



January 4, 2022

Diane J. Frasier
 Director
 Office of Acquisition and Logistics Management
 Office of Management
 National Institutes of Health

Via e-mail: frasierd@mail.nih.gov

Dear Ms. Frasier:

I am writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals—PETA entities have more than 9 million members and supporters globally—regarding the National Institutes of Health’s (NIH) contracts with Alpha Genesis, Inc. (AGI), a Yemassee, S.C.-based company. NIH has awarded tens of millions of dollars in contracts to AGI to maintain colonies of monkeys at the company’s facilities and to purchase monkeys for use in NIH’s intramural laboratories in Bethesda and elsewhere. However, AGI has a long history of flouting animal welfare laws, which represent minimum standards of care. Gross negligence and widespread incompetence in AGI’s facilities have caused immense pain and misery to animals, and just last month, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued an [official warning](#) to AGI for [serious violations of the federal Animal Welfare Act](#). Federal Acquisitions Regulations stipulate that such scofflaw behavior would disqualify a contractor from receiving federal contracts. In accordance with these regulations, we believe NIH should cancel any current contracts with AGI and disqualify the company from future contracts with the agency.

Between April 2014 and September 2022, the company was cited for repeat violations of the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA), including six critical violations:

- In just eight months, inspectors documented six separate incidents in which animals were returned to incorrect enclosures at AGI. In August 2022, an adult female monkey sustained grave injuries from incompatible conspecifics and was found dead after staff negligently moved her to the wrong enclosure, even though the enclosures are clearly labeled. Four other monkeys required subsequent veterinary care after they were placed in the wrong enclosures. In July 2020, two monkeys died after their fingers became trapped in structures in their enclosures—but no one noticed.
- Between January and August 2020, six separate incidents in which monkeys opened or escaped from their enclosures were observed. Two groups of monkeys—consisting of seven and four animals, respectively—escaped through weaknesses in a chain-link fence. Three groups of monkeys opened panels between their cages and had “direct, unplanned” interactions, three of which required veterinary care.

PEOPLE FOR
 THE ETHICAL
 TREATMENT
 OF ANIMALS

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- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

- An infant monkey died after becoming entangled in a stretch gauze material used in an enclosure to hold a water bottle.
- Twenty-six monkeys escaped from an enclosure after staff failed to follow protocols, resulting in skin lacerations and the amputation of one animal's finger.
- A monkey escaped from a transport cage into the woods while being moved to a medical clinic and wasn't recaptured.
- A macaque was found "down" in an enclosure with dehydration. The next day, another monkey was found in the same condition and it was discovered that the water line had been turned off for up to a week.
- Two monkeys escaped from an outdoor chain-link enclosure, breaching the thin wire between the fence and the frame. One of the monkeys was darted, sustained internal injuries, and died.
- A juvenile monkey was removed from a social group and treated for trauma. The monkey's tattoo was "read incorrectly," and the animal was placed into the wrong social group. Fighting was observed, and the juvenile macaque died from the resulting injuries.
- A female monkey escaped from her enclosure because the cage had been secured with a clip instead of a lock.
- A monkey died after being left outside, even as temperatures dropped to 9 degrees.
- Another monkey was found dead in a location thought to be empty. The animal wasn't being observed and didn't receive appropriate care.
- Three monkeys died due to cold stress after sedation procedures.
- A large number of dead cockroaches were observed in the aisle just outside the monkeys' cage. Inside the cage was a layer of feces and standing water.

In July 2017, the U.S. Department of Agriculture took the rare step of posting a stipulation of \$12,600 against AGI for numerous violations of the AWA.

NIH currently holds contracts with AGI valued at more than \$17 million. While government regulations require that contractors adhere to all relevant laws, AGI has grossly failed to meet this burden. Indeed, [Federal Acquisition Regulations](#) (FAR 52.212-4 (q)) state that, "[t]he Contractor shall comply with all applicable Federal, State and local laws, executive orders, rules and regulations applicable to its performance under this contract." Further, FAR 52.212-4 (m) states that, "The Government may terminate this contract, or any part hereof, for cause in the event of any default by the Contractor, or if the Contractor fails to comply with any contract terms and conditions..." [HHS Acquisition Regulations](#) (HHSAR 352.270-5) similarly permit the NIH to terminate a contract for a company's ongoing noncompliance with federal animal welfare regulations, and to prohibit said company from eligibility for future contracts.

In light of AGI's abject failure to comply with federal animal welfare laws, consistent with the aforementioned regulations, we ask that you immediately cancel any current contracts with AGI and disqualify the company from future contracts with NIH.

I would be happy to meet with you to discuss this further. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alka Chandna". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Alka Chandna, Ph.D.
Vice President
Laboratory Investigations Cases