

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO
WESTERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

R & R CHINCHILLA, INC., and JAMES
FRANKLIN RITTERSPACH,

Defendants.

) Case No.: 3:26-cv-01990

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) District Judge James R. Knepp II

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) Magistrate Judge Darrell A. Clay

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) **TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER**

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Plaintiff, United States of America, filed an *Ex Parte* Motion for Temporary Restraining Order and Preliminary Injunction against Defendants R & R Chinchilla, Inc. (“R & R”) and James Ritterspach under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 65(a) and (b)(1), and Sections 2159 and 2146(c) of the Animal Welfare Act (“AWA”). 7 U.S.C. §§ 2159, 2146(c). The United States requested, in part, that the Court enjoin Defendants from operating their facility, located at 7754 State Route 103, Jenera, Ohio (the “Facility”), in violation of the AWA, its regulations, and standards for a period of 14 days.

Upon consideration of the United States’ Memorandum of Authorities in Support of the Motion, including the exhibits and declarations submitted therewith, the Court finds that the United States has met the standards for temporary preliminary injunctive relief under Sections 2146(c) and 2159 of the AWA, 7 U.S.C. §§ 2146(c), 2159, and hereby GRANTS the motion for a temporary restraining order and defers ruling on the motion for a preliminary injunction.

For a period of 14 days from the date of this Temporary Restraining Order, it is ORDERED that Defendants, including any of their officers, agents, servants, employees, and those working in active concert with them, must:

1. Provide to counsel for the United States within seven (7) days of the Court's order:
 - a. a list of every building and its location at which Defendants own, possess, or hold any chinchilla or other AWA-regulated animal that is intended for breeding or sale as of August 20, 2026; and
 - b. an accurate inventory of animals on hand in each building on the list above, including whether the animal is a short-haired or long-haired breed, and a kit or an adult;
2. Immediately cease from acquiring by birth¹ or transfer or disposing by euthanasia or transfer any animals listed on the inventories in Paragraph 1 above without the consent of the United States or a court order;
3. In the case of any animals that were already pregnant at the time of the Court's order, provide notice to counsel for the United States within 72 hours of the birth of any animal, including the number of animals born;
4. If any animal listed on the inventories dies, have a licensed veterinarian who has received training and/or has experience in the care and management of chinchillas confirm the death in person and document the condition of the animal;
5. Provide the veterinarian's record of death for the paragraph above to counsel for the United States within 72 hours of the death of the animal;

¹ "Acquiring by birth" as used in this paragraph includes breeding animals, but shall not include animals born to an animal that is pregnant on or before the time that the Court enters this order.

6. Ensure that, within four (4) days of the Court's order, any animal with a visible eye issue as of the day that the Court's order is served on Defendants receives a complete physical examination from head to tail by a licensed veterinarian who has received training and/or experience in the care and management of chinchillas;
7. Ensure that, within seven (7) days of the Court's order:
 - a. There is daily observation of each animal and each enclosure and timely reporting of problems of animal health to a licensed veterinarian who has received training and/or experience in the care and management of chinchillas;
 - b. Breeding collars are carefully and humanely removed from all chinchillas and that all animals housed together are compatible;
 - c. Enclosures do not have accumulations of feces or urine, and adequate clean bedding is provided in each enclosure;
 - d. Floors between the rows of animal enclosures do not have excess discarded bedding or fecal material;
 - e. Pest control strategies for rodents that do not risk or interfere with the health and well-being of chinchillas are implemented;
 - f. Cobwebs are cleaned off enclosures;
 - g. Animals are provided potable water and sufficient food that is wholesome, palatable, and free from contamination;
 - h. Cage cards with the (1) number of animals, (2) breed(s) of the animals, (3) any distinctive physical features of the animals, and (4) any identifying marks on the animals are posted on enclosures with kits born July 1, 2026 or after;

- i. Fans or other ventilation methods are placed throughout the buildings housing animals;
8. Ensure that, within fourteen (14) days of the Court's order, every animal listed on the inventories in Paragraph 1 above (excluding any animal that has already received an examination pursuant to Paragraph 6) receives a complete physical examination from head to tail by a licensed veterinarian who has received training and/or experience in the care and management of chinchillas;
9. Provide complete and legible veterinary records for the physical examinations described in Paragraph 7 above and for any veterinary care otherwise provided to any chinchilla to counsel for the United States within seven (7) days of the animals being seen by a veterinarian; and
10. Within fourteen (14) days of the Court's order, provide complete and accurate disposition and acquisition records for the last twelve (12) months to counsel for the United States.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/ James R. Knepp II
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

Dated: August 21, 2026