



# NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

**The LINK-Letter Vol. 12, No. 5 May 2019**

*A monthly report of news from THE NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER*



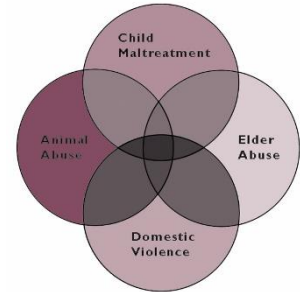
ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE



[www.NationalLinkCoalition.org](http://www.NationalLinkCoalition.org)

[Phil Arkow](#), Coordinator and Editor

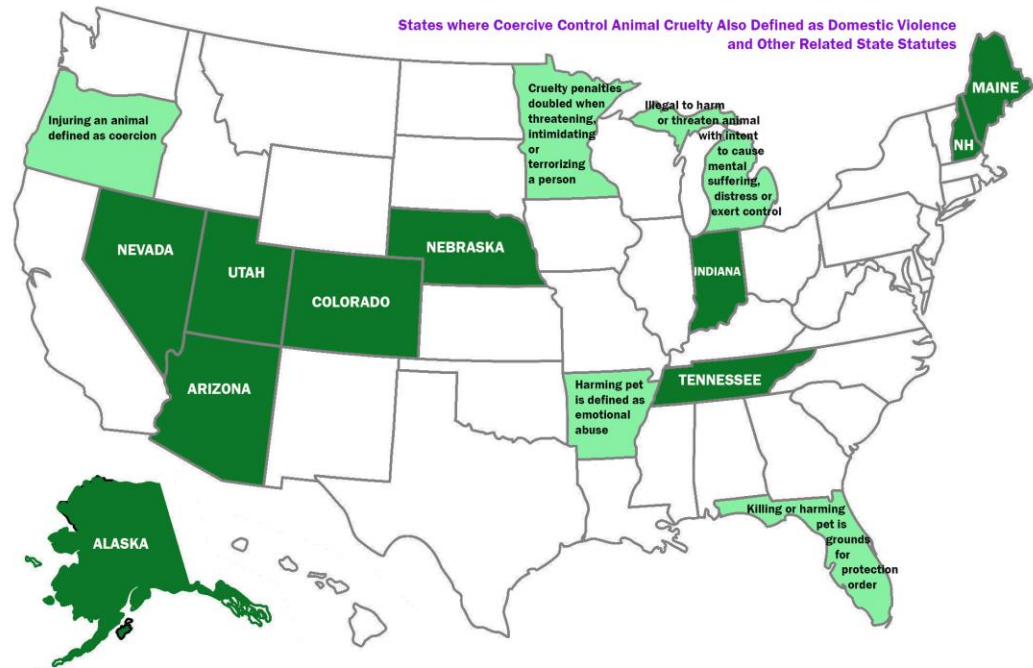
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## ANIMAL ABUSE AND... DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

### Utah Adds Animal Abuse to Definition of Domestic Violence

With extensive research and testimonials from survivors demonstrating that family pets are often harmed by abusers as coercive control tools to assert their power, an innovative legislative response has been to define animal abuse in the context of intimate partner violence as domestic violence as well as animal cruelty. Such designations give prosecutors additional leverage in criminal cases and help bolster survivors' abilities to escape toxic situations.



Coercive animal abuse is considered domestic violence in AK, AZ, CO, IN, ME, NE, NH, VT, TN, and UT and an enhancement to domestic violence considerations in AR, FL, MI, MN, and OR

On March 27, Utah became the 10<sup>th</sup> state to enact such legislation when Gov. Gary Herbert signed [SB 45](#) into law. The new law adds “aggravated cruelty to an animal with the intent to harass or threaten the other cohabitant” to the list of 25 other offenses which, when committed or attempted to commit, constitute the state’s statutory definition of domestic violence. Utah defines “aggravated” cruelty to an animal as torturing, poisoning, or killing an animal without the legal authority to do so.

We are watching several similar bills introduced in other states. In [New York, A 588](#) would create a felony-level crime of animal cruelty intended to threaten, intimidate or harass a family or household member, with additional penalties if the act is committed in the presence of a minor child.

[Texas HB 2516](#) would add cruelty to non-livestock animals with the intent to coerce, control, punish or intimidate another family member to the definition of “family violence”. The bill is in the Criminal Jurisprudence Committee. [Indiana’s HB 1615](#) would expand existing provisions defining “beating” an animal as an act of domestic or family violence to “abusing” an animal.

[Missouri HB 370](#) would add “intimidation,” defined as “injuring, killing, or threatening to injure or kill an animal if such act is done to coerce, control, punish, or as an act of revenge against a household member,” to the conditions which would allow courts to issue orders of protection.

Unfortunately, several similar bills – [New Mexico HB 52](#) and [Virginia’s HB2642](#) and [SB 1276](#) failed to pass despite bipartisan support.

## Coercive Abuse Concept Goes “Down Under”

The concept of coercive animal abuse being defined as an act of domestic violence has spread to Australia, where four Australian states and territories have statutory provisions describing this phenomenon.

In the [Australian Capital Territory’s](#) Family Violence Act of 2016, “family violence” by a person in relation to a family member includes several acts, such as sexually coercive behavior, stalking, damaging property, deprivation of liberty, and “harming an animal.”



The [Northern Territory’s](#) Domestic & Family Violence Act of 2007 defines domestic violence from a list of conducts committed by a person against someone with whom the person is in a domestic relationship. These include intimidation, stalking, economic abuse, and “damaging property, including the injury or death of an animal.” Attempting or threatening to commit such conduct is also included.

The [Queensland](#) Domestic & Family Violence Protection Act of 2012 definition of domestic violence includes: “causing or threatening to cause the death of, or injury to, an animal, whether or not the animal belongs to the person to whom the behavior is directed, so as to control, dominate or coerce the person.”

[Victoria’s](#) Family Violence Protection Act of 2008 defines family violence as including emotional and psychological abuse and threatening and coercive behaviors. Specific examples include: “causing or threatening to cause the death of, or injury to, an animal, whether or not the animal belongs to the family member to whom the behavior is directed so as to control, dominate or coerce the family member.” Such conduct meets the definition of family violence whether or not such action rises to the level of constituting a criminal offense.

Other Australian states have extensive provisions defining family violence in terms of emotional abuse, threatening and coercive behaviors, but do not specify threats or harm to animals

## Colorado Incorporates The Link in Extreme Risk Protection Orders

Increased awareness of the lethality risk of domestic violence offenders having access to firearms is prompting states to enact “Extreme Risk Protection Orders” that allow courts to prohibit persons from having or obtaining a firearm upon a finding that the person presents a significant risk to self or others. One such bill became law on April 12 in Colorado, where **HB 19-1177** includes the offender’s history of having been arrested for domestic violence and/or animal cruelty as grounds for the issuance of such an order.



Under the new law, which takes effect Jan. 1, 2020, a petitioner can ask the court to issue a temporary ERPO by establishing a preponderance of evidence that a person poses a significant risk to self or others. After a hearing, the court can issue a continuing ERPO which would prohibit the respondent from possessing, controlling, purchasing, or receiving a firearm for 364 days.

Upon issuance of an ERPO, the respondent will have to surrender all of his or her firearms and concealed carry permit. Similar bills are under consideration in **Arizona (HB 2161)** and **Pennsylvania (SB 90 and HB 1075)**. **North Dakota HB 1537** was defeated.

## ANIMAL ABUSE &... SEXUAL ABUSE

### Wisconsin Tries, Again, to Increase Penalties for Sex with Animals

Wisconsin lawmakers are again trying to increase penalties for animal sexual abuse, which has been linked with child sexual abuse and pornography. A similar measure introduced in 2018 had wide bipartisan support but was killed on the final day of the legislative session. Senate Majority Chair Scott Fitzgerald explained his decision at the time by saying he “doesn’t want the press to talk about sex with animals on the last day of session.” (*See the [April 2018 LINK-Letter](#)*)



The 2019 iterations, **AB 152** and **SB 139**, would increase penalties for bestiality from current misdemeanor levels to a variety of felony charges for sexual contact with an animal; advertising, harboring, transporting, providing or transporting animals for sexual contact; and creating, distributing or possessing animal pornography. Penalties would be further enhanced if a child were involved. The bill would also require offenders to register as a sex offender; current law only permits courts to order such registration. The bills are in the respective Committees on Criminal Justice and Public Safety.

### Maryland Updates Animal Sexual Abuse Statutes

Archaic terminology defining bestiality in Maryland as “unnatural or perverted sexual practice with another or with an animal” changed on April 18, when Gov. Larry Hogan signed **HB 641** into law. The measure now defines Aggravated Cruelty to Animals to include “sexual contact with an animal.”



The new law further defines aggravated cruelty to animals as a crime of violence, making offenders eligible for additional criminal penalties including mandatory sentences **Gov. Larry Hogan** for offenders with prior convictions. Persons convicted of sexual contact with an animal will be included among Tier III sex offenders. The new law takes effect on Oct. 1, 2019.

## *ANIMAL ABUSE AND... CRIMINAL JUSTICE*

### *FBI Publishes Year 2 NIBRS Data*

The [FBI has published](#) its second year of what are still very limited data on the incidence of four types of animal abuse and neglect, following the landmark inclusion of animal physical abuse, neglect and gross neglect, organized animal abuse (animal fighting), and animal sexual abuse in its national database of crimes.



The National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) began its rollout in 2016 with the inclusion, for the first time, of crimes against animals itemized in the system used by thousands of law enforcement agencies nationwide. Not all states participate in NIBRS, and not all participating departments have updated their systems yet to accommodate the new procedure to meet a 2021 deadline. Meanwhile, animal cruelty investigators who are not housed within a law enforcement agency are unable to enter their data into NIBRS without a cooperative agreement with local police or sheriffs, so the first two years' data are still somewhat limited. Patterns, analysis, and Links between animal abuse and other crimes will take several more years to emerge.

NIBRS reports for 2016 detailed 1,143 cases of animal abuse from 13 participating states ([See the January 2018 LINK-Letter](#)). In 2017, 6,998 law enforcement agencies reported 5.4 million incidents which included 3,162 animal cruelty incidents. In these cases, 760 people were arrested, 96% of whom were adults. About 70% of cases occurred in homes. Only 3% involved suspected drug or alcohol use. More than 18,000 law enforcement agencies are eligible to submit data into NIBRS.

The 2017 data come from police departments serving 32% of the U.S. population. Data collected so far show a rise in the reporting of animal cruelty, but whether this is a result of more cruelty or more agencies participating in NIBRS could not be determined.

The NIBRS reporting process can show Links between domestic violence and animal abuse or between dog fighting and gun and drug violations, for example. With that information, police officials can better understand these interconnected problems as well as improve their training.

By correlating multiple crimes within NIBRS, Link patterns will emerge. A woman who is afraid to report abuse by her partner may report he is cruel to animals. A neighbor may report animal abuse first, and officers may uncover violence against people or information dictating a call to child protective services.

The [American Veterinary Medical Association](#) reviewed the data and quoted several Link authorities, including the National Link Coalition's Randy Lockwood and Martha Smith-Blackmore, and the Animal Welfare Institute's Mary Lou Randour. Lockwood said that tracking crimes of animal cruelty also reinforces to law enforcement agencies that those crimes are important.

The article noted that the ASPCA is part of the National Link Coalition, which advocates for ways to prevent violence against animals and people. The Coalition was among supporters for the effort to gain separate reporting on crimes against animals. ASPCA leaders think the data could help gauge how often such crimes occur, track outcomes, and measure the success of interventions.

The article quoted the National Sheriffs' Association which advocated for including animal abuse cases in NIBRS. "Concerned neighbors are more likely to report suspected animal abuse than they are to report other forms of family violence. Consequently, animal control officers have much easier access to homes than do other law enforcement and social services agents," said the NSA.

The AVMA article also spotlighted Smith-Blackmore's new ["Suspect It – Detect It" infographic](#) to help veterinary clinic staff recognize and respond to suspected animal abuse ([See the March 2019 LINK-Letter](#)).

<b>NIBRS Participating States 2017 - Animal Cruelty Incidents Reported</b>							
<i>State</i>	<i>No. of Agencies</i>	<i>Population Covered</i>	<i>Animal Cruelty Incidents</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>No. of Agencies</i>	<i>Pop. Covered</i>	<i>Animal Cruelty Incidents</i>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,998</b>	<b>105,672,974</b>	<b>3,162</b>				
<b>Alabama</b>	1	85,634	0	<b>Missouri</b>	25	890,041	39
<b>Arizona</b>	5	441,754	0	<b>Montana</b>	104	1,050,005	83
<b>Arkansas</b>	292	2,836,240	0	<b>Nebraska</b>	89	854,722	0
<b>Colorado</b>	219	5,575,629	504	<b>N. Hamp.</b>	178	1,296,830	81
<b>Conn.</b>	94	2,964,038	17	<b>N. Dak.</b>	107	754,604	46
<b>Delaware</b>	63	961,939	923	<b>Ohio</b>	544	9,332,963	22
<b>D.C.</b>	1		0	<b>Okla.</b>	356	1,874,821	0
<b>Idaho</b>	105	1,699,259	2	<b>Oregon</b>	195	3,911,879	119
<b>Illinois</b>	1	146,770	0	<b>Penna.</b>	29	203,372	0
<b>Indiana</b>	105	392,088	0	<b>R. I.</b>	47	1,058,595	0
<b>Iowa</b>	240	3,104,739	0	<b>S. Car.</b>	445	4,997,385	196
<b>Kansas</b>	362	2,157,747	0	<b>S. Dakota</b>	111	814,529	11
<b>Kentucky</b>	437	4,454,189	44	<b>Tennessee</b>	468	6,716,522	475
<b>Louisiana</b>	33	911,835	0	<b>Texas</b>	161	5,446,658	62
<b>Maine</b>	25	381,656	3	<b>Utah</b>	71	2,336,125	0
<b>Maryland</b>	1	1,034,920	0	<b>Vermont</b>	90	623,657	21
<b>Mass.</b>	300	5,909,196	13	<b>Virginia</b>	413	8,467,744	0
<b>Michigan</b>	629	9,953,546	276	<b>Wash.</b>	228	6,845,624	114
<b>Minnesota</b>	26	285,742	0	<b>W. Va.</b>	246	1,593,494	14
<b>Mississippi</b>	5	195,630	0	<b>Wisc.</b>	147	3,110,853	97

**Note:** The wide disparities in the number of animal cruelty incidents reported among jurisdictions are indicative of numerous confounding factors, including: the types and interests of agencies filing such reports; absence of humane law enforcement agencies not permitted to submit data into NIBRS; and the nature of animal cruelty investigation systems (and lack thereof). Such limited data may not be fully representative of a national picture of animal cruelty incidents.



## Maine Considering Allowing Court-Appointed Advocates for Animals

Following the examples set in recent years in Connecticut and Rhode Island, a bill in the Maine legislature would allow a court to appoint volunteer advocates for justice in animal cruelty cases, either under its own initiative or upon the request of a party or counsel. Under the provisions of **LD 1442**, advocates could monitor the proceedings, consult with individuals and records relevant to the case, and present appropriate information and recommendations. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.

Similar bills have been introduced in other states, including **Illinois HB 1631**, **New Jersey A 4840** and **S 3322**, and New York's **A 25**, **S 3027** and **A 702**.

## ANIMAL ABUSE &... ELDER ABUSE

### Link “Road Show” Comes to Ohio with Focus on Elder Abuse and Social Work



The adult protection services and social work professions were well-represented at a trio of Link trainings held in Cleveland, Toledo and Columbus, Ohio in March. The three-day event attracted more than 150 multi-disciplinary participants to hear from the National Link Coalition and local agencies about how they can leverage resources, build cross-communication networks, and raise support for Ohio's cross-reporting bill HB 33.



Above, Aviva Vincent, veterinary social worker at the Case Western School of Social Work and Colleen Dempsey of the National Association of Social Workers – Ohio Chapter shared resources at Cleveland's Fairhills Partners, a multi-faceted agency for seniors' social services. Middle, Susan Marshall of the Ohio Coalition of Adult Protective Services described the state's infrastructure and systems for protecting vulnerable adults at the United Way of Greater Toledo. Below, Lynn Dobb welcomed participants to the Central Ohio Area Agency. on Aging.



The statewide tour also included a webinar for the Animal Law and Family Law Committees of the Ohio State Bar Association.

## ***ANIMAL ABUSE &... CHILD MALTREATMENT***

### **Police, Child Protection Missed Animal Abuse Warning Signs in Disappearance and Death of 5-Year-Old Boy**

The Crystal Lake, Ill., couple charged with murder in the death of their 5-year-old son had a long history of involvement with police and child protective services as the state opens an investigation into “shortcomings” in the system which missed numerous warning signs, including a home that was filled with dog feces and urine.



**“AJ” Freund**

According to the [Chicago Sun-Times](#), authorities said the home of Andrew Freund, Jr., 60, and JoAnn Cunningham, 36, and their son, Andrew “AJ” Freund, was in poor condition and the family lived without power at times. Police reports document the home was full of dog feces, urine and trash and had many broken or open windows even in the winter. Records show that the family had a lengthy history with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services after AJ was born with opiates in his system in 2013, but the boy was eventually returned and allowed to remain with the family despite allegations of neglect.



**Andrew Freund, Jr., & JoAnn Cunningham**

AJ’s disappearance, and the eventual discovery of his body buried in a shallow grave several miles away, triggered a massive week-long search and national news media attention. In addition to each being charged with five counts of first-degree murder, the couple were charged with nine counts of aggravated and domestic battery, two counts of concealing a homicide, and two counts of failing to report a missing child.

Crystal Lake police released more than 60 pages of records detailing five years of calls to the home. Records showed that Cunningham was arrested the same day her son was reported missing on a warrant for failing to appear in court for driving with a suspended license. That incident, last December, prompted police to visit the home, where they reported concern about living conditions, noting dog feces and urine throughout the house and broken windows. “Upstairs in the room where the boys slept the window was open and the smell of feces was overwhelming,” an officer wrote.

Officers who noted a large bruise on the hip of one of the couple’s children reported the injury to DCFS. The boy reportedly told police the bruise came from the family dog, “Lucy,” jumping on him. Several months earlier, responding to a report that the family had been living without power for several weeks, police conducting a wellbeing check reported their findings to DCFS. They were told that a caseworker would not come out to check for utility issues, according to police records.

Cunningham also has a 3-year-old son, who was reportedly taken into protective custody by DCFS. At the time of AJ’s disappearance, Cunningham was involved in a legal dispute for custody of the boy with her mother, who had filed for a protection order accusing the boy’s parents of denying them medical care, food, clean clothing, and a healthy living environment. The petition claimed AJ lived in “constant fear, hunger and filth.” DCFS caseworkers visited the home twice last year to investigate separate allegations of neglect, though both were determined to be unfounded.

The agency issued a statement after AJ’s body was found saying it was investigating whether there were any “shortcomings” in their oversight of the case.

## ***ANIMAL ABUSE AND... VETERINARY MEDICINE***

### **Extensive Link Training Offered at AVMA 2019 Convention**

Seven Link presentations will be offered on Sunday, Aug. 4, as part of an all-day Animal Welfare track designed for public and corporate practice at the 2019 American Veterinary Medical Association annual conference in Washington, D.C.

The renowned authorities discussing aspects of The Link between animal and human maltreatment, and their implications for veterinarians, are:

<p>8:00 – 8:50 am: <b>“Preparing the Practice to Respond to Suspected Animal Abuse,”</b> by <b>Phil Arkow</b>.</p> 	<p>9:00 – 9:50 am: <b>“Crime Scene Findings, Evidence Handling and Veterinary Forensics,”</b> by <b>Martha Smith-Blackmore</b>.</p> 	<p>10:00 – 10:50 am: <b>“Responding to Animal Abuse and Neglect in the Context of Suspected Domestic Violence,”</b> by <b>Maya Gupta</b>.</p> 	<p>1:00 – 1:50 pm: <b>“The Veterinary Pathologist as Part of the Team Investigating Cruelty, Abuse and Neglect,”</b> by <b>Randy Lockwood</b>.</p> 
<p>2:00 – 2:50 pm: <b>“The Veterinarian’s Role in Responding to Animal Hoarders,”</b> by <b>Jyothi Robertson</b>.</p> 	<p>4:00 – 4:50 pm: <b>“The Role of the Veterinarian in Investigating Animal Fighting,”</b> by <b>Rachel Touroo</b>.</p> 	<p>5:00 – 5:50 pm: <b>“Collaborating with Animal Care and Control Officers in Responding to Abuse and Neglect Cases,”</b> by <b>Todd Stosuy</b>.</p> 	

Other animal welfare programs scheduled for the day are:

11:00 – 11:50 am: “Access to Veterinary Care: A National Family Crisis,” by **Michael Blackwell**.

3:00 – 3:50 pm: “Practical Application of the 3Rs: Optimizing Research Animal Welfare during Experimentation,” by **William Stokes**.

We thank AVMA for helping us bring training and greater awareness of The Link to veterinarians.

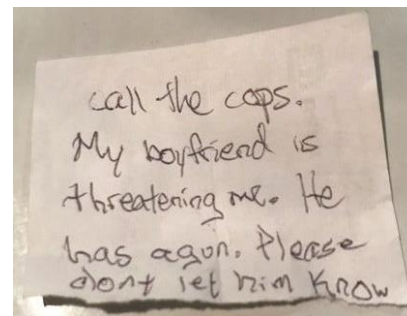
### ***Permission to Reprint***

The news items and training opportunities contained in *The LINK-Letter* are intended to disseminate as widely and as freely as possible information about the connections between animal abuse and interpersonal violence. Permission is hereby granted to re-post these articles in other newsletters, websites, magazines, and electronic publications provided that appropriate credit is given to the National Link Coalition and with links to [www.nationallinkcoalition.org](http://www.nationallinkcoalition.org)



## The Veterinarian's Response to Suspected Domestic Violence

Recent articles in the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* (See the [October 2018](#) and [February 2017 LINK-Letters](#)) and dramatic surveillance video footage of a woman who was being held at gunpoint by her abusive boyfriend slipping a note to veterinary staff (See the [June 2018 LINK-Letter](#)), have prompted discussion within the veterinary profession regarding appropriate response when suspected domestic violence is encountered.



Practitioners have long been wary of entering into such a contentious arena, fearing for the safety of their staffs, lacking training in the dynamics of interpersonal violence, and being wary of getting dragged into court. However, with growing awareness of how animal abuse often Links with domestic violence, and in a profession where as many as 81% of veterinary school students are women, the veterinary team's role as public health providers is being considered as a resource to assist animal and human survivors.

In this discussion, it may be helpful to review the Codes of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Surgeons and Veterinary Nurses established in the United Kingdom by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. These Codes, updated in February, 2019, go further than the American Veterinary Medical Association's Position Statement on Animal Abuse and Neglect and the American Animal Hospital Association's Animal Abuse Reporting Position Statement. The American statements support reporting suspected animal abuse to appropriate authorities, but neither one addresses domestic violence or child abuse.

The RCVS Codes of Professional Conduct's Supporting Guidance No. 14 discusses client confidentiality. It emphasizes that confidentiality may be breached and appropriate information shared with relevant authorities when: an animal shows signs of abuse; a dangerous dog poses a risk to safety; child or domestic abuse is suspected; where the information is likely to help in the prevention, detection or prosecution of a crime; or there is a significant threat to the health or safety of an individual.

Following extensive guidelines regarding the response to suspected animal abuse, the Supporting Guidance includes the following section:

### Child and domestic abuse

14.18 Given the links between animal, child and domestic abuse, a veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse reporting suspected or actual animal abuse should consider whether a child or adult within that home might also be at risk. Suspicions of abuse may also be triggered by a separate issue arising out of the relationship with the client.

14.19 Veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses are not expected to be experts in abuse, but they can use their professional judgement to determine whether the appropriate authorities should be informed. In all cases, the situation should be approached with sensitivity and the impact of any disclosures to the authorities should be considered carefully.

14.20 Where there are concerns that a child is at risk, the veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse should consider seeking further advice (on an anonymous basis initially if needs be) or making a report to, for example, the NSPCC, the local child protection team or the police.

14.21 Where a disclosure of domestic abuse is made to a veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse a report should only be made to the appropriate authorities if the victim agrees. If the victim does not agree to the matter being reported, then the veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse should encourage the victim to approach agencies or organisations through which they can seek help.

## ***NEWS FROM LOCAL LINK COALITIONS***

### **New Link Coalition Formed in Lille, France**

A new Link coalition has been formed in France, where the [Association contre la Maltraitance Animale et Humaine](#) (AMAH) (the Association Against Animal and Human Abuse) has been organized in Saint-Andre-lez-Lille, a commune in the metropolitan region of Lille. Co-administrator Anne-Claire Gagnon, a veterinarian and cat behaviorist, tells The LINK-Letter that the group is working to create a website.

The group's vision is to promote well-being among people and animals with mutual respect. AMAH is working to better understand the Link ("le lien") between violence against vulnerable people and animals, to work together to prevent domestic violence and assist the people and animals affected by it. It aims to educate a wide range of professionals, including veterinarians, animal protection agencies, educators, human medical personnel, attorneys, prosecutors, law enforcement firefighters, and persons who come in contact with abused women such as hairdressers and estheticians.

This work will build a network, coordinate multidisciplinary interventions, improve regulations based upon the common denominators affecting people and animals, and inspire academic research.

### **Links Group UK Reorganizes**

Our British counterpart, [The Links Group UK](#), has announced several changes in leadership positions. After many years of service, Freda Scott-Park has stepped down as chair; we join our British colleagues in congratulating Freda for her many years of advancing Link programming and awareness in Great Britain and around the world.

Taking over as Chair is Paula Boyden. Wendy Sneddon serves as Secretary, Mike Elliott is Treasurer, and Vicki Betton serves as Marketing and Communications Officer.



**From left, Paula Boyden, Freda Scott-Park, Vicki Betton, & Wendy Sneddon**

The Links Group exhibited at the British Small Animal Veterinary Association Congress in Birmingham in April. BSAVA is organizing three additional Link training days in June, September and October. The organization also offers a [free online course](#) on understanding animal welfare in violent homes.

## ***LINK POSITION OPENINGS***

### **Social Work Position Available in Pet Co-Sheltering Program**

New York City's URI PALS program (Urban Resource Institute People and Animals Living Safely) is seeking a Licensed Social Worker to coordinate its program of assessing the needs of families fleeing domestic violence with their pets. The program coordinator will work with community partners to: coordinate timely access to veterinary care and treatment for animal abuse; secure pet protection orders; explore pet-friendly housing options; address pet ownership issues and train staff on signs of animal abuse. Send cover letter and resume to [careers@urinyc.org](mailto:careers@urinyc.org).

## BUILDING LINK AWARENESS

### Japanese Link Handbook Published

A comprehensive handbook exploring the Link between animal abuse and interpersonal violence in Japan has just been published.



動物虐待と対人暴力の連動性～動物に対する暴力と人に対する暴力の表裏一体の関係性を探る (Title in English: *The Link Between Animal Abuse and Interpersonal Violence: Exploring the Two Sides of the Same Issue*) draws evidence from academic research to explain The Link and broaden the perspective of animal and human social welfare professionals.

The 60-page handbook is published by the [Animal Literacy Research Institute](#) (See the [December 2017 LINK-Letter](#)), an organization founded to separate fact from misinformation and present objective information about human-animal interactions. Co-founder Sakiko Yamazaki tells *The LINK-Letter* that the handbook explores how antisocial behaviors including violent crimes and family violence are associated with animal abuse. The handbook provides an overview of how The Link has been applied to practice in several Western countries, discusses how the graduation hypothesis and pattern of general deviance impact animal abuse's Links with other antisocial behaviors, and is one of the few Link resources available in Japanese.

The Institute is also hosting Japan's [1<sup>st</sup> Veterinary Social Work Workshop](#) on July 28 in Tokyo. The program will include presentations on The Link; how The Link is being incorporated into practice in other countries; and animal hoarding issues that impact human and animal welfare,



**Rep. Bill DeSteph**

### Link Cited in New Virginia Felony Animal Cruelty Law

The Link between animal abuse and human violence was cited in a nationally-distributed story on [ABC-TV](#) describing a new law in Virginia that expands the conditions under which animal cruelty against dogs and cats can be prosecuted as a felony rather than a misdemeanor.

Gov. Ralph Northam signed **SB 1604** into law on April 1. Effective July 1, the new law will make anyone who tortures, willfully inflicts inhumane injury or pain, or cruelly and unnecessarily beats, maims or mutilates any dog or cat subject to a Class 6 felony, punishable by up to five years in prison and a \$2,500 fine. Current law requires the animal to die from its injuries in order for the crime to be considered a felony; under current provisions, measures which save the life of an abused animal have the unintended consequence of reducing the penalties imposed upon the offender.

State Sen. Bill DeSteph (R – Virginia Beach) introduced the measure, which was passed unanimously by both the House of Delegates and Senate. “We have heard from folks all over the commonwealth who share our belief that anyone who intentionally tortures a dog or cat is a threat to public safety, and should be dealt with severely,” DeSteph said. ABC-TV noted that studies show a connection between animal cruelty and many other crimes, from drug and weapons offenses to battery and sexual assault.

## Orlando Pets and People Walk to Raise Funds and Link Awareness



Harbor House of Central Florida held its 9<sup>th</sup> Annual [Paws for Peace Walk](#) in Orlando on April 20 as part of its ongoing campaign to raise awareness and end abuse of vulnerable people and animals. The domestic violence shelter's event included Easter egg hunts for dogs and kids (with different treats inside the eggs), pet yoga, a silent auction, vendors, and awards. People and pets came dressed in costumes based on this year's theme of "Heart of a Hero." The walk raises awareness of how offenders of domestic violence often have a pattern of abusing all members of the household, including children and pets. Harbor House is one of only

nine shelters in Florida that accept pets; its kennels were added seven years ago because so many women were choosing to stay in abusive homes rather than leave their pets behind.

## Link Featured in Newspaper Article on Ohio Cross-Reporting Proposal

A bill in the Ohio Legislature which would add significant cross-reporting provisions got significant public exposure on April 21 when the [Toledo Blade](#) published an extensive article on The Link. Reporter Alexandra Mester interviewed several authorities in Toledo and National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow to describe how **HB 33** would help to save lives.



**Stephen Heaven**

Toledo Humane Society Executive Director Stephen Heaven described how animal cruelty is often under-reported because human services professionals fear violating confidentiality restrictions if they report suspected animal abuse they encounter in their work. He described a case he experienced at a Michigan animal shelter where multiple failures by veterinarians and police to report resulted in a father's killing a pet rabbit and his son torturing a cat.

Forensic psychologist Charlene Cassel said her evaluations of offenders always include a question about their childhood relationships to animals because childhood animal abuse is such a strong predictor of violence in adulthood. About a third of these individuals perpetrated acts of animal abuse as children and the majority had either been abused themselves or witnessed abuse of others or animals.



**Gary Thompson**

Local veterinarian Gary Thompson told the newspaper that veterinarians see cases of potential animal abuse periodically and that he has reported several cases himself over the years. "It happens more often than we probably know or would like to see," Thompson said.

"Legislators are recognizing that hurting animals also hurts people. These agencies need to be working together," Arkow said.

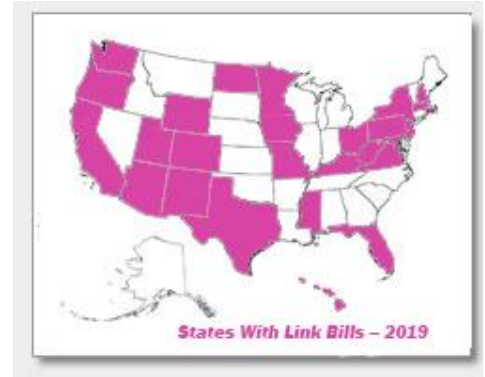
The bill would cause veterinarians, children's services agencies, adult protective services, counselors, social workers, and marriage and family therapists to immediately report suspected animal abuse, and add dog wardens and animal control officers as mandated reporters of suspected child abuse. Good-faith reporters would be immune from civil and criminal liability.



## THE LINK... IN THE LEGISLATURES

### Link Bills We're Watching

As many states end their 2019 legislative season, we're following a record number of bills impacting animal abuse and its Links with other crimes. *If you know of any such bills not included here, please let us know.*



### Domestic Violence/Pet Protection Orders



**Arizona HB 2161** would allow a petitioner to request an ex parte severe threat protection order based on the respondent's ownership of a firearm; in determining whether ground exist for an order, courts shall consider all relevant evidence including the respondent's cruel mistreatment of an animal. The order would require the respondent to relinquish all firearms and ammunition.



**California AB 415** would expand provisions of the California Victim Compensation program to allow the costs of temporary housing for the pets of domestic violence victims to be reimbursable as part of relocation expenses. The Committee on Public Safety approved the bill and sent it to the Appropriations Committee.



**Colorado HB 19-1177** creates "Extreme Risk Protection Orders" that allow courts to prohibit persons from having or obtaining a firearm upon a finding that the person presents a significant risk to self or others. In determining grounds for the issuance of such an order, courts can consider the person having been arrested for domestic violence and/or animal cruelty. **The bill was signed into law on April 12.**



**Florida HB 379** and **SB 774** would have allowed courts to issue protection orders enjoining the respondent from interfering with the custody, transferring, encumbering, concealing, harming, or disposing of any animals owned by the petitioner and/or respondent and minor children in the home. *The bills died when the Legislature session adjourned.*




**Indiana HB 1615** amends existing provisions in IC 31-9-2-42 which include "beating" an animal without justification within the definition of "domestic or family violence" to read "abusing" an animal. The bill passed the House 81-13 and the Senate 92-0





**Kentucky HB 25** would have: prohibited pretrial diversion for a person charged with torture of a dog or cat; made torture of a dog or cat a Class D felony; and prohibited early release for those who torture a dog or cat as a way to threaten, intimidate, coerce, harass, or terrorize a family member or member of a dating relationship. **The bill died in the House Judiciary Committee.**





**Mississippi SB 2014** would have prohibited respondents from removing, damaging, hiding, harming, or disposing of any companion animal owned or possessed by a person protected by the order. The court could have also authorized the removal of a companion animal from the respondent. The bill passed the Senate 51-0 but **died in the House Judiciary Committee.**


 **Missouri HB 370** would add “intimidation” – injuring, killing, or threat to injure or kill an animal if such act is done to coerce, control, punish, or be an act of revenge against a household member – as grounds for a court to issue a protection order. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.


 **New Hampshire HB 361** would add animals to the tangible property whose disposition courts may determine during divorce or annulment settlements; this property settlement “shall address the care and ownership of the parties' animals, taking into consideration the animals' wellbeing.” The bill passed the House and is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.


 **New Mexico HB 52** would have defined an act of animal abuse intended to coerce, control or intimidate a domestic violence victim as an act of domestic violence as well as animal cruelty. The bill passed the House 50-13 but **died in the Senate**.


 **New York A 588** would create a felony crime of animal cruelty to companion animals that is intended to threaten, intimidate or harass a family or household member, with additional penalties if committed in the presence of a minor child. The bill is in the Assembly Codes Committee.

 **New York A 767** and **S 1251** would amend pet protection orders to allow the court to grant petitioners exclusive care, custody and control of animals kept by the petitioner, respondent or child, and to order the respondent to stay away from, take, transfer, conceal, harm, or dispose of the animal. The bills are in the Assembly Judiciary and Senate Children & Families Committees.

 **New York A 1097** would require courts to consider the best interest of companion animals in awarding their possession in a divorce or separation proceeding. The bill is in the Assembly Judiciary Committee.

 **North Dakota HB 1537** would have allowed family members to file a petition for a “public safety petition order” prohibiting the respondent from having or obtaining a firearm if the respondent is believed to pose a risk of injury to self or others; among the criteria to establish such risk is a history of violence or cruelty toward an animal. **The bill died in the House.**

 **Pennsylvania SB 90** and **HB 1075** would create “Extreme Risk Protection Orders” that would allow courts to prohibit persons from having or obtaining a firearm upon a finding that the person presents a risk of suicide or of causing death or serious bodily injury to another person. Factors that could help make such a determination include a history of domestic abuse and/or animal cruelty. **HB 1028** would allow household members to file a petition for a “Firearm Restraining Order” prohibiting a respondent from having firearms, weapons or ammunition if the respondent presents an immediate and present danger to physical safety, as represented by acts of domestic violence or killing or threatening to kill pets or other animals. The bills are in the respective Judiciary Committees.

 **Rhode Island H 5023** and **SB 225** would add a provision allowing courts to provide for the safety and welfare of all household animals and pets in protection orders for adult and child victims of domestic abuse and sexual exploitation. The House and Senate Judiciary Committees each recommended their bill be held for further study. A related measure, **H 5076**, would allow courts to award custody of household pets and to impose enforcement remedies including a restraining order or other injunctive relief. The House Judiciary Committee also recommended this bill be held for further study.



**Rhode Island H 5483** and **H 5822** would allow the district court to determine the ownership of a pet between “formerly cohabiting parties” based on what would be in the pet’s best interests. Both bills are in the House Judiciary Committee, which has held **H 5483** for further study.



**Texas SB 194** and **HB 309** would add “indecent assault,” which encompasses numerous actions for illegal sexual gratification, to the list of crimes for which victims could obtain a protection order that includes harming or threatening the victim’s animals. Such pet protection orders are already in place for victims of domestic or family violence, sexual assault or abuse, and stalking. **SB 194** passed the Senate and both bills are in the House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee.



**Texas HB 3021** would direct the Attorney General and the State Bar of Texas to develop information to provide to the public about the availability of provisions that allow pets to be included in protective orders. The bill is in the Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Committee.



**Texas HB 2516** would add cruelty to non-livestock animals with the intent to coerce, control, punish or intimidate another family member to the definition of “family violence”. The bill is in the Criminal Jurisprudence Committee.



**Utah SB 45** defines an act of aggravated animal cruelty intended to coerce, control or intimidate a spouse or partner as an act of domestic violence as well as animal cruelty. **The bill was signed into law on March 27.**



**Virginia HB 2642** and **SB 1276** would have made any animal cruelty violation a Class 6 felony if carried out with the intent to threaten, intimidate, coerce, harass, or terrorize a family or household member. **The bills died in the Senate.**



**Wyoming HB 235** will allow courts to issue protection orders that grant sole possession of any household pets kept by the petitioner, the respondent, or a minor child to the petitioner “for the purpose of protecting the household pet.” The order will also order the respondent to not have any contact with the animal and to not abduct, remove, conceal, or dispose of the household pet. **The bill became law on March 8 and takes effect July 1.**



### *Animal Abuse and Child Maltreatment*




**Colorado HB 19-1144** would have allowed courts to permit a child witness, as in a case of child sexual abuse, to be accompanied by a court facility dog while testifying. **That bill was postponed indefinitely by the House Judiciary Committee.** **HB 19-1220** would allow any witness, regardless of age, to be accompanied by a court facility dog while testifying. The bill passed the House and is being considered by the Senate.





**New York A 831** would increase the penalty for aggravated cruelty to animals from two to four years when the crime is committed in the presence of a child. The bill is in the Assembly Agriculture Committee.




**New York A 955** would make it a misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year in prison and a \$1,000 fine, to knowingly cause a minor child under age 16 to attend an animal fight. The bill is in the Assembly Agriculture Committee.


 **New York A 1211** and **S 3415** would permit individuals already mandated to report suspected child abuse to report suspected animal cruelty, notwithstanding other provisions of confidentiality, if the act were committed by a person also suspected of child abuse or maltreatment. (The original version of the bill mandated such reporting.) Individuals already permitted to report suspected child abuse (which includes everyone in New York State) would also be permitted to report suspected animal cruelty. Reports made in good faith would be immune from civil and criminal liability. The bills are in the Assembly Children & Families and Senate Domestic Animal Welfare Committees.


 **New York A 2664** and **S 3327** would amend the definition of child endangerment and other related statutes to include committing acts of animal cruelty in the presence of a child and to strengthen penalties for existing animal cruelty charges when committed in the presence of a child. The bills are in the Assembly Codes and Senate Domestic Animal Welfare Committees.


 **Washington HB 1235** would create a new crime of “providing a harmful material to a minor” that includes bestiality and animal mutilation, dismemberment, rape, or torture. The bill is in the House Committee on Public Safety.


### *Animal Abuse and Other Crimes*


 **Massachusetts S.1027** would allow juvenile courts to prosecute youths between the ages of 14 and 18 if the offense involved the infliction or threat of serious bodily harm to a person or an animal. The bill is in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.


 **Mississippi HB 843** and **HB 984** would have required law enforcement officials investigating animal cruelty to use a standardized form compliant with the FBI’s National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS). **The bills died in the House Agriculture and Judiciary Committees.**

 **New Jersey A3693** and **S2239** would add individuals convicted of animal cruelty to the list of offenders who are prohibited from possessing a firearm and obtaining a permit to purchase a handgun. The bills are in the Assembly Judiciary and Senate Law & Public Safety Committees.


 **New Jersey A 1334** and **S 3294** expands the definition of animal cruelty to include the theft or release of an animal from the residence of the owner during a burglary. The bills are in the Senate Environment and Energy Committee.


 **New York A 1069** would add a conviction for felony animal abuse for aggravated animal cruelty, animal fighting, poisoning, or injuring a service animal or racing animal, to the definition of a “serious offense” which would affect the ability of someone to possess a firearm. The bill is in the Assembly Codes Committee.


 **New York A 1834** and **S 186** (“Kirby and Quigley’s Law”) would expand the definition of aggravated cruelty to animals to include harm to a companion animal during the commission of a felony. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture Committee and the Senate Domestic Animal Welfare Committee.

 **New York A 2509** and **S 609** would allow animal fighting charges to be eligible for an enterprise corruption charge. The bills are in the Assembly and Senate Codes Committees.





 **Pennsylvania HB 353** would add animal fighting to the definition of corrupt organizations' "racketeering activities." The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.

 **Pennsylvania HB 1071** would cause the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing to add sentencing enhancements to crimes of burglary and criminal trespass if a domestic animal is killed or harmed. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.


 **Washington HB 1541** would make it illegal for offenders convicted of 2<sup>nd</sup>-degree animal cruelty to possess a firearm. The bill is in the House Committee on Civil Rights & Judiciary.


### *Animal Abuse and Elder Abuse*

 **Maryland HB 561** would have added the crime of psychological abuse of a vulnerable adult, defined as the intentional use of verbal or other conduct resulting in a vulnerable adult's apprehension of fear, confusion, intimidation, depression or emotional distress; such conduct would include the destruction or harm of an animal owned by the vulnerable adult. **The bill was withdrawn from the Judiciary Committee.**


 **New York A 1153** would bar landlords from denying residential occupancy or evicting persons over age 62 solely for keeping a common household pet. Property owners could establish reasonable rules for the care and handling of pets. The bill is in the Assembly Housing Committee.


### *Animal Hoarding*

 **New Jersey S 2242** and **A3762** would define animal hoarding as possessing too many animals with inadequate care which leads to death, bodily injury or other serious adverse health consequences, a 4<sup>th</sup>-degree crime. Courts would be required to order psychological evaluation and counseling for convicted offenders. The bills are in the Senate Environment & Energy Committee and the Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.

 **New York A 261** would create the crime of companion animal hoarding, defined as keeping more than 25 companion animals in conditions likely to jeopardize the health and well being of the animals and people living in the household. Offenders would be required to undergo mental health evaluation and may have to complete treatment and counseling. The bill is in the Assembly Agriculture Committee.

### *Psychological Evaluation of Offenders*

 **California SB 580** would amend current procedures requiring animal abuse offenders on probation to complete counseling for behavior or conduct disorders, to instead undergo psychiatric or psychological evaluation, treatment, and a responsible animal owner education course as the court deems appropriate. The bill passed the Public Safety Committee and was sent to the Appropriations Committee.

 **Colorado HB 19-1092** would allow courts to order mental health treatment to offenders convicted of cruelty to animals; current law only allows courts to impose anger management treatment. The bill would also require courts to impose a ban of either five or 10 years upon conviction for a misdemeanor or felony offense, respectively. The bill passed the House and the Senate Judiciary Committee.



**Mississippi HB 984** would have required offenders convicted of aggravated cruelty to a dog or cat to undergo psychiatric or psychological evaluation or counseling. **The bill died in the House Judiciary Committee.**



**Missouri HB 111** would allow courts to require adults and juveniles convicted of animal abuse to undergo psychological or psychiatric evaluation and treatment; these would be mandatory if the offense were torture or mutilation, or upon a second conviction for animal abuse. *The bill also addresses Cross-Reporting* and has been approved by the Crime Prevention & Public Safety Committee.



**New Jersey** currently requires juveniles (but not adults) convicted of animal cruelty to undergo mental health counseling. Five bills would expand that to include adults as well. **A3049** and **S1636 (“Shyanne’s Law”)** would require a mental health evaluation for juvenile and adult animal cruelty offenders, to be followed by mental health counseling if warranted by the evaluation. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee and the Senate Health, Human Services & Senior Citizens Committee. **A3856** and **S2165** would require both juveniles and adults to undergo mental health counseling; those bills are in the Assembly Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee and the Senate Economic Growth Committee. **S2749** would likewise require mental health counseling for all persons convicted of animal cruelty; it is in the Senate Environment and Energy Committee.



**New York A 984** and **S 385** would require courts to impose mandatory psychiatric evaluation and treatment for juvenile and adult offenders convicted of aggravated cruelty to animals. **S 384** would require juvenile offenders to undergo psychiatric evaluation and treatment where necessary. The Assembly bill is in the Agriculture Committee. The Senate bills are in the Domestic Animal Welfare Committee.



**New York A 987** and **S 2007** would prohibit a person convicted of “Buster’s Law” from having a companion animal unless authorized by court order after they complete appropriate psychiatric or psychological testing. **A 987** is in the Assembly Agriculture Committee; **S 2007** is in the Senate Domestic Animal Welfare Committee.


### *Animal Sexual Abuse*




**California AB 611** would: expand the prohibition against sexually assaulting certain animals to prohibit defined sexual contact with any animal; authorize the seizure of animals in such cases; expand the ban of owning or keeping animals to animal sexual abusers; and require veterinarians to report suspected animal sexual abuse as they are already mandated to do for animal abuse or cruelty. The bill passed the Assembly and is in the Senate Rules Committee.




**Hawai’i HB 24** would have added a new crime of sexual assault on an animal with eight specific actions considered illegal. It would have been a Class C felony unless a minor were involved, in which case it would be a Class B felony. Offenders would have had to surrender or forfeit all animals to a humane society; pay the organization for the animals’ care; obtain psychiatric or psychological treatment; and be prohibited from owning, keeping, residing, working, or volunteering with animals for at least five years. **The House Agriculture Committee recommended it be deferred.**


 **Kentucky SB 67** creates a new section of KRS Chapter 525 to establish the felony offense of sexual crimes against an animal, and amend KRS 436.605 to add sexual crimes against an animal to the list of crimes for which an animal control officer may utilize peace officer powers. **The bill was signed into law** on March 26.





 **Kentucky HB 98** would have created a new section of KRS Chapter 525 to prohibit cruelty to equines including situations involving abuse, neglect and sexual contact. **The bill was in the House Judiciary Committee when the Legislature adjourned.**


 **Maryland HB 641** amends §10-606 of the Annotated Code of Maryland defining Aggravated Cruelty to Animals to include “sexual contact with an animal.” It further defines aggravated cruelty to animals as a crime of violence. Persons convicted of sexual contact with an animal will be included among Tier III sex offenders. **HB 641 was signed into law by the Governor on April 18.** The new law takes effect on Oct. 1, 2019.




 **Massachusetts S.891** would amend Chapter 272, Section 34 of the General Laws to replace the archaic “Crime against nature” – the “abominable and detestable crime against nature, either with mankind or with a beast” – with a new crime of a “sexual act on an animal.” The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.


 **Pennsylvania HB 1312** would deny offenders convicted of having sexual intercourse with animals the right of having their criminal records expunged. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.

 **West Virginia HB 2792** prohibits activities connected with sexual abuse of an animal; establishes criminal penalties; and provides for forfeiture of animals, payment of associated costs, and restrictions on owning animals upon conviction. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.

 **Wisconsin AB 152** and **SB 139** would increase penalties for bestiality from current misdemeanor levels to a variety of felony charges for sexual contact with an animal; advertising, harboring, transporting, providing or transporting animals for sexual contact; and creating, distributing or possessing animal pornography. Penalties would be further enhanced if a child is involved. The bill would also require offenders to register as a sex offender; current law only permits courts to order such registration. The bills are in the respective Committees on Criminal Justice and Public Safety.

### *Animal-Assisted Interventions for Crime Victims and Witnesses*

 **New Hampshire HB 513** would allow victims and witnesses of child abuse and sexual abuse, and persons with intellectual disabilities, to have a comforting facility dog or therapy animal accompany them to court. The court would have to consider the age of the victim or witness currently and at the time of the incident, the interests of the victim or witness, the rights of the parties to the litigation, and any other factor deemed relevant. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.

 **New Jersey A3729** would allow assistance dogs to be used to help facilitate the taking of testimony of victims or witnesses in open court in criminal prosecutions. The bill is in the Assembly Judiciary Committee.

## *Cross-Reporting*



**Florida** companion measures **HB 379**, **SB 774**, and **SB 1738**, which would have allowed veterinarians to report suspected criminal violations to a law enforcement officer or certified animal control officer without notice to or authorization from a client, died in committee when the Legislature adjourned. A related measure, **HB 7125**, would allow veterinarians to report suspected animal abuse to law enforcement or certified animal control officer humane without notice to or authorization from the client unless the suspected violation occurs at a commercial food-processing animal operation on agricultural land. **HB 7125** measure passed both the House and Senate and is awaiting the Governor's signature.



**Iowa SF 3** would mandate veterinarians who “conclude that an animal is being subjected to animal cruelty” to complete an animal cruelty report and submit it to a local law enforcement agency. Individuals who report, cooperate with or assist in such investigations in good faith would be immune from civil and criminal liability. The bill is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



**Minnesota HF 1530/SF 1517** would grant veterinarians, who are already mandated to report suspected animal cruelty, immunity from civil and criminal liability for making such a report in good faith. **HF 1530** is in the Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Division; **SF 1517** is in the Judiciary and Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee.



**Missouri HB 111** would grant immunity from civil liability to all persons, including veterinarians, teachers and school personnel, who report suspected animal abuse to a law enforcement agency in good faith. *The bill also addresses Psychological Evaluations* and was approved by the Crime Prevention & Public Safety Committee.



**New York A 1170** would require veterinarians who reasonably and in good faith suspect that a companion animal is the victim of cruelty, abuse or neglect to report the incident and disclose necessary records to law enforcement and humane investigators. Currently, N.Y. veterinarians are permitted to make such reports. Both the existing and proposed law accord veterinarians who report in good faith – to protect the health and welfare of the patient or the public – immunity from civil and criminal liability. The bill is in the Assembly Committee on Higher Education.



**Ohio HB 33** would require veterinarians, children's services agencies, adult protective services, counselors, social workers, and marriage and family therapists to immediately report suspected animal abuse in situations where a child or older adult resides with the alleged violator. Good-faith reporters would be immune from civil and criminal liability; however, penalties and court costs would be assessed if reports are made maliciously and such penalties would go towards providing funding for domestic violence shelters to assist victims in finding temporary shelter or other support for their companion animals. The bill would also add dog wardens and animal control officers as mandated reporters of suspected child abuse. The measure is in the House Criminal Justice Committee.



**Oregon HB 2227** would add animal control officers to the list of individuals mandated to report child abuse. The measure was approved by the House and has moved on to the Senate.



**Oregon HB 2500** would allow veterinarians addressing the effects of animal abuse to sue the person inflicting the abuse. Plaintiffs who prevail could collect compensatory damages for



expenses incurred in providing veterinary care, plus costs and reasonable attorney fees. The bill passed the House and is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



**Rhode Island S 82** would amend §4-1-37 of the General Laws, which permits veterinarians, technicians, and animal shelter and kennel personnel to report suspected animal abuse, to mandate such reporting with immunity from lawsuits if made in good faith. The measure would also impose a \$500 fine for failing to report. The Senate Judiciary Committee recommended it be held for further study.



**Texas SB 1750** and **HB 2787** would allow veterinarians to report suspected animal cruelty to appropriate governmental entities without violating veterinarian/client confidentiality. **SB 1750** is in the Senate Business & Commerce Committee. **HB 2787** was approved by the House Agriculture & Livestock Committee and was sent to Calendars.



**Washington HB 1919** expands provisions against animal fighting to include fighting paraphernalia and mutilating or abandoning fighting animals, but a requirement that the Washington State Patrol establish and maintain a statewide toll-free hotline to allow the public to report animal abuse **was deleted in a substitute bill**. The deleted section would have facilitated community reporting and law enforcement response to animal abuse by creating a central repository of incidents of animal abuse, neglect fighting, and sexual abuse for inclusion in the FBI's National Incident Based Reporting System. The State Patrol would have referred incidents to local law enforcement agencies for investigation as appropriate. The animal fighting amendments passed the House and Senate and were sent to the Governor on April 25.

### *“CASA for Animals”*



**Illinois HB 1631** would allow a special pro bono attorney or law student advocate to be court-appointed to represent the health or safety of a cat or dog in judicial proceedings. A court's denial of a request for a separate advocate would not be subject to appeal. Advocates would be selected from attorneys and law school students with knowledge of animal law issues. The bill is in the House Rules Committee.



**Maine LD 1442** would allow a court to appoint volunteer advocates for justice in animal cruelty cases, either under its own initiative or upon the request of a party or counsel. Advocates could monitor the proceedings, consult with individuals and records relevant to the case, and present appropriate information and recommendations. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.



**New Jersey A 4840** and **S 3322** would authorize courts to appoint advocates in criminal cases that affect the welfare or care of cats or dogs. Advocates would monitor the case, attend hearings, consult with relevant individuals, review records, and present information and recommendations to the court in the animals' best interests. The bills are in the Assembly and Senate Judiciary Committees.



**New York A 25, S 3027** and **A 702** would allow for the creation of a court-appointed advocate for animals. **A 25** and **S 3027** are in the respective Judiciary Committees; **A 702** is in the Assembly Judiciary Committee.

## THE LINK... IN THE NEWS

### Dog-Stabber Who Terrorized Wife and Children Gets Maximum Sentence



**Christopher McCabe** ordered to pay \$1,000, undergo anger management training, have no contact with his ex-wife and children, and was banned from owning any pets for life. McCabe's ex-wife and children submitted testimony detailing the emotional trauma they suffered. The dog, "Lola," spent months recovering from her injuries and was adopted into a new, loving home.

Christopher McCabe, 37, of Renton, Wash., was sentenced to 364 days in jail after pleading guilty to animal cruelty and harassment/domestic violence for stabbing the family dog more than a dozen times and posting photos of the incident on Instagram (See the [January 2019 LINK-Letter](#)). The sentence, imposed by King County Superior Court Judge Johanna Bender, was the maximum allowed under the plea agreement, [KCPQ-TV](#) reported. McCabe was given credit for the 261 days he has already served,



**Kendrick Douglas**

### Toledo Man Gets Prison for Animal Cruelty and Cocaine Charges

A man who had recently pled guilty to a felony charge of possessing cocaine was sentenced to jail on an animal cruelty charge for carrying a dog by the skin of its neck. Kendrick J. Douglas, 28, of Toledo, Ohio, pleaded no-contest to the charge and will serve 180 days in jail. The dog, as well as a second dog, were rescued and adopted into new families. Douglas was also sentenced to three years in prison and three years of post-release control on the drug charge, the [Toledo Blade](#) reported.

### Man on Probation for Domestic Violence Gets Probation for Kicking Kittens



**Tylor Nokes**

An Iowa man who was on probation after prior convictions for domestic violence and assault of romantic partners was sentenced to two additional years of probation for kicking two kittens so severely that they both incurred permanent brain damage. Tylor Nokes, 22, of Grimes, Iowa, could have been sentenced to up to one year in jail under Iowa law. The [Des Moines Register](#) reported that his guilty plea and conviction can be expunged after he completes his sentence, which also includes 50 hours of community service and paying fines, fees, court costs, and restitution.



### What is The LINK?

Legislation...

Intervention...

Networking...

Knowledge...

...to protect **ALL** vulnerable  
members of the family

## Naked Man Charged with Narcotics, Having Sex with a Cat

Michael Navage, 40, of Mesa, Ariz., was arrested on March 20 on suspicion of bestiality and animal cruelty when authorities responding to his loud cry for help reportedly found him standing naked in his bathroom with a five-month-old cat stuck on his penis. The [Arizona Republic](#) reported that police also allegedly found methamphetamines, a counterfeit \$100 bill, drug paraphernalia, and credit cards, a checkbook and identification belonging to someone else.. Navage reportedly told police he had been showering with the cat and was drying it off; a veterinary exam, however, allegedly found superficial wounds to the cat's anal area and rib and pelvic injuries consistent with a larger object being inserted into the orifice. The cat was being treated at the Arizona Humane Society's trauma hospital.



Michael Navage

## Son Charged with Animal Cruelty after Argument with Father

Robert Abbott, Jr., 34, of Gibsonton, Fla., was arrested by Hillsborough County Sheriff's deputies and charged with animal cruelty and resisting arrest after he allegedly got into an argument with his father and stabbed the family dog. The [Tampa Bay Times](#) reported that Abbott surrendered after barricading himself in the bathroom. The dog, a 5-year-old pit bull terrier mix named "Marley," required emergency veterinary treatment at Hillsborough County Animal Services.



Robert Abbott, Jr.



## Woman Sought in Stabbing of Ex-Husband's Dog

Authorities in Bandera County, Texas, issued a felony arrest warrant on charges of animal cruelty and burglary for allegedly ransacking her ex-husband's home and stabbing his 9-year old shih tzu named "BG" to death. [Texas Breaking News](#) reported that authorities were seeking Heidi Carpenter in connection with the incident which was reported to sheriff's deputies by her ex-husband, Joe Bailey, who returned home to find the dog missing, a bloody paw print on the floor and blood on the couches and BG's bed. BG's body and several bloody knives were found a day later through the help of a neighbor's drone. Carpenter was reportedly on probation at the time from a 2017 incident where she had been charged with criminal trespass and assault. A veterinarian who performed a necropsy on BG said, "In all my years of veterinary service I have not experienced such brutality and animal abuse of this fashion."

## Ex-cop Charged with Animal Sex Abuse Charged Again – for Child Pornography



Terry Yetman

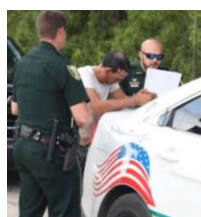
A former Bossier City, La. police officer who had been arrested last year on 40 charges of animal sexual abuse was arrested again in April on 31 counts of child pornography. Terry Yetman was apprehended by Louisiana State Police and the U.S. Marsha's Violent Offender Task Force. His bail was set at \$620,000 and authorities said additional charges may be possible, according to the [BossierNow](#) news service. Yetman had served with the Bossier City Police Department from 2014 until shortly after his 2018 arrest on the animal sexual abuse charges.

## Teen's Tape Leads to Cockfighting, Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Charges



**Jeremy Osburn**

A 16-year-old girl who made an audio recording of her father allegedly abusing her mother alerted authorities who arrested him on domestic violence charges and also uncovered a suspected cockfighting operation. Henry County, Ky. sheriff's deputies arrested Jeremy Osburn, 37, of Pleasureville, after the girl and a school counselor presented them with a recording allegedly documenting Osburn asking the woman why she thought he hit her. The girl also said that Osburn was making her help him train the birds to fight. [WDRB-TV](#) reported that deputies found evidence of cockfighting including medication, spurs and roosters, plus marijuana, firearms, drug paraphernalia, and over \$5,000 in cash. Osburn was charged with engaging in an unlawful transaction with a minor, assault, trafficking in marijuana, possession of drug paraphernalia, endangering the welfare of a minor, terroristic threatening, and 14 counts of animal cruelty.



**Deputies book Royero**

## Domestic Disturbance Call Uncovers Suspected Cockfighting Ring

Putnam County, Fla., sheriff's deputies investigating a domestic disturbance apparently did not find any domestic violence, but did allegedly discover 200 chickens and cockfighting paraphernalia. Oriel Castro Royero, 47, of Palatka, was arrested on charges of selling or possessing fighting animals, possession of animal fighting equipment, and owning property used for animal fights, according to [WJXT-TV](#). The Sheriff's Office said detectives believe Royero is an established breeder and trainer in illegal gamecock fighting and was supplying birds to other illegal organizations in Florida and elsewhere.

## Woman Charged with Child and Animal Porn After Car Crash

A Hamilton County, Tenn., woman who was arrested for allegedly crashing her husband's car with her children inside was later charged with animal and child pornography when investigators searching her cell phone reportedly found videos of her sexually abusing a child and providing an explicit narrative of her digitally penetrating a dog. The Chattanooga [Times Free Press](#) reported that Teela Moore Hendrix, a/k/a Telia Faye Moore, 33, of Ooltewah, Tenn., had barricaded herself in her home following the car crash, resulting in a standoff with sheriff's deputies. She faces numerous charges of aggravated sexual battery, criminal offenses against animals, possession of marijuana and drug paraphernalia, reckless endangerment, and aggravated domestic assault.



**Teela Moore Hendrix**



To subscribe to The Link-Letter (it's free!)  
– Just send an e-mail to Coordinator Phil Arkow  
([arkowpets@snip.net](mailto:arkowpets@snip.net))  
Please tell us what organization(s) you're with  
and where you're located.



## ***LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES***

**May 15 (online):** Phil Arkow will conduct two webinars on “Interpersonal Violence and Animal Cruelty” for the National Organization for Victim Assistance’s [Victim Assistance Academy](#).

**May 15 – Denver, Colo.:** Michelle Welch will present on the animal abuse/domestic violence Link at the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys’ 3<sup>rd</sup> National [Domestic Violence Prosecution Conference](#).

**May 16-24 – Kiev, Kryvyi Rih, and Dnipro, Ukraine:** [Mark Randell](#) will train police officers and animal welfare NGOs on The Link.

**May 21 (online):** Claudine Wilkins will conduct a [Justice Clearinghouse](#) webinar on “Criminal Cases Involving Multi-Animal Impounds” on behalf of the National Law Enforcement Center on Animal Abuse and the National Animal Care & Control Association.

**May 23 – Newtown, Pa.:** Phil Arkow will present a keynote address on “Animal Abuse, Animal Hoarding and Elder Abuse: Challenges and Strategies for Adult Protective Services” at the [Bucks County Area Agency on Aging](#).

**May 23 – João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brazil:** Melinda Merck, Nestor Calderon, Marcelo Robis, and Janina Hammerschmidt are among the speakers presenting on “Veterinary Expertise and Animal Abuse: Advances and Challenges,” “Interpersonal Violence and Animal Abuse: Theory of The Link,” and “Animal Hoarders” at the [9<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Collective Veterinary Medicine](#).

**May 31 – Edinburgh, Scotland:** The Children, Adolescents & Animals Research (CAAR) program at the University of Edinburgh will present a [reflective workshop](#) on “New Advances in Animal Cruelty Prevention.”

**June 3 – Niagara Falls, Ont., Canada:** Phil Arkow will present on “The Link between Animal abuse and Human Violence, and its Implications for Educators and the Humane Movement,” at the [OSPCA](#) Annual Educational Conference.

**June 3-4 – Bloomington, Ill.:** Belinda Lewis and Adam Ricci will present on forensic photography, cruelty scene processing, and bloodstain pattern analysis at the [Prairie States Animal Welfare Conference](#).

**June 6 – Mount Vernon, Ga.:** Animal Law Source, the Montgomery & Candler County Sheriff’s Departments, and Metter Animal Control Services will present a [training](#) for law enforcement, ACOs, prosecutors, judges and veterinarians on The Link and animal cruelty enforcement and prosecution.

**June 6 – Dallas, Texas:** Jamey Cantrell of Plano Animal Services will speak on animal hoarding at the Mental Health Association of Greater Dallas’ [9<sup>th</sup> Annual Southwest Conference on Hoarding](#).

**June 7 – Rojales, Spain:** Nuria Querol will present on “Gender-based Violence and Animal Violence” at a [conference](#) for the Council of Equality.

**June 11 – Naples, Fla.:** Joanna Fitzgerald will present on the veterinarian’s response to elder abuse issues at the [Collier County Veterinary Society](#) meeting.

**June 12 – Regina, Sask., Canada:** Christiana Bratiotis and Colleen Marion will present a [workshop](#) on interagency approaches to animal hoarding for human and animal service providers.

**June 12 – Stratford, N.J.:** Phil Arkow will present on The Link and Domestic Violence for the [S.A.S.H.A. Foundation](#).

**June 14 – Dallas, Texas:** The [North Texas Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular business meeting.

**June 15-16 – Louisville, Ky.:** The Link will be addressed at the meetings of the [National Coalition on Violence Against Animals](#) and the [National Sheriffs Association](#)'s Animal Cruelty Advisory Committee.

**June 23 – Wetherby, West Yorkshire, U.K.:** [The Links Group UK](#) will conduct a training for the BSAVA.

**June 25-26 – Hartford, Conn.:** Phil Arkow and Aubrey Fine will discuss cross-reporting between child and animal protection agencies and therapeutic interventions for child abuse victims at the [Paws for Kids](#) conference.

**July 8 – Sept. 28 (online):** The Federal University of Parana, Brazil, will offer a 10-week online [Training Course on The Link between Human Violence and Animal Abuse](#). Topics include: Human-animal interactions; Family vulnerability and pets; Violence against women, children and the elderly and their relationships with pets; Animal abuse; How to report; The veterinarian's role; Diagnosis of animal abuse; and Interdisciplinary actions.

**July 12 – Dallas, Texas:** The [North Texas Link Coalition](#) will offer a 3-hour CE & CEU training event.

**July 18-19 – Toronto, Ont., Canada:** Jyothi Robertson will present four sessions on animal welfare, animal hoarding and forensics, and Rebecca Ledger will present four sessions on forensic behavioral analysis, at the [joint conference](#) of the World Small Animal Veterinary Association and the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association.

**July 21-24 – Oxford, U.K.:** 62 world-class speakers from 16 nations will present on numerous aspects of humane education at the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual [Oxford Animal Ethics Summer School](#) on the theme of "Humane Education: Increasing Sensitivity to Animals and Humans."

**July 22-25 – Phoenix, Ariz.:** Katie Campbell will present on "Domestic Violence and Pets: How to Create and Run a Pet-Friendly Housing Program" at NOVA's 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Training Event.

**July 25 – Novato, Calif.:** Phil Arkow will train on The Link to the community and [Marin Humane Society](#).

**Aug. 4 – Washington, D.C.:** An all-day animal welfare track at the [American Veterinary Medical Association](#)'s 2019 Convention will feature: Phil Arkow on "Preparing the Practice to Respond to Suspected Animal Abuse"; Martha Smith-Blackmore on "Crime Scene Findings, Evidence Handling and Veterinary Forensics"; Maya Gupta on "Responding to Animal Abuse and Neglect in the Context of Suspected Domestic Violence"; Randy Lockwood on "Veterinary Pathologists as Part of the Team Investigating Cruelty, Abuse and Neglect"; Jyothi Robertson on "The Veterinarian's Role in Responding to Animal Hoarders"; Rachel Touroo on "The Role of the Veterinarian in Investigating Animal Fighting";

and Todd Stosuy on “Collaborating with Animal Care and Control Officers in Responding to Abuse and Neglect Cases.”

**Aug. 9 – Dallas, Texas:** The [North Texas Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular business meeting.

**Aug. 27 (online):** Terry Mills of the ASPCA will conduct a Justice Clearinghouse [webinar](#) on “What Dog Fighters Don’t Want You to Know: Considerations for the Justice Professional.”

**Sept. 9 – Edinburgh, Scotland:** Phil Arkow will be the keynote speaker at the [Scottish SPCA and University of Edinburgh](#) conference on “The Links between Animal Cruelty, Adverse Childhood Experiences and Human Violence: Research and Practice.” Other Link speakers will include Paula Boyden, Jo Williams, and Mike Flynn.

**Sept. 9 – 10: Albuquerque, N. Mex.:** The [New Mexico Conference on The Link](#) between Animal Abuse and Human Violence will feature multiple Link authorities in a two-day event at the National Hispanic Cultural Center. John Thompson will be the keynote speaker.

**Sept. 13 – Dallas, Texas:** The [North Texas Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular business meeting.

**Sept. 16 – Quedgeley, Gloucester, U.K.:** [The Links Group UK](#) will conduct a training for the BSAVA.

**Sept. 18-19 – Albuquerque, N. Mex.:** Positive Links’ biennial [New Mexico Conference on The Link between Animal Abuse and Human Violence](#) will be held.

**Sept. 22 – Falls Church, Va.:** Deborah L’Heureux will present on “Animal Cruelty and The Link” at the [VCA SouthPaws CE conference](#).

**Oct. 1 (online):** Jessica Rock will conduct a [Justice Clearinghouse](#) webinar on “Creating an Animal Abuse Task Force: How Law Enforcement Can Work with Local resources to Investigate and Prosecute Crimes” on behalf of the National Sheriffs’ Association and the National Animal Care & Control Association.

**Oct. 11 – Dallas, Texas:** Chelsea Rider will present at a 3-hour CE & CEU training event hosted by the [North Texas Link Coalition](#).

**Oct. 24 – Plano, Texas:** Phil Arkow and Felicia Kerney will present at the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual [North Texas Facing Family Violence conference](#) on “The Cruelty Connection: Breaking the Cycles of Domestic Violence by Preventing Animal Abuse” The conference’s theme is “All Systems Go: Working Together – Family Violence Across the Lifespan.”

**Oct. 27 – Cambridge, U.K.:** [The Links Group UK](#) will conduct a training for the BSAVA.

**Nov. 8 – Dallas, Texas:** The [North Texas Link Coalition](#) will hold its regular business meeting.

**Nov. 21-22 – Toronto, Ont., Canada:** The [Canadian Violence Link Conference](#) will examine the Link between violence to humans and animals, look at the vulnerabilities among both populations, and explore how various sectors can learn from each other and gather the necessary tools to stop the cycle of violence.



## ABOUT THE NATIONAL LINK COALITION



The National Link Coalition is an informal, multi-disciplinary collaborative network of individuals and organizations in human services and animal welfare who address the intersections between animal abuse, domestic violence, child maltreatment and elder abuse through research, public policy, programming and community awareness. We believe that human and animal well-being are inextricably intertwined and that the prevention of family and community violence can best be achieved through partnerships representing multi-species perspectives.

### Members of the National Link Coalition Steering Committee

#### Phil Arkow, Coordinator

Consultant, ASPCA  
Chair, Animal Abuse & Family Violence Prevention Project,  
The Latham Foundation  
Stratford, N.J.

#### Lesley Ashworth

Founder/President, American Veterinary Charitable Fund  
Consultant, Ohio Domestic Violence Network  
Former Director, Domestic Violence/Stalking Program,  
Columbus City Attorney's Office/Prosecution Division  
Blowing Rock, N. Car.

#### Diane Balkin, J.D.

Senior Staff Attorney, Animal Legal Defense Fund  
Past President, Int'l. Veterinary Forensic Sciences Assn.  
Denver, Colo.

#### Barbara W. Boat, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Univ. of Cincinnati College of Medicine  
Exec. Director, Childhood Trust, Cincinnati Children's Hospital  
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#### Maya Gupta, Ph.D.

Senior Director of Research,  
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#### Helen Holmquist-Johnson, MSW, Ph.D.

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Colorado State University School of Social Work  
Ft. Collins, Colo.

#### Jane A. Hunt

Community Volunteer  
Loveland, Colo.

#### Mark Kumpf, CAWA

President, Ohio County Dog Wardens Association  
Dayton, Ohio

#### Randall Lockwood, Ph.D.

Senior Vice President, Anti-Cruelty Special Projects  
ASPCA  
Falls Church, Va.

#### Paul Needham

Chair, Education Committee,  
National Adult Protective Services Association  
Shawnee, Okla.

#### Maria Luisa O'Neill

Account Representative, Wages & Investments  
U.S. Department of the Treasury,  
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#### Emily Patterson-Kane, Ph.D.

Animal Welfare Scientist, Animal Welfare Division  
American Veterinary Medical Association  
Schaumburg, Ill.

#### Allie Phillips, J.D.

Director, Sheltering Animals and Families Together (SAF-T)  
Lansing, Mich.

#### Gale Rasin, J.D.

Retired Associate Judge, Baltimore City Circuit Court,  
Chestertown, Md.

#### Chelsea Rider, J.D.

Director, National Law Enforcement Center on Animal Abuse  
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#### Chris Risley-Curtiss, MSSW, Ph.D.

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Arizona State University School of Social Work  
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#### Martha Smith-Blackmore, DVM

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#### Hugh Tebault III

President,  
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#### John Thompson

Executive Director, National Animal Care & Control Assn.  
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