

Ollie's Law Advisory Committee Meeting
Minutes May 13, 2025 | 9 AM – 10:30 AM
Approved 6.3.25

Advisory Committee Attendance

Louis Pacheco
Jeni Mather
Mark Hogan
Carmen Rustenbeck
Dr. Erin Doyle -present until 9:58 AM
Debra Cameron
Kara Holmquist
Kevin Sullivan joined at 9:07AM

Advisory Committee Absence

Amy Baxter -absent for meeting
Kathy MacKenzie -absent for meeting
Noelle Wilson -absent for meeting
Francine Coughlin -absent for meeting
Mike Cahill-absent for meeting

MDAR Attendees

Jessica Burgess
Katherine Foote
Sheri Gustafson

Public Attendees

15 additional ZOOM attendees

This open meeting was held virtually over the ZOOM webinar platform. 848 2157 6796
Meeting ID: Passcode: animal

I. AC Attendance Roll Call

Mathers started meeting at 9:00 AM by roll call.
Pachecho-present, Hogan-present, Doyle-present, Rustenbeck-present, Holmquist- present,
Cameron-present
Sullivan-missing at roll call joined at 9:07 AM.

II. Minutes Review for April 30, 2025-Vote Required

Pacheco motioned to accept the minutes from the AC meeting on 4/30/25. Cameron-second. Roll call: Mather-yes, Pacheco-yes, Hogan-yes, Rustenbeck-yes, Holmquist-yes, Doyle-yes, Cameron-yes
Minutes for April 30th, 2025 Ollie's Law AC Meeting accepted.

III. Physical facility requirements

A. Definitions

Mather asked Holmquist to share the document she created “Information Related to General Facility and Animal Facility Regulations in Facilities Used for Boarding”.

Holmquist stated that she tried to focus on general facilities and structures.

Doyle stated that her document that was previously shared the “ASV Guidelines for Standards of Care” should be referred to when establishing regulations.

Mather shared a document she created “Facility Models for Commercial Dog Daycare & Boarding in Massachusetts” and stated that this document helps define the different types of facility setups. Mather went over the definitions listed in the document.

Doyle asked if the AC should just focus on dogs or if the boarding of other animals would be covered by regulations. Holmquist responded that the current statutes only apply to facilities that board dogs. While some of the bill drafts addressed catteries, that language did not make it into the final legislation.

Cameron asked about the number of animals needed to meet the definitions of kennels since the statute states a pack or collection.

Holmquist responded that the activity determines if they meet the definition and that there is no minimum number unless defined in the type.

Sullivan mentioned that he was told by the department that if they don’t meet the definition then they cannot obtain a kennel license.

Mather asked about basic needs in the models and if it would be beneficial to revisit Pacheco’s suggestion of following a dog through intake to discharge.

Doyle suggested looking at the models and regulations on a split screen to be able to see similarities and differences clearly. 330 CMR 12 webpage shown on screen, and “Information Related to General Facility and Animal Facility Regulations in Facilities Used for Boarding”.

Burgess mentioned that care should be taken to utilize definitions already within statutes and then to look at other MGLs and regulations that may utilize those definitions.

Mather stated that looking at the regulations, the definition of facilities seems to be reasonable but in other places, the definition of facilities may be too loose to be applied to kennel facilities.

Cameron discussed the difference in the definitions between the MA regulations and the CO regulations and how the MA defines organizations that transport care.

Holmquist shared a document she had been working on titled “Facilities (1)” and went over the details. The document was a draft of what she felt the kennel regulations may look like.

Doyle asked about how foster home language was brought into the shelter/rescue regulations and if looking at that would be beneficial.

Burgess stated to the group that when drafting legislation they look at statutory authority and then look at what it encompasses to ensure that authority isn't exceeded.

B. General requirements

1. Indoor

2. Outdoor

Mather suggested the group move on to the next agenda topic and started to look at the shelter regulations and determine what is needed for isolation. She asked if home-based facilities could utilize a bathroom for isolation if needed.

Doyle said that she felt the isolation discussion should be talked about in a medical section versus a facility section.

Sullivan asked how the committee should address pre-existing facilities versus ones being built post regulations. Should they be encouraging best practices for all new facilities?

Doyle left the meeting at 9:58 AM.

Mather stated that as a business owner, she feels mandating state-of-the-art facilities is not reasonable and that she would not like to see the regulations put anyone out of business.

Burgess mentioned that regulations should not include recommendations and regulations need to address what is intended and can be accomplished. Regulations need to be clear on expectations and may include some exemptions.

Sullivan asked if the group wanted to discuss play areas and minimum square footage requirements. He also asked if there were suggestions on how to determine the number of kennels or crates needed.

Rustenbeck mentioned that she would be happy to gather info from the IBPSA on facilities and that most facility definitions that she has seen do not have a defined "isolation space". Instead, they define isolation meaning "a place where a pet can be placed away from other animals."

Mather stated to remember that the AC's purpose is to advise and not write regulations. She asked if under facilities the group could agree that indoor and outdoor areas need to be maintained and be able to be cleaned and sanitized or does there need to be considerations. Is it reasonable for a kennel not to be the gold standard?

Cameron and Sullivan stated that they felt no matter what the facility is that the areas need to be able to be kept clean and need to be able to be disinfected.

Holmquist added that the kennels should have an operational plan for how they will maintain the kennel in a sanitary way.

Mather said food storage should be part of the plan.

C. Fire and Emergency Planning

1. What are other states doing

2. Open discussion

Mather started the discussion on Fire and Emergency planning. Stated that they should be looking at local ordinances and that it is reasonable for all kennels to have a fire plan.

Rustenbeck mentioned that she would send the IBPSA emergency action plans to MDAR and recommended that kennels “test drive “their action plans.

Burgess said that there are statewide robust fire and building codes and that when developing regulations they should be pointing to existing codes.

Holmquist asked if the codes have different sets for homes versus businesses and if there are any mentions of alert systems and requirements.

Cameron asked that if a home is licensed for use as a business does that change the requirements?

Burgess stated that fire and building codes are incredibly complex and lengthy and would cover a vast range of facilities.

Mather moved the discussion on having various emergency plans based on where the facility is located, such as coastal versus inland.

Rustenbeck said that to be transparent she wanted to mention that CO is looking to potentially sunset their regulations.

IV. Questions on any materials submitted

V. New Business

Mather stated that the meeting scheduled for 11/12/25 needed to be rescheduled and that it has been pushed back on the updated schedule to 11/18/25.

Mather moved to adjourn, Pacheco Second. Roll call. The meeting adjourned 10:29 AM