



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

**Department of Environmental
Conservation**

DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
Director's Office

555 Cordova Street
Anchorage, AK 99501
www.dec.alaska.gov

August 2016

Dear Interested Person:

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) proposes to make changes to 18 AAC 36 (Animal Health) to update the animal diseases testing regulations, to come into compliance with federal rules relating to animal diseases and importation, and to set minimum care standards for animals.

Animal Disease and Importation: DEC proposes to revise these regulations to include federal standards for diseases that are not already addressed, such as scrapies and chronic wasting disease. These standards need to be adopted so that animals in Alaska can continue to cross interstate and international borders for import, sales, shows, etc.

Animal Care Standards: Peace officers, veterinarians, and others dealing with reports of animal cruelty need clear objective criteria to determine whether a person's conduct meets the "minimum standards of care for animals" as required in A.S. 03.55.100. DEC proposes to address this in regulation by providing general minimum care standards for all animals, and specific criteria for horses, livestock (cattle and other ruminants), pigs, and dogs. Providing objective criteria through regulation will also allow animal producers in the state to certify or otherwise represent to their customers that their farms meet a minimum accepted standard of care. This will not only help in marketing their animals and animal products, but also help inform the public that the state has criteria for proper care of animals.

The purpose of this letter is to let you know that these proposed regulations are available for public review and comment. A copy of the proposed regulation changes is available on the Alaska Online Public Notice System or by contacting Dr. Bob Gerlach, State Veterinarian, by email at bob.gerlach@alaska.gov or by phone at (907) 375-8214. Comments must be in writing and received not later than 5:00pm on Friday, September 16, 2016. Your comments can be mailed, faxed, or e-mailed as noted in the enclosed notice.

Hearing from those affected by the proposal is a critical component in developing a workable set of regulations. Every comment received by the deadline will be fully considered. At the end of the public review period, we will prepare a response summary that will be made available to everyone who commented on the proposed regulations. We recognize the time commitment required to review and comment on proposed regulations and thank you in advance for your effort.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "R F Gerlach, VMD".

Dr. Bob Gerlach, VMD
State Veterinarian

Enclosures