

THE FACTS ABOUT:

Animal Care Standards



Don't all pets deserve to be protected and cared for under the highest standard of care?

THE ISSUE

Americans love their pets – 68 percent of U.S. households have at least one.¹ But what most don't realize is that not all potential pets are protected by equal standards of care that ensure their health and safety. No one wants animals to be left vulnerable to substandard treatment or neglect, wherever they come from.

WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON?

The truth is, consistent regulation and uniform oversight doesn't exist to make sure all pet providers care for their animals appropriately. Sadly, this jeopardizes animal health and wellbeing and creates human health risk.

There are currently some rules to protect pets, such as the federal and state laws that regulate animal care by licensed and inspected dog breeders, as well as the state and local laws regarding care, warranties and transparency that regulate pet stores. But most states don't have standards of care that animal rescues and shelters must meet – and these organizations account for nearly half of the dogs (44 percent) and cats (47 percent) that are brought into American homes as pets each year.²

THE CASE FOR EQUAL STANDARDS OF CARE

68% of U.S. households have at least one pet¹

44% of Americans get their pets from shelters; 25% from breeders; 4% from pet stores²

Recent national survey said 90% would support legislation requiring animal shelters and rescues to meet the same standards of care and requirements that pet stores meet⁴

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WHAT'S NEEDED

Some states have set excellent examples for protecting the health and wellbeing of animals in all pet care facilities.

Colorado's Pet Animal Care Facilities Program (PACFA) ensures that pet care facilities meet or exceed minimum standards of care, holding and record keeping. Anyone who engages in selling, transferring, adopting, breeding, boarding, training, grooming, sheltering or rescuing an animal may need to be licensed with the state's Department of Agriculture.

Wisconsin's Dog Seller and Dog Facility Operator rules regulate those that deliver pet dogs to the public, including non-profits that shelter or foster 25 dogs or more each year, dog breeders and pet stores. The state

licenses and inspects these groups that are required to meet specified standards of care and provide certificates of veterinary inspection when a dog goes to an owner for sale or adoption, among other requirements.

Other states, such as Connecticut, Maine and New York, have registration requirements or animal care regulations that apply to municipal shelters and/or private rescues, but most do not.

Oversight doesn't just protect pet health and wellbeing, it also helps safeguard humans from disease risks.³ Requiring all animal providers to be licensed or registered and to provide vaccinations and veterinary checks will mitigate the spread of disease, and enable authorities to track the movement of animals into and across the U.S.



High quality care and appropriate government oversight should be the foundation of any organization that works with the animals that will become beloved companions. The most responsible way to protect both the animals and the people who ultimately bring them into their homes as pets is to establish appropriate standards of care and hold all pet providers accountable to them.

¹ American Pet Products Association.

https://www.americanpetproducts.org/press_industrytrends.asp

² 2017-2018 American Pet Products Association National Pet Owners Survey.

<https://www.mceldrewyoung.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2017-2018-Pet-Survey.pdf>

³ American Veterinary Medical Association, (2019, June).

<https://www.avma.org/javma-news/2019-07-01/short>

⁴ PIJAC 2020 National Survey