

COMPLAINT INSPECTION	A complaint inspection is conducted in response to a concern received by Animal Care.
Sources of Information	<p>Sources of information include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• general public• animal protection group• whistle blower• city, county, or State agency• APHIS personnel• other Federal agency• you, the inspector (see page 8.5.3) <p>Methods of obtaining information include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• phone call• letter• e-mail• personal contact• fax <p>NOTE: The complainant does not have to give his/her name. If the complainant does give his/her name, you should not give out the person's name in order to maintain confidentiality. However, the complainant's name may be subject to a FOIA request.</p>
Information Follow-up	<p>Decide if the complaint information applies to the Animal Care Program.</p> <p>If it does not apply to the Animal Care Program, refer the complainant to the appropriate office/agency, if known.</p> <p>Possible referral agencies include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• US Fish & Wildlife Service• State wildlife agency• local animal control• local or national humane society• State animal welfare agency

If it **does apply** to the Animal Care Program **but is not** a possible violation:

- explain regulations and situation to complainant
- take no further action

If it **does apply** to the Animal Care program **and is** a possible violation:

- complete a Complaint sheet (see page 8.5.5)
- determine if the complaint applies to someone in your territory

If **not** in your territory,

- forward the Complaint sheet to the Regional Office
- inform the complainant it is not in your area but you are forwarding it to the Regional Office
- give the complainant the Regional Office phone number for follow-up

If in your territory,

- contact your Supervisory Animal Care Specialist (SACS) to determine if an inspection or investigation is needed
- conduct an inspection if required
- complete the Complaint sheet and a memo detailing your findings, if appropriate
- forward the Complaint sheet, the inspection report and the memo, if applicable, to your SACS or Regional Office following your standard procedure

Response Time

The time frame for responding to a complaint depends on the severity of the situation.

The response time may be:

- within 72 hours when:
 - the animal's health and well-being is threatened, e.g., an elephant is locked up in truck on a hot day, or an extremely ill tiger is not being cared for

**NCI Noted
While Off-Duty**

- properly
- the public's safety is threatened, e.g., unsafe enclosures for dangerous animals, or unsafe handling of non-caged dangerous animals
- as directed by your SACS or other program official for a situation with high public attention or Headquarters/Administration involvement
- within 10 business days for all other complaints, e.g., lions housed in a small cage, or a monkey on display in a pet store

If you are *on your own time and notice a noncompliance* at a licensed facility or an unlicensed exhibitor, you are not required to take any action. However, if you choose to take action, listed below are some suggested actions:

- assess the severity of the noncompliance
- take appropriate immediate action if required (see below)
- *if in your territory*: return to the facility when on duty and conduct an inspection or evaluation of the incident
- *if not in your territory*: contact your SACS when on duty to determine a course of action

NOTE: Remember that you cannot work overtime without your SACS approval.

After you have conducted an inspection or evaluation of the situation, you should send to your SACS:

- the inspection report, if appropriate
- a memo documenting the situation and the action taken
- an "Animal Incident Report" if appropriate

Life-Threatening Situation

If it is a **life-threatening situation**, such as a dangerous animal escape, you should:

- leave the area immediately
- contact facility personnel/management
- call 911, if appropriate

Non-Life Threatening Dangerous Situation

If you believe that the noncompliance results in a **non-life threatening dangerous situation** to the animal or the public, you should speak to the licensee or a responsible person.

If the licensee does not correct the NCI at that time, you should:

- speak to the management of the venue, or
- call your SACS or Regional Office emergency contact number and discuss a course of action
- contact local authorities, such as the local police or humane society, if appropriate, e.g., a non-regulated species is involved

No Immediate Danger

If you believe that the noncompliance results in **no immediate danger** to the animal or the public, you may choose to:

- take no action at that time, or
 - speak to the licensee or responsible person
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