



NEWS RELEASE

Worcester County Sheriff's Office

Woman Pleads Guilty Following Large-Scale Animal Cruelty Investigation in Worcester County

On June 10, 2025, members of the Worcester County Sheriff's Office, Worcester County Bureau of Investigation, and Worcester County Animal Control, with assistance from the Worcester County State's Attorney's Office, executed a search and seizure warrant at a residence in Snow Hill, Maryland.

The conditions discovered during the execution of that warrant were significant and deeply concerning. Ultimately 57 dogs and 9 cats were seized.

The animals were confined in crates, all located in dark basements, garages, and sheds without air conditioning or adequate ventilation. Many crates contained multiple animals, forcing them to stand and lie on top of one another, the majority covered in urine and feces.

During the seizure, Animal Control Officers and deputies worked quickly to remove the animals as temperatures continued to rise throughout the day. After being removed and transported to our Animal Control Facility, each animal was immediately evaluated by a veterinarian. Due to the elevated temperatures, many dogs required cooling measures, including cold hosing, to reduce their body temperature.

Veterinary assessments revealed numerous medical concerns, including low body condition score or emaciation, broken teeth, significant skin conditions, untreated masses, infections, tick-borne diseases, intestinal parasites, and other serious, in some cases life-threatening, conditions—some of which were deemed untreatable.

Through the coordinated efforts of our partner, Humane World for Animals, additional veterinary care was provided, and 30 of the dogs were successfully rehomed. Local shelters and humane societies provided assistance with the remaining animals available for adoption.

On May 21, 2026, Patricia Gadaleta was found guilty of theft scheme and multiple counts of animal cruelty. She was sentenced to 10 years of incarceration, with all but 3.5 years suspended.

Through the investigation, it was determined that Patricia Gadaleta bought and sold numerous dogs using multiple aliases and fraudulent methods.

Patricia Gadaleta has been known to use the following aliases:

- Missy Adams
- Page Benakowski
- Page Benna
- Page B
- Meg Kippler
- Helen Piela
- Elaine Buffington
- Aubrey Newman

Investigators believe additional individuals and businesses may have been victimized.

Anyone who believes they may have been a victim, or who has information relevant to this investigation, is asked to contact the Worcester County Sheriff's Office at 410-632-1111.

Anonymous tips can also be submitted anonymously through our mobile app:

<https://apps.myocv.com/share/a87521863>

Your assistance is important and appreciated.

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