

ANIMAL WELFARE PROGRAM

**REPORT ON §3932-B KENNEL FACILITY
LICENSING IMPLEMENTATION**

JANUARY 27, 2026



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF
**AGRICULTURE
CONSERVATION
& FORESTRY**



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ANNUAL REPORTING REQUIREMENT

Pursuant to 17 MRSA §1011 (22), the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) is to submit an annual report regarding the transfer of the issuance of kennel licenses from municipalities to DACF.

BACKGROUND

In the first session of the 132nd Legislature, LD 1771, An Act to Strengthen Oversight of Kennels by Changing the Licensing Authority from Municipalities to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, was passed (2025 PL ch. 414). The legislation moved responsibility for the issuance of kennel licenses from municipalities to DACF and enacted criteria regarding DACF's authority to refuse to issue or renew, suspend, or revoke a facility license for an animal shelter, kennel, boarding kennel, breeding kennel, or pet shop. It further required annual reporting for the years 2026, 2027, and 2028 regarding the transfer of the issuance of kennel licenses from municipalities to DACF (kennel licenses are referred to as §3932-B licenses, given their location in the statute).

DISCUSSION

DACF's Animal Welfare Program (AWP) has taken the following steps towards the implementation of the new legislation, particularly as they relate to §3932-B kennel licensing activities:

- In late August 2025, AWP created §3932-B Kennel Licensing documents to provide kennel owners with materials needed to complete the new application process.
- On September 11, 2025, all 2025 Municipal Kennels Registered in the Maine Dog Licensing Database were mailed packets, including a letter explaining changes to the licensing process. These packets were mailed to 138 kennel owners. Electronic versions of the licensing packets are posted on AWP's publicly available Municipality Resources page.
- On September 10 and October 20, 2025, AWP included information regarding §3932-B Kennels in its monthly Dog Licensing Database User Updates publication, which is sent to over 1,200 municipal database users. Information was also provided in AWP's August Dog Licensing Refresher Training for all dog licensing database users.
- On September 22, 2025, AWP's "ACO Lunch & Learn," which is a monthly free continuing education hour for Maine Animal Control Officers (ACOs), was held on the topic of kennel inspections to update ACOs on changes in process and to ensure they were informed that there would be additional forthcoming changes with the completion and implementation of Chapter 701 Rules which cover kennels and provide the basis for inspections.
- On October 29, 2025, AWP provided clarification and updates to municipal clerks regarding Animal Control Officer inspections of §3932-B Kennels as required by §3932-B(2) and (5), including the process for ensuring the ACO was aware of needed inspection(s) and links to inspection documents and prior ACO trainings available for review.

DACF's Animal Health Program has undertaken draft rulemaking for departmental rules Chapter 701 and Chapter 216, which required updates pursuant to LD 1771. Chapter 701 drafts are

currently with the Commissioner's Office for final review, after which public rulemaking will commence pursuant to the requirements of the Maine Administrative Procedures Act. Chapter 216 rule drafting is underway.

STATISTICS

As of January 27, 2026, thirty-nine §3932-B Kennels have been licensed, and applications are in process for another forty-seven. AWP continues to field calls from 2025 Municipal Kennel License holders and municipalities working through the changes and clarifying prior misunderstandings of Municipal Kennel License requirements. Hence, the total number of §3932-B kennel licenses may continue to fluctuate in the near term as constituencies adjust to the new statutory requirements.