



**Humane
World for
Animals™**

Formerly called the Humane Society
of the United States

Undercover at an American Kennel Club-linked puppy mill

Roaches, sick puppies and disturbing conditions caught on tape at a Horrible Hundred puppy breeder in Long Island

The investigation

Sportsman's Kennels is a massive dog breeder in Manorville, New York, where at any given time up to 277 dogs and puppies are held in a meandering collection of bins, kennels and runs.

Following a visit from one of our secret shoppers, a Humane World for Animals undercover investigator obtained work at the kennel, which is linked to the dog registry and dog event organization American Kennel Club, commonly known as the AKC. The investigator worked at the breeding facility for about five weeks in September and October, 2025. We documented distressing conditions, with many dogs and puppies kept in cramped cages or plastic bins, while others suffered from a variety of ailments. The investigator saw roaches in the dogs' food, on the equipment and in the whelping areas. [Sportsman's Kennels' website](#) boasts it has been "breeding AKC pups since 1962," but it has also failed nine state inspections since 2019, and has been listed in Humane World for Animals' annual [Horrible Hundred report](#) on problem puppy mills five times, although it passed several recent inspections. While the facility previously operated as both a pet store and a breeding kennel, it currently claims to sell only puppies bred on the premises in order to comply with the new New York [state law](#) that prohibits the sale of puppies in retail stores.



Breeding dogs at Sportsman's Kennels in Long Island, New York, which holds more than 275 dogs and puppies. Photo by Humane World for Animals, 2025.

Before starting our undercover employment, Humane World for Animals sent a secret shopper into Sportsman's Kennels. The shopper asked to visit with a puppy she saw there and was shocked to find herself with a timid dachshund who seemed unsocialized and was missing a significant amount of fur. The loss of hair in such a young animal can indicate parasites or medical issues that should be addressed by a veterinarian.

Humane World for Animals later sent a second investigator to the kennel to be hired as a worker. Our findings were so disturbing that we filed complaints with local authorities.

Hidden camera documentation

Our investigator found a number of concerning issues and documented them with a hidden camera, including:

- Many smaller dogs and puppies who were kept continually in small plastic bins without enough room to run. It was common to see three or more puppies confined to a bin not much larger than a bathtub. Some were getting large enough to jump out.
- Bathtub-sized bins that were also used for nursing mother dogs and their litters, and for adult dogs who were not currently breeding or who were considered unsellable, who were kept in a back room that was not visible to the general public.
- Some parts of the kennel, including whelping areas, food preparation areas and a grooming room, were crawling with roaches.
- Some of the puppies vomited, or were seen hacking, coughing or wheezing, while others had congenital issues such as hernias or eye disorders. During the investigation, some puppies were brought to a veterinarian and were diagnosed with kennel cough (*Bordetella bronchiseptica*), which is highly contagious.
- Several puppies who had ears filled with brownish or blackish debris or had eye and nasal discharge.
- Many of the adult dogs had sores, matted fur, diarrhea or feces caked in their fur.
- One puppy had a crusty belly rash, which was reported to Sportsman's Kennels' manager. The manager instructed a staff member to give him a "dip," presumably a medicated bath to kill parasites such as fleas and lice, rather than immediately calling a veterinarian, but the puppy continued to have symptoms for weeks.



Above: Our secret shopper with a timid and thin puppy who was missing fur on his head and body.

Below: A mother dog was scratching and missing a significant amount of fur. Photos by Humane World for Animals, 2025.



- A mother Cavalier King Charles spaniel who was missing a very noticeable amount of fur, and was filmed repeatedly scratching, as if unable to get comfortable, while caring for a litter of small puppies.
- One breeding dog who was observed with noticeable blood on his fur near his neck.
- A breeding male Rottweiler who was so thin that the outline of his spine and ribs could be seen.
- Older breeding dogs and puppies who were considered unsellable were kept in what our investigator referred to with co-workers as the “forgotten dogs room,” or “neglected dogs room,” where they were fed but received minimal care and attention, and where conditions tended to be especially cramped and bleak. Sometimes there were no lights on in the room, leaving the dogs in darkness.
- Many plastic bins in which dogs were confined were scored with chew marks because puppies had no toys to play with.
- A statement by the kennel owner that our undercover worker should save moist, used food that the puppies didn’t eat because it could be fed to the adult Rottweilers. In one instance, many of the dogs missed a meal because the facility ran out of food.
- Unsafe conditions such as sharp points that could injure the dogs, rust, enclosures that the larger puppies could jump out of, and in one instance, roach-infested areas that were heavily sprayed with insecticide near pregnant dogs who were about to give birth.



Above: a thin breeding dog had very loose stools and seemed shy and fearful.

Below: AKC documents displayed on the wall. Photos by Humane World for Animals, 2025.



Toward the end of their employment, the investigator was given a mini goldendoodle puppy named Honey who had been moved to the “forgotten dog room.” Honey was getting older and larger, and had been marked unsellable due to suspected hernias. The facility owner indicated to our investigator she did not want to pay the cost of hernia surgery. As soon as Honey was given up, she was immediately brought to a veterinarian, where the goldendoodle was found to be slightly underweight and had a yeast infection in both ears; no sign of a hernia was detected. Honey was taken into the care of [Humane Long Island](#) and adopted into a loving home.



Left: The “forgotten dogs room,” where puppies and dogs considered too old, defective or otherwise unsellable live in small bins. Right: “Honey” is in the foreground. Photos by Humane World for Animals, 2025.

Shockingly, despite failing many prior inspections, Sportsman’s Kennel managed to pass five of its last six [state inspections](#) in 2025. Its most recent known inspection was on November 18, 2025, at which time there were 277 dogs and puppies on site, according to records from the New York Department of Agriculture and Markets. But Humane World for Animals found a number of apparent violations of New York kennel law during the investigation, including unsafe conditions, keeping expired medications for use on the dogs, failing to properly control the roach infestation, keeping some dogs in cages that were seemingly too small, and using dangerous chemicals—including Raid—in close proximity to the dogs. Humane World for Animals provided a full list of suspected violations to local authorities.

Housing conditions reported to local authorities

Humane World for Animals reported housing conditions to local authorities.

We found cockroaches crawling in and on food containers, on some of the walls and floors, and under the dog bins in a whelping room where pregnant dogs close to giving birth were confined. The facility owner indicated she no longer had an exterminator on contract.

The investigator saw a black mold- or mildew-like substance on some of the walls, on paper that was stored to be shredded for dog bedding and in ditches in the kennels and outside the building.

Some of the dogs had feces stuck in their fur or on their paws, and feces were smeared on some of the cage floors.

Some of the chain link cages were rusted and others, which held smaller breeds, whelping dogs and puppies, were constructed of thick plastic that had been chewed by the dogs. These conditions could make the enclosures hard to sanitize and lead to the spread of disease.

With no toys in their kennels, and no space to run, often the only entertainment the dogs had was chewing on their own enclosures.

At least one chain link dog run had a sharp point that was accessible and at eye level to the dog in the enclosure.

An alley near the building was full of sludge and had an extremely foul, sewage-like odor.

Many puppies were confined to enclosures that were seemingly too small and had no enrichment objects. In one case, a larger puppy escaped by jumping out of their cage and was found running loose.

Workplace safety and fairness concerns

The owner and manager admitted to being aware of the decrepit conditions during the investigation. After one shopper left without buying a puppy, the kennel owner confessed to our undercover worker that some of the breeding dogs did not look good, stating, “I lost the sale ‘cause they look like sh*t.”

On another day, the kennel manager told our investigator that if he were shopping for a dog and saw Sportsman’s Kennel, “I would not [buy from here], I would leave” adding, “This place looks terrible [...] . The ceiling’s falling in, there’s cobwebs everywhere, it’s disgusting.”

Some specific conditions sparked concerns for the kennel workers and their safety. We reported some workplace concerns to local authorities, including:

- The business owner required workers to drive an unsafe van that needed repairs and did not have a functional speedometer or seatbelts.
- The owner asked workers to perform tasks without enforcing the use of adequate safety equipment, such as spraying insecticides without a mask, digging up tree stumps without adequate safety gear, and more.
- The owner berated workers with insults such as, “that’s stupid,” “you know what [your IQ] is,” and comments about personal appearance.
- The owner allegedly did not pay at least one worker for weeks on end.



A kennel worker sprays insecticide directly on roaches in the whelping room, in the presence of pregnant dogs, and without wearing protective gear. Photo by Humane World for Animals, 2025.

How the AKC protects puppy mills

Sportsman’s Kennels’ website proudly touts its American Kennel Club affiliation, and it has AKC documents displayed on the wall inside the building. The business seems to engender trust with potential buyers partly due to its alleged links with the AKC. The AKC often [promotes its kennel inspection program](#) when defending its opposition to national, state and local dog protection laws.



Larger-breed dogs in Sportsman's Kennels, which holds about 20 different breeds and cross breeds, included standard poodles and Labradors. Photos by Humane World for Animals, 2025.

The public has a degree of trust in AKC, partly because many assume that the AKC inspects all the breeders who register with them, which it does not. In addition, the AKC admits on its own website that the inspection program is primarily used to “protect the integrity of the AKC registry,” in other words, to ensure that purebred dogs have accurate papers proving their heritage, not necessarily to protect the welfare of the dogs.

In fact, the opposite is true. The AKC has [actively opposed](#) stronger laws that would protect breeding dogs and puppies by fighting more than 500 different national, state and local bills over the last 18 years alone.

The AKC has also been stiffly criticized for promoting [appearance-based standards](#) in some breeds that are detrimental to their health, can cause pain and suffering, and often shorten their lifespans.

Others criticize the AKC and its member breed clubs for promoting unnecessary cosmetic surgeries on dogs, including tail docking and ear cropping, which are banned in some countries.

Perhaps most detrimental to dogs, the AKC spends large sums on lobbying to oppose animal welfare laws designed to protect dogs in puppy mills, including the federal Puppy Protection Act and the Better CARE for Animals Act, as well as hundreds of state and local bills. Because the AKC receives income every time an AKC puppy is registered, it appears it has a vested interest in increasing commercial breeding, even when overbreeding hurts dogs.

Next steps

After reviewing hours of undercover footage and more than 90 pages of investigation notes, Humane World for Animals shared a summary of key findings with the New York State Attorney General's office, the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, and local agencies, urging them to take action to the fullest extent of their respective powers.

At press time, Humane Long Island reported that Honey the goldendoodle had been adopted into a loving home.

What you can do

Former employees or customers who have purchased a sick puppy from Sportsman's Kennels are urged to file a complaint with the state Attorney General's [office online](#), or call 800-771-7755.

Others who want to tell their story of an encounter with Sportsman's Kennels or one of its dogs can contact Humane World for Animals at stoppupmills@humaneworld.org or fill out our online complaint form at humaneworld.org/reportapupmymill.

People who witness any animals in immediate danger, such as animals in distress without food and water, are urged to contact their local animal care and control agency, or, if no such agency exists, their local police or sheriff's department.

Concerned citizens can help prevent puppy mill cruelty by asking their elected officials to support the Puppy Protection Act (H.R. 2253) and the [Better CARE for Animals Act](#) (H.R. 3112/ S.1538), and by encouraging fellow pet lovers to adopt from local animal shelters and reputable rescues, or choose to buy only from a local, quality breeder they have met in person and who keeps a reasonable number of dogs.



A nursing mother dog at Sportsman's Kennels had no soft bedding for her puppies. Photo by Humane World for Animals, 2025.