

PRESS RELEASE

Griffin Grifter Sentenced to Federal Prison for Dogfighting

Monday, August 10, 2026

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Georgia

NEWNAN, Ga. - Norman Dixon, a convicted drug dealer who fraudulently obtained federal pandemic relief money to fund his lifestyle, was sentenced to two years in federal prison for promoting dogfighting.

"Dixon exploited federal relief programs while breeding, training, and abusing dogs in horrific conditions for his barbaric entertainment and monetary gain," said U.S. Attorney Theodore S. Hertzberg. "Dogfighting has no place in civilized society. Depraved individuals who abuse animals for profit should take notice: we will aggressively prosecute these offenses and ensure the perpetrators are sent to prison."

"Norman Dixon was sentenced to federal prison for his vile acts of animal cruelty, the killing of animals, and his involvement in brutal dog-fighting operations. Dixon also defrauded the Indiana Department of Workforce Development by fraudulently filing for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance benefits he knew he was not entitled to receive, stealing taxpayer-funded relief intended for people in genuine need," said Anthony P. D'Esposito, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor. "We will continue to work relentlessly with our law enforcement partners to protect the integrity of the unemployment insurance system and aggressively pursue those who seek to exploit, loot, and abuse these critical public benefit programs."

"Dogfighting is grossly inhuman and it is against the law," said USDA Inspector General John Walk. "USDA OIG remains resolute to bring those who commit this gruesome crime to justice. Let this prison sentence be a warning that violations of animal welfare laws will not be tolerated. It is unconscionable that this criminal supported himself by fraudulently exploiting a public relief program. I commend acting Special Agent in Charge Nathan Unger for his investigative work."

According to U.S. Attorney Hertzberg, the charges, and other information presented in court: Dogfighting is an extreme form of animal cruelty. Dogs forced into dogfighting

are often kept on short, heavy chains in squalid conditions. Dog fights often last hours, with dogs suffering puncture wounds, lacerations, blood loss, and broken bones. Injured dogs do not receive professional medical care because the injuries would quickly expose dogfighting rings. Instead, the dogs must suffer through bootleg “treatment” from criminals. Losing dogs and those that refuse to fight are often brutally executed.

Videos and photographs obtained from Dixon’s Facebook and iCloud accounts showed that, since at least 2018, Dixon bred dogs for the purpose of dogfighting. He used treadmills and other devices to condition them to fight from birth, and he marketed puppies on Facebook for dogfighting. Dixon’s dogs spent much of their lives on heavy chains and in makeshift pens or overcrowded crates, surrounded by waste. Dixon recorded numerous dog fights in which his dogs were seriously injured, and he captured video of dead and dying dogs, some hanging by their necks from leashes, suggesting that they had been strangled to death.

While promoting dogfighting ventures, Dixon relied on fraudulently obtained taxpayer money to support his lifestyle. He exploited relief programs designed to help struggling citizens and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic to receive more than \$170,000 in Paycheck Protection Program and Unemployment Insurance funds, lying to state and federal government agencies in the process.

On August 7, 2026, Norman Dixon, 35, of Griffin, Georgia, was sentenced to two years in prison to be followed by three years of supervised release. Additionally, he was ordered to pay restitution of \$171,069. As part of his sentence, Dixon was barred from possessing dogs for the entire term of supervised release. Dixon was convicted of one count of sponsoring and exhibiting a dog in an animal fighting venture after pleading guilty on April 30, 2026.

This case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor - Office of Inspector General and U.S. Department of Agriculture - Office of Inspector General.

Assistant United States Attorney Samir Kaushal and former Assistant United States Attorney Alex R. Sistla prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact the U.S. Attorney’s Public Affairs Office at USAGAN.PressEmails@usdoj.gov or (404) 581-6185. The Internet address for the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Northern District of Georgia is <http://www.justice.gov/usao-ndga>.

Updated August 10, 2026