

January 13, 2026

**OFFICE OF THE HEARING EXAMINER
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON**
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www.kingcounty.gov/independent/hearing-examiner

REPORT AND DECISION

SUBJECT: Regional Animal Services of King County file no. **V25017816-A25005020**

RAJINDER SANDHU
Animal Services Enforcement Appeal

Activity no.: A25-005020

Appellant: **Rajinder Sandhu**

[REDACTED]
Kent, WA 98042

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

King County: Regional Animal Services of King County
represented by **Chelsea Eykel**
Regional Animal Services of King County
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Kent, WA 98032
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Overview

1. After hearing the witnesses' testimony and observing their demeanor, studying the exhibits admitted into evidence, and considering the parties' arguments and the relevant law, Ms. Sandhu's appeal is denied but with modifications to the monetary penalty and "dangerous dog" registration requirements.

Procedural Background

2. On October 23, 2025, Kelly Lindsay filed an online complaint with Regional Animal Services of King County (Animal Services) for an incident on October 23, 2025. Ex. D3. On October 28, 2025, Animal Services issued Notice of Violation V25017816-A25005020 to Rajinder Sandhu for her son’s dog, Milo, trespassing on private property, being out of compliance for a potentially dangerous dog designation, failing to register him as a potentially dangerous animal, and being designated as dangerous; and for her dog Sasha, trespassing on private property. Ex. D6. Rajinder Sandhu filed a timely appeal on November 21, 2025. Ex. D8.
3. We went to hearing on January 8, 2026. Participating in the hearing were: Sgt. Chelsea Eykel representing Animal Services, complainants Kelly Lindsay and Cheryl Swanberg, and appellant Rajinder Sandhu.

Appeal Issues

Per the Notice of Hearing, the issues identified for consideration on appeal are as follows:

4. In Ms. Sandhu’s November 21, 2025, appeal statement, she indicates that she is not Milo’s owner, and “Milo’s future care [is] to be handled entirely in California, and Milo will not be returning to King County.” Ms. Sandhu does not dispute the factual basis for the violations themselves, but requests reconsideration of the violations and penalties in light of the circumstances pertaining to this incident.
5. The issues on appeal are as follows:
 - A. Whether the October 23, 2025, violation by Milo for Trespassing, 2nd Violation (KCC 11.04.230.L) and the associated \$50 penalty are supported by a preponderance of the evidence and appropriate under the facts of this case.
 - B. Whether the October 23, 2025, violation by Sasha for Trespassing, 2nd Violation (KCC 11.04.230.L) and the associated \$50 penalty are supported by a preponderance of the evidence and appropriate under the facts of this case.
 - C. Whether the October 23, 2025, violation for Potentially Dangerous Animal Order Compliance (KCC 11.04.230.U) and the associated \$250 penalty are supported by a preponderance of the evidence and appropriate under the facts of this case.
 - D. Whether the October 23, 2025, violation Failure to Register a Potentially Dangerous Animal (KCC 11.04.230.V) and the associated \$250 penalty are supported by a preponderance of the evidence and appropriate under the facts of this case.

- E. Whether the October 23, 2025, violation by Milo for Dangerous Conduct, 2nd Violation (KCC 11.04.230.F) and the associated \$1000 penalty are supported by a preponderance of the evidence and appropriate under the facts of this case.

Factual Findings

Weighing all the evidence, the hearing examiner finds the following facts by a preponderance of the evidence:

6. Milo is Ms. Sandhu's son's dog but has historically spent a significant amount of time living with Ms. Sandhu. In January of 2024, Milo was designated "Potentially Dangerous" for killing chickens on a neighbor's property. Ex. D12 (A24-162). With that designation, Ms. Sandhu and her son were put on notice that Milo needed to be registered as potentially dangerous, and that they needed to comply with the restrictions and requirements for having a potentially dangerous dog.
7. After the January incident, Ms. Sandhu's son took Milo to live with him in California. Milo stayed in California, returning on October 18, 2025, for Ms. Sandhu to provide care while her son traveled for two weeks. Sandhu Testimony.
8. On October 23, due to an apparent power outage, Milo and Ms. Sandhu's dog, Sasha, were able to leave their outdoor kennel and go to the neighbor's property.
9. Ms. Graham and Ms. Swanberg were outside in the backyard with their chickens when they saw Milo and Sasha approaching the property. Swanberg Testimony. Milo rapidly grabbed one of the chickens. *Id.* Ms. Swanberg screamed and he dropped the first chicken but then ran to grab another chicken. *Id.*
10. Ms. Graham got a rake and chased the dogs off of the property. She attempted to get them back into the Sandhu's backyard. Swanberg Testimony.
11. The two chickens Milo grabbed died from their injuries. Ex. D5; Swanberg Testimony.
12. Sasha was an unwitting bystander in Milo's actions and did not participate in the harmful behavior. Swanberg Testimony.
13. Ms. Sandhu's testimony was detailed and credible as to her understanding of how Milo and Sasha got off of her property that day. When she returned home, it was evident that there had been a power outage. Sandhu Testimony. Her gate was open and the dogs were in the yard, but not in their kennel where she had left them. The kennel has an electric component that contains the dogs, but with the power outage, the dogs were able to escape the kennel. She also was unable to review the Ring video at her residence because of the power outage. Ms. Sandhu was unaware that they had left the property and caused harm at the Graham property until she was contacted by Animal Services.

14. Ms. Sandhu “deeply apologizes” for Milo’s behavior and the death of the two chickens. Milo does not reside with Ms. Sandhu or in King County as of November 1, 2025, and will not return to King County. Sandhu Testimony.
15. Ms. Sandhu is specifically asking for relief on registration of Soma as a dangerous animal because he will not be returning to King County. Sandhu Testimony.
16. Sgt. Eykel noted that the prior designation of Soma as potentially dangerous is the basis for the current “dangerous” designation and, although registration is not necessary if Soma does not live in King County, the designation is still important in case he does return. Eykel Testimony.

Conclusions of Law

17. The hearing examiner has jurisdiction pursuant to KCC 20.22.040.
18. Animal Services bears the burden of proving by a preponderance of evidence both the violation and the appropriateness of the remedy it has imposed. KCC 20.22.080.G; .210.B. We do not grant substantial weight or otherwise accord deference to agency determinations. Exam. R. XV.F.3.
19. Under KCC 11.04.230.L, “Trespassing” occurs when a domesticated animal “enter[s] a person’s property or premises without that person’s permission.” There is no dispute that Milo and Sasha were off the Sandhu property and trespassed on Ms. Graham’s property on October 23, 2025.
20. There was some dispute as to how the dogs were able to get off the property and whether there was a power outage on the day in question. Ms. Sandhu’s testimony was credible and reflected her honest belief that the dogs were able to escape because the house lost power. Even where animals are able to leave their owner’s property as a result of an anomaly or accident, a trespass violation is not excused. Here, while it is unfortunate and unlucky that the dogs were able to escape on October 23, Ms. Sandhu is still responsible for their actions. The trespassing violations are upheld along with the associated monetary penalties.
21. The remaining appeal issues all involve Milo’s actions on the Graham property, which are also largely undisputed. Ms. Sandhu concedes that she and her son did not comply with the “Potentially Dangerous” dog requirements that went into effect after the 2024 incident. Regardless of Milo’s departure to California, the potentially dangerous restrictions, such as wearing a muzzle, should have been implemented as soon as he returned to King County on October 18, 2025. The violation for Potentially Dangerous Animal Order Compliance (KCC 11.04.230.U) and the associated \$250 penalty are supported by a preponderance of the evidence and appropriate in this case.
22. Similarly, the Failure to Register a Potentially Dangerous Animal violation (KCC 11.04.230.V) is supported by a preponderance of the evidence. Ms. Sandhu and her son failed to register Milo, presumably because he would be spending the majority of his time

in California. Unfortunately, his short visit to King County resulted in another violent incident that could have been avoided if the registration steps and associated requirements were complied with. The violation is upheld along with the \$250 penalty.

23. Ms. Sandhu acknowledges that Milo was responsible for killing two of Ms. Graham's chickens. Based on a preponderance of the evidence, Milo meets the criteria for a "Dangerous" dog designation. KCC 11.04.230.F; KCC 11.01.120. I am upholding the designation itself with the caveat that actively registering Milo as dangerous will not be required based on Ms. Sandhu's representation that Milo will not return to King County. Because Milo is designated "Dangerous," he is prohibited from returning to King County "without prior written consent" from Animal Services and a "valid dangerous animal registration." KCC 11.04.285.H.
24. Ms. Sandhu's testimony was honest and apologetic. She was understandably attempting to do a favor for her son and ended up in a very unfortunate situation for which she expressed sincere remorse. She committed that Milo will not be returning to King County. Based on her testimony, her apology to her neighbors, and the other monetary penalties in place, I am waiving the \$1000 penalty for the dangerous designation.

DECISION:

1. The "Dangerous" designation is upheld but no registration will be required for Milo unless he returns to King County.
2. The total monetary penalties for the violations are reduced from \$1600 to \$600.
3. The remainder of Ms. Sandhu's appeal is DENIED.

ORDERED January 13, 2026.



Devon Shannon
Hearing Examiner

NOTICE OF RIGHT TO APPEAL

King County Code 20.22.040 directs the Examiner to make the County’s final decision for this type of case. This decision shall be final and conclusive unless appealed to superior court in accordance with Ch. 7.16 RCW. It is the responsibility of the party seeking to appeal the examiner’s decision to determine and meet the legal requirements for filing an appeal.

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 8, 2026, HEARING IN THE APPEAL OF RAJINDER SANDHU, REGIONAL ANIMAL SERVICES OF KING COUNTY FILE NO. V25017816-A25005020

Devon Shannon was the Hearing Examiner in this matter. A verbatim recording of the hearing is available in the Hearing Examiner’s Office.

The following exhibits were offered by Animal Services and entered into the record:

Exhibit no. D1	Regional Animal Services of King County staff report
Exhibit no. D2	RASKC investigation report no. A25005020
Exhibit no. D3	Online Complaint form of October 23, 2025, incident by Kelly Lindsay, dated October 23, 2025
Exhibit no. D4	Witness Statement from Cheryl Swanberg
Exhibit no. D5	Photograph of deceased chickens
Exhibit no. D6	Notice of violation no. V25017816-A25005020, issued October 28, 2025
Exhibit no. D7	Dangerous Designation
Exhibit no. D8	Appeal, received November 21, 2025
Exhibit no. D9	RASKC investigation report no. A24000162
Exhibit no. D10	Online Complaint form of January 7, 2024, incident by Scott Pettit, dated January 8, 2024
Exhibit no. D11	Notice of violation no. V24015105-A24000162, issued January 16, 2024
Exhibit no. D12	Potentially Dangerous Designation
Exhibit no. D13	Appeal, received February 3, 2024
Exhibit no. D14	Hearing Examiner’s Report and Decision, dated April 12, 2024 (incomplete)
Exhibit no. D15	Map of subject area
Exhibit no. D16	Hearing Examiner’s Report and Decision, dated April 12, 2024 (complete)

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

SUBJECT: Regional Animal Services of King County file no. **V25017816-A25005020**

RAJINDER SANDHU
Animal Services Enforcement Appeal

I, Jessica Oscoy, certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that I transmitted the **REPORT AND DECISION** to those listed on the attached page as follows:

- EMAILED to all County staff listed as parties/interested persons and parties with e-mail addresses on record.
- placed with the United States Postal Service, through Quadient-Impress, with sufficient postage, as FIRST CLASS MAIL in an envelope addressed to the non-County employee parties/interested persons to addresses on record.

DATED January 13, 2026.



Jessica Oscoy
Administrator

Eykel, Chelsea

Regional Animal Services of King County

Lindsay, Kelly

Hardcopy

Sandhu, Rajinder

Hardcopy