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APHIS Updates Animal Welfare Inspection Guide

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On June 20, 2025, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Animal Care program will update the Animal Welfare Inspection Guide to ensure consistency across documents and align with Congressional Directives. APHIS will continue to use courtesy visits as appropriate for facilities that are:

- Considering seeking licensure or registration under the Animal Welfare Act (AWA)
- Seeking guidance or suggestions regarding how to ensure that they are compliant with the AWA and Animal Welfare Regulations
- Seeking to improve their understanding of the AWA requirements and verify that improvements they are making put them in compliance with the Regulations and Standards

If an APHIS inspector identifies any direct non-compliant items during a courtesy visit at a facility with an active license or registration, the inspector will end the courtesy visit and conduct a focused inspection. In this case, the inspector will follow all focused inspection procedures, including citing the direct non-compliances and any other observed noncompliances on a focused inspection report. APHIS will also follow up with an unannounced inspection to ensure the non-compliances are corrected. These specific changes can be found in the following sections of the updated [Animal Welfare Inspection Guide](#): 1.5, 4.3.2, 4.3.2.2, 4.8, 4.8.2, and 4.8.3.2.