



NOV 02 2017

Department of Animal Services

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Mayor
Dee Margo

City Council

District 1
Peter Svarzbein

District 2
Alexsandra Anello

District 3
Cassandra H. Brown

District 4
Sam Morgan

District 5
Dr. Michiel R. Noe

District 6
Claudia Ordaz Perez

District 7
Henry Rivera

District 8
Cissy Lizarraaga

City Manager
Tommy Gonzalez

Animal Shelter Advisory Committee

Minutes
September 13, 2017

1. Call to Order – Establish Quorum

A meeting of the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee was held at the City Council Chambers and was called to order at 6:04pm by Dr. Guy Johnsen – Chairman.

Board Member	Present	Absent
Barbara Candelaria	X	
Amanda Herrera	X	
Dr. Guy Johnsen	X	
Ken Margherio	X	
Marcia Margherio	X	
Charlie Moreno	X	
Claudia Ordaz-Perez	X	
Maria Ramirez	X	
Julie Rutledge		X
Regina Wagner	X	
VACANT		

Animal Services staff present: Paula Powell, Ramon Herrera, Nicole Cote, Mario D'Agostino, Hugo Navarro, Gina Ramirez, Michele Anderson, Adan Parra and Misty Monteros.

Public present: List of attendees available upon request.

2. Reading and Approval of Minutes

Discussion and action on the approval of the July 12, 2017 minutes.

Marcia Margherio made a motion to approve the July 12, 2017 minutes; Regina Wagner seconded; all members voted in favor, none opposed, and motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and action on the approval of the August 9, 2017 minutes.

Charlie Moreno made a motion to approve the August 9, 2017 minutes; Marcia Margherio seconded; all members voted in favor, none opposed, and motion passed unanimously with Regina Wagner and Maria Ramirez abstaining.

Paula Powell – Interim Director
5001 Fred Wilson | El Paso, Texas 79906 | (915) 212-7297

"Delivering Outstanding Services"



Department of Animal Services

3. **Chairman Remarks**

Chair welcomed new members Julie Rutledge, Claudia Ordaz-Perez, Maria Ramirez, Amanda Herrera and Ken Margherio, followed by introductions around the dais. Chair noted that Julie Rutledge was absent, but would be allowed time at a future meeting to introduce herself. He then asked Ramon Herrera and Michele Anderson to distribute the new guidebooks to members for their review, noting that they contained a lot of reference material such as Title 7, state statutes and the reform plan.

4. **Reports of Special Committees, Animal Services, Rescue Shelters**

A. **Free Roaming Cats**

Regina Wagner gave her report (attached here as part of these minutes). Chair opened the floor for questions and general discussion on cat traps, cat handling and grants followed.

B. **Public Education, Outreach and Responsible Ownership**

Barbara Candelaria discussed public education, noting that it takes creativity, time and money. Campaign planning must start at least two months in advance to get the word out; resources for advertising include City buses, school children in advanced placement classes, churches and college attendees majoring in communications that can assist in promoting Animal Services events. Ramon Herrera mentioned that while it is in draft form, the department is starting to organize a marketing plan with a targeted approach toward advertising and budget. Barbara further mentioned the Socorro Clinic, expressing the need to reach a larger audience with information such as times of operation and cost for spay/neuter procedures. Chair opened the floor for questions and general discussion on community outreach followed.

C. **Rescue Agency/Limited Shelter Report**

Yvette Macias, COO with Chewy's Animal Rescue, introduced herself, noting that the group is incorporated in the state of Texas and is currently in the process of applying for non-profit status. She continued to say they are starting a pet food pantry focusing on low-income residents with proof of disability income or unemployment, which will begin distribution this Friday at 2104 E. Yandell, Suite 6, from 10am-2pm. The group is also working on funding to help with disaster relief and rescue efforts in the Houston/east coast area, stationing in Rockport and assisting residents with 500 pounds of dog and cat food. Chair opened the floor for questions and general discussion followed.

D. **Department of Animal Services Report**

Paula Powell – Interim Director

5001 Fred Wilson | El Paso, Texas 79906 | (915) 212-7297



Department of Animal Services

Paula Powell, Interim Director, introduced herself and the Task Force Team before beginning her presentation. She briefly reviewed statistics on intake, outcomes and live release rates along with an FY18 forecast via a PowerPoint slideshow. She further discussed the first 30-days task force update, to include safety and cleanliness, capacity/customer service, medical supplies and other administrative functions. She concluded her report with a plan for the second 30-days, to include fire station adoptions, a feasibility study of a transport program, evaluation of current processes, sick animal isolation and facility improvements before introducing the September PAWCAST for member review. Chair opened the floor for questions and general discussion on county registration, offsite adoption events, transport precedent and adoption returns followed.

5. Call to the Public

None

6. Main Agenda

A. Discussion and Action on the Update of the El Paso Shelter Foundation and 501(c)3

Camilo Jimenez with the El Paso Animal Shelter Foundation provided an update, noting there had not been much development other than the MOU between the City and the Foundation that will be taken to City Council soon. He added that the hope is to submit the application and associated paperwork to the IRS for 501(c)3 status by the end of next week. The Nominating Committee is still looking at candidates for board member selection and Chair requested that the Foundation consider an ASAC member for membership on the Foundation board. Camilo noted that the Animal Services Director is an ex-officio member of the Foundation and he would discuss Chair's request with the Board. Chair further requested that an ASAC member be permitted to be notified of and attend meetings. At this point, board members are Camilo Jimenez – Secretary, Ms. Oaxaca – Treasurer and Dr. Noe – President. Paula Powell added that the agreement between the City and the Foundation would go before Council next Tuesday, and that agreement allows the Foundation to fundraise on behalf of the City. *No action taken at this time.*

B. Discussion and Action on How Bite Cases are Handled at the City Shelter

Paula noted that an improvement process is underway for bite case quarantines and requested the item be tabled until the next regularly scheduled meeting on October 11th.

Amanda Herrera made a motion to table the item; Maria Ramirez seconded; all members voted in favor, none opposed, and motion passed unanimously.

Paula Powell – Interim Director

5001 Fred Wilson | El Paso, Texas 79906 | (915) 212-7297



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C. Discussion and Action on the Implementation of a Strategic Plan for ASAC and to Meet One Saturday in October to Develop the Plan and Future Objectives to Facilitate Progressive Animal Welfare in the Community

Ken Margherio spoke on the implementation of a strategic plan for ASAC that will make a difference in animal welfare (attached here as part of these minutes). General discussion regarding facilitation of a strategic plan continued with Nicole Cote introducing herself and noting that the department, the Foundation and the ASAC plans should align with the City's strategic plan. She requested that the meeting be held in November, with the date to be set at a later time. Paula Powell noted that the Saturday meeting in November would need to be posted as a meeting in the event of a quorum.

Ken Margherio made a motion to develop and implement a strategic plan for the ASAC and to meet one Saturday in November to develop the plan and objectives; Charlie Moreno seconded; all members voted in favor, none opposed, and motion passed unanimously.

D. Discussion and Action on Reasons and Possible Solutions to the Impounding of Animals at City Shelter

Regina Wagner spoke on reasons and possible solutions to impounding animals at the City shelter (attached here as part of these minutes) and referred to an Animal Welfare Survey (attached here as part of these minutes) that was given to individuals bringing animals to the Shelter several years ago. Chair opened the floor for questions and general discussion on education and ways to incentivize the sterilization of intact animals followed. *No action taken at this time.*

E. Discussion and Action on Animal Abuse Registry

Regina Wagner spoke on animal abuse (attached here as part of these minutes) and offered attachments A and B (both attached here as part of these minutes) for further information. She noted that an ideal bill would include a provision to list convicted abusers for a minimum of 5 years, to require animal control shelter facilities and adoption groups to check the registry before adopting out an animal, and to prohibit the ownership or possession of an animal by convicted animal abusers while they are on the registry. She further added that the registry should include people who violated local laws along with state laws. Paula Powell requested time to research the feasibility of implementing an animal abuse registry in El Paso and asked to be able to return with the feasibility study to determine whether it would be realistic in El Paso. Paula further noted that research is needed before any attempt to create an ordinance is made.



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Regina Wagner made a motion that the City of El Paso pass an ordinance implementing an animal abuse registry; Barbara Candelaria seconded; all members voted in favor, none opposed, and motion passed unanimously.

F. Discussion and Action on the Clarification of Microchip Policies for the City, Clarification of Breeding Laws and Permits for the City and Discussion of Fox News Stating We Will Not Reach the 90% Live Release Rate by 2020

Barbara Candelaria discussed missed educational opportunities for responsible pet ownership in regard to the microchip law and why the law is not upheld. She further discussed breeding laws and the lack of enforcement, requesting clarification on breeding ordinances. She noted it was disheartening to hear Fox News state we would not reach 90% by 2020 and expressed her concern over that statement. She does not want all the work put into reaching that goal to go by the wayside with the entry of our new administration. Chief Mario D'Agostino assured her it would not, as that report was made before the new Task Force Team was assigned to the department. They are committed and have the commitment of City Council, the Mayor and the City Manager as well. Chief D'Agostino noted there is an open invitation to City Representatives to tour the shelter and a video tour can be offered as well. *No action taken at this time.*

G. Discussion and Action on Curbing Community Cat Intake During Capacity Periods (Spring/Summer) at the Department of Animal Services

Chair spoke on this item, briefly explaining cat behavior and breeding cycles. He asked that the City get involved and engage in community cat trapping for TNR before returning the cats to where they were trapped in an effort to decrease capacity at the shelter. Regina Wagner disagreed, noting that winter trapping is a lot of work and cats are not traveling quite as much. She further explained that Animal Services no longer traps cats and this program would create much confusion for the public. General discussion on veterinary staffing, how the program would be publicized and where/when trapping would take place followed. Claudia Ordaz-Perez requested a list of concerns and Regina Wagner agreed to create the list.

Dr. Guy Johnsen made a motion to recommend the City engage in community cat trapping in strategic zip codes from October 1st through January 31st; Maria Ramirez seconded; Regina Wagner opposed; motion passed by a 8 to 1 vote.

7. Future Agenda Items

Chair briefly explained that this item will be on each agenda in an effort to eliminate agenda items flowing in before meetings and allow staff time to research and provide background studies and reports as appropriate. Future



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agenda items should be brought forward at each meeting by members. Chair requested 'discussion and action on the development of by-laws for ASAC' be brought forward for inclusion on next month's agenda. Tabled item 'discussion and action on how bite cases are handled at the City shelter' will return, as will the animal cruelty registry and breeding laws. As a matter of clarification, Paula added that a future agenda item does not necessarily indicate it will be brought back at the next meeting, but at a future meeting. Charlie Moreno requested an item on officer training received in animal cruelty and neglect cases.

8. **Adjournment**

Claudia Ordaz-Perez made a motion to adjourn; Regina Wagner seconded; all member voted in favor, none opposed, and motion passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 9:04pm.

Prepared by: Misty Monteros

Approved by ASAC Chairman:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "V. J. [unclear]", is written over a horizontal line.

CITY CLERK'S DEPT

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Free-roaming cat report - ASAC September 2017 **DRAFT**

Since there are many new members on the committee, I would like to ensure that everyone understand the importance of Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) also known as the community cat program done thru the City's shelter.

TNR improves the lives of cats, and addresses community concerns. The traditional method, catch and kill, is cruel, endless, and costly. Under TNR, cats are humanely trapped, spayed/neutered, vaccinated for rabies, ear tipped for identification, microchipped, and returned to their original outdoor homes. TNR makes free-roaming and community cats healthier and ends the breeding cycle, which means no more kittens. It also ends mating behaviors such as yowling, spraying, fighting and roaming.

TNR is one of the key components on the strategy to become a no kill city, since the rate of euthanasia for free-roaming cats is one of the highest in any open admission shelter.

Trapped Cats Must Be Returned to Trapping Location

Trapping cats and releasing them at another location is not Trap-Neuter-Return and violates Texas state law. Cats are territorial animals and form strong bonds with the location they inhabit. A food source exists in the area (whether intentionally provided by humans, or not) and cats are acclimated to local conditions. Not only is dumping cats in a different location a death sentence for some cats, it is illegal. Furthermore, it doesn't solve the original problem. Relocating cats has the same effect as trapping and euthanizing them at a shelter. Due to the vacuum effect, new cats will move into the area and breed or remaining cats will breed back to capacity.

Returning TNR'd Kittens

We would like a meeting to discuss new ways to approach kittens. We are getting complaints on how kittens are being returned. Kittens should not be returned while still lethargic. We recommend delivering kittens directly to the person who brought them in.

TY CLERK DEPT
117 NOV 2 12:01

Special thanks to the humane society for working closely with us to take friendly cats and kittens who would not otherwise survive on the streets.

Mass TNR events

We continue to work with Animal Services on mass TNR events. A big thank you to the Animal Services team for coming in on their day off. In August, 75 surgeries were completed in one day. And 96 cats were spayed or neutered last Saturday in the September event. There is continued need for more surgical slots. There are more cats and willing volunteers than slots for these events.

Thank you to Dr. Shinaut who has agreed to offer a Sun City Cats reduced rate. Northeast still does not have a participating veterinarian.

We plan to register for Global Cat Day and will celebrate throughout the month of October. As part of the celebration, Sun City Cats will conduct a How to Trap-Neuter-Return seminar to train, educate, and empower citizens on Trap-Neuter-Return. It will include a TNR demonstration showing all phases of the TNR process. All workshop attendees will gain access TO FREE TRAPS IF NEEDED, AS WELL AS expert guidance and assistance. We will be advocating for the humane treatment of all animals.

In addition, we are working on an educational flyer to educate the public on the struggles of community cats that were once indoor cats and left behind by owners. These cats rely on their human companions for food and shelter and often are hurt or killed once left outside.

We are being asked to conduct educational meetings in different areas of the city, businesses, neighborhood associations and neighborhood watch groups, and to distribute information in neighborhood via flyers.

9/13/2017

ASAC 1: Ken Margherio

1. Discussion and action on the implementation of a Strategic Plan for ASAC and entertain a motion to implement a Strategic Plan.

Regarding the above, also entertain a motion to meet one Saturday in October to develop the plan and future objectives to facilitate progressive animal welfare in the community.

.....
I believe any organization, must have a strategy to operate effectively and efficiently. We need to know, as a committee.... and those that we support in the community need to know....

What is our purpose? What do we, as a group want to accomplish? What are the actions we will take going forward to make a difference in progressive animal welfare.

I believe it is imperative to have a clear mission and a strategic plan that we can use as a guideline, that assures we are working on the right things, that will clearly make a difference in animal welfare.

What are our objectives? How do we measure our success?

I would like to be able to, a year from now, specifically be able to identify what we have accomplished as a committee, and as a partner in animal welfare in the community. I would like to have Animal Services, the Rescues, and the Public, be able to clearly see a progressive change based on what we do.

To do this, we must have a Strategy Plan and a clear set of goals and objectives, and be able to measure what we have accomplished.

I know from attending these meetings as a member of the public, that there has often been mixed views on mission, mixed feelings on what has been accomplished and mixed feelings on what ASAC should prioritize as a committee.

I know many of you, aside from being on ASAC, contribute in many ways, whether it is in rescue efforts, working with animal services, the humane society, or in other ways in the community. I would like to see a way to pull this together in a more homogenized effort. I would like to be able to say with pride, we have been a key player in meeting El Paso's 2020 No Kill objective.

.....
At a high level, or in simple terms, a strategy plan requires 5 things:

1. Mission: Something that states the purpose or goal of an organization, "what we want to do".

Example: Improve Animal Welfare in the Community

2. Strategy: A plan, a methodology or an approach to attain a specific result.

Example: Improve Animal Welfare by reducing disease, increasing shelter live release, reduce euthanasia of healthy animals.

3. Objectives: Targets, or results, that we want to obtain based on our actions.

Example: Live release of 90% by 2020

4. Actions: Something done to achieve a result.

Examples: Improve vaccination programs, improve education in the community, Increase spay neuter of feral cats, Improve Capacity at Animal Services, Increase out of state transfers, increase marketing to increase adoptions, create partnerships between animal welfare organizations etc.

5. Measurable Results: Results that can be quantified.

Examples: AS monthly report on Live Release, Euthanasia and Adoptions. Community vaccination programs counting numbers of inoculations. Measuring lost in care numbers due to illness at animal services. All of these can show trends that will let us know if we are getting the job done.

In Summary, I would like our committee to develop and adopt a strategy plan to be used as a guideline going forward.

I believe this would give us a more clear direction for the future, and allow us to work more efficiently, be more progressive, and be more of a partner in animal welfare in the community.

So, I would ask that you entertain a motion to develop and implement a Strategic Plan. And also entertain a motion to meet one Saturday in October to develop the plan and our future objectives. Thank you!

Sept 14/17

Animal Services Impoundments, Reasons, Suggestions DRAFT

"City task force says Animal Services will not reach goal of being no-kill shelter by 2020" that was the headline on KPCW 14 on August 16th, 2017.

The question is, is there something else that can be done? Are we just placing a "bandaid" on the problems and missing the big picture?

We must answer the question, why? Why are all these animals ending up in the City Shelter?

Several years ago Animal Services gave out an "Animal Welfare Survey" to a small number of individuals bringing animals to the shelter. I'm recommending that they do the same but on a larger scale. In addition, we may want the rescues to also document reasons why people are surrendering either thru a survey or thru their customer service.

I believe there are many other things that can be tried to reduce the impounding of animals at animal services. And they need help from the rescues to, as they are all on the front lines. Many times rescues are contacted by pet owners prior to going to animal services maybe rescues can suggest alternatives to surrender instead of saying "take them to animal services".

The following are suggestions to take into consideration:

- 1.- When people bring litters of puppies or kittens to Animal Services. Take the puppies but make it a requirement that owner must bring the mom to be spayed. STOP the cycle, taking the puppies is just a Band-Aid, get to the root of the problem, the intact male and female adult dogs.*
- 2.-Invest in spay/neuter services. For example, the Socorro clinic, has it been used effectively? Is there enough staffing available, not talking only about vets but support staff as well.*

3. Invest in education; go out to the areas where there is the need. Animal Control officers know where those areas are. Go to the root of the problem don't wait until the animals come to you

4.-If a person is repeatedly bringing in animals, or has done it more than once, find out why? Stop them from having animals it's not fair to the animals or the taxpayers when they just relinquish.

5. Educate when animals are being adopted. we find ourselves trying to get so many out I believe sometimes we don't care what they do with the animal. People must know that a pet is a lifetime commitment. Educate that on average cost is over 500.00 per year without unexpected expenses such as medical. Make sure they are a good fit.

6. For years I have suggested utilizing the bus system to advertise, this is a great opportunity for educational exposure. Have some information in both English and Spanish at each bus terminal, inside the bus, or at the bus stop, people who may not have channel 15 can read a brochure or see an eye catching poster.

Use what is out there already, Best Friends has amazing Public Announcement videos about spay/neuter.

7.- Expand the -Pet retention program. Reducing owner surrender, the program has to be a priority and we must be innovative with the solutions. The program needs to be resourceful and work with the community (landlords, food pantries, vet clinics, neighbors).

For example, the elderly man can't feed the cat anymore, find out why, is it temporary? Long term? Can we refer him to a food pantry? Can we get a volunteer to help him? get him coupons from a pet food retailer? How can we stop him from surrendering the cat?

8.-Instead of expanding the existing shelter...have satellite shelters across the city that can hold say 50-100 animals. for example , have one in the far east this will allow people from the county and eastside to get easy access to the services. After the holding period then move animals to the large shelter.

IV CLERK DEPT
17 NOV 2 14:01

Yes this means more staffing, etc. but it allows individuals to look for their animals closer to home. People work and can't get to shelter by 6:00pm. his works in other part of the Country.

There are so many ideas and I just wanted to share a few, because I think we get caught up on blaming animal services but the real issue are a for example, why are people not coming to look for their pets? why are people relinquishing their pets? Why are so many litters being brought in? The community has to take responsibility in some way or another otherwise all we are doing is training the next generation to continue with the same irresponsible patterns and nothing will change.

CITY CLERK DEPT
2017 NOV 2 PM 2:01

ANIMAL WELFARE SURVEY

Please help us to HELP YOU and your pet!

Please take a few moments to complete this survey prior to relinquishing your pet.

YOU WILL REMAIN ANONYMOUS

The purpose of this survey is so that we as a community can help those in need prior to relinquishing their animals. Once we understand why animals are brought here, we can help families keep their pets in the future.

Please mark all the statements that pertain to your particular situation.

Type of animal ☐ Dog ☐ Cat ☐ Bird ☐ Ferret other _____

You are relinquishing the animal because:

- ☐ Cannot afford to pay the fee to get animal out of Animal Services.
- ☐ Moving to a place that does not accept pets.
- ☐ Moving out of town and cannot take animal with me.
- ☐ Military. Moving, cannot take pet
- ☐ Military. Deployed. cannot find someone to take care of pet while in deployment.
- ☐ On a tight budget, cannot afford to feed pet. (lost job, partner lost job, unexpected expenses, etc)
- ☐ Animal is sick, cannot pay for veterinary services.
- ☐ Behavioral problems (barks too much, ruining house, ruining yard, soils inside house)
- ☐ I have several animals and cannot cope anymore.
- ☐ Have a new baby, or expecting a baby.
- ☐ Someone in the household is allergic to the animal.
- ☐ The animal is pregnant and I cannot afford more animals.
- ☐ Found, not mine
- ☐ Do not have time to take care of the animal.

You are requesting euthanasia because:

☐ animal is old and sick ☒ animal is sick ☐ Animal is aggressive

☐ other. Please explain _____

Will you be willing to reconsider if help was available? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Thank you for participating in this survey!

CITY CLERK DEPT
'017 NOV 2 PM2:01

Animal Abuse Registry ASAC September 2012

DRAFT.

Animal abuse is underreported, under investigated, and under prosecuted across the country, including El Paso. Recently, it seems that El Paso is experiencing a surge in cases with more and more incidents appearing in the news (for example, the cat shut into a carrier that was taped closed and abandoned, the dogs that were starved and ultimately killed a child).

San City Cats is frequently contacted about cats who have been found dead, poisoned, shot or otherwise abused. The incidents were reported but the cases did not go anywhere. It's time for this to change. El Paso is falling behind the rest of the country. The FBI now categorizes animal cruelty as a Group A offense, alongside murder and arson, because of the close link between animal abuse and violence against humans. See Attachment B for more information.

SEC is working with the organization, For All Animals, and their attorney, Liz Holtz, on an animal abuse registry. While an abuse registry does not entirely address the larger problem of El Paso ignoring animal cruelty, it's an important step to beginning the conversation and making it clear animal abuse isn't tolerated in El Paso.

I am requesting that ASAC approve a motion for the City of El Paso to pass an ordinance implementing an animal abuse registry.

Animal abuse registries are a tool for police departments because it helps to identify convicted animal abusers who are involved in new allegations of abuse, and for shelters to screen out convicted animal abusers who may be trying to adopt an animal. We believe that the registry should be made available not only to law enforcement, animal control and shelter facilities but also to the public, just as the registries for convicted sex offenders are. See Attachment A for more information.



Prepared for Sun City Cats
Elizabeth Holtz, Director of Legislative Affairs

ATTACHMENT B

**Frequently Asked Questions
Animal Cruelty, Law Enforcement, and Prosecution**

What is the link between animal cruelty and violence against people?

Many peer-reviewed studies have confirmed what most of us understand instinctively – there is a strong link between violence against animals and violence against people. In other words, people who hurt animals are more likely to hurt people.

Are there any studies proving this link?

The body of evidence establishing the link between human and animal cruelty is massive. Here are just a few of these studies:

- *“Childhood cruelty toward animals among criminals and noncriminals”¹* – Study determined that men convicted of violent crimes were significantly more likely to have committed animal cruelty as children.
- *“Animal cruelty by children exposed to domestic violence”²* – Children who witness domestic violence in their homes are nearly three times more likely to abuse animals than other children.
- *Developmental animal cruelty and its correlates in sexual homicide offenders and sex offenders³* – Subjects with a history of animal cruelty were 11 times more likely to have committed sexual homicide. Further, subjects with higher frequency of animal cruelty during adolescence were six times more likely to commit sexual homicide.
- *Statistical Summary of Offenders Charged with Crimes Against Companion Animals July*

¹ Kellert, S. R., & Felthous, A. R. (1985). Childhood cruelty toward animals among criminals and noncriminals. *Human Relations*, 38, 1113-1129.

² Currie, C. L. (2006). Animal cruelty by children exposed to domestic violence. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 30(4), 425-435.

³ Alys, L., Wilson, J. C., Clarke, J., & Toman, P. (2009). Developmental animal cruelty and its correlates in sexual homicide offenders and sex offenders. In A. Linzey (Ed.), *The link between animal abuse and human violence*. Eastbourne, East Sussex, UK: Sussex Academic Press.

2001-July 2005⁴ – Study conducted by the Chicago Police Department found that 65% of people arrested for crimes against animals had been previously arrested for battery against a human.

- ***“Battered pets and domestic violence: Animal abuse reported by women experiencing intimate violence and by nonabused women”⁵*** – Women at domestic violence shelters were almost 11 times more likely to have a partner that hurt or killed their pet than other women.

Why should animal cruelty by children be treated seriously? They’re just kids.

“Conduct disorder” is a serious psychiatric syndrome in children and teenagers. Typical symptoms include lying, physical cruelty, and property destruction. Animal cruelty is one of the most significant and earliest indicators that a child has or will develop conduct disorder.⁶

The evidence is so overwhelming that the following groups agree that animal abuse by children is a warning sign of future violent behavior: the American Psychological Association, the National Crime Prevention Council, the U.S. Department of Education, and The National School Safety Council.⁷

Why should prosecutors spend time on animal cruelty? Aren’t resources better spent on going after “serious” criminals?

We Need to Protect Animals to Protect People

There is a link between human violence and animal cruelty. Animal cruelty is connected to many forms of human violence including domestic violence, elder abuse, child abuse, and crimes such as murder, arson, and rape. One study found that in 88% of homes with abused children, animal abuse or neglect was also occurring.⁸ And a comprehensive study of over 3500 domestic violence victims across 11 metropolitan cities in the U.S. found that pet abuse was one of only four significant risk factors for domestic violence among an urban population.⁹

Psychologists and social workers understand that animal cruelty, domestic violence, elder abuse, and child abuse intersect. Taking animal cruelty seriously actually puts law enforcement and prosecutors in a better position to uncover other crimes. Animal abuse is a significant indicator that there is something wrong in the abuser’s home or life. Sometimes animal cruelty is more

⁴ Degenhardt, B. (2005). Statistical Summary of Offenders Charged with Crimes against Companion Animals July 2001-July 2005. Report from the Chicago Police Department.

⁵ Ascione, F. R., Weber, C. V., Thompson, T. M., Heath, J., Maruyama, M., & Hayashi, K. (2007). Battered pets and domestic violence: Animal abuse reported by women experiencing intimate violence and by nonabused women. *Violence Against Women*, 12(4), 354-373.

⁶ Ascione, F. R. (2001, September). Animal abuse and youth violence. *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

⁷ Randour, M. L. (2004). “Including animal cruelty as a factor in assessing risk and designing interventions.” Conference Proceedings, Persistently Safe Schools, The National Conference of the Hamilton Fish Institute on School and Community Violence, Washington, D.C.

⁸ DeViney, E., Dickert, J., & Lockwood, R. (1983). The care of pets within child abusing families. *International Journal for the Study of Animal Problems*, 4, 321-329.

⁹ Walton-Moss, B. J., Manganello, J., Frye, V., & Campbell, J. C. (2005). Risk factors for intimate partner violence and associated injury among urban women. *Journal of Community Health*, 30(5), 377-389.

visible to neighbors (such as leaving a dog tethered in the cold) than human violence. An animal control officer might be the only person who can uncover other crimes and alert authorities.

A Cycle of Violence

Failing to address animal cruelty today also creates a cycle of future violence. A 2009 study of the link between domestic violence, child abuse, and animal abuse found “a robust link between witnessing animal abuse and perpetuating cruelty towards animals...Furthermore, individuals who witnessed animal cruelty were eight times more likely to be perpetrators.”¹⁰ Children who are simply present in a violent home are more likely to abuse animals later in life.

What's the link between animal cruelty, domestic violence, and elder abuse?

When one form of abuse is occurring in a household, it's more likely that other crimes are also happening. But there are other ways that animal cruelty is connected to abuse. Twelve different studies have found that between 18% and 48% of female domestic violence victims stay with their partner because they are worried about the safety of their companion animals.¹¹ Domestic abusers also use companion animals as pawns to manipulate women. In one study, 71% of abused women reported that their partners had killed, abused, or threatened to abuse an animal.¹² In response, more and more domestic violence shelters are creating programs to accommodate victims' pets.

Similarly, the elderly are easily manipulated by abusers who threaten the safety or care of their animals. Victims of elder abuse are also more reluctant to accept outside help out of fear that their companion animal won't be taken care of. A 2000 survey of adult protective services caseworkers discovered that 35% of clients reported their companion animals were abused, killed, or threatened.¹³

I heard that the FBI now investigates animal cruelty? Is this true?

Generally, no, but it does track it. The reason you might have heard about animal cruelty and the FBI is that in 2016, the FBI started including animal cruelty cases as a Class A felony in its National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS). NIBRS is used by law enforcement agencies across the country. Before 2016, animal cruelty was considered a lesser offense and put into a “miscellaneous” category. This new categorization enables officials to track reported cases of animal cruelty, allowing law enforcement and lawmakers to better understand and effectively respond to animal abuse. Without good data, it's difficult to effectively respond.

But the bottom line is that the FBI's decision to include animal cruelty as a Class A felony is an acknowledgement from our country's largest criminal justice entities that animal cruelty is a serious offense. Other Class A felonies include murder, arson, and assault.

With all this evidence about the seriousness of animal cruelty, why aren't more abusers put in jail?

¹⁰ DeGue, S., & DiLillo, D. (2009). Is animal cruelty a “red flag” for family violence? Investigating co-occurring violence toward children, partners and pets. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 24(6), 1036-1056.

¹¹ Ascione, F. R. (2007). Emerging research on animal abuse as a risk factor for intimate partner violence. In K. Kendall-Tackett & S. Giacomoni (Eds.), *Intimate partner violence* (pp. 3-1 to 3-17). Kingston, NJ: Civic Research Institute.

¹² Ascione, F. R., Weber, C. V., & Wood, D. S. (1997). The abuse of animals and domestic violence: A national survey of shelters for women who are battered. *Society and Animals*, 5(3), 205-218.

¹³ Boat, B. W., & Knight, J. C. (2000). Experiences and needs of adult protective services case managers when assisting clients who have companion animals. *Journal of Elder Abuse & Neglect*, 12(3/4), 145-155.

Unfortunately, some police departments and prosecutors' offices still don't go after animal abusers either because they don't believe it's a serious crime or because they lack resources. Read on to learn about ways you can change that in your community!

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Prepared for Sun City Cats
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ATTACHMENT A

Animal Abuse Registries Frequently Asked Questions

What is an animal abuse registry?

An animal abuse registry is a list of people who have been convicted of animal cruelty in a specific city, county, or state. Registries differ widely across the country. In Tennessee, the only state with an animal abuse registry, the list is published online and open to the public. In New York City, the list is online but you must work in animal control, sheltering, or rescue to access it. The length of time that a person remains on the registry or even what crimes result in someone being added are also different for every registry.

How do abuse registries help shelters and rescue groups?

First and foremost, registries allow shelters and rescue workers to quickly identify if a potential adopter has been convicted of animal abuse. There is no national database of convicted abusers, and shelters are unable to easily screen adopters for cruelty. Right now, a person convicted of animal cruelty could walk into a shelter and adopt an animal.

Lauren Bluestone, director of Nashville's Metro Animal Care and Control, speaking about Tennessee's registry, said, "It's going to be another useful tool that agencies such as ourselves can do a little bit more research on individuals we encounter whether it be in the field or individuals that come to adopt animals."¹

Who else does an animal abuse registry help?

Registries allow pet owners and employers hiring for jobs that work with animals to identify people who have been convicted of animal cruelty. Similar to other registries, it allows community members to be better equipped to keep their pets and children safe. Registries decrease opportunities for abusers to hurt more animals by decreasing the amount of contact they have with the animals in their community, in their employment, or in their neighborhood.

¹ <http://wkrn.com/2016/01/01/tennessee-becomes-first-state-to-release-animal-abuse-registry/>

Shouldn't the focus be on rehabilitating offenders or strengthening the existing cruelty laws?

Animal abuse registries are one tool in the larger work to end animal cruelty. A registry alone is not enough. For All Animals strongly supports strengthening current animal cruelty laws, expanding mental health resources for people who abuse animals, and increasing the prosecution rate of cruelty cases. But animal abuse registries are something that we can do to immediately protect animals and humans from people who commit violent acts against animals.

Furthermore, an animal abuse registry makes a strong statement that this kind of behavior is not acceptable. It's a step toward the greater goal of communities thoroughly investigating and prosecuting animal cruelty.

What is the link between people who hurt animals and people who hurt people?

Studies have confirmed what many people understand intuitively – there is a strong link between violence against animals and violence against people. People who commit violence against animals are more likely to be violent with people either at the same time or in the future. Animal abuse is a serious indicator that there is something else wrong in the home, whether it is a child committing the abuse who needs psychological intervention, domestic violence, or elder abuse.

Numerous studies have documented that animal abusers are more likely to commit acts of violence against people. A study by the Chicago Police Department found that 65% of people arrested for crimes against animals had been previously arrested for battery against a human.² It is because of this link that the FBI started including animal cruelty cases as Class A felony, alongside crimes like murder and arson, in its National Incident Based Reporting System.

For more studies and further reading on the link between animal abuse and human violence, see "Animal Cruelty, Law Enforcement, and Prosecution – FAQs."

What if a mean neighbor claims I neglect my dogs and puts me on the registry fraudulently?

Only convicted animal abusers are put on these registries. And sadly, animal cruelty is so under-investigated and under-prosecuted that it's very unlikely that an innocent person would end up on a registry. As a society, we are not even bringing serious animal abusers to justice.

What other cities or states already have animal abuse registries?

Suffolk County, New York created the first registry in 2010, and Tennessee enacted the first statewide registry in 2015. The Tennessee registry only includes people convicted of abuse of companion animals (cats and dogs). First-time offenders are listed for two years, and a second offense results in a five-year posting. Each listing includes a photo of the offender along with

² Degenhardt, B. 2005. *Statistical Summary of Offenders Charged with Crimes against Companion Animals July 2001-July 2005*. Report from the Chicago Police Department.

their name, address, county, offense, and conviction date. The registry is available here: <https://www.tn.gov/tbi/topic/tennessee-animal-abuse-registry>.

Here is a partial list of other registries.

- Seven counties in New York, plus New York City, have animal abuse registries (Albany, Cattaraugus, Nassau, Niagara, Orange, Rockland, and Suffolk counties)
- Hillsborough County, Florida (which encompasses Tampa) created an animal abuse registry in the fall of 2016. People convicted of animal cruelty must register with the local sheriff's office, and they are not allowed to buy or adopt cats or dogs.
- Cook County, Illinois (the second most populous county in the United States) maintains an animal abuser registry online.³ People convicted of animal abuse must register within five days of the conviction or be fined up to \$2000. Convicted abusers who attempt to adopt or purchase animal may be fined up to \$5000.
- Laredo, Texas became the first city in Texas to create a registry in August 2017.⁴

³ <http://cookcountysheriff.org/AnimalAbuserRegistry.html>

⁴ <http://www.lmtonline.com/local/politics/article/Laredo-city-officials-announce-launch-of-state-s-12160814.php>