

Diary of an investigator: Tyler, Texas, Petland

Editor's note: *This document contains the log notes of an HSUS undercover investigator in his own words. He worked at the Tyler, Texas, Petland store in December 2018. Some edits have been made for brevity, to correct spelling or typographic errors, and to conceal the names of employees for their privacy. Yellow highlights have been added by the editor for emphasis. The photographs are screen grabs that were taken from the investigator's undercover videos. All words are his own. All photos copyright HSUS.*



Saturday, December 1, 2018 Day 1

I first submitted a paper application to this store on Thursday, November 29, 2018. On Friday, November 30, 2018, I received a call back was told to come in for a working interview in the kennel area on this day.

I arrived at the store at 2:50pm and was scheduled to start at 3:00pm. I was greeted by "O" who is the sales manager. She informed me that the other technician called out sick and my working interview was partially done this soon to help fill a gap in the kennel area. I then met "JC" who was the senior kennel technician for that shift. She later informed me that she had worked at the store for approximately 2 months.

The kennel area consists of approximately 40 display kennels, 4 isolation kennels still in the main area, and 6 kennels in a closed off room. Each kennel had a 1x1, squared off, metallic floor with a plastic bin underneath to catch feces and urine. There are 2 deep sinks to wash the plastic bins, sanitize equipment, and give dog baths. Kennel employees wear personally bought scrubs, but I was able to wear jeans and a normal shirt. There are

several hand sanitizer bottles and I was instructed to sanitize every time I had any contact with a dog because of cross contamination. No dog was ever allowed to be in contact with a dog outside of their kennel.

"JC" informed me that usually 2 employees work in the kennel area. One employee handles medication, exams, and the more technical duties while the other watches the dogs and cleans cages. She explained that the managers never want to see any feces in the display kennels, so they need to be cleaned continually and throughout the day.

"JC" indicated that a dog had recently died of canine parvovirus and that they now tested for it in every new arrival. She went on to say that the aforementioned dog contracted the disease before the dog arrived at the store and that many of the sick animals she's dealt with contracted their illnesses from the breeders prior to their arrival at the store. She also explained that sometimes dogs get hurt in the play area when they are with customers. She had recently helped treat a dog with a concussion that had likely been injured while with a customer.

In the middle of the shift, several employees from the sales floor came into the kennel area and complained about a customer. "JC" informed me that the customer had recently purchased a dog and then attempted to return the animal after the dog had showed symptoms of respiratory problems and made a small scene. That same customer returned to the store to buy another dog. The employees believed that the symptoms of the dog were due to the actions of the customer and were reluctant to deal with him. One of the employees later informed me that he did not buy another animal and that he was nearly asked to leave.

"JC" informed me that new dogs normally arrive on Sunday or Monday and that the store usually receives 17 dogs in each shipment.

At the start of the day, there were 3 dogs in the isolation kennels. Each of these dogs had diarrhea and one was unable to keep food down. Another dog was added later because he acted aggressively to the other dogs in his kennel.

"B" is a salesman at the store. Near the end of the shift, he explained that to show dominance to the dogs I would have to grab them by the scruff and speak in a low growling voice.

"O" clocked me out at the end of the shift and said that she recommended me for the job. She scheduled me to work the morning shift on Monday so that I would be able to meet the kennel manager.

I observed 54 dogs in the kennel area at the start of the day but was unable to do a final count. I also observed 2 dog sales over the course of the shift. I departed the area at approximately 9:40pm and am scheduled to return on Monday, December 3, 2018 at 6:45am.

Monday, December 3, 2018 Day 2

I arrived at the store at 6:41am and was scheduled to start at 7:00am. I spent the day in kennel area where I sanitized kennels and equipment, wiped windows, and cleaned animal feces.

I worked in the kennel area with "RS" who is the kennel manager and an individual named "CY" who is a kennel technician. "CY" is "O"'s daughter.

Very early in the day, "RS" pointed out that a dog had a small amount dried feces stuck to his backside. She explained that the dog needed a bath and was taken out of the display kennel and into an isolation kennel by himself. Several times throughout the day, both "CY" and "RS" talked about the dog and indicated that they would bathe the dog when they had the time. When I left the store at 2:15pm, the dog was still in an isolation kennel (where it had stayed all day) and was not bathed.

"RS" indicated that 16 new dogs were scheduled to be delivered that night. Among the new dogs are 2 heeler, 1 Boston terrier, and 1 goldendoodle. Many of the kennels were already full and "RS" explained several times throughout the day that placing all of the new dogs would be difficult.

"CY" indicated that, on the previous day, a Chihuahua had become nonresponsive and was given saline. She believed the dog was going to die. "O" brought the dog to her house overnight and the dog eventually showed signs of improvement. "CY" explained that sometimes the smaller dogs "crash" and she was unsure of the reason why.

I observed 58 dogs in the kennel area at the start of my shift. Please note, my previous days count did not include dogs in the isolation kennels. I also observed 2 dog sales over the course of the shift. I departed the area at approximately 2:15pm and am scheduled to return on Tuesday, December 4, 2018 at 1:45pm.

Videos from today included this conversation:

"CY": That Chihuahua. Yesterday I came in and it was crashing, and it looked like it was dead. It would roll over and its head wouldn't follow its body and it couldn't stand up.

Me: What'd you guys do?

"CY": We gave it saline. We injected it with saline which is liquids basically to see if he responds to it which he did thankfully. We thought he wasn't gonna make it but towards last night my mom ended up bringing him home. He started walking which is a great sign. So, he's doing really good now. He's actually in the kennel now.

Me: What caused it, though?

"CY": We don't know. Mostly with small dogs, because they're so small, they can't function properly sometimes. Because they're so small, they're organs can't keep up with them. If that makes sense. "E" [different kennel technician] could explain it more. Cause if stuff happens, she's the one that's like (the person to handle the problem) but I was alone because (unintelligible) didn't show up.

Later:

"CY": If you ever see a dog that's like lethargic and not really moving and if you tap it and it doesn't move or anything. Be sure to report that 'cause he's probably crashing. If you ever see a dog that's shaking really bad, just mess with him and if he gets up and starts moving, he's probably not having a seizure but if he stays there, he's probably having a seizure. Cause the problem with him was apparently, on the night shift before, "JC" had noticed the dog acting lethargic, but she had forgotten to report it. She said she forgot to report it to somebody. So, the next morning when we came in he was almost completely gone.

Tuesday, December 4, 2018 Day 3

I arrived at the store at 2:44pm and was scheduled to start at 3:00pm. Please note, I was originally scheduled for 2:00pm but I was instructed to return at 3:00pm. I spent the day in kennel area where I sanitized kennels and equipment, wiped windows, and cleaned animal feces with "RS" and "JC".

There were 3 isolation kennels used during the workday. One had a heeler and "JC" informed me that the dog was new and acted aggressively towards the other dogs in the display kennel. Another isolation kennel had 2 smaller breed dogs and "JC" explained that those dogs were in isolation because there was not enough room in the display kennels. The last dog had blood in her stool and needed to be syringe fed.

While in the breakroom, I observed a large cockroach in the middle of the floor. An employee then entered the area and explained that infant black widow spiders were found in the tarantula cages and she assumed that they were transported in with the tarantulas by mistake. She said that the black widows were found and removed from the area.

Early in the day, "JC" showed me a bulldog with stitches on the outside edge of each of his eyebrows. There was no sign of injury and the stitches were in identical spots on both eyelids. She explained that it must've been done while with the breeders and she had never seen anything like this in the past. Later she showed me a different dog that appeared to have had surgery for a hernia and had several stitches in his abdomen.

While in the breakroom, I observed several shipping documents that pertained to the breeders of the dogs that had recently arrived at the store. The first was **J.A.K.'s Puppies Inc.** (featured in [this article](#)) located at 2685 Grant Ave, PO Box 245 in Britt, IA. Their USDA# is 42-B-0271. The others are **QD Kennels, Tiffanie's, and PBT Pet Online.**

I observed 71 dogs in the kennel area at the start of my shift. I also observed 1 dog sale over the course of the day. I departed the area at approximately 9:15pm and am scheduled to return on Wednesday, December 5, 2018 at 1:45pm.

Videos from today included this conversation:

"JC" with a bulldog that had stitches put into the outside of both of his eyelids:

Me: What happened there?

"JC": I have no idea.

Me: Did we do that?

"JC": No. The breeder did.

Me: That's odd.

"JC": Yeah. I never saw...see...I can't even talk today.

Me: You're fine. Never seen that before?

"JC": Yeah. I thought it was just a string and I was gonna pull it and then I looked closer and was like, "Oh no that's a stitch."

Me: They're both on the same side, too. It's not just a scratch or something. They're equal.

Later in the day: "JC" was talking about the Chihuahua that had previously crashed:

Me: How's that one Chihuahua, anyway?

"JC": She's doing good. Poops look good. (Unintelligible) on her own and drinking water on her own.

Me: That's pretty big. Do you know what caused that?

"JC": I have no idea. She just crashed. It happens sometimes especially with smaller dogs.

Me: Yeah, I guess I haven't really worked with dogs before, but I didn't think that happened like that. Just out of nowhere.

"JC": Sometimes it depends on if they're getting enough to eat. The other guys, they'll push him outta the way. You gotta watch the smaller dogs

Later in the day: My video shows dogs in an isolation kennel. Please note, these dogs were in isolation for spacing reasons and not behavior or illness.

"RS" was syringe feeding a dog and talking about seizures.

"RS": It's the one that had really bad bloody stool and we got the bloody stool taken care of but she just isn't eating on her own.

Me: You have to do this a lot?

"RS": I have since I've been here. I mean not every day or every puppy or whatever, but we get these little tiny ones and when they go down, they go down quick. That is why I am always fussing about making sure that my puppies eat. Cause these are my babies. When they crash and they start having seizures. We have to give them saline solution under the skin, nutritional gel, syringe feed them, syringe water them. I mean, everything, it's like...We had a Chihuahua that I lost which broke my heart. I'd been taking him back and forth home for like a week.

Me: Is this the one recently, like the other day?

"RS": No, we haven't lost one. (The previous Chihuahua) It had 4 seizures and I was able to bring him out of all of them except for the last one because he had the 5th seizure not even 24 hours after the 4th. He hadn't recovered from the 4th one yet. That broke my heart.

Me: What do you do when they start seizing?

"RS": When they start seizing you get them out immediately. It's not like a convulsive seizure normally. They're not coherent. Just laying. They may be stiff. Their jaws may be clenched tight. The first thing we may want to do is put the saline solution under their skin. 2 cc's. Then get some stress relief water and very slowly, like a drop at a time, pull their lip up and put it right here in the corner of their mouth. Drop it in and put the tip in between their teeth. Drop it in very slowly to get that sugar back in because that's what's happened. Their sugar level has bottomed out. They're having a hypoglycemic seizure.

Me: So, why does that happen?

"RS": Because they're not eating enough. The other puppies aren't letting them eat or they've gotten a cold or upper respiratory. Maybe they've just quit eating and that's why we have to watch and make sure every puppy is in the bowl eating. Because once they start going down, it's hard.

Me: So, what does the saline do?

"RS": Saline is that bag that's on the wall that we use for nebs (nebulizer). So, when we have to give it under the skin, we don't take the needle off. We draw up 2cc's. You pull up their skin like this and make a tent. Put the needle in the skin and inject the saline solution into there. That's usually because they're dehydrated. When they start going down, they burn up all of their fluids in their body. So, we like to keep them warm. I usually wrap mine in a blanket. When I'm here and a puppy has a seizure, everyone is on high alert. It's get me this, get me this, get me this. Cause I'm rubbing his body, giving him saline, and all that kinda stuff. I don't usually like them to be in holding when they're like this, but they're too thin to be in the window, because they get depressed. When they get depressed, they don't eat and they don't drink. So, last night when we got home and she was running around and bouncing on my other puppies. You know, that gave me hope she was gonna be okay but at the same time if they're not eating and they've got a lot of activity they're gonna burn up their calories and deplete their sugar as well. So, we don't want them to have a whole lot of activity but they have to have some to regain their strength. It's a catch-22 but it's one that I am very passionate about making sure my babies eat.

Me: How much are you giving...him? (referring to the dog "RS" was syringe feeding)

"RS": Her.

Me: Her.

"RS": I want her to eat 12cc's per feeding but I've been able to get 6-9 down her at a time.

Wednesday, December 5, 2018 Day 4

I arrived at the store at 1:45pm and was scheduled to start at 2:00pm. I spent the day in kennel area where I sanitized kennels and equipment, wiped windows, and cleaned animal feces with "RS" and "JC."

There were 3 isolation kennels used during the workday. One had a heeler that had acted aggressively towards the other dogs in the display kennel. It is now the 2nd day that the dog had stayed in isolation. Another kennel had 2 smaller breed dogs that were in isolation because there was not enough room in the display kennels. The last dog needed to be syringe fed. "O" took this dog home with her for the night.

Dr. P from the Flint Veterinary Clinic arrived at the store for weekly examinations. "JC" later informed me that a veterinarian comes in every Wednesday. Dr. P first gave vaccinations and then examined every dog that had recently been delivered to the store. He then examined the Chihuahua and the other dog that had recently crashed.

Late in the day, I observed a dog in a display kennel that appeared to be shivering. I pointed this out to "JC" and she put a blanket in with [the] dog. A short time later, the same dog appeared have trouble breathing. I pointed this out to "JC" but she [was] unsure of what actions to take. She noticed that the dog had only eaten a small amount of

her food. "JC" was able to get the dog to eat and was still with her when I departed the area at the end of the day.

I observed 69 dogs in the kennel area at the start of my shift. I also observed 1 dog sale over the course of the day. I departed the area at approximately 9:00pm and am scheduled to return on Friday, December 7, 2018 at 5:45am.

Videos from today included these conversations:

Video: Dr. P examining a dog that had recently crashed and was previously syringe fed by "RS."

"RS": I could syringe feed her and 9-12cc's per feeding every couple of hours. I could put water in front of her. She'll drink water if I put it in front of her. She won't get up and get water. (Unintelligible) If I set her up here and set water in front of her she'll drink on her own. Yesterday her poop was almost a normal color. Almost this color (refers to the color of the dog). No blood in her poop. This morning it had, it was almost this color (refers to the dog again) but with a green hue to it. It was a lot runnier this morning than it was yesterday. I don't know if that is from the food change or the food she's getting.

Dr. P: (Unintelligible) If we were monitoring her blood sugar, if we could check it throughout the day, she's had a lot of times where it was low, low, low. Obviously the reason why she's had these hypoglycemic crashes. She just doesn't synthesize glucose from the liver storage of (unintelligible). She doesn't eat enough to keep that blood sugar high because she's not (unintelligible) any glucose. So, when that blood sugar goes low it stresses her (unintelligible) cells which have a high demand for sugar. That's where you get some blood in the stool and some (unintelligible).

"RS": No more crashes since the 1st one on Sunday.

Dr. P: Okay but it takes a while. She's obviously thin. She doesn't have any fat reserves. Any liver storage of glycogen to pump out glucose which she needs. So, she's always vulnerable to what she's eaten last and how fast that glucose has come out of her system. So, keeping her alive to the point you have, the way she started, is an accomplishment because she crashed hard and you could lose them when they're like that. It's just nursing care. It's keeping them warm. It's keeping calories in them. I like to give them canned food when I can because it has a little bit more reserve calories she could fall back on later.

Thursday, December 7, 2018 Day 5

I arrived at the store at 6:45am and was scheduled to start at 7:00am. I spent the day in kennel area where I sanitized kennels and equipment, wiped windows, and cleaned animal feces with "RS" and a new employee named "SS".

There were 3 isolation kennels used during the workday. One had a heeler that had acted aggressively towards the other dogs in the display kennel. It is now the 4th day that the dog had stayed in isolation. Another kennel had a shih tzu that was put in the previous day. "RS" explained that the other dogs had acted aggressively towards the shih tzu and she separated it to keep the dog safe. The last dog was a Chihuahua that had

multiple seizures and needed to be syringe fed. An employee eventually took the dog to the vet before the store opened.

Upon arrival, "RS" carried the Chihuahua that had previously crashed and she explained that she had taken the dog home for the night and that the dog had a seizure at approximately 3:45am. She planned on taking the dog to the veterinarian in the late morning but eventually had an employee drop the dog off at the veterinarian at approximately 8:00am. When I left the store at 1:00pm, the Chihuahua was still at the veterinarian's office and there had been no news.

"RS" added me to the store's GroupMe message. The message chain dates back to early November 2017. The vast majority of the messages mainly detail schedule changes, dog sales, and daily messages that show which tasks have been completed. I observed several mentions of ill animals (mostly related to bloody stool) but the majority of the messages were un-descriptive.

I observed approximately 65 dogs in the kennel area at the start of my shift. I did not observe any sales over the course of the day, but the group chat described 3 dog sales after I had left. I departed the area at approximately 1:00pm and am scheduled to return on Saturday, December 8, 2018 at 6:45am.

Videos from today included these conversations:

Video: "RS" talking about the Chihuahua that had recently had a seizure.

"RS": She needs to be syringe fed. I'll do that. At this point, she's been seizing since 3:45 this morning and so I'm trying to get her sugar brought up

enough, so she stops seizing. Anything I put in her mouth, liquid form-wise or food, she could aspirate or choke. So, I have to be very, very careful about what I give her. I gave her honey this morning. I have given her a total of about 5 cc's of saline under her skin. I gave her some Nutra-drops.



Later:

"RS": If you mention her name or you move her, and she seizes. She's in pretty bad shape.

Me: So, you just woke up and she was like that?

"RS": She woke me up whining.

Video: "RS" talking about the seizing Chihuahua.

Me: What are you giving her?

"RS": Saline under the skin. (Unintelligible) gonna go ahead and give her another shot and send her off to the vet. I was gonna wait for "O" to get here but "O" won't be in until 9:00am.

Later:

Me: She's moving around okay.

"RS": No, she's having a fit. She's having a seizure.

Later:

Me: So, is there a point where you would call the vet?

"RS": She's going to the vet. I got Sam¹ to say that I could take her this afternoon. When they get like this, most of them don't bounce around too much or try to pull away because they don't have the energy.

(Begins crying) When you put the saline under the skin, you need to rub it so that it distributes through the body and it doesn't leave a big knot.



Friday, December 8, 2018 Day 6

I arrived at the store at 6:42am and was scheduled to start at 7:00am. I spent the day in kennel area where I sanitized kennels and equipment, wiped windows, and cleaned animal feces with an employee named "E".

There were 3 isolation kennels used during the workday. One had a heeler that had acted aggressively towards the other dogs in the display kennel. It is now the 5th day that the dog had stayed in isolation. Another kennel had a shih tzu that was put in because the other dogs had acted aggressively towards the shih tzu. It is now the dog's 2nd day in isolation. The last was a bulldog that was put in isolation the previous night and appeared

¹ Editor's note: Sam is Samit Darne, the owner of the store.

to have breathing issues. Please note, this dog had been given nebulizer treatments for the past several days.

"E" informed me that the Chihuahua that had previously crashed was still at the veterinarian's office and that she not received any news on the condition of the dog.

I observed approximately 60 dogs in the kennel area at the start of my shift. I observed 1 sale over the course of the day, and the group chat did not mention any other sales. I departed the area at approximately 1:05pm and am scheduled to return on Sunday, December 9, 2018 at 3:45pm.

Sunday, December 9, 2018 Day 7

I arrived at the store at 3:45pm and was scheduled to start at 4:00pm. I spent the day in kennel area where I sanitized kennels and equipment, wiped windows, and cleaned animal feces with an employee named "Z".

"Z" had started as a kennel tech in August of 2018. She indicated that she may quit soon to work at a dog shelter and was discontented with the pet store. She felt the owner of the store cared more about money than the actual care of the animals. She explained that sick dogs were common and that was due to the breeders that the store repeatedly uses.

There were 2 isolation kennels used during the workday. One kennel had a pug that had excessive diarrhea. It is the dog's 1st day in isolation. The other was a bulldog that appeared to have respiratory issues. It is now the dog's 3rd day in isolation. Please note, this dog had been given nebulizer treatments for the past several days.

The heeler that had previously spent 5 days in isolation was put into a normal display kennel that morning. The dog was still single housed.

"Z" indicated that the boxer that was featured in several news stories ([link](#)) and was called underfed was bought by an employee so, "We wouldn't have to deal with all of the drama anymore."

"O" explained that the Chihuahua that had previously crashed, named Jade by the staff, was still at the veterinarian's office and was alive. The veterinarian believed that the dog would make it through the night, but the overall tone implied that she still needed medical care. "O" then explained that dog first crashed over a week ago (02 Dec18) and she was upset that the dog was not brought to the vet sooner.

I observed approximately 56 dogs in the kennel area (not including Jade the Chihuahua) at the end of my shift. I observed 1 sale over the course of the day, and the group chat did not mention any other sales. I departed the area at approximately 7:50pm and am scheduled to return on Monday, December 10, 2018 at 6:45am.

Videos from today included the following conversation:

"Z": There are things that I like doing. I like working with big dogs. I like saving them. I like going out and saving them and giving them homes. Adoptions. Cleaning kennels. It's

like a thing. Here is just not my thing. The owner Sam's a ... not really much of a ... taking care of animal thing.

Me: More of a business kind of person?

"Z": Yeah.

Me: I haven't really met him yet or talked to him for more than a few minutes.

"Z": I don't know. "RS" is awesome, though.

Me: Did he do something to make you, or is just his vibe?

"Z": It's his job that he does. He gets these animals from breeders that come in sick or come in with some kind of disease or parvo or something like that. It's just really stupid and I don't like people like that. If I was Sam, I would get people that would (unintelligible) their [expletive]. I mean it makes sense. And these dogs are so expensive.

Me: Oh, yeah, they are.

"Z": He doesn't care about his employees but he only cares about the money.

Later in the day: "Z" [was] talking about difficult customers and sick puppies.

"Z": There's this guy that comes in here a lot. He gets a dog. He brings it back. "Oh, there's something wrong with this dog. It's got a yeast infection. It's sick." He comes back. Gets another dog. "Oh, something's wrong with this dog." Every time.

Me: So, is he just renting dogs?

"Z": I guess, I don't know. "Oh, I can't take this dog cause my wife don't like it."

Me: How many dogs has this guy gone through?

"Z": Like 4 or 5.

Me: What's the endgame?

"Z": I don't know. It's insane.

Me: You get a lot of weird customers like that?

"Z": Have you heard about that boxer thing? [referencing [this](#) news story about a boxer in the store with ribs showing]

Me: Not really, no.

"Z": It was all over the internet and stuff like that. Some girl came up here and we had a boxer. You know how puppies, when they eat, they suck in and their rib shows? Well, we had a boxer and a lady took a picture and sent it all over the Facebook and the SPCA saying, "Oh my gosh, this dog is so thin and they're not taking care of this dog." It was all over. It was bad. The news was up here. Cops was up here. It was horrible.

Me: So, did anything happen with that?

"Z": It happened (unintelligible). One of our coworkers got the boxer so we wouldn't have to deal with that drama anymore.

Me: Oh, someone bought it outright?

"Z": Yeah, it was insane. Everyone wanted to see the boxer. Some girl even come up here and saw its teeth and she was saying she's a registered vet and this dog's teeth is not healthy. I'm like, "What?" That dog was healthy. It was crazy.

Me: So, you just got all of the annoying customers?

"Z": (Nods head) Yeah, there was a lot of drama around here with the customers.

Me: It's kinda surprising.

"Z": Yeah, it is. And, like, how many sick puppies we have here as a pet store. You know, we have a nebulizer. We have meds. I feel like I'm a vet tech. You might as well put it as a vet tech pet store.

Later that day:

"O": They said it [Jade the Chihuahua] was not looking good. I don't remember exactly what "RS" said but the vet gave her a report and it was not good.

Sales Employee²: Did it make it?

"O": It's made it so far and the vet just called and said it looks like it may make it another night. It says, (reading an email) "From Dr. P, your Jade was barely with us this morning. Not at all sure if she will keep up the fight. Dr. D is working on her this morning." It says, "Could have a liver shunt that keeps her from being able to store energy. These little guys are just more fragile with no room for error." Think of her as a premature baby that weighs 1 ½ pounds. Everything is more likely to go wrong." So, that was around lunchtime today and then I was just on the phone with "Y"

and "RS" was in the background and said, "Tell her I said the vet just called and it looks like Jade is going to make it through the night tonight."

Me: You said it's a liver shunt?

"O": It said, "Could have a liver shunt that keeps her from being able to store energy."

I thought you got a shunt. I didn't realize you had those. I don't know. But anyways, I'm just really excited.

I'm mad that it took them that long to take her to the vet. I mean, she crashed on me Sunday morning (02 Dec18). So, for us to just keep doing what we could do all week long and finally take her Friday I guess it was. Yeah, that's great. Let's have some over-weekend care at the vet. That's what we need to pay for. She's gonna have to raise the damn price on her just to get our money out of her.

Later that day:

"O": I just wish they would quit getting the little dogs. The vet has told him to his face, "Quit getting dogs under two pounds."

Monday, December 10, 2018 Day 8

I arrived at the store at 5:45am and was scheduled to start at 7:00am. I spent the day in kennel area where I sanitized kennels and equipment, wiped windows, and cleaned animal feces with "CY".

² Editor's note: the investigator did not give a name for this employee.

"O" explained that the Chihuahua that had previously crashed, named Jade by the staff, had to be euthanized while she was at the veterinarian's office.

"CY" explained that a veterinarian visits the store once a week but if a dog has to be treated at a veterinary office then it would result in a larger bill. Because of this, the owner usually waits to send a dog to a veterinary office which normally results in euthanasia.

There were 2 isolation kennels used during the workday. One kennel had a pug that had excessive diarrhea. It is the dog's 2nd day in isolation. The other was a bulldog (featured in previous video) that appeared to have respiratory issues. It is now the dog's 4th day in isolation. Please note, this dog had been given nebulizer treatments for the past several days.

There is a bookshelf in the kennel area that contains pamphlets which correspond to each dog for sale. These pamphlets contain medical information, pedigree certificates, breeder information, and any other paperwork associated with the dog. Normally, only sales staff interact with the book shelf, but it is located right in the middle of the kennel tech's work space.

I observed approximately 56 dogs in the kennel area at the end of my shift. I did not observe any sales over the course of the day and the group chat did not mention any other sales. I departed the area at approximately 2:05pm and am scheduled to return on Tuesday, December 11, 2018 at 1:45pm.

Videos from today included the following conversation:

"CY" [was] talking about dogs being sent to the vet.

Me: Do dogs here go to the vet a lot? The only time I've seen it is with Jade.

"CY": Since I've been here, which I've been here since about September, I've had 3 dogs go. There should be more that go but Sam doesn't (unintelligible) but basically, he has a deal with 2 vets and he pays them monthly. They come in every, well one comes in one week and the other comes in the other. They come in and say, "Well we did this and this and this." But if he has to take a dog in, that's extra to his (bill). He doesn't want to pay that extra money. So really, most of the dogs that go to the vet end up dying because we take them so last minute. For example, Jade. That morning, she should've been took. You know, but we waited until it was like, "Okay we can't take care of her anymore." And now she's being put down. She probably would've got put down anyways but still. There's a chance. Or she could've, and I hate saying this, she could've got put down sooner and been out of so much pain. I mean, she was having seizures. I've never had a seizure but I'm pretty sure it doesn't feel pleasant. But no, a lot of the way things are ran here makes me mad. I mean, especially with Sam.

Later in the day

Video: "CY" talking about dogs getting stuck in the grates.

Me: Have you ever had one get stuck in there? Like, a smaller one get its paw stuck?

"CY": Yeah, I've never seen one break its paw though. Or break its arm.

Tuesday, December 11, 2018 Day 9

I arrived at the store at 1:43pm and was scheduled to start at 2:00pm. I spent the day in kennel area where I sanitized kennels and equipment, wiped windows, and cleaned animal feces with a new employee named "U".

"RS" indicated that 18 new dogs had arrived at the kennel and that a breeder was scheduled to drop off an additional 3 dogs to the store at some point during the day. "E" (kennel tech) suggested that I keep an eye on the breeders when they arrive at the store. She explained that she had previously seen a breeder forcibly throw a dog into a kennel when they delivered dogs to the store.

I observed "RS" with some paperwork from [Puppy Travelers](#) which is a dog transport service that works throughout the United States. It's likely that some of the new dogs were dropped off by Puppy Travelers. Each new dog had a plastic collar around their neck which relayed information about their breed and sometimes the information relating to the breeder and their USDA number. "RS" asked to record the breed, weight, and temperature of each new dog. Some of the breeders and kennels that I observed were Lindsey Forquer (42-A-1544), Pinnacle Pet, Tiffanie's Kennels LLC (43-B-3731), Loveable Gold Star Puppies (32-B-0242), PBT Phillips (5809241), Conrad's Cuddly Canines (43-B-3659), and Allen and Edna Brubacker of Twin Lane Kennel.

Samit Darne is the owner of the store. I very briefly met him when I started but have not observed him at the store since that day. Several Petland employees have indicated or outright said that Mr. Darne is more concerned with the business aspect of the store than the welfare of the animals.

There were 4 isolation kennels used during the workday. One kennel had a miniature pinscher that had acted aggressively toward the other dogs. It is the dog's 1st day in isolation. The other was a small breed dog that was single housed for an unknown reason. It is the dog's 1st day in isolation. Another had 3 shih tzus that were there because there was not enough room in the display kennels. The last had 2 crestepons that were there because there was not enough room in the display kennels. Please note, this bulldog that had respiratory issues for the past several days was brought to the veterinarian the previous night and was still there for the duration of my shift.

Near the end of the night, a heeler, that had arrived the previous day, had become stuck in an empty water bottle holder by his bottom front tooth. The dog was screaming loudly and appeared to be in distress. A sales employee freed him from the holder and the dog appeared to be unharmed afterwards. "RS" then asked me to put a water bottle into the empty holder.

I observed approximately 76 dogs in the kennel area at the end of my shift. I did not observe any sales over the course of the day and the group chat did not mention any other sales. I departed the area at approximately 9:10pm and am scheduled to return on Thursday, December 13, 2018 at 1:45pm.

Thursday, December 13, 2018 Day 10

I arrived at the store at 1:43pm and was scheduled to start at 2:00pm. I spent the day in kennel area where I sanitized kennels and equipment, wiped windows, and cleaned animal feces with "Z".

Early in the day, a representative from the American Kennel Club entered the kennel area and appeared to give a brief inspection. He appeared to give the area an overview, asked "RS" about the number of dogs in the store, and checked several dogs to make sure their paperwork matched their chip numbers. He spent a short period with "RS" in the back office and left after that.

In the kennel area, I observed breeder information that indicated that several dogs came from Angie McDuffee at [AJ's Angels](#) in Cushing, MN. AJ's Angels is in the same location and has the same website as [Clearwater Kennels](#). Both websites are exactly the same (including customer reviews) except for the name. Clearwater Kennels was featured in HSUS's Horrible 100 several times.

There were 4 isolation kennels used during the workday. The 1st had a dachshund with respiratory issues that needed to be syringe fed. It was the dogs 1st day in isolation. Another had 3 shih tzus that were there because there was not enough room in the display kennels. It was their 3rd day in isolation. Another had a bulldog with an overly runny nose and respiratory issues. It was the dog's 1st day in isolation. The last had 2 crested poos because there was not enough room in the display kennels. Please note, this bulldog that previously had respiratory issues was still at the veterinarian and remained there for the duration of my shift. "RS" indicated that the dog suffered from the early stages of pneumonia but was expected to recover and return to the store in the next couple of days.

I observed approximately 77 dogs in the kennel area at the end of my shift. I observed 3 sales over the course of the day and the group chat did not mention any other sales. I departed the area at approximately 8:50pm and am scheduled to return on Saturday, December 15, 2018 at 6:45am.

Videos from today included the following conversations:

"RS" at a kennel tech meeting talking about problems with giving dogs medication.

"RS": I've got dogs who have been on medication 8-12 days and it's only supposed to be 7. I've got charts where medication evidently was missed because it's not notated. It's just like at the hospital. If it's not documented, it did not happen. So, make sure that we are documenting, documenting, documenting. If you do nebs (nebulizer treatments), if you do worming, if you do medication. Make sure we're documenting food. Syringe feeding. If we're syringe feeding we want to document it.

Later that day:

"Z" talking about possibly working at a dog shelter and dogs dying at the store.

"Z": Well, the thing is about the shelter, that I'm kind of debating, that they put dogs down and I'm not good about putting dogs down.

Me: We don't do that here? No one's mentioned it.

"Z": No, they don't do that, but we have had dogs that crash here and actually die here.

Saturday, December 15, 2018 Day 11

I arrived at the store at 6:42am and was scheduled to start at 7:00am. I spent the day in the kennel area where I sanitized kennels and equipment, wiped windows, and cleaned animal feces with "RS" and a new employee named "Q".

"RS" arrived at the store with the dachshund (previously featured in my video) in a pet carrier. She indicated that she had taken the dog home for the night to make sure he was well. The dog appeared to be more energetic but still needed to be syringe fed both food and water. At the end of her shift, "RS" took the dog home with her for the night.

In the kennel area, I observed breeder information that indicated that several dogs came from Judy Slaughter at Baxter's Southern Comfort and Countryside Pets.

There were 5 isolation kennels used during the workday. The 1st had a dachshund with respiratory issues that needed to be syringe fed. It was the dog's 3rd day in isolation. Another had 3 shih tzus that were there because there was not enough room in the display kennels. It was their 5th day in isolation. Another had a bulldog with an overly runny nose and respiratory issues. It was the dog's 3rd day in isolation. The bulldog (Billy) that returned from the veterinarian's office was also in isolation. The last had 2 crested dogs because there was not enough room in the display kennels.

I counted approximately 67 dogs in the kennel area at the end of my shift. I observed 4 dog purchases over the course of the day, but the group chat mentioned another sale in the evening. I departed the area at approximately 2:00pm and am scheduled to return on Sunday, December 16, 2018 at 1:45pm.

Sunday, December 16, 2018 Day 12

I arrived at the store at 1:45pm and was scheduled to start at 2:00pm. I spent the day in the kennel area where I sanitized kennels and equipment, wiped windows, and cleaned animal feces with "E."

In the kennel area, I observed breeder information that indicated that several dogs came from Bill and Mona Paulsen at Prairieview Kennel and Anita Gustin.

There were 4 isolation kennels used during the workday. The 1st had 3 shih tzus that were originally there because of limited space in the display kennels. It was discovered during the shift that the shih tzus all had very runny noses and had not eaten. "E" then had to syringe feed each dog food and water. It was their 6th day in isolation. Another had a bulldog with an overly runny nose and respiratory issues. It was the dog's 4th day in isolation. The bulldog (Billy) that returned from the veterinarian's office was also in isolation. The last had a dachshund that was returned by a customer. The customer had bought the dog the previous night and brought him back this morning. She said the dog was lethargic and threw up multiple times. "O" instructed us to keep the dog in isolation.

Please note, the dachshund (previously featured in video) was with "RS" at her house for the whole day.

Early in the day, "O" indicated that a Dachshund was sold the previous night, but the new owner returned the dog that morning. The customer complained that the dog seemed sick and had acted in a lethargic manner. Samit Darne had offered them a replacement animal and asked "O" to bring the dog to the veterinarian the next day. "O" indicated that she did not believe the dog was sick and was likely just under stress because of the new environment.

"E" observed that the 3 shih tzus in isolation had not eaten and that their paws were cold to the touch. Each dog appeared to have a very runny nose and acted in a lethargic manner. She contacted "RS" and then put all of the dogs in the nebulizer. After that, she observed that the dog's feces appeared to have a large amount of mucus. She informed me that she would have to syringe feed each dog food and water. At the end of the shift, each dog had been syringe fed but still appeared to be unenergetic.

The store has 9 small, 6 medium, and 6 large kennels. Typically, each kennel holds 2-4 dogs depending on their size. I have observed 5 dogs in a medium kennel but that was treated as a temporary situation until another spot opened. There are also 12 isolation or holding kennels and they are roughly the size of the medium ones.



I counted approximately 61 dogs in the kennel area at the end of my shift. I observed 3 dog purchases over the course of the day, but the group chat mentioned another sale in the morning. I departed the area at approximately 7:15pm and am scheduled to return on Tuesday, December 18, 2018 at 6:45am.

Videos from today included the following conversations:

"O" talking about dogs arriving at the store that night even though there is limited space.

"O": She wants to combine some dogs or however you want to do it.

"E": (Unintelligible)

"O": I know but I told her that I have puppies coming tonight and I did not know how many. I'll send her the same message and see if she texts one of y'all or talks to one of y'all. I'm just letting you know that I'm gonna be bringing them back here and I'm not

just gonna set them on the floor. I don't care if we pull these crates down or put them in crates. I don't care but we have to put them somewhere.

"O" talking about the dachshund that was returned to the store.

"O": And it was lethargic. She didn't act like that with me and it was probably just in a new environment and stressed. So, Sam allowed them to bring it back. Cause they brought it back and we were like, "You have to call the warranty department" and they left that damn dog on the counter and walked out of the store. I was like, "Oh, well I guess I got me a free dog." They paid for it. Anyway, so Sam³ said to put it in SCC and we'll bring it to the vet in the morning and then we'll have them call the owner and give them an update on the pet's health but then he let them exchange it. I don't know. We could maybe put it back in the window but if it is sick or something, I don't know.

"E": It was fine when it walked out of here.

"O": It was fine when I brought it back here a minute ago.

Later: "E" talking about the shih tzus in isolation.

Me: What happened with them?

"E": It's just something we don't deal with often that "RS" gave me a bunch of [expletive] to do and I've already done and it's not working.

Me: What do you think got them like that?

"E": I don't know, it's whatever Hank (bulldog also in isolation) was having. Cause he was having that mucus in his throat and he was really snotty. They're itty bitty, so when he (Hank) stopped eating he was okay because he's like 20 pounds of solid fat. They're all less than 3 pounds and so they're starving and it's making it worse.

Later in the day: Fecal material with what appears to be mucus left behind by the shih tzus (mentioned in the previous video) after nebulizer treatment.

Me: What is that?

"E": I don't know.

Me: Is that vomit?

"E": It looks like [feces].

Tuesday, December 18, 2018 Day 13

I arrived at the store at 6:43 am and was scheduled to start at 7:00 am. I spent the day in the kennel area where I sanitized kennels and equipment, wiped windows, and cleaned animal feces with "JC."

Please note, several times in the previous report I referred to a dog in isolation as a dachshund. I was informed later that the dog is a schnauzer.

In the kennel area, I observed breeder information that indicated that several dogs came from Delane Doss who is connected with KCZ Amazing Pets and Supplies LLC. The certificate indicates that Ms. Doss is a hobby breeder and not licensed by the USDA. I also

³ Samit Darne, the store owner
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observed paperwork that listed James Troyer from Coalgate, OK. Also, a dog that had recently arrived at the store had a collar that listed Samuel J Graber as the breeder.

There were 8 isolation kennels used during the workday. The 1st had a shih tzu that was previously with 2 other dogs of the same breed. The dog showed strong signs of recovery and was put back into a display window at the end of the day. It was his 8th day in isolation. Another had a bulldog with an overly runny nose and respiratory issues. It was the dog's 6th day in isolation. The bulldog (Billy) that returned from the veterinarian's office was also in isolation. Another had a schnauzer (featured in previous video and mistakenly referred to as a dachshund) that was returned by a customer. The dog was put back into a display kennel at the end of the day. Another had 3 smaller breed dogs that were there because of limited space in the display kennels. Another had 2 Labradors that were there because of limited space in the display kennels and it was their 2nd day in isolation. A different kennel had 2 huskies that were there because of limited space in the display kennels and it was their 2nd day in isolation. The last had a boxer that was there because of limited space in the display kennels and it was their 2nd day in isolation.

Upon arrival, I observed that there more dogs in the store than I had ever seen. There were only 3 empty isolation kennels which made the morning cleaning procedures more difficult. There was a medium kennel that housed 8 small breed dogs which is the most I've seen in one area. Later, "O" explained that they received 3 more dogs than what was originally planned and that she was frustrated because the kennel was overcrowded.

"O" indicated that one of shih tzus in isolation had died on Sunday night (16 DEC18) and that another was currently at the veterinarian's office. She explained that dogs under 2lbs often die in the store and that the staff is not equipped to treat them effectively.

I counted approximately 80 dogs in the kennel area at the end of my shift. I did not observe any dog purchases over the course of the day, but the group chat mentioned another sale in the evening. I departed the area at approximately 2:05pm and am scheduled to return on Wednesday, December 19, 2018 at 6:45am.

Videos from today included the following conversation:

"O" talking about the shih tzu that recently died and overcrowding in the kennel.

Me: So, are those 2 other shih tzus okay? The ones that were bad the other day.

"O": We had 3 total. One died, one's at the vet, and then one's still here.

Me: That one's doing pretty well by the way.

"O": Well good.

Me: The other one's just went?

"O": We force fed it Sunday night. I think it should've went to the vet. It was not doing good. It was throwing up everything we were trying to feed it. We had to stick our finger in the AD (type of food) and put it in the roof of its mouth and so we were forcing it to eat stuff but she ("E" on Sunday night) showed me a picture and sent it to "RS" of some vomit that was in her cage. So, yeah, it did not make it that night.

Me: That sucks.

"O": It does suck and here's what sucks even worse. See the 1 ½ pound yorkie? We begged them to quit getting dogs under 2 lbs. Begged them. I don't know how big the

shih tzu was but. I don't know if you were here for Jade. Jade died. Well, they put her down because she was suffering. We had one named "Tiny." I don't remember what Tiny was. Maybe a Chihuahua. Something tiny. Then, my daughter "CY" took home Honey, a little morkie. The naked one. Were you here for the naked little morkie? It's like a mole rat. Had a little bit of hair on her head and that's it. Apparently, that's normal for those breeds to lose hair but I've never seen it in my life. Anyway, "CY" got a good deal from Sam (Samit Darne) because if they're ugly he wants them the hell out of the store. She brought it home and like a week later it died. It crashed on us at home and she rushed it up here and "RS" put it in the nebs (nebulizer) and all that. Then I rushed it to my vet in Whitehouse. It made it one night. Since I've been here in June, we've had 3 of these tiny, tiny little dogs just not make it. It's like they're not sturdy enough. Their immune system's not...I guess, I'm not a vet. The vet has asked him to stop getting such small dogs. We are not equipped to take care of those. So, when I pulled that one off of the truck last night I was like, "I'm sorry." I hate to be negative right out of the gate but (shrugs shoulder) my experience so far.

Later:

"O": Anyway, so those 5 came from a different distributor. Then I thought we had 17 more last night and when he opened the back door of the truck, he's like, "You have 20 and not 17." I mean, I can count. We have 17. He's like, "Yeah, I know." Cause he sends me a list so I know exactly what I'm getting and I could make sure I have (enough space). He flips the page on one of the breeders and front page said 4 and the 2nd page said 7. He's like, "I don't know why but you've got the other 3 on my truck so I'm gonna give them to you." So, I got 20 last night instead of 17. I mean it was a nightmare. I knew I was just using everything y'all had. I told the girls last night. I don't care if you take those big basket crates from up there. I mean, I don't know where else to put them. I have to figure something out but we have to have a place for them.

Later:

"O": I don't know y'all. It's too many [expletive] dogs.

Wednesday, December 19, 2018 Day 14

I arrived at the store at 6:44am and was scheduled to start at 7:00am. I spent the day in the kennel area where I sanitized kennels and equipment, wiped windows, and cleaned animal feces with "JC."

In the kennel area, I observed breeder information that indicated that several dogs came from Bobby and Lori Schroeder in Coalgate, OK. I also observed that a recently arrived dog's tag had the name "Samuel J. Graber."

There were 3 isolation kennels used during the workday. The 1st had a bulldog with an overly runny nose and respiratory issues. It was the dog's 7th day in isolation. The bulldog (Billy) that returned from the veterinarian's office was also in isolation. The last had a boxer that was there because of limited space in the display kennels and it was his 3rd day in isolation.

Early in the day, 2 police officers, an animal control officer, and an unknown individual entered the kennel area and began an impromptu inspection. One police officer took pictures of several kennels and the white board over the medical table. Another officer explained that they were there because of a complaint lodged by the ASPCA. None of the individuals asked me or "JC" any questions and they left the kennel area after approximately 5 minutes. Later, one of the salesmen indicated that he overheard the officers talking about a parvo outbreak. "RS" indicated that she was unaware of the inspection until it had already happened.

I observed the body of the deceased shih tzu (previously featured in my undercover video) in the freezer in the kennel area. "JC" indicated that she was unaware of the body, but it was likely placed there until the veterinarian could examine the body on his weekly visit.

"RS" indicated that if a dog's feces were yellow then the staff would take a sample for later examination by a veterinarian. I've observed several instances where a kennel technician expressed concern over the appearance of a dog's feces but did not take a sample. Prior to this conversation, no one had ever mentioned sample collection.

I counted approximately 84 dogs in the kennel area at the end of my shift. I observed one dog purchase over the course of the day and the group chat did not mention any another sales. Please note, I was removed from the group chat shortly after I resigned my position. I departed the area at approximately 2:10pm.



Videos from today included the following:

A police officer explaining that the inspection is related to a complaint.

Police Officer: Complaints we're following up on. Filed by the ASPCA. We're just doing a walk-through.

Video: A brief shot of police officers and animal control officers walking through the kennel area.

Moments later: "RS," a salesman, and "O" talking about the police officers featured in the previous video and parvo.

"RS": So, what did they say?

"JC": They said it looked good.

Me: They were only here a couple of minutes.

Salesman: I eavesdropped on them when they were talking to the animal specialist and they just mentioned that we had parvo at one point.

"RS": And how would they know this?

Me: What?

"RS": That we had parvo. They come in with it and it spreads like wildfire.

Video: Recently deceased shih tzu stored in the freezer in the kennel area.

Video: "JC" talking about other HSUS Petland investigations.

"JC": They found a dead dog in the freezer. And it's like, probably they had it for the vet to examine it. And it was trying to make the Petland a house of horrors. We're horrible, we're terrible, blah, blah, blah.

Later that day:

"RS": By the time I get done putting in puppies, we're gonna have 85 dogs...well, 84 since one is going home. He (the veterinarian) doesn't like us to have over 75 dogs. 70 to 75 max. For 2, some of these kennels have 5, 6, 9 dogs. I mean, I don't like it and I know he's not going to like it. I mean, I could only do what I'm told to do. I was told yesterday afternoon I had to (unintelligible). I don't like it. I feel bad for 'em. My heart breaks for 'em and my heart breaks for us when you have 6 or more dogs in a kennel, that's more poop, more dogs that's gonna get poop on them, that's more baths, more whining, they don't have room to move around. It breaks my heart.

END