



July 7, 2026

Animal Advocacy UW-Madison
Sent electronically to jbray4@wisc.edu

Regarding Case Number: 2025295901

On April 16, 2026, the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (OSCCS) received a report alleging members of Animal Advocacy UW-Madison improperly posted fliers for a speaking event which occurred on Thursday, April 16, 2026. On April 16, 2026, OSCCS also received a report alleging members of Animal Advocacy UW-Madison solicited others to unlawfully enter Ridglan Farms and remove animals from the property on April 19, 2026. I was assigned to be the investigating officer for the case created in response to this report, and I am recommending the following finding:

- 5 - Violation of UW-Madison, UW System Administrative, or UW System Board of Regents Policies: Failure to comply with UW-Madison, UW System Administrative, or UW System Board of Regents policies including, but not limited to, the use of university facilities and grounds, fleet vehicles, electronic information technology, and facility reservation contracts. -- Responsible
- 3 - Violation of Law: Conduct that could constitute a violation of any local, state, or federal law, including violations of City of Madison Ordinances and Regulations. -- Not Responsible

My findings are based on my investigation of the incident, including information from: an Incident Report, documents and communications gathered during the investigation, and my investigatory interview with you on June 10, 2026.

See Final Investigatory Report included below for decision rationale.

For violating 5 - Violation of UW-Madison, UW System Administrative, or UW System Board of Regents Policies, I am recommending the following sanctions for Animal Advocacy UW-Madison :

Written Reprimand: An official warning that a Registered Student Organization (RSO) is in violation of the Organizational Rules of Conduct and any future misconduct by the RSO may result in a more serious disciplinary response from the University.

Educational Sanction: The executive board and other relevant leaders within Animal Advocacy UW-Madison shall review the Student Organization Resource & Policy Guide's section on [Posting, Chalking, and Leafletting](#) and the University's [Expressive Activity](#) policy section on Postings and create a 1-page summary of those requirements to be shared with Animal Advocacy UW-Madison members prior to advertising for future events.

Student Conduct and Community Standards

Student Affairs 724 W Johnson St. Madison, Wisconsin 53715
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If Animal Advocacy UW-Madison does not complete or comply with these sanctions, the organization may be violating Rule 6d. This could result in more disciplinary action. OSCCS asks that the information contained in these findings (the list of violations and the sanctions) be emailed to every single active member of your organization; please CC or BCC gbvollrath@wisc.edu when doing so.

The rest of this letter explains the hearing request process if Animal Advocacy UW-Madison does not agree to the recommended finding or sanctions.

Animal Advocacy UW-Madison has the right to request a hearing on this case before a Hearing Committee. **To request a hearing, you must complete and submit the online request form by July 14, 2026.** The request form can be found at https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofWisconsinMadison&layout_id=56. If you do not request a hearing by this date, the finding and sanctions in this letter will become final.

Click here to learn more about the student organization misconduct policy and student organization rights:
<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-2002>.

If you have any questions about this letter or the disciplinary and hearing process, or if I can be of any further assistance, please contact me via email at gbvollrath@wisc.edu. Other judicial bodies may pursue or continue their own investigations into Animal Advocacy UW-Madison or its members related to the case. Additionally, if Animal Advocacy UW-Madison disbands or gives up its University affiliation to avoid sanctions, it may be added to the [Student Organizations Not in Good Standing](#) letter. If this happens and Animal Advocacy UW-Madison would like to become registered as a student organization again in the future, the organization will have to petition for reinstatement.

Sincerely,



Gretchen Vollrath
Investigator - Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards

CC: Director, OSCCS
Steffen Seitz
George Corrigan
Kenneth Diao

Registered Student Organization: Animal Advocacy UW-Madison

Date of Report: July 7, 2026

This report addresses alleged violations of UW-2002 – Registered Student Organization (RSO) Code of Conduct. Gretchen Vollrath (Investigator), Investigating Officer & Hearing Coordinator - Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards, conducted the investigation into these allegations. The report will be used to determine whether it is more likely to be true than not true that there was a violation of the below-referenced policies.

Background

On April 17, 2026, the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards received information indicating the following occurred:

On or before April 17, 2026, flyers were posted on the outside of the Humanities building advertising the Zoe Rosenberg speaking event sponsored by Animal Advocacy UW-Madison.

On or before April 17, 2026, a flyer created by Animal Advocacy UW-Madison stating, “Help Save 2,000 Beagles... Return to Ridglan Farms... April 19th, 2026” was posted in the Student Activity Center.

Following receipt of this information, the Investigator gathered publicly available information about Animal Advocacy UW-Madison.

A Notice of investigation (NOI) by the Investigator was sent to the president of Animal Advocacy UW-Madison on May 13, 2026.

Alleged Violations

The NOI informed Animal Advocacy UW-Madison of the alleged behavior and that such conduct could possibly violate the following provisions of the UW-2002 policy on Registered Student Organization Code of Conduct:

UW-2002 II. B. 5 – Violation of UW-Madison, UW System Administrative, or UW System Board of Regents Policies: Failure to comply with UW-Madison, UW System Administrative, or UW System Board of Regents policies including, but not limited to, the use of university facilities and grounds, fleet vehicles, electronic information technology, and facility reservation contracts.

UW-2002 II. B. 3 - Violation of Law: Conduct that could constitute a violation of any local, state, or federal law, including violations of City of Madison Ordinances and Regulations.

Investigation

As part of the investigation, the Investigator reviewed photographs of Animal Advocacy UW-Madison's Zoe Rosenberg event posters that were hung outside of the Humanities building, a photograph of Animal Advocacy UW-Madison's "Help Save 2,000 Beagles" poster that was hung in the Student Activity Center, Animal Advocacy UW-Madison's social media, Google documents linked through the Animal Advocacy UW-Madison posters and social media, a partiful.com event page created for the Zoe Rosenberg speaking event, and *The Simple Heart* blog, which was linked in the aforementioned Google documents. The Investigator also requested and received a Student Activity Center printer usage log from the Student Activity Center Operations Manager.

On June 10, 2026, the Investigator interviewed the following people:

Witness 1 – President of Animal Advocacy UW-Madison

Witness 2 – Attorney for Animal Advocacy UW-Madison

From June 9, 2026 – June 25, 2026, the Investigator attempted to speak with two other members of Animal Advocacy UW-Madison who had been identified as participants in activities at Ridgland Farms through their statements to the media, but those individuals declined to be interviewed.

Interview Summaries

On June 10, 2026, during the same meeting, the Investigator interviewed **Witness 1 (W1)** and **Witness 2 (W2)**. They stated the following:

W1 is president of Animal Advocacy UW-Madison and has held that position since fall semester 2025.

W1 was in charge of advertising for the Zoe Rosenberg speaking event which was held on April 16, 2026. Posters for the event were printed in the Student Activity Center. W1 could not remember when the posters were picked up and was unable to access those records¹. W1 believed that the Zoe Rosenberg posters were hung up in the days before the event². According to W1, there was not a specific plan as to where the posters would be hung but stated, "we usually try and... get flyers to as many different parts of campus as possible." When asked if the group had sought permission from the university to hang the posters, W1 stated that he could not remember if that had happened.

In a discussion about the purpose of hosting the Zoe Rosenberg speaking event, W1 explained that Animal Advocacy UW-Madison's intention was to provide information about

¹ The Investigator reached out to the Student Activity Center Operations Manager who was able to pull print records from April 7 – 15, 2026. This log showed an order for 15 copies of "Zoe Rosenberg Event (11 x 17 in).pdf" on April 15, 2026.

² An Instagram post for the Zoe Rosenberg event, identical to the Zoe Rosenberg poster, was posted on April 14, 2026.

the legal risk of participating in a rescue such as at Ridgland Farms. W1 noted that Zoe Rosenberg was a fitting speaker on this topic as “she was convicted of a felony” for participating in a similar animal rescue event. W1 asserted that “she [was not] there to say there’s no legal risk.”

When asked about the “Help Save 2,000 Beagles” poster, W1 stated that these were printed on April 12, 2026, and posted on April 13, 2026³. As to the language included on the poster (i.e. “return to Ridgland Farms... April 19th”), W1 presented two arguments. First, the language was “catchy” which was important in a “constant attention economy.” W1 noted that Animal Advocacy UW-Madison had created a similar poster without the “Return to Ridgland Farms” language and, in his opinion, it was not as effective at getting students’ attention. Second, while Animal Advocacy UW-Madison was “not encouraging... direct participation,” people could, after seeing the poster, “go and stand on the road and peacefully protest.” W2 noted that “there was a large number of people who were standing on the public roadway, bearing witness, sort of a vigil, holding signs, etc. It might even be the majority of people” who attended the Ridgland Farms rescue events.

When asked about the Google document linked in the “Help Save 2,000 Beagles” poster, W1 stated that the purpose of the document was for “political advocacy.” As to the “Now is when we need to ACT” language contained in the document, W1 argued that political action is time sensitive and is especially helpful before a rescue event takes place. W1 noted that similar language was used in Animal Advocacy UW-Madison’s March 16, 2026, Instagram post urging viewers to “Take Action NOW” and that post included action items such as putting pressure on local officials and calling the sheriff’s department. W1 noted that when the March 16, 2026, Instagram post was created, a second rescue event at Ridgland Farms had not yet been planned and, therefore, the action the group was calling for was political advocacy.

A post from the blog *The Simple Heart* was linked in one of the documents created by Animal Advocacy UW-Madison. This blog post titled “This is the (New) Plan to Save the Dogs” asked readers “to join [the writer] in Dane County, Wisconsin on Sunday, April 19 for what may be the most important rescue in animal rights history.” The blog post outlined a five-stage rescue plan. In stage four, “2,000 rescuers will descend on Ridgland Farms from all directions and use every nonviolent means to breach the facility walls and rescue the dogs.” When asked why this blog post was linked in the “Help Save 2,000 Beagles” Google document, W1 explained that it was included to provide “context” to their request for political advocacy. W1 stated, “I don’t think you can ask people to take political action without also giving them the information on... why now and why you should care.”

³ W1 later provided a screenshot of text messages related to the “Help Save 2,000 Beagles” posters. These text messages (and the print log previously discussed) confirmed that the posters were printed after 9:00 pm on April 12, 2026, and were hung beginning on April 13, 2026.

At the end of the interview, W2 noted that by the time the Animal Advocacy UW-Madison posters were hung up, the window in which to sign up for the Ridgland Farms rescue had already closed⁴. According to W2, this “shows that [the group’s actions were] informational as opposed to solicitous.” W1 admitted that Animal Advocacy UW-Madison “knew that [the group’s actions were] highly controversial” and, therefore, the group “might... face some sort of repercussions.” For this reason, Animal Advocacy UW-Madison “intentionally put these posters up after it was possible to sign up” for the Ridgland Farms rescue event.

Findings

UW-2002 II. B. 5 – Violation of UW-Madison, UW System Administrative, or UW System Board of Regents Policies

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The UW-Madison policy under examination was UW-6013 – Expressive Activity. UW-6013 II. M. 2 states, “[p]ostings in outdoor public university areas must not be affixed to... buildings...” UW-6013 II. M. 1 advises that “[p]ostings in outdoor public university areas are limited to general bulletin boards and kiosks.” As evidenced by pictures provided to the Investigator by an employee of the Office for Student Organizations, Leadership & Involvement, two posters for the Animal Advocacy UW-Madison Zoe Rosenberg speaking event were affixed to columns on the exterior of the Humanities building in violation of the Expressive Activity policy. Please note, the content of the posting was not considered in the evaluation of the posting location.

Based on the information collected during the investigation and summarized above, there was a preponderance of the evidence to conclude UW-2002 II. B. 5 was violated.

UW-2002 II. B. 3 - Violation of Law

UW-2002 II. B. 3 - Violation of Law: Conduct that could constitute a violation of any local, state, or federal law, including violations of City of Madison Ordinances and Regulations. – Not Responsible

The primary state law under examination was Wis. Stat. § 939.30 – Solicitation. The crimes considered under the solicitation charge were Wis. Stat. § 943.10 – Burglary and Wis. Stat. § 943.75 – Unauthorized Release of Animals. Notably, solicitation requires proving that the accused unequivocally intended for the crimes to be committed. In this case, it appears that the advertising for the Zoe Rosenberg event and the posting of the “Help Save 2,000 Beagles” flyer occurred after the window to sign up for the Ridgland Farms event had closed.

⁴ The April 12, 2026, Simple Heart blog post, “Six Hours Left to Sign Up for the Ridgland Rescue,” stated that “the application to join the rescue will thus close in 6 hours, at 12:01 am PT” on April 13, 2026.

It is possible, of course, that the leadership of Animal Advocacy UW-Madison knew that the deadline had passed to sign up for the Ridglan Farms rescue and still intended for people to participate in the event regardless. However, documents created by Animal Advocacy UW-Madison relating to Ridglan Farms focus on legal ways to support the effort to free the beagles (e.g., contacting people in positions of power.) For these reasons, there does not appear to be an unequivocal intent for either the crime of burglary or the unauthorized release of animals to be committed.

Based on the information collected during the investigation and summarized above, there was not a preponderance of the evidence to conclude UW-2002 II. B. 3 was violated.

Sanctions

While the more serious of the alleged violations was not substantiated, Animal Advocacy UW-Madison did violate the posting provision of UW-6013. For this reason, it is recommended that Animal Advocacy UW-Madison be assigned the following sanctions:

1. **Written Reprimand:** The written reprimand shall serve as an official warning that Animal Advocacy UW-Madison is in violation of the RSO Code of Conduct and any future misconduct by the group may result in a more serious disciplinary response from the university.
2. **Educational Sanction:** This type of sanction is intended to provide an RSO with the opportunity to repair the harm of their actions and to engage in experiences that will help the RSO to reflect on the behavior and assist in avoiding future violations of university policy. In this case, the executive board and other relevant leaders within Animal Advocacy UW-Madison shall review the Student Organization Resource & Policy Guide's section on [Posting, Chalking, and Leafletting](#) and the university's [Expressive Activity](#) policy section on Postings and create a 1-page summary of those requirements to be shared with Animal Advocacy UW-Madison members prior to advertising for future events.

The educational sanction document should be submitted to OSCCS and SOLI for review and feedback by September 2, 2026.

Animal Advocacy UW-Madison should work with its advisor on developing this summary and the process for distributing the information to its members before future events. The plan must be approved by Gretchen Vollrath (gbvollrath@wisc.edu) prior to September 2, 2026.

If you need additional support completing this sanction, please contact Aaron Vieth – Student Organization Support Manager at avieth@wisc.edu.