently to update the LRA.

- [Access Licensing and Registration Application Packets](#)

- List of Active Licensees and Registrants under the AWA
- Licensing and Registration under the Animal Welfare Act: Guidelines for Dealers, Exhibitors, Transporters, and Researchers

Information about Regulated Businesses

Commercial Animal Dealers

Individuals or businesses who sell or offer to sell or transport or offer for transportation, in commerce, warm-blooded animals for use in research, exhibition, or as pets must be licensed as a dealer. In addition, individuals or businesses who buy, sell, offer to buy or sell, or transport or offer to transport, in commerce, warm-blooded animals to or from another dealer or exhibitor must be licensed as a dealer. A Class A license is issued to dealers who sell animals that are bred and raised at their facility in a closed or stable colony. A Class B license is issued to other dealers whose business includes the purchase and/or resale of warm-blooded animals. Examples of dealers include commercial dog-breeding facilities, animal brokers, and operators of auction sales.

There are exemptions to the dealer licensing requirements. In summary, the exemptions include but are not limited to, retail pet stores, breeders with four or fewer breeding females of dogs, cats, and/or small exotic or wild mammals, sales of less than 25 dogs or cats per year to research facilities, purchases and sales of animals used only for the purposes of food or fiber (including fur), and any person who buys animals solely for his or her own use or enjoyment.

Exhibitors

Individuals or businesses with warm-blooded animals that are on display, perform for the public, or are used in educational presentations must be licensed as exhibitors with APHIS. Licensed exhibitors include circuses, zoos, educational displays, petting farms/zoos, animal acts, wildlife parks, marine mammal parks, and some sanctuaries. The animals involved in the exhibition may include domestic and exotic animal species.

Research Facilities

Research facilities use animals (as defined by the Animal Welfare Act) for research, teaching, testing or experimentation. Examples of research facilities include hospitals, colleges and universities, and pharmaceutical firms. The Animal Welfare Act requires researchers to provide anesthesia or pain-relieving medication to minimize the pain or distress caused by an experiment, unless otherwise scientifically justified. The Animal Welfare Act does not allow Animal Care to prevent the use of animals in research or experimentation, however.

Transporters

A person with a commercial business that moves animals from one location to another is considered a transporter under the Animal Welfare Act and must be registered with the USDA. Examples of transporters include airlines and trucking companies.

Publications

- The Animal Welfare Provisions on Animal Fighting
- Handling Fish Fed to Fish-Eating Animals
- Wild and Exotic Cats Position Statement
- Declawing and Tooth Removal

Additional Information

- Animal Welfare Act Contingency Plan Final Rule
- Retail Pet Store Regulation
- Publications, Forms and Guidance Documents
- Animal Welfare Act
- Animal Welfare Act Inspections
- Animal Care Public Search Tool