



Press Release  
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# New Iowa regulations improve state puppy mill law

The Humane Society of the United States commends the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and Secretary Mike Naig for upgrading the state's companion animal welfare regulations. The improved standards of care go into effect today and will greatly increase the quality of life for thousands of dogs and cats in commercial breeding facilities.

Under the new rules, commercial breeders must provide the animals in their care with:

- Protection from extreme temperatures and weather
- Clean, sanitary housing
- Room to comfortably stand, sit, turn around or lie with limbs fully extended in their primary enclosure
- A solid resting surface large enough for the dog or cat to lie on his or her side
- An opportunity to exercise at least twice daily
- Prompt veterinary care for any sickness, disease or injury
- Proper care during transport including exercise breaks, clean enclosures and temperature regulation

The new rules also allow state inspectors to limit the number of dogs in a facility or primary enclosure based on space or care they are receiving. Requiring commercial breeders to only keep the number of dogs and cats they can adequately care for will likely have major welfare implications.

"For far too long, puppy mills have been allowed to operate without appropriate oversight in our state," said Preston Moore, Iowa state director for the Humane Society of the United States. "On behalf of animals and pet lovers across the state I sincerely thank the Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship for taking these important steps to require humane treatment of all dogs and cats—even those kept for breeding."

Iowa has one of the highest concentrations of commercial breeders in the nation. The Humane Society of the United States included 13 Iowa breeders in our 2019 Horrible Hundred report, second only to Missouri. Documented welfare issues in Iowa facilities that appeared in the report include lack of veterinary care for serious and painful conditions, unsanitary and unsafe conditions, and exposing dogs to extreme heat and cold. Each of these concerns are addressed in the new rules.

Upgraded regulations for shelters, rescues, and other state licensees all go into effect today. The Department will begin enforcing the new rules in June, giving regulated entities time to comply.