



Taking Command

July 2026

A publication of the AKC Government Relations Department



What's New in Government Relations

This month we celebrated Independence Day, a time to pause and reflect on the freedoms we enjoy. We want to take a moment to thank each of you who have taken a stand with us to protect our rights to own, breed, and exhibit our purebred dogs.

In this issue, we recognize three individuals who we have been proud to partner with in this fight. Recently, AKC Government Relations (AKC GR) staff presented a Legislator of the Year Award to New Jersey State Assemblyman Bill Spearman and a Lifetime Achievement Award to Don Slavik, former K9 officer and current US Police Canine Association leader. We were also proud to present Nancy Fisk, President of the Virginia Federation of Dog Clubs and Delegate for Hockamock Kennel Club with AKC's Community Achievement award.

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The articles below are a digest of blogs recently published by AKC Government Relations. To view all resources, and for the latest information, please [click here](#).

KNOWING INTERSTATE DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS HELPS OWNERS AVOID ENFORCEMENT TROUBLES

For owners and breeders, there is no doubt that traveling to events is always going to be a hassle, and it can be even more so when you are traveling to a state that has different requirements than your own. The following are helpful tips to help you understand the requirements and avoid enforcement troubles.

When you travel like an AKC state, there are several things you should know about the state's requirements. First, you should know the state's requirements for travel. This includes the state's requirements for travel, including the state's requirements for travel, including the state's requirements for travel.

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Regardless of whether you are a dog owner or a breeder, there are several things you should know about the state's requirements. First, you should know the state's requirements for travel. This includes the state's requirements for travel, including the state's requirements for travel, including the state's requirements for travel.

Need help interpreting the appropriate state agency to contact to address an interstate AKC requirement? Visit [AKC's website](#) for more information.

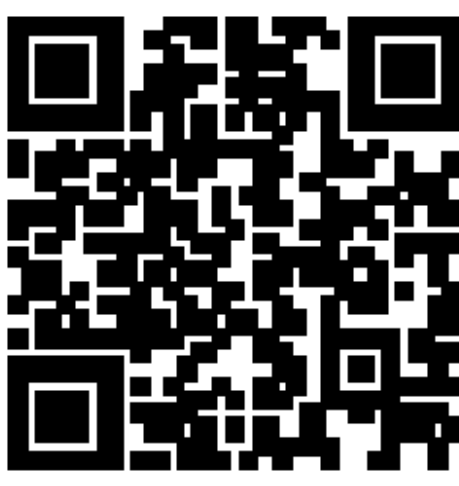
New World Screwworm—Updates on Interstate Travel Requirements with Dogs

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and state departments of agriculture and public health officials are working together to address the first cases of New World Screwworm (NWS) detected in southwest Texas and New Mexico since the 1960s.

The American Kennel Club (AKC) recommends that all dog owners, or anyone who works with dogs, learn about NWS and to stay updated on developments. Additionally, anyone potentially engaging in interstate transportation with dogs—owners, AKC event competitors, professional handlers, event superintendents, and interstate transporters, including those that are part of shelter and rescue operations—should become familiar with new health and animal movement requirements imposed to help prevent further spread of the pest. Attention should be paid to NWS-related animal movement rules imposed by (1) their home state, (2) all states they will travel through, both outbound and return, and (3) their destination state.

For more information, including the latest state-level rules regarding the movement of animals, [visit AKC's Legislative Action Center](#) page that is regularly updated with current NWS information and updates.

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Don't Miss Out—Register Today for the 2026 AKC National Detection Dog Conference

Don't miss your opportunity to [register for the 2026 AKC National Detection Dog Conference](#), taking place August 4–6, 2026, at the Sheraton Imperial in Durham, North Carolina. Join us for *Unleashing Potential: Building America's Canine Defense, One Puppy at a Time* and gain valuable insights from leading experts in detection dog breeding, genetics, training, health, and performance. Continuing Education (CE) credits will be available for attendees. Read more below or scan the QR code for more information, and to register today!

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AKC Lauds Pet & Public Health Priorities In Senate Farm Bill 2.0

Today, the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee released base text for the 2026 Senate Agricultural Authorization Act, the "Farm Bill 2.0". This measure accompanies and shares important positive priorities with the recently-passed House Farm Bill (H.R. 7567, the *Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026*). The bill reauthorizes key U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs through 2031, and serves as an important vehicle to address federal priorities in the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA).

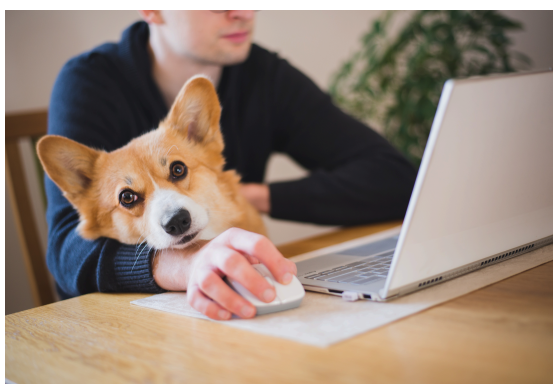
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Save the Date: AKC National Legislative Conference 2026

The American Kennel Club (AKC) Government Relations Department is excited to announce that the 2026 National Legislative Conference will return to Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina, September 26, 2026.

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New Federal Guidance on Animal-Related Reasonable Accommodations

A recent internal memorandum within the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), outlined updated enforcement guidance for assessing requests for the use of an animal as a reasonable accommodation under the Fair Housing Act.

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AKC Honors Nancy Fisk with Community Achievement Award

The American Kennel Club is pleased to announce that Nancy Fisk, Delegate for the Hockamock Kennel Club, has been awarded the AKC Community Achievement Award. The AKC Community Achievement award recognizes outstanding community leadership by individuals and clubs.

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AKC Honors Don Slavik with Lifetime Achievement Award

Recently, American Kennel Club Executive Secretary and Vice President of Government Relations Sheila Goffe, and Chris Sweetwood, founder of the AKC Reunite Adopt a Canine Cop grant program and AKC Detection Dog Task Force Co-Chair, attended the United States Police Canine Association (USPCA) National Detector Dog Trials in Atlantic City, where they presented a Lifetime Achievement Award to Don Slavik.

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New Jersey Assemblyman Bill Spearman Honored as Legislator of the Year

Recognizing his commitment to responsible dog ownership, consumer protection, and thoughtful policymaking, the American Kennel Club (AKC) named New Jersey Assemblyman William (Bill) Spearman an AKC Legislator of the Year at the recent AKC Celebrates USA 250 event at the Navy Yard in Philadelphia.

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Legislative Information and Updates

Linked below are some highlights of pending legislation impacting dog ownership and dog owners' rights across the country. For more information on these issues, and information on how you can get involved, visit the AKC GR Legislative Action Center [here](#).

Visit the [2026 Legislation Tracking map](#) for the most up-to-date information on state and federal legislation. This site, updated each weekday, provides the latest bill text, status, and links to legislative alerts posted by the AKC.

In addition to tracking and responding to legislative proposals, AKC Government Relations addresses dog-related regulatory proposals from the U.S. federal government, all 50 states, and the District of Columbia. AKC [GR's Regulatory Resource Center](#) provides updates on federal and state regulatory issues that may impact dog owners.

Federal	State	Local	Regulatory
Issues that may affect all dog owners in the U.S.	Issues specific to your state	Issues at the city, county, and metropolitan levels, and in U.S. territories	Regulatory issues at the federal, state, and local levels

Please contact AKC GR at (919) 816-3720 or doglaw@akc.org for more information or to let us know what's happening in your local community.



Everything We Do,
We Do for Dogs.



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