

Board of Animal Health Oversight of Companion Animals

Topic Selection Background Information

April 2025

Program Overview	The Board of Animal Health (BAH) is responsible for protecting the health of Minnesota domestic animals. This responsibility extends to a variety of animals, including cattle, deer, horses, poultry, sheep, and cats and dogs held by breeders and kennels. BAH is also responsible for inspecting and licensing commercial cat and dog breeders and certain kennels.
Evaluation Questions	How well has BAH fulfilled its responsibility to “protect the health of the state’s domestic animals” with respect to companion animals? To what extent has BAH enforced commercial breeder licensing and enforcement, and kennels and dealers laws? To what extent has BAH established adequate policies and standards for its work? How does Minnesota’s regulation and oversight of companion animals compare to that of other states?
State Resources <i>Low</i>	For Fiscal Year 2024, BAH reported total expenditures of \$7.4 million, of which 3 percent was dedicated to activities related to dog and cat breeders. It is unclear how much was dedicated to work in kennels. The state funded more than 80 percent of the board’s expenditures in Fiscal Year 2024.
State Control <i>High</i>	BAH is established in state law. The board consists of seven members, who are appointed by the governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate. Minnesota statutes grant the board its authority to inspect and license commercial dog and cat breeders and kennels.
Impact <i>Low</i>	In Fiscal Year 2024, BAH licensed 92 kennels and 89 commercial dog and cat breeders. In addition, the board awarded three commercial breeders through the Breeder Excellence Program.
Timeliness <i>Medium</i>	This topic has appeared on OLA’s list of potential evaluations several times since the Legislature enacted a law to license commercial breeders in 2014. It may be a good time to review BAH’s work in this area.
Feasibility <i>High</i>	OLA could complete this evaluation using standard evaluation techniques, such as interviews and document reviews.
Balance <i>High</i>	OLA last evaluated BAH’s work in 2018, but OLA has never evaluated the board’s oversight of companion animals.
Discussion	An evaluation focused on BAH’s oversight of companion animals would be manageable and potentially useful to determine how well the board oversees the health of these animals in the state.