

**15A NCAC 10H .1404 MINIMUM STANDARDS CAPTIVITY LICENSE FOR HOLDING**

(a) The following minimum standards shall apply to wild animals and wild birds held under a captivity license for holding. Each license holder shall comply with the following general requirements in addition to requirements specified by species.

- (1) General Sanitation and Food Requirements.
  - (A) Clean drinking water shall be provided. All pools, tanks, water areas, and water containers provided for swimming, wading, or drinking shall be clean. Enclosures shall provide drainage for surface water and runoff.
  - (B) Water disposal and waste disposal shall be in accordance with all applicable local, State, and federal laws.
  - (C) Food shall be of a type and quantity that is appropriate for the species and shall be provided in an unspoiled and uncontaminated condition.
  - (D) Fecal and food waste shall be removed from inside, under, and around enclosures and disposed of in a manner that prevents noxious odors or pests.
- (2) General Enclosure Requirements.
  - (A) Enclosures constructed of chain link or other approved materials shall be braced and securely anchored.
  - (B) Enclosures shall be ventilated.
  - (C) Enclosures with a natural substrate shall have a dig barrier that prevents escape.
  - (D) The young of an animal may be kept with the parent or foster animal of the same species in a single-animal enclosure until weaned. After weaning, if the animals are kept together, the requirements for multiple-animal enclosures shall apply.
  - (E) Chains or tethers shall not be used as a method of confinement for wild animals inside an enclosure.
  - (F) Enclosures shall be equipped with one shelter, nest box, or den large enough to accommodate all animals in the enclosure at the same time.
  - (G) Enclosures shall have one elevated area large enough to accommodate all animals in the enclosure at the same time.
- (3) Single animal enclosures shall have the following minimum dimensions and horizontal areas, or dimensional equivalents:

Animal	Length (ft.)	Width (ft.)	Height (ft.)	Total Square Footage
Wild Turkey	6	4	8	24
Coyote	8	8	6	64
Fox (Red and Gray)	8	4	4	32
Raccoon	8	4	4	32
Bobcat	10	5	5	50
Otter	10	5	5	50
Squirrel	4	2	2	8
Groundhog	8	4	4	32
Rabbit	6	3	3	18
Opossum	6	3	3	18
Skunk	6	3	3	18
Armadillo	8	6	4	48

For animals not mentioned elsewhere in this Rule, a single animal enclosure shall be a cage with one horizontal dimension being four times the nose-rump length of the animal and the other horizontal dimension being two times the nose-rump length of the animal. The vertical dimensions shall be two times the nose-rump length of the animal. No cages shall be less than four feet by two feet by two feet, or less than eight square feet.

- (4) The minimum square footage for a multiple animal enclosure shall be determined by multiplying the required square footage for a single animal enclosure by a factor of 1.5 for one additional animal and that result by the same factor, successively, for each additional animal. Vertical dimensions may remain the same as for single animal enclosures.

(b) Alligators.

- (1) The minimum land area of the enclosure shall be based upon the length of the longest animal. Land area with both horizontal dimensions as long as the longest animal shall be provided. In case of more than one animal, the combined area covered by all their bodies while aligned parallel without overlap shall not exceed 50 percent of the land area.
- (2) The enclosure shall contain a pool of water large enough for all the animals in the enclosure to completely submerge themselves at the same time. Steps shall be taken to prevent the surface of the water from freezing solid.
- (3) The enclosure shall have a structural barrier of sufficient strength to contain the animals, and shall prevent contact between an observer and the alligators.
- (4) Enclosures shall be equipped with a shelter or shelters large enough to accommodate all alligators in the enclosure at the same time.
- (5) The facility shall have a perimeter boundary eight feet in height, located three feet from the primary enclosure, and constructed of 11.5 gauge chain link or equivalent.

(c) Wild Birds. Enclosures for wild birds may house more than one animal, provided that the enclosure is permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

- (1) Enclosures for wild birds shall be designed using the standards established by the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association's "Wildlife in Education: A Guide for the Care and Use of Program Animals," which is hereby incorporated by reference, excluding subsequent amendments and editions, and is available for a fee at <https://national-wildlife-rehabilitators-association.myshopify.com/>.
- (2) Enclosures for raptors shall be built to standards detailed in the University of Minnesota's "Raptors in Captivity: Guidelines for Care and Management," which is hereby incorporated by reference, excluding subsequent amendments and editions, and is available for a fee at <https://www.hancockhouse.com/>.

(d) Black Bear. Black bears held in captivity at facilities other than publicly operated zoos or educational institutions shall be held in enclosures simulating a natural habitat, developed in accordance with the requirements of G.S. 19A-11.

(e) Cougar. Cougars held in captivity at facilities other than publicly operated zoos, educational, or scientific research institutions shall be held in enclosures simulating a natural habitat, developed in accordance with the requirements of G.S. 113-272.5(e)(4).

*History Note: Authority G.S. 106-549.97(b); 113-134; 113-272.5; 113-274;  
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