



Ohio Revised Code Section 935.20 Investigations.

Effective: March 31, 2021

Legislation: House Bill 24 - 133rd General Assembly

(A) On and after January 1, 2014, the director of agriculture immediately shall cause an investigation to be conducted if the director has reason to believe that one of the following may be occurring:

(1) A dangerous wild animal is possessed by a person who has not been issued a wildlife shelter permit, wildlife propagation permit, or rescue facility permit under this chapter.

(2) A restricted snake is possessed by a person that has not been issued a restricted snake possession permit or restricted snake propagation permit under this chapter.

(3) A dangerous wild animal or restricted snake is being treated or kept in a manner that is in violation of this chapter or rules.

For purposes of the investigation, the director or the director's designee may order the animal or snake that is the subject of the notification to be quarantined or may order the transfer of the animal or snake to a facility that is on the list maintained by the director under this section. If the director's designee orders the animal or snake to be quarantined or transferred, the designee shall provide a copy of the order to the director.

(B) The director shall attempt to notify the person owning or possessing an animal or snake that has been ordered to be quarantined or transferred under division (A) of this section. The notice shall be delivered in person or by certified mail. The director also may post a copy of a quarantine order at two conspicuous locations on the premises where the animal or snake is quarantined. The director shall maintain a copy of an order issued under this section and evidence that the director attempted to notify the person owning or possessing the animal or snake.

(C) A quarantine or transfer order issued under this section shall contain all of the following:

(1) The name and address of the person owning or possessing the animal or snake, if known;



- (2) A description of the quarantined or transferred animal or snake;
 - (3) A description of the premises affected by the quarantine or transfer;
 - (4) The reason for the quarantine or transfer;
 - (5) Any terms and conditions of the quarantine or transfer;
 - (6) A notice that a person adversely affected by the order may request a hearing to review the order.
- (D) A person that is adversely affected by a quarantine or transfer order pertaining to a dangerous wild animal or restricted snake owned or possessed by the person, within thirty days after the order is issued, may request in writing an adjudication in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code. A request for an adjudication does not stay a quarantine or transfer order.
- (E) The owner of or person possessing a dangerous wild animal or restricted snake that was quarantined or transferred under division (A) of this section shall be responsible for all reasonable costs associated with the quarantine or transfer, including the costs of transportation, housing, food, and veterinary care for the animal or snake. If such an owner or person is unable to pay for the reasonable costs, the director shall certify the costs to the county auditor to be assessed against any property of the owner or person and thereby made a lien upon it and collected as other taxes. All money from the collection of liens under this division shall be credited in accordance with division (J) of this section.
- (F) If the state veterinarian determines that a dangerous wild animal or restricted snake that was quarantined or transferred under division (A) of this section is infected with or exposed to a dangerously contagious or infectious disease or is seriously injured, the state veterinarian shall so notify the director. The director may order the animal or snake to be humanely euthanized by a veterinarian if the state veterinarian has indicated that euthanization is medically necessary.
- (G) A quarantine or transfer order issued under this section shall remain in effect until one of the following occurs:



(1) The director, after reviewing the results of the investigation conducted under division (A) of this section, issues a written notice of release.

(2) A court of competent jurisdiction orders the quarantine or transfer order to be terminated in a proceeding conducted under division (H) of this section.

(3) A court of competent jurisdiction orders the seizure of the dangerous wild animal or restricted snake in a proceeding conducted under division (H) of this section.

(H) If, after reviewing the results of an investigation concerning a dangerous wild animal or restricted snake conducted under division (A) of this section and after resolution of any proceeding conducted under division (D) of this section, the director determines that a circumstance described in division (A)(1), (2), or (3) of this section is or was occurring, the director shall initiate, in a court of competent jurisdiction, a proceeding for the permanent seizure of the animal or snake, as applicable. If the court affirms the director's determination that a circumstance described in division (A)(1), (2), or (3) of this section is or was occurring, the court shall order the animal or snake seized and shall order the method of disposition of the animal or snake. The court may order the person owning or possessing the animal or snake to pay all reasonable costs associated with the seizure and, if applicable, the costs associated with the quarantine or transfer of the animal or snake, including the costs of transportation, housing, food, and veterinary care of the animal or snake. If the court does not affirm the director's determination, the court shall order the quarantine or transfer order to be terminated and the animal or snake to be returned to the person owning or possessing it, if applicable.

(I) The director may authorize any of the following to conduct an investigation and order the quarantine or transfer of a dangerous wild animal or restricted snake under division (A) of this section:

(1) Employees of the department of agriculture;

(2) Natural resources law enforcement officers with the consent of the director of natural resources;



- (3) Employees of the department of health with the consent of the director of health;
 - (4) Employees of a board of health with the consent of the board;
 - (5) Humane society agents appointed under section 1717.06 of the Revised Code with the consent of the humane society;
 - (6) Law enforcement officers with the consent of the sheriff of the county or the chief law enforcement officer of the township or municipal corporation, as applicable, by whom the law enforcement officers are employed;
 - (7) Law enforcement officers who are state highway patrol troopers with the consent of the superintendent of the state highway patrol.
- (J) Money collected for reimbursement of costs associated with the quarantine or transfer of dangerous wild animals and restricted snakes under this section shall be credited to one of the following funds, as applicable:
- (1) If the animal or snake was quarantined or transferred by an employee of the department of agriculture or the department of health, a natural resources law enforcement officer, or a law enforcement officer who is a state highway patrol trooper, the dangerous and restricted animal fund created in section 935.25 of the Revised Code;
 - (2) If the animal or snake was quarantined or transferred by an employee of a board of health, a special fund, which is hereby created in each health district, that shall be used exclusively for the administration and enforcement of this chapter and rules;
 - (3) If the animal or snake was quarantined or transferred by a humane society agent, a special fund, which is hereby created in each county that has a humane society, that shall be used exclusively for the administration and enforcement of this chapter and rules;
 - (4) If the animal or snake was quarantined or transferred by a law enforcement officer who is not a state highway patrol trooper, the special fund that is created in the political subdivision that employs



the law enforcement officer in division (D) of section 935.16 of the Revised Code.

(K) The director shall maintain a list of facilities inside and outside the state that the director determines are eligible to accept dangerous wild animals and restricted snakes for the purposes of this section.