

## **Breeder Excellence Program FAQ**

### **What is the Breeder Excellence program?**

A statutory program to recognize people who demonstrate commercial breeder excellence and exceed the standards and practices required of commercial breeders in Minnesota.

### **When will the Breeder Excellence program start?**

The Breeder Excellence program will start July 1, 2020.

### **Can any dog or cat breeder be in the Breeder Excellence program?**

Only commercial dog or cat breeders licensed with the Minnesota Board of Animal Health (Board) can apply to be part of the Breeder Excellence program. A commercial dog or cat breeder must not have had any violations with the Commercial Dog or Cat Breeder program during the most recent licensing period.

### **How does the program work?**

Commercial dog and cat breeders that exceed the standards and practices required of commercial breeders have the opportunity to earn up to five different badges in the Breeder Excellence program. A commercial breeder that earns all five badges will be recognized as a Breeder of Excellence. Program badges are good for one-year only and qualifying breeders will receive a new badge each year that they apply they qualify.

### **How will I know if a commercial dog or cat breeder is in the Breeder Excellence program?**

A commercial dog or cat breeder may display any or all badges earned at their facility or in any advertising. The Board will maintain a list of commercial dog and cat breeders in the Breeder Excellence program on its website.

## What are the five badges for the Breeder Excellence program?

### Behavior and Socialization

To qualify for the behavior and socialization badge, commercial dog and cat breeders must:

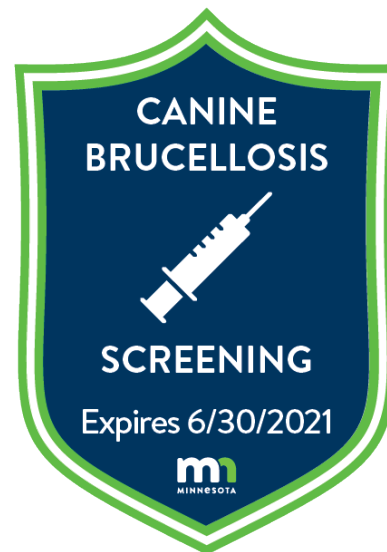
- Establish and maintain an enrichment plan that outlines activities in two out of the three following enrichment categories: (1) animal to animal interaction, (2) human to animal interaction, and (3) environmental stimulation.
- Create a log of enrichment activities detailing at least 60 days of plan implementation to be reviewed and approved by Board inspectors.



### Canine Brucellosis screening (dog breeding facilities only)

To qualify for the canine brucellosis screening badge, commercial dog breeders must:

- Present copies of test results verifying that each adult dog (dogs 28 weeks of age or older) in their facility tested negative to two approved canine brucellosis tests performed at least 12 weeks apart.
- Present copies of test results verifying that each dog added to the facility not tested as indicated above was isolated until tested negative to two approved canine brucellosis tests performed at least 12 weeks apart.



## Continuing Education

To qualify for the continuing education badge, commercial dog and cat breeders must:

- Submit proof of at least 20 hours of Board-approved continuing education for all individuals listed on the license application; or
- 12 hours of Board-approved continuing education and proof of membership in a relevant association for all individuals listed on the license application.
- Present documented evidence of a formal training program for all facility employees.



## Facility Management

To qualify for the facility management badge, commercial dog and cat breeders must:

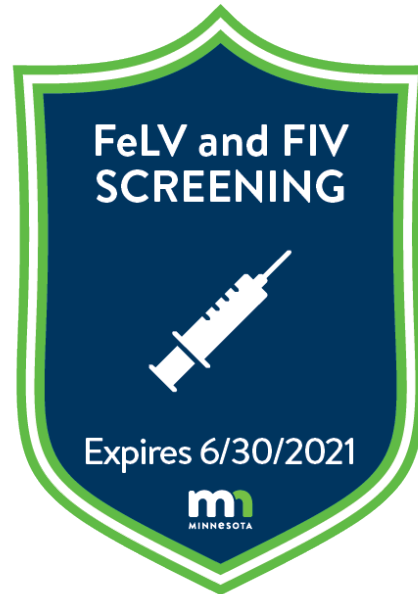
- Submit a written biosecurity plan to the Board for review which outlines the facilities disease prevention protocols including isolation of sick animals, cleaning and disinfection of the facility, personal protective equipment for staff members and policies for visitors.
- Submit a written emergency response plan to the Board for review which outlines facility management's response to natural and man-made disasters including a detailed evacuation plan and an alternate care plan if primary staff are unavailable due to unforeseen circumstances.



## Feline Leukemia (cat breeding facilities only)

To qualify for the facility management badge, commercial cat breeders must:

- Present copies of test results verifying that each adult cat (cats 28 weeks of age or older) in their facility tested negative to an approved test for Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV) and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV).
- Present copies of test results verifying that each cat added to the facility not tested as indicated above was isolated until tested negative to an approved test for FeLV and FIV.



## Health Screening

To qualify for the health screening badge, commercial dog and cat breeders must:

- Present documentation verifying that all adult animals in the facility have had a comprehensive wellness examination by a veterinarian within the past year.
- Present documentation verifying that a licensed veterinarian has conducted an onsite assessment of all animals in the facility within the past year.
- Present copies of results of health screening performed under the direction of a licensed veterinarian on all adult (28 weeks of age or older) intact animals in their breeding facility. Screening may include genetic or disease testing and/or parasite and disease screening.



## **If a breeder isn't in the program, how can I find out if they meet any of these requirements?**

The Board encourages anyone looking to acquire a new pet to contact the breeder directly to address questions about the animal you wish to purchase or their breeding facility.

## **If a breeder is participating in the Breeder Excellence program, does that guarantee that every dog or cat purchased from their facility will be free from genetic or contagious disease(s).**

*Enrollment of a breeder in the Breeder of Excellence program means the annual qualifications for a badge of excellence at the time of application had been met. Successful enrollment is not a guarantee or warranty by the Board of Animal Health of an animal's health or fitness. A purchaser should work with individual breeders or refer to Minnesota Statutes 325F regarding their consumer rights.*

*The Board of Animal Health is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Provider.*