

Guidelines for Enclosures for Commercial Dog Breeding

Housing provided for dogs must meet specific requirements that, for the state of Indiana, exceed U.S. Department of Agriculture requirements. Owners should ensure that animals have adequate floor space, as well as appropriate flooring.

“Primary enclosure” means any structure or device used to restrict an animal or animals to a limited amount of space, such as a room, pen, run, cage, or compartment. 9 CFR 1.1.

General Requirements

Primary enclosures for dogs must be designed, constructed, and kept in good repair and must:

- a. Be made of suitable materials.
- b. Be structurally sound.
- c. Be kept in good repair.
- d. Have no sharp points or edges that could injure an animal.
- e. Protect the animal from injury.
- f. Contain the animals securely.
- g. Keep other animals from entering the enclosure.
- h. Enable the dogs to stay dry and clean.
- i. Provide shelter and protection from extreme temperatures and weather conditions that may be uncomfortable or hazardous to the dogs.
- j. Provide sufficient shade to shelter all of the animals in the enclosure at one time.
- k. Provide all of the dogs easy and convenient access to clean food and water.
- l. Enable all surfaces in contact with the dogs to be readily cleaned and sanitized, or be replaced when worn or soiled.
- m. Floors must be constructed in a manner that protects the dogs’ feet and legs from injury. If the floor is mesh or slatted, the floor may not allow a dog’s feet to pass through openings in the floor. 9 CFR 3.6(a).
- n. Suspended floors must be strong enough so that the floor does not sag or bend between the structural supports. 9 CFR 3.6(a)(2).

Size of a Primary Enclosure

Primary enclosures must provide sufficient space to allow each dog to turn about freely, to stand, to sit, and lie in a comfortable, normal position, and to walk in a normal manner. 9 CFR 3.6(a)(2). Tethering as a primary enclosure is prohibited. 9 CFR 3.6(c)(3). Wire cages are subject to additional requirements outlined in the next subsection.

For the purposes of Indiana requirements, the length of a dog is determined by measuring the dog from the tip of its nose to the base of its tail. The primary enclosure must be the following size or larger:

- a. Each dog must be provided a minimum amount of floor space calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{(Length of the dog in inches plus six inches)} \\ & \times \text{(Length of the dog in inches plus six inches)} \\ & = \text{required floor space in square inches}^{**} \end{aligned}$$



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***Required floor space in inches divided by 144
= required floor space in square feet.*

- b. The minimum floor space for a bitch with nursing puppies must be approved by the kennel veterinarian. The kennel veterinarian must determine the minimum space after considering generally accepted husbandry practices and the breed and behavioral characteristics of the bitch. The minimum floor space must be at least 105 percent of the minimum floor space required for the bitch.
- c. The interior height of the enclosure must be at least six inches higher than the head of the tallest dog in the enclosure when it is in a normal standing position. 9 CFR 3.6(c)

Requirements for Enclosures with Wire Floors

If the floor of a primary enclosure is made of metal strands (wire), all of the following apply:

- a. The wire strands must be either:
 - i. Greater than one-eighth of an inch in diameter (9 gauge); or
 - ii. Coated with a material such as plastic or fiberglass. 9 CFR 3.6(a)(2).
- b. The primary enclosure must include an area that allows the dog to be off of the wire floor. IC 15-21-4-1(b)(1). The solid floor area must meet the following standards:
 - i. The area must be made of solid material. Rubber or plastic mats and pieces of carpet can meet this requirement. Towels and rugs do not meet this requirement.
 - ii. The area must be large enough for all dogs in the enclosure to utilize the solid floor at the same time. Therefore, the size of the solid floor area must be at least as big as the following:
(the length of the dog in inches)
x (the length of the dog in inches)
= required solid floor area in square inches for each dog
- c. The primary enclosure must be large enough to allow for reasonable movement by the dog. IC 15-21-4-1(b)(2).