



# NATIONAL LINK COALITION

*Working together to stop violence against people and animals*

**The LINK-Letter Vol. 14, No. 4 April 2021**

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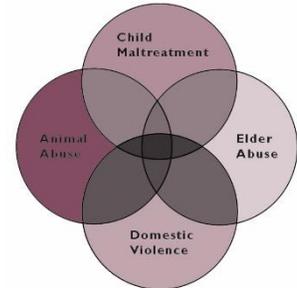
**ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE**



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

[Phil Arkow](#), Coordinator and Editor

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## ***CHILD MALTREATMENT... and THE LINK*** **Florida Bill Would Require Cross-Training and Cross-Reporting, Based on The Link**

A landmark, omnibus bill in the Florida House of Representatives would establish a legislative intent to require cross-reporting and cross-training protocols between child protective and animal services personnel based on The Link between the welfare of family animals and child safety and protection.

**“The legislature recognizes that...early identification of animal cruelty, is an important tool in safeguarding children from abuse and neglect, providing needed support to families, and protecting animals.”**

**Florida SB 96/HB 7039** would require child protective investigators to report known or suspected animal cruelty and grant them criminal, civil and administrative immunity for such reports, which are presumably made in good faith. It would similarly require animal control officers to report suspected child abuse to the state’s central abuse hotline. The Florida Department of Children and Families and the Florida Animal Control Association would jointly develop a mandatory one-hour training module on The Link and on timely cross-reporting procedures.

“The Legislature recognizes that animal cruelty of any kind is a type of interpersonal violence that often co-occurs with child abuse and other forms of family violence, including elder abuse and domestic violence. Early identification of animal cruelty is an important tool in safeguarding children from abuse and neglect, providing needed support to families, and protecting animals,” reads the bill’s language.

The measure would also redefine bestiality as “sexual contact with an animal,” ban animal pornography, and raise the crime from a misdemeanor to a felony.

The bill, sponsored by Senate Subcommittee on Children, Families and Elder Affairs, passed the Senate 40-0 and was sent to the House Health & Human Services Committee. Florida is already one of 18 states in which everyone is a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse.

## U.S. Bill Would Link Animal & Child Abuse in States' CAPTA Reports

**U.S. H.R. 763**, the Child and Animal Abuse Detection and Reporting Act, would amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) to require that data collected by the federal government from state child protection agencies include information about animal abuse as a risk factor for child abuse. The bill was introduced on Feb. 3 by Rep. Ann McLane Kuster (D – N.H.) and John Katko (R – N.Y.) with 27 co-sponsors and is in the House Education and Labor Committee.



**U.S. Reps. Ann McLane Kuster and John Katko**

Weighing the additional factor of animal abuse linked with child maltreatment can help identify opportunities to prevent both child and animal abuse or suggest when more specialized interventions are needed. The bill was first introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives in 2019, but was not taken up before the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress ended (*See the [August 2020 LINK-Letter](#)*).

As authorized by CAPTA in 1988, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services established the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) to compile information from states about the nearly 700,000 American children abused annually. Case reports in NCANDS include many details, such as the type of abuse a child suffered or whether the caregiver had a substance abuse disorder, that help researchers and service providers better understand the factors associated with child abuse. However, animal abuse is one well-established risk factor that is not considered under current law.

“As a mother and animal lover, I am deeply disturbed by the degree to which child and animal abuse co-occurs,” said Kuster. “Our government must do more to protect both our children and animals. I am proud to reintroduce this legislation that will direct the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to gather data and analyze cases where both kids and pets are abused. Having this information will enhance our understanding of these abhorrent behaviors and provide a better foundation for screening, prevention, and treatment programs.

“There is an unfortunate correlation between animal and child abuse, with perpetrators often engaging in both of these heinous acts,” Katko said. “Animals and children do not deserve to be mistreated, and we have a responsibility to do a better job tracking the behaviors of abusers. This bipartisan legislation does that [and] will help protect children and animals from future abuse.”

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### *For Additional Information*

Just click on the blue underlined hyperlinks in these articles and it will take you to other websites with additional information about that topic.



## Canada Recognizes Animal Abuse Link in Issuing Child Protection Orders

The Canadian government took a significant step forward in protecting children and recognizing the impact of animal abuse in the dynamics of dysfunctional families in enacting amendments to the 1985 [Divorce Act](#). The amendments, which took effect March 1, shift the focus away from custody to put the best interests of the child first, including the risk of animal abuse.

In determining the best interests of the child for the purposes of instituting a parenting order or no-contact order, Canadian courts can now consider a list of factors that include family violence and its impact. Family violence is defined as conduct, whether criminal or not, by one family member towards another that is violent or threatening or that constitutes a pattern of coercive and controlling behavior. Such behavior would cause the other family member to fear for her or his own safety or that of another person or expose the child to such conduct.

Among these coercive and controlling behaviors, the new Canadian definition specifically includes “threats to kill or harm an animal or damage property; and the killing or harming of an animal or the damaging of property.” Courts can now use harm of or threats to family pets to assess the ability or willingness of one spouse to take care of the child.

## *DOMESTIC ABUSE... and THE LINK*

### Maine Bill Would Award Pet Custody Based on Animals’ Best Interests

A proposal in the Maine legislature would join that state with four others that allow courts to consider companion animals’ best interests when ruling on the disposition of property in marriage dissolutions.

**Maine LD 535** would allow courts adjudicating the dissolution of marriages to consider the well-being of companion animals in the disposition of property, similar to considerations covering the couple’s children. Factors which the court might consider include:

- Who can best provide for the animal’s basic daily needs and financially support it.
- The amount of time each party has spent with the animal during the marriage tending to the animal’s nutritional, physical, grooming, and medical needs.
- Each party’s emotional attachment to the animal.
- Any child’s emotional attachment to the pet and the benefit to that child of the animal remaining in the child’s primary residence.
- Any history of domestic violence between the parties.
- Any history of animal abuse or other unsafe conditions for the animal.

Similar measures have been enacted in Alaska (2016), Illinois (2017), California (2018), and New Hampshire (2019). The bill is co-sponsored by eight senator and representatives. It is in the Judiciary Committee.

## Pet Fostering Plan Offers Community Solution to The Link



Our colleagues at Canada’s Violence Link Coalition have shared with us a new example of forward-thinking that addresses the Violence Link on a community basis. In Niagara, Ont., the [Lincoln County Humane Society](#) has initiated a pet fostering service for clients, including those fleeing domestic violence situations.

Through funding from United Way Niagara and PetSmart Charities of Canada, Individuals living within specified municipalities can contact the humane society through their social worker, nurse or other social services official. LCHS will perform an assessment of the animal and work to match it with an appropriate foster home while the owners work to stabilize their personal situations. In emergencies such as domestic violence, pets may be housed at LCHS where they are examined by a veterinarian and provided with current vaccinations.

“Due to their shared vulnerabilities, victims of domestic violence often form strong bonds with their pets. That bond can then be used by abusers to coerce and control their partners. When a victim undertakes safety planning, their pet is an important consideration. Unfortunately, most shelters and transition houses are unable to take in pets. This results in victims who delay leaving due to concern for their pets,” notes Barbara Cartwright, CEO of Humane Canada.

“In order to address this gap in services, human and animal services must work together to find practical solutions. Thanks to this service, pet owners in distress no longer have to choose between seeking help and retaining their pets.”

## New Australian State Law Protects Pet Victims of Domestic Violence



Citing “mounting evidence that companion animals are being used as a tool for coercive control and preventing women experiencing family violence from leaving unsafe situations,” the Parliament in the Australian state of Victoria has unanimously enacted two key provisions to protect pets in domestic violence situations.

**M.P. Andy Meddick**

Andy Meddick, Animal Justice Party member of the Parliament’s Legislative Council for Western Victoria, [introduced a bill](#) on March 3 that confirms that companion animals will be redefined as “family members” under the 2008 Family Violence Protection Act. The measure also calls for a new system in which ownership of pets is automatically removed from perpetrators, defaulting to the victim survivors of family violence. The state Parliament also approved more funding for pet-friendly crisis accommodations, government payments to help remove animals from violent homes, and greater scope to family violence leave provisions which will allow women to access family violence leave to help their animals.

Victoria has a history of recognizing the animal abuse/domestic violence Link. In 2015, the government provided \$100,000 a year for four years for the family violence response center [Safe Steps](#) to coordinate a statewide program linking pet survivors of domestic violence with animal shelters in order to remove barriers preventing women from escaping.

## *CRIMINAL JUSTICE... and THE LINK*

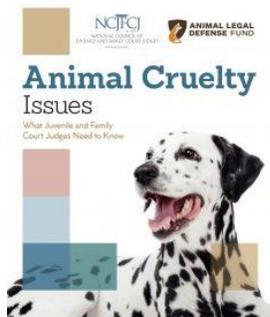
### Judges' Council Conducts Activities for Judicial Responses to The Link

The National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges has continued its Judicial Response to Animal Cruelty Project with a [landing page on the NCJFCJ website](#) that showcases and shares materials and resources for the judicial profession. The page, "*Animal Cruelty and Family and Interpersonal Violence*," notes that hundreds of studies conducted over the past 40 years have demonstrated a clear Link between violence against animals and domestic violence, child maltreatment and elder abuse.

"Juvenile and family court judges have an important role in addressing, intervening in, and preventing interpersonal violence and harms against household members, including pets, in juvenile or family law cases," the page states. To assist judges in this role, the NCJFCJ is sharing knowledge about The Link, laws that recognize that animals can be crime victims, and tools and resources that promote the safety and well-being of people and animals.

**"Juvenile and family court judges have an important role in addressing, intervening in, and preventing interpersonal violence and harms against household members, including pets, in juvenile or family law cases."**

The project is a follow-up from the Council's [2019 resolution](#) regarding animal abuse and its Links to other forms of violence (*See the [September 2019 LINK-Letter](#)*). The resolution recognized that when animals are subjected to cruelty, courts should consider their welfare in reaching decisions. The resolution also directed NCJFCJ to collaborate with allied experts to develop and disseminate resources and trainings to assist judges in better understanding the implications of The Link.



One such alliance has been with the Animal Legal Defense Fund, whose involvement helped lead to the creation of an ongoing advisory group to help the partnership identify judicial training and technical assistance needs and develop appropriate resources, including a technical assistance bulletin, community collaboratives, webinars, and trainings at state conferences.

The advisory group has identified potential stakeholders who could be involved in a local collaborative: prosecutors; child welfare caseworkers; parent attorneys; law enforcement; animal control; domestic violence victim advocates; Court Appointed Special Advocates and Guardians Ad Litem; women's shelters; judges; psychologists; veterinarians and technicians; and batterer intervention programs.

NCJFCJ is also working with the National Link Coalition to add the voices of juvenile and court judges to the perspectives and resources available on The Link.

The Council's Vision Statement states, "The NCJFCJ envisions judges who engage community stakeholders and local child-, family- and animal-service practitioners to work in collaboration to understand and address The Links between animal cruelty and interpersonal violence in ways that are specific to each community and its needs."

## Link Cited in Bill Allowing Tort Actions for Wrongful Death of Pets



**Deborah Glick**

A bill introduced in the New York State Assembly cites The Link between animal abuse and human violence and America’s evolving attitudes toward animals as justification for a law which would allow the establishment of a cause of action in tort for the wrongful injury to or death of a companion animal. **A 5779**, sponsored by Assembly member Deborah Glick (D-New York City), would provide for compensatory and punitive damages and injunctive relief within a three-year statute of limitations for such wrongful injury or death. The bill is in the Assembly Judiciary Committee.

The [Memorandum in Support of Legislation](#) submitted with the bill justifies the need for such a law, in part, by stating, “Brutal violence against animals, so often a precursor to violence against humans, goes on largely undeterred - and entirely uncompensated - because criminal anti-cruelty measures often aren’t enforced, and our civil tort law still treats animals the same as inanimate property: like table and chairs. Although several courts in New York have departed from the traditional approach, many are hesitant, absent legislative guidance, to relinquish the common law’s antiquated, scientifically obsolete assumption that animals are just ‘things.’”

Citing recent reports in *USA TODAY* that more than two-thirds of pet owners consider their pet a member of their family and that 83% might risk their own lives to rescue their pet, the memo continues, “Americans entering the 21<sup>st</sup> century recognize the importance of our relationships with animals.”

Similar bills were introduced without success in every Assembly session since 2002. It is not clear whether earlier versions of the measure were also based upon Link philosophy.

## Connecticut Bill Would Require Link Training

A unique bill in the Connecticut General Assembly would not only require convicted animal cruelty offenders to receive psychological evaluation, as has been proposed and enacted elsewhere, but would also require law enforcement officers and court officials to receive training on The Link.

**Connecticut H 6251** would require police, prosecutors and judges to receive training or education on The Link between animal abuse and commission of crimes so that cases are prosecuted and adjudicated with an understanding and consideration of such information, and require any and all resolutions to animal cruelty cases to include mandatory psychological evaluation and sessions to identify the potential for more serious criminal behavior.



**Rep. Dorinda Borer**

The bill is sponsored by Rep. Dorinda Borer (D – West Haven). Its stated purposes are “to prevent further abuse by repeat offenders, to decrease the number of animal abuse cases that result in dismissal and to require thorough evaluation of offenders of animal abuse crimes.” Co-sponsors include Reps. David Michel and Gary A. Turco. It is in the House Judiciary Committee.

## D.C. Bar Association Learns About The Link

An all-star team of four Link authorities led a webinar on March 22 for the [D.C. Bar Association](#) to alert attorneys in the nation’s capital about various aspects of how animal abuse and other forms of family violence are Linked. The webinar, “The Abuse Interface: Animal Abuse, Child Abuse, and Domestic Violence,” attracted 39 participants.

National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow kicked off the webinar with an overview on The Link, “Connecting the Dots in Criminal Justice.” The presentation focused on how preventing, prosecuting and punishing animal abuse can help prevent crimes against people. He described seven distinct areas of The Link and innovative public policy and programs being initiated by the criminal justice system to respond to Link issues.

### HOUSEHOLD VIOLENCE AND CHILDREN

Allison Jackson, Division Chief of the Child and Adolescent Protection Center at [Children’s National Hospital](#) in Washington and an associate professor of pediatrics, offered a medical perspective on household violence and children. Tracing how the humane movement gave birth to the child protection movement, she noted common vulnerabilities which put children and pets at risk. “Kids and animals have several things in common: they don’t vote and many are too young to talk,” she said. The risk is amplified when Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is present, and the COVID-19 quarantines have only exacerbated these risks further.



Allison Jackson

She presented statistics on the deleterious traumatic impact of household violence inflicted upon, or witnessed by, children, and reviewed the myths and misconceptions surrounding children’s exposure to domestic violence, which can lead to emotional abuse, neglect, physiological anxiety, and feelings of helplessness and terror. Although considerable research is examining children’s resilience, “resilience doesn’t mean that they’re not affected. Even a rubber band breaks when it exceeds its limits,” she said.

She identified ways in which children experience domestic violence: through prenatal exposure; intervening to help the abused parent; being victimized themselves; participating in or witnessing the abuse; observing the effects of the aftermath; seeing a parent arrested and incarcerated; and polyvictimization which can include household pets. Given that rates of IPV escalate during pregnancy, toxic stress responses can damage the child’s developing brain chemistry. “The physical risks to children exposed to IPV should not be underestimated,” she advised.

In recognizing that pets and children can both be secondary victims in homes marked by domestic violence, Jackson noted that the cycles of trauma within an abusive home are layered on top of whatever community violence and trauma are present in children’s lives. All community sectors – including animal welfare, victim services, law enforcement, social work, medicine, and public health – “need to be trauma-informed and culturally humble.”



**Blair Decker**

## **SUPPORTING THE PETS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS**

Blair Decker described Washington’s [Safety Network for Abused Animals and People \(SNAAP\)](#) assistance to survivors in criminal cases and civil protection orders and collaboration with the Humane Rescue Alliance to offer foster care to domestic violence survivors’ pets. SNAAP works with domestic violence agencies to spread awareness of The Link and to advocate for more pet-inclusive shelter practices and housing. No domestic violence or homeless shelters in Washington accept pets.

“It’s really important to ask questions about pets at intake,” she said. “Survivors light up and want to talk about their pets and are happy that you ask.”

Decker noted two threats to pets in domestic violence situations: the shortage of pet-friendly housing for survivors fleeing abuse; and challenging legal issues such as including pets in protection orders and assuring their welfare in divorce and custody hearings. She noted that attorneys can cite instances of animal abuse as bases for seeking civil protection orders and can ask courts to direct the care, custody and control of pets to their clients and to order respondents to stay away from the animals. These issues are often barriers to survivors seeking safety, leaving many survivors with three bad options: remaining in the abusive situation, living in their cars, or leaving their pets behind with the abuser.

“If you’re an attorney, make asking your clients about whether they have pets part of your standard protocol. Know what resources are available and support pet foster care programs,” she advised.

## **THE LINK IN THE COURTROOM**

National Link Coalition co-founder and ASPCA consultant Randy Lockwood described how arguments based on the Link can and cannot be used in court trials. While the existence of a Link between animal abuse and human violence should be a given for judges, prosecutors and juries, many triers of fact are still surprised at how much evidence there now is establishing these connections.



**Randy Lockwood**

Under Federal Rule of Evidence 404(b), incidents of a defendant’s past animal cruelty can be cited in trying to build a case. But prosecutors cannot use a defendant’s character or character trait to prove that on a particular occasion the person acted in accordance with that character or trait. Such prior acts may be admissible for demonstrating that the past act was relevant to the defendant’s motive, intent, or evidence of planning. Evidence of past acts need to be probative of a person’s conduct or intent but not prejudicial, he said.

A more likely usage of prior animal abuse incidents is in making arguments for moving a juvenile case into an adult court or seeking felony charges rather than misdemeanors. Another more feasible usage is in making arguments for enhanced sentencing or denial of probation, he said.

“It is difficult, but not impossible, to use information about the connections between animal cruelty and interpersonal violence to help establish guilt if the prosecution can work within the exemptions of federal rules of evidence,” he advised. “Courts are more willing to consider ‘Link’ evidence when making waiver or sentencing decisions, particularly if arguments can be made that such decisions are consistent with balanced and restorative justice.”

## Webinar Explores The Link in Pennsylvania Legislation and Programs

To help celebrate National Criminal Justice Month in March, the [Criminal Justice program](#) at Harcum College in Bryn Mawr, Pa., held a [roundtable discussion](#) about The Link between animal abuse, domestic violence, child abuse, and other crimes. A panel of three speakers described various issues surrounding The Link and provided legislative updates on animal cruelty laws in Pennsylvania. The 32 participants included students in Harcum College’s animal center management, criminal justice, animal law, juvenile justice, and domestic violence classes.

### “PAWS AND LAWS MATTER”

[Kristen Tullo](#), Director of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the Humane Society of the U.S., retraced the history of Pennsylvania’s new Keystone Link Coalition, which is building relationships between humane and human services, elevating public and professional awareness, and empowering people to take action. She noted that 22,000 animal abuse cases are filed annually in Pennsylvania, but it is not yet known how many of these cases Link to domestic violence or child abuse.



Kristen Tullo

This gap in the data is serious. “Cross-reporting is critical and is something that we’re focusing on from a legislative perspective,” she said. She emphasized how critical it is that we all come together at the early stages of animal cruelty to intervene in order to help prevent violence against other family members. “It’s really exciting to see these groups coming together to protect people and pets.”

She called extensive progress in recent years when the state’s archaic animal cruelty laws were overhauled “a powerful time in our state’s legislative history – it shows that paws and laws matter.” The passage of Libre’s Law ([See the July 2017 LINK-Letter](#)), which cited The Link as a rationale for updating animal abuse statutes and penalties, expanded animal protection to multiple species that can be at risk. “Abusers will use any animal to control their victim,” Tullo said.

Pending legislation in Pennsylvania includes the Protection from Abuse Act, which would include pets in protection orders; the Animal Welfare Cooperation Act; and cross-reporting legislation.

### SAVING PUPPY MILL DOGS



Grace Kelly Herbert

Grace Kelly Herbert, President and Co-founder of [Finding Shelter Animal Rescue](#), described efforts to enact Victoria’s Law which addresses Pennsylvania’s puppy mills. The estimated average sale price of puppies raised in horrendous and often unregulated conditions is \$1,000, with additional increases during the coronavirus pandemic which has created a “puppy craze” for people sheltering in place.

As a result of low overhead by keeping the animals living in squalor, puppy mill operators can make a profit of \$250,000 per year. She described her organization’s work to raise public and legislative awareness about the horrors of puppy mills.

## GIVING OFFENDERS A “NEW LEASH ON LIFE”



Tamar Paltin, Assistant Professor of Harcum’s Animal Center Management course, described her work with [New Leash on Life](#) where incarcerated offenders train dogs from animal shelters who have been “time-stamped” for euthanasia or who have behavioral issues. By pairing high-risk dogs and inmates with common histories of abuse, unfortunate situations, and lives behind bars, the human-animal bond rescues dogs and reduces recidivism. “The program works on both ends of the leash to rescue dogs and break the cycles of recidivism,” Paltin said.

The program is based in Philadelphia, said to have the highest per capita incarceration rate of the 10 largest U.S. cities; some 100 people move through the prison system every day. But most people leaving prison lack meaningful job experience and connection with a community and face food and housing insecurity, unemployment, and substance abuse issues. “They’re basically set up to fail from the minute they leave prison,” she said.

33% are re-arrested or re-incarcerated within one year of release and 60% within three years. New Leash on Life drastically reduces those numbers: the one-year recidivism rate for participants is only 9.27%. “The vast majority are very successful,” Paltin said, noting that some participants have gone on to earn MSW degrees, start their own businesses, and even gain employment as animal control officers.

Participants receive daily workshops on life skills, financial literacy, grief counseling, and mental health. They care for shelter-rescued dogs for 12 weeks with classes on dog training which gives them a strong foundation in basic animal care and husbandry and career readiness.

Seeing the relationships between inmates and dogs bloom is powerful and motivates people to change their lives. “We make it very clear that we’re not just a dog rescue program but also a recidivism program and we’re there for both ends of the leash,” she said.

Post-release, offenders participate in weekly group meetings and individual case management, 60 days of paid internships at 15 hours per week, access to transportation, and assistance with job applications, employment services, computer access, and a career clothing closet. Almost all of the 307 participants have found employment; 222 dogs have been saved and adopted into loving homes. “We have lots of great success stories,” she said.



### What is The LINK?

Legislation...

Intervention...

Networking...

Knowledge...

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

## ***LAW ENFORCEMENT... and THE LINK***

### **Lethality Risk to First Responders Doubles when Animal Abuse Co-Occurs with Domestic Violence**

What is believed to be the first academic journal article dedicated to linking pet abuse to an increased risk for police officers responding to domestic violence cases has been published. Andrew Campbell, whose research in Indianapolis has found that the risk of lethality to first responders in domestic violence cases doubles when animal abuse is also involved (*See the [August 2019 LINK-Letter](#)*), had his paper published in the inaugural issue of a new journal, *Forensic Science International: Animals and Environments*.



**Andrew M. Campbell**

Campbell notes that in some communities, as many as 50% of all police calls are related to domestic disturbances. Research is clear that there are associated risks of great physical and emotional harm for all residents of the home, and this risk extends to first responders to the scene. At least 8% of police officer deaths in the line of duty occur during responses to domestic disturbances or violence; the risk of non-lethal injury to officers is similarly elevated, with over 4,000 officers in such incidents requiring medical attention.

Campbell cites research on how pet and farm animal abuse is a coercive control device employed by domestic violence abusers. His earlier research reported that human victims of domestic violence are significantly more likely to experience forced sex, strangulation, death threats, and daily fear of being killed by the perpetrator (*See the [Sept. 2018 LINK-Letter](#)*).

“Domestic violence perpetrators who also abuse pets are significantly more likely to have a history of mental illness and/or abuse substances, have threatened or attempted suicide, and to have a gun – a dangerous combination that increases risk for fatal outcomes that include victim/officer homicide and perpetrator suicide,” he writes. At least 20% of all domestic violence homicide victims are not intimate partners of the perpetrator, but rather first responders, and family and community members.

Dual animal abuse/domestic violence offenders are also less likely to be arrested, often because they tend to flee the scene because of prior records with law enforcement. Given that perpetration of animal abuse has been tied to increased risk of committing other crimes, letting these offenders loose in the community presents additional public safety risks.

“Officers must remember that safety plans are extremely necessary in this scenario as these perpetrators are likely to return home and risk will likely only increase now that abuse has been reported,” he writes.

A surprising finding in Campbell’s study of 10,000 police officer reports was that perpetrators of both domestic and pet abuse seemed calm and apologetic, a “mask” that may cause responders to underestimate the threat that the offender likely presents. “Data clearly indicate these perpetrators present great risk to all and officers must remember what real danger may lie just below this deceptive surface.”

-- Campbell, A.M. (2021). Behind the mask: Animal abuse perpetration as an indicator of risk for first responders to domestic violence. *Forensic Science International: Animals and Environments*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fsiae.2021.100003>.

## New York Bill Would Define Animal Fighting as Corrupt Enterprise



A bill in the New York State Assembly would join the Empire State to at least seven other states where animal fighting offenses could be prosecuted as corrupt enterprises. New York **A2661** cites “the well-established social science Link between violence against animals and violence against people” and law enforcement’s experience that investigation and prosecution of animal fighting exposes gang networks, narcotics rings, weapons trafficking activity, and other sophisticated and violence criminal enterprises, to justify defining animal fighting as a criminal act when referring to enterprise corruption.

**Assemblyman Charles Lavine** The justification for the measure notes that while money need not be exchanged to qualify animal fighting as illegal, “there is indeed a significant financial machine behind this disgusting ‘blood sport,’” estimated to be a billion-dollar underground economy. In bringing down fighting rings, “law enforcement has seized guns and heroin, uncovered domestic abuse and child abuse, and rescued countless dogs from a lifetime of torture.”

By defining animal fighting as enterprise corruption, law enforcement and prosecutors will gain additional resources to combat the crime. Currently, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, Oregon, Utah, and Virginia are believed to have enacted laws describing animal fighting as racketeering offenses of enterprise corruption.

The bill is sponsored by Assemblyman Charles D. Lavine (D - Nassau County). The bill is in the Assembly Codes Committee.

## Canadian Police Academy Offers Violence Link Training

Recently, (*See the [December 2020 LINK-Letter](#)*), we have highlighted new legislation in Ontario that requires all law enforcement officers to receive training on The Link between animal abuse and human violence, and similar training in Alberta. This training is apparently beginning to expand to other Canadian Provinces through programs on Prince Edward Island.



The [Atlantic Police Academy](#) trains thousands of public safety officers who go on to law enforcement careers across Canada. Leslie Hadfield, a social sciences instructor at the Academy, is training all new recruits on The Link as well as all experienced officers in PEI. The Academy is considering developing an instructor level course on The Link.



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## VETERINARY MEDICINE...and THE LINK

### Texas Bill Would Expand Reporting of Suspected Animal Abuse



A bill in the Texas Legislature would expand veterinarians' current permission to report suspected abuse of all animals into a mandate to report, but only if non-livestock animals are involved.

Texas' Occupational Code § 801.3585, adopted in 2007, currently grants practitioners immunity from liability in a civil or criminal action for good-faith reporting of suspected cruelty against both livestock and non-livestock animals. **HB 4330** would require veterinarians to report suspected cruelty, but only of non-livestock animals. Texas' penal code differentiates between livestock and non-livestock animals.

**Rep. Mary González**

The bill, introduced by Rep. Mary González (D – El Paso) would require veterinarians to report suspected abuse to the county sheriff or municipal police agency; reports made in good faith would be immune from civil and criminal liability and also administrative discipline.

Currently, 19 states mandate veterinary reporting of suspected animal abuse, either by statute, occupational code or codes of professional conduct. 19 states permit reporting. All but five states grant immunity from civil and/or criminal liability, and in some cases from administrative sanctions, for reporting.

### Japan Includes Mandatory Link Training for Veterinary Technicians



The new national veterinary technician [curriculum](#) authorized by the Japanese government now includes a mandatory 30 hours on subjects related to human-animal interaction which include The LINK and animal hoarding.

Japan has been working on a national licensing program for vet techs since 2019, and the new curriculum was recently announced. The human-animal interaction subjects that veterinary technicians are now required to learn about are:

- Human-Animal Relations (including the history of pet keeping, current pet demographics, and attitude towards animals).
- The Association Between Human Welfare and Companion Animals (including The LINK, animal hoarding, and benefits of pet keeping for specific populations such as children and elderly).
- Animal Assisted Activities, Animal Assisted Therapy, and Animal Assisted Education (including understanding the effect of animal-related interventions on human physical and mental health and the role of animal-related occupations in these interventions).

Sakiko Yamazaki at the [Animal Literacy Research Institute](#) tells *The LINK-Letter* that one challenge is a shortage of qualified instructors in Japan to teach some of the subject areas. ALRI already conducts lectures at several vet-tech related departments of universities and vocational schools.

## *ANIMAL SEXUAL ABUSE... and THE LINK*

### Three of Last Four Remaining States Considering Banning Bestiality

Legislation has finally been introduced in West Virginia that would finally ban bestiality in the Mountain State. **HB 2827**, introduced by Delegate Josh Holstein (R – Boone) would create a new felony offense of sexual crimes against animals. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.

The measure, as in the 46 states which have already outlawed the practice that has been strongly linked with child sexual abuse and pornography, would exempt accepted veterinary, animal husbandry, artificial insemination, and breed conformation judging practices. Unlike other states, the West Virginia bill adds an unusual exemption for “generally accepted affection towards a pet such as petting, hugging or kissing in a non-sexual manner.”



Delegate Josh Holstein

Offenders would face imprisonment of one-to-five years and/or up to \$10,000 in fines. Offenders would have to relinquish custody of all animals under their control if they are not the owner of the animal victim; animals returned to offending owners would not be spayed or neutered prior to being returned. Offenders would also: be prohibited from owning any animals or residing in residences where animals are present for 10 years; attend treatment programs or psychiatric or psychological counseling; and reimburse the agency caring for the animals housing and treatment.

West Virginia introduced a similar bill in 2017, which was defeated ([See the March 2017 LINK-Letter](#)). Currently, 46 states have outlawed sex with animals; only Hawai'i, West Virginia, Wyoming, and New Mexico still permit the practice. Bills that would outlaw the practice have also been introduced in this year's legislatures in Hawai'i ([See the January 2021 LINK-Letter](#)) and Wyoming ([See the February 2021 LINK-Letter](#)). Bestiality was also outlawed late last year in Guam ([See the January 2021 LINK-Letter](#)).

### Child/Animal Sexual Abuse Links Explored in Canadian Study



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A 2018 research study conducted by the [Canadian Centre for Child Protection](#) examined how bestiality is treated under Canadian case law “because we know that the

bestiality offense plays an important role in prohibiting sexual acts that involve animals and children.” Based on additions of bestiality offenses, particularly in the presence of a child, to the criminal code in 1988 the Centre reviewed relevant criminal cases on the issue in order “to shine a light on a topic that has been largely hidden in the shadows, and [that] raises important issues for consideration by all those involved in the criminal justice system and risk management.”

The [research paper](#) was designed to provide readers with a better understanding of the ways in which animals have been used to satisfy the sexual needs of humans. It focuses on the facts of specific cases first, then reviews the current state of Canadian law before considering recent developments and offering additional avenues for reform. “It is hoped that bringing these cases together in one place will spark meaningful discussion about a topic that has, to date, been largely ignored from a policy and public safety point of view,” the authors wrote.

The report observed that the number of bestiality cases reported by police (103 between 2011-2016) or prosecuted may not be an accurate assessment of the scope of the problem. However, the case examples provide an important lens into behavior that is of significant concern and that represent a reasonable starting point for future research. The study's main findings included:

- Coerced oral sexual acts with an animal, and manual stimulation of an animal, are more common forms of abuse than penetrative acts. All reported cases that involved a non-penetrative sexual act with an animal also involved the sexual abuse of a child.
- 87% of bestiality cases involved more than one offence such as sexual assault, sexual interference, child pornography, and online luring; the latter three offenses can only be committed against children.
- In 82% of cases that involved bestiality and sexual abuse of a child, the child sexual abuse occurred as frequently as, if not more frequently than, the coerced sexual activity involving the animal. In some instances the child sexual abuse was committed separately from the abuse of the animal, but in roughly half of the cases the child was either compelled to commit the act of bestiality or forced to watch someone else commit such an act.
- In 68% of cases that involved the sexual abuse of an animal and child, the offender was in a position of trust over the child, usually a close family member such as a parent or stepparent.
- All bestiality cases involved a male offender (almost all of whom were adults), but in 21% of cases an adult female was also charged as a co-offender or also compelled to commit bestiality.
- In 87% of cases, a dog — often the family dog — was the targeted animal, but goats, horses and cats were also victimized.
- Visual recordings were made of many of the incidents, which became primary evidence necessary to sustain the charges.

The authors noted that although the number of bestiality cases reported represent only an infinitesimally small percentage of the total population, the “statistics confirm that bestiality does, indeed, happen in Canada” and that “numbers do not tell the full story.” Most incidents are not reported and sexual offenses against animals are believed to be severely underreported, in part because the animal cannot – and children often will not – disclose what happened.

In only a limited number of cases were researchers able to determine how the children and animals were incited or compelled to participate in these acts. Children were compelled either by being befriended or offered gifts or fun activities, or through coercive threats to distribute images of the victims to their families if they did not comply. In a few cases, the offender exposed the child to sexually explicit content depicting acts of bestiality in order to groom them. Animals were incited through food treats, force, or sexually arousing the animal and then including the child.

The researchers noted a disappointing lack of detail about the impacts of the abuse on children, which unfortunately “is perhaps not surprising given that the victims in these cases were subjected to other significant sexual abuse, usually over multiple years.” Future research should examine:

- How do victims relate to animals after this type of abuse has occurred?
- Are there specific/additional impacts associated with being forced to engage in such conduct that are distinct from the impacts arising from the sexual abuse itself?
- Do victims feel responsible for the abuse of the animal?
- Do these victims face additional challenges in disclosing their abuse?
- Do these victims discuss this aspect of their abuse with therapists, support persons and others in their lives?
- Does this type of abuse warrant additional or more specialized supports?
- And what about the impact on the animal?

The report also described issues affecting prosecution of these cases, the use of technology as evidence, and criminal law options in the absence of suitable legislative response. The authors called for legislative reform that broadens the definition of bestiality so as to not require penetration, similar to shifts in the definition of sexual assault against humans.

**“Coerced sexual acts involving animals... often occur in conjunction with other very serious behavior that involves human victims.”**

“The link between physical violence against animals and humans has been known for some time by those in the animal welfare and human services fields, but relatively little has been said about sexual violence,” they conclude. “The analysis of these cases has highlighted the reality that coerced sexual acts involving animals (or at least, the ones for which a reported decision was issued) often occur in conjunction with other very serious behavior that involves human victims.”

The findings were also reported at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Violence Link Conference in Toronto in November, 2019 ([See the December 2019 LINK-Letter](#)).

-- Canadian Centre for Child Protection (2018). *“Bestiality” as Reflected in Canadian Case Law*. Winnipeg: Author

## ***SOCIAL WORK... AND THE LINK***

### **Veterinary Social Work Positions to Include Link Response**

[Applications are being accepted](#) for a Veterinary Social Worker in Sage Veterinary Centers’ Campbell, Calif. clinic to develop the hospital’s first program which would include identifying needs and training staff on animal abuse recognition, collaboration with reporting agencies, and consultation. The position, which requires a MSW and two years’ experience or extensive training in veterinary social work, will also help the hospital to provide support, intervention and counseling to clients and staff, and assist staff with communication skills, wellness and self-care, stress management and compassion fatigue, grief management, and de-escalating confrontations.

[Another California veterinary clinic](#), TrueCare for Pets, in Studio City, has also posted an urgent hiring application for a Veterinary Social Worker whose responsibilities would include assisting the emergency care staff with animal abuse recognition, coordination with reporting agencies, and consultation. The position provides social work support, including emotional support to clients, consultations with staff, quality-of-life and end-of-life counseling, bereavement counseling, and serving as a field instructor for a social work internship program for the hospital.

## *News from LOCAL LINK COALITIONS*

### **South Florida Link Coalition Presses On Despite the Pandemic**

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and founder/director Dr. Amber Marchione having to take time off to have a second baby, the [South Florida Link Coalition](#) is continuing to remain active in the West Palm Beach region. Marchione tells *The LINK-Letter* that the coalition got fiscal sponsorship from another organization so they can act as a nonprofit for fundraising purposes but do not have to deal with the administrative hassles of actually being a 501c3 organization. She admits, however, that it would be nice on some days to have a board of directors to assist.



**Amber Marchione**

Although the pandemic slowed operations down, the multidisciplinary coalition continues to provide community outreach and education on The Link and to conduct trainings and fundraisers for the cause. “Most fundraising dollars help us to directly service domestic violence victims. We have a hotline and have formulated a foster network so when someone is ready to leave their abuser we can find safe foster or free boarding through us so they will leave and go to shelter,” she says.

“We also pay for medical bills for animals from abuse and food and supplies to animals. I can say that we have even been slower on this too, since as of last year ALL of our local DV shelters are finally pet-friendly due directly to our efforts and our education. A huge impact from us!”

Marchione advises other Link coalitions that “the best volunteers are the ones that are volun-TOLD to attend our meetings as part of job or grant requirements of their positions so networking with government agencies and law enforcement is a good idea.” The coalition’s partners include victim services, sheriff and police agencies, animal care and control, fire rescue, humane groups, family services, veterinarians, the children’s services council, support agencies for domestic violence survivors, the State Attorney’s office, the Department of Children and Families, and school police.

### **Link Coalition Coalescing on Big Island of Hawai’i**

A group on the Big Island of Hawai’i is organizing a Link coalition which would serve that island and perhaps the entire state. President and Founder [Ilene Harrington](#) tells *The LINK-Letter* that their organization, Domestic Violence Hurts Animals and People, has already received its 501c3 status as a nonprofit.



The group’s initial board of directors includes people with specialized backgrounds in strategic planning, business management, state government and legislatures, education, social media marketing, and marriage and family therapy. A veterinarian is serving as an advisor.

The group has been meeting monthly since August 2020 to define goals and plans, which include creating a website and school educational programs, and developing alliances with other community organizations that care about the reduction of violence and the future of children. The Hawai’i County Council has expressed some preliminary interest.

## *THE LINK... IN THE LEGISLATURES*

### Link Bills We're Watching

As the 2021 legislative sessions roll along, we're anticipating another record year for the number of bills to be introduced addressing animal abuse and its Links to other forms of family and community violence. Here are the **112 bills** that we know to have been introduced so far: we expect there will be more to come. [Please let us know](#) if you're aware of any others that we may have missed.

### *Domestic Violence/Pet Protection Orders*



**Arizona HB2451** would allow petitioners to request a "severe threat order of protection" to prohibit respondents who have made a credible threat of death or serious physical injury to self, others, or cruel mistreatment of an animal, or from possessing a firearm. The bill is in the House Judiciary and Rules Committees.



**California AB 258** would require emergency shelter and transitional housing programs for the homeless to allow residents to keep pets. It is in the Assembly Housing & Community Development Committee. **SB 344** would require the Department of Housing and Community Development to develop and administer a program to award grants to shelters for the homeless to provide shelter, food and basic veterinary services for residents' pets. It is in the Senate Appropriations Committee. (It is not clear whether these bills would cover homeless persons who are fleeing domestic violence.)



**Connecticut SB 6** would add "a pattern of coercive controlling behavior" that includes cruelty or the threat of cruelty to animals to the provisions by which a family member may apply to the Superior Court for restraining order relief. The bill is in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.



**District of Columbia B23-0181**, the Intrafamilial Offenses and Anti-Stalking Orders Amendment Act of 2020, was signed into law on Jan. 13, 2021 as **D.C. Act 23-571**. It clarifies procedures by which certain victims of intrafamily offense, sexual assault, sex trafficking of children, or individuals whose animals are victims of an intrafamily offense, to petition for a civil protection order. "Intrafamily offense" is defined as a criminal offense against an intimate partner or family or household member, or cruelty to animals owned by an intimate partner, or family or household member. Courts may also issue an anti-stalking order if the petitioner fears a household animal is endangered by the respondent. **It is expected to take effect May 24.**



**Illinois HB 1907** would require the Department of Human Services to establish a grant program, incorporating third-party funding and services, for counties with populations greater than 200,000 to support domestic violence shelters and service programs that assist domestic violence survivors' pets. The bill is in the House Revenue & Finance Committee.



**Kentucky HB 26** would include violence against a domestic animal used as coercive conduct within the definitions of "domestic violence and abuse" and "dating violence and abuse" and would allow judges to award possession of a domestic animal to the petitioner in a protection-from-abuse procedure. **HB 215** would define animal abuse when part of an incident of domestic violence and abuse or dating violence and abuse as first-degree aggravated animal abuse, a Class C felony. It is in the Committee on Committees.



**Maine LD 535** would allow courts adjudicating the dissolution of marriages to consider the well-being of companion animals in the disposition of property. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.



**Maryland SB 159/HB 281** would require humane society and animal control officers to undergo 80 hours of training, including on the association between animal abuse and abuse of the elderly or domestic violence. The bills are in the Senate Environment & Transportation and Judicial Proceedings Committees.



**Massachusetts HD.2220/SD.1466** would expand existing provisions that prevent respondents in a domestic violence protection order from harming, taking or disposing of household animals to also include protective orders issued in sexual assault harassment cases.



**Mississippi SB 2091** would have allowed municipal and justice courts to include companion animals in awarding protection orders. **The bill died in the Senate Judiciary Committee.**



**Missouri S71** would allow adult protection orders and child protection orders, full or ex parte, to restrain or enjoin an individual from committing or threatening to commit abuse against a pet. A protection order may include an order of custody of the pet where appropriate, as well as any funds needed to cover the medical costs resulting from abuse of the pet. The bill passed the Agriculture, Food Production and Outdoor Resources Committee and is in the full Senate.



**Nevada AB 350** would increase the penalty for harming or killing a companion animal from a Category C felony to a Category B felony if the act is committed to threaten, intimidate or terrorize a person. The bill is in the Assembly Judiciary Committee.



**New Jersey A 4880 and S 3168** would expand the statutory definition of domestic violence to include acts of animal cruelty against animals owned or possessed by the persons affected by these types of abuse. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture and Senate Environment and Energy Committees.



**New Jersey S 930** would allow courts to designate ownership or protective custody for a pet in an animal cruelty violation, domestic violence, matrimonial action, action for dissolution of a civil union, or judgment of divorce or dissolution or maintenance giving primary consideration to the well-being of the animal. The bill is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



**New York A1353** would make it a crime to unjustifiably injure or kill a companion animal to threaten, intimidate or harass another family member. The penalty would be increased if the act occurs in the presence of a child. The bill is in the Codes Committee.



**New York A510/S3039** would expand existing domestic violence pet protection orders to allow courts to grant petitioners exclusive care, custody and control of animals and to order respondents to stay away from the animals or take, transfer, harm, or conceal the animals. The bills are in the Assembly Judiciary and Senate Children & Families Committees.



**New York A5775/S4248** would require courts to consider the best interest of a companion animal when awarding possession in a divorce or separation proceeding. The bills are in the Assembly and Senate Judiciary Committees.



**New York A3985** (“Bella’s Law”) would require the Office of Children & Family Services to investigate possible domestic violence or abuse for persons who have been accused of animal abuse. The bill is in the Committee on Children & Families.



**Rhode Island H 5569** would permit family courts to award custody of household pets to the plaintiff in a domestic abuse complaint. The House Judiciary Committee recommended it be held for further study.



**Texas HB 674** would require the public to be informed about the availability of provisions to include pets and other companion animals in protective orders. The bill is in the House Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Committee.



**Washington HB 1293**, the “Survivors’ Justice Act,” would allow courts to reduce what may be considered unduly harsh sentences for offenses committed by domestic violence survivors where the domestic violence was a significant contributing factor to the criminal conduct. However, judges could impose sentences above the standard range in a number of aggravating circumstances including “intent to obstruct or impair human or animal health care or agricultural or forestry research or commercial production.” The bill is in the Committee on Public Safety.

### *Animal Abuse and Child Maltreatment*



**U.S. H.R. 763**, the Child and Animal Abuse Detection and Reporting Act, would amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) to require that data collected by the federal government from state child protection agencies include information about animal abuse as a risk factor for child abuse. The bill is in the House Education and Labor Committee.



**Arkansas HB 1497** would expand the permitted use of courthouse dogs for child witnesses to also include vulnerable witnesses (e.g., with intellectual or developmental disabilities). The bill passed the House and is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



**Florida SB 96** would establish a legislative intent to require reporting and cross-reporting protocols between child protective and animal services personnel based on The Link between the welfare of family animals and child safety and protection. It would require child protective investigators to report known or suspected animal cruelty and grant them criminal, civil and administrative immunity for such reports. It would require animal control officers to report suspected child abuse to the state hotline. The Florida Department of Children and Families and the Florida Animal Control Association would jointly develop a one-hour training module on The Link and on timely cross-reporting procedures. It would also redefine bestiality as “sexual contact with an animal” and ban animal pornography. The bill passed the Senate 40-0 and is in the House.



**Kentucky HB 215** would define animal abuse when committed in the presence of a minor child as first-degree aggravated animal abuse, a Class C felony.



**Massachusetts HD 2440 and SD 516** would expand the power of Department of Children & Families employees and contractors to report suspected animal abuse over a longer period of time. Current law allows such cross-reporting only during their specific 10-15 day investigation or evaluation timeframe.



**New Jersey A 4880 and S 3168** would expand the definition of child abuse to include acts of animal cruelty against their animals. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture and Senate Environment and Energy Committees.



**New York A474 and A3726** would increase prison terms for aggravated animal cruelty committed in the presence of a child in order to minimize psychological damage to a still-developing minor's sense of judgment and ethical conduct. **A474** is in the Agriculture Committee and **A3726** is in the Codes Committee.



**New York A1353** would make it a crime to unjustifiably injure or kill a companion animal to threaten, intimidate or harass another family member. The penalty would be increased if the act occurs in the presence of a child. The bill is in the Codes Committee.



**New York A748** would define the releasing or failure to control an animal so as to prohibit an agent of a residential facility operated by children and family services as second-degree assault. The bill is in the Assembly Codes Committee.



**New York A1816**, recognizing the adverse impact animal fighting can have on a child's emotional development and potential for antisocial behavior, would make it a misdemeanor to knowingly cause a minor child to attend an animal fight. The bill is in the Assembly Agriculture Committee.



**Pennsylvania SB 78** (Kayden's Law – Preventing Abuse in Child Custody Proceedings), in noting that domestic abuse against a partner, spouse, child or pet can be part of a pattern of emotional and psychological abuse, would allow courts to include a person's prior conviction for animal cruelty or animal fighting to be considered in determining custody of the child and whether the person posed a threat of harm to the child. The bill was removed from the table.



**Rhode Island S 308** would increase penalties for animal cruelty committed in the presence of a child. The bill is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



**Texas HB 1071** would allow courts to permit qualified facility dogs and therapy animals and their trained handlers to accompany witnesses if the dogs would assist the witness in testifying. It is in the Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence Committee.



**Washington HB 1292** would create a new crime of "providing harmful material to a minor" that would include "patently offensive representations or descriptions" of bestiality and animal mutilation, dismemberment, rape, or torture. The bill is in the Committee on Public Safety.

## *Animal Abuse and Elder Abuse*



**Maryland SB 159/HB 281** would require humane society and animal control officers to undergo 80 hours of training, including on the association between animal abuse and abuse of the elderly or domestic violence. The bills are in the Senate Environment & Transportation and Judicial Proceedings Committees.



**New Jersey A 4880** and **S 3168** would expand the statutory definition of elder abuse and abuse of the developmentally disabled to include acts of animal cruelty against animals owned or possessed by the persons affected by these types of abuse. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture and Senate Environment and Energy Committees.

## *Animal Sexual Abuse*



**Connecticut HB 5193** would increase the penalties for engaging in sexual contact with an animal. The bill is in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.



**Florida SB 96/HB 7039** would redefine bestiality as “sexual contact with an animal” and ban animal pornography. It would also establish a legislative intent to require reporting and cross-reporting protocols between child protective and animal services personnel based on The Link between the welfare of family animals and child safety and protection. They would raise bestiality from a 1<sup>st</sup>-degree misdemeanor to a 3<sup>rd</sup>-degree felony. **SB 96** passed the Senate 40-0 and is in the House Health & Human Services Committee.



**Hawai'i SB 343/HB1085** would establish the crime of bestiality, or sexual assault of an animal as a Class C felony, or Class B felony if committed in the presence of a minor. **SB 343** passed the Senate and was sent to the House; both bills are in the House Committee on the Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs.



**Missouri HB 373** would require mental health evaluations for offenders of bestiality and animal hoarding; it is in the Rules Committee.



**New York A614** would add sexual contact with animals to the state’s animal cruelty law, make it a felony if serious injury or death of the animal occurs, require convicted offenders to relinquish all animals and bar them from future possession of animals, and undergo psychological evaluation. The bill is in the Agriculture Committee.



**Washington HB 1292** would create a new crime of providing harmful material to a minor, including bestiality and animal mutilation, dismemberment, rape, or torture, as a gross misdemeanor or Class C felony. The bill is in the Public Safety Committee.



**West Virginia HB 2827** would create a new felony offense of sexual crimes against animals. The bill is in the Judiciary Committee.



**Wyoming HB46** would define and create the misdemeanor crime of bestiality; 46 other states have already created similar laws. The bill passed the House 60-0 and the Senate Judiciary Committee recommended it be passed.

## *Cross-Reporting*



**Florida HB 47 and SB 216** (“Allie’s Law”) would require veterinarians, technicians and other animal treatment provider employees to report suspected animal cruelty (at locations other than commercial food-producing animal operations) to authorities with immunity from civil and criminal liability, professional disciplinary action and employer retaliation. Failure to report would be grounds for disciplinary action. It would be a misdemeanor to destroy or alter medical records to conceal animal cruelty. Reporting at commercial food operations would be permissive. **HB 49** and **SB 218** would allow veterinary records to remain confidential if animal cruelty is reported as a means to protect veterinarians and to encourage such reports by making them feel safe to do so. **HB 47 and HB 49** are in the House Regulatory Reform Subcommittee; **SB 216 and SB 218** are in the Senate Agriculture Committee.



**Hawai’i HB1086/SB609** would require veterinarians to report animal injury, death or abuse to law enforcement where there is reasonable cause to believe that it relates to dogfighting or animal abuse. The measures give veterinarians immunity for civil liability for making the reports. **HB1086** passed the House Committee on the Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs. **SB609** is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.



**Iowa HF 623** would amend the Iowa Veterinary Practice Act to grant veterinarians immunity from administrative, civil or criminal liability for actions undertaken in assisting in the investigation or prosecution of animal abuse and neglect cases, including reporting such abuse. The bill is in the Senate Agriculture Committee.



**Massachusetts SD516/HD2440** would remove the 10-day time limit within which social services workers may report suspected animal abuse and allow them to report at any time.



**Missouri HB 643** would give immunity from civil liability to anyone who reports suspected animal cruelty in good faith; intentional filing of a false report would be a misdemeanor and civilly liable. The bill is in the House Committee on Crime Prevention.



**New Jersey A 2734** would require employees of the Department of Children & Families to report suspected abuse of a companion animal to the Chief County Humane Law Enforcement Officer or State Police, and of a livestock animal to the Chief County Humane Law Enforcement Officer and the Department of Agriculture. The bill is in the Assembly Women and Children Committee.



**New Jersey A 2426/S 1980** would allow certified animal control officers to enforce municipal animal control ordinances and require them to report suspected animal cruelty to notify the municipal humane law enforcement officer. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture and Senate Environment & Energy Committees.



**New Jersey A 4880 and S 3168** would require veterinarians, veterinary technicians, investigators of domestic violence and abuse, employees of the Department of Children and Families and Divisions of Aging and Developmental Disabilities, police officers, and caregivers at residential health care facilities, police officers, or any person who has reasonable cause to believe an animal has been subjected to an act of animal cruelty to report the suspected violation to the appropriate law enforcement officer, with immunity from civil and criminal liability. The bills are in the Assembly Agriculture and Senate Environment and Energy Committees.

 **New York A 5823/S 5023** would require veterinarians who reasonably and in good faith suspect that a companion animal's injury, illness or condition is the result of animal cruelty to report the incident and disclose records concerning the animal's condition and treatment. (Existing law allows voluntary reporting.) The bills are in the Assembly and Senate Higher Education Committees.

 **New York A 5780** would permit mandated reporters of child abuse to report suspected animal cruelty, with immunity from civil and criminal liability. The bill is in the Committee on Children and Families.

 **Oregon HB 3071** would add all elected officials of the state, state agencies, boards, commissions or departments, and all elected city and county elected officials, to those mandated to report suspected child and elder abuse. The bill is in the House Committee on Human Services.

 **Texas HB 4330** would require veterinarians to report suspected cruelty of non-livestock animals to the county sheriff or municipal police agency; reports made in good faith would be immune from civil and criminal liability and administrative discipline. Texas veterinarians currently have immunity for reporting all animal abuse but are not mandated to do so.

### *Animal Abuse and Other Crimes*

 **U.S. H.R. 1016**, the Animal Cruelty Enforcement (ACE) Act, would enhance enforcement of federal anti-cruelty laws, such as interstate trafficking of fighting animals, by creating an animal cruelty crimes section at the U.S. Department of Justice. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.

 **Kentucky HB 486** would require law enforcement officers to receive training on The Link between animal abuse and interpersonal violence. The bill is in the Committee on Committees.

 **New Jersey A 1572/S 746** would bar animal abusers from possessing a firearm. The bills are in the Assembly Judiciary and Senate Law & Public Safety Committees.

 **New York S197/A1633 ("Kirby and Quigley's Law")** would expand aggravated animal cruelty to include harm to a pet during the commission of a felony. The bills are in the respective Agriculture Committees.

 **New York A99** would make the release of or failure to restrain an animal so as to prevent a police officer or peace officer from performing his or her duties an assault in the second degree on a police officer. The bill is in the Assembly Codes Committee,

 **New York A558** would prohibit individuals convicted of serious felony offenses against animals from possessing firearms. The bill is in the Assembly Codes Committee.

 **New York A2661** would define animal fighting as a criminal act when referring to enterprise corruption. The bill is in the Assembly Codes Committee.

 **Oregon HB 2271** would appropriate moneys from the General Fund to the Department of Justice to enable local district attorneys and law enforcement agencies to add resource prosecutor positions dedicated to assisting the prosecution of animal cruelty offenses. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.

 **Washington HB 1038** would prohibit individuals convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity of animal cruelty, whether in Washington or elsewhere, from possessing a firearm. The firearm provision already exists for persons convicted of or found not guilty by reason of insanity of domestic violence. The bill is in the Committee on Civil Rights & Judiciary.

### *“CASA for Animals”*

 **Florida S 1316/H 1003** would provide for the appointment of lawyer and legal intern advocates for the interests of an animal in civil and criminal proceedings regarding the welfare, care or custody of animals. The bills are in the Senate Governmental & Accountability and House Criminal Justice & Public Safety Subcommittees.

 **Illinois SB 153** would allow courts to appoint attorneys or law students as special advocates to assist the court in prosecution of cases involving the injury, health or safety of a cat or dog and represent the interests of justice. Advocates could monitor the case and attend hearings; consult with persons and review records relevant to the conditions of the cat or dog or the defendant’s actions; and present information and recommendations to the court. The bill is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

 **New Jersey A 4533/S 2868** would allow courts to appoint a pro bono attorney or law student special advocate to represent the interests of animals in cruelty cases. **S 2868** passed the Senate 34-0 and joined **A 4533** in the Assembly Judiciary Committee.

 **New York S 3525/A 5315** would create court-appointed volunteer lawyer and law student advocates for animals in animal welfare proceedings. The bills are in the Senate and Assembly Judiciary Committees.

 **Rhode Island H 5577/S 534** would permit civil and criminal courts to appoint pro bono attorneys and supervised law students to act as animal advocates in animal cruelty and abuse cases addressing the animals’ welfare or custody, in the interests of justice. The House Judiciary Committee recommended it be held for further study; the Senate bill is in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

### *Animal Hoarding*

 **Missouri HB 373** would add animal hoarding to the definition of animal neglect and require mental health evaluations for offenders. It is in the Rules Committee.



**New Hampshire HB 366** defines animal hoarding and sets forth a provision for a person charged with animal hoarding to be given a psychiatric evaluation. The bill has been retained in the House Environment and Agriculture Committee for action in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the session.



**New Jersey S 1760** establishes the crime of animal hoarding and requires mental health counseling for all adult and juvenile animal cruelty and hoarding offenders. The bill is in the Senate Energy & Environment Committee.



**New York A1229** would create a violation of companion animal hoarding and allow courts to order mental health evaluations and prohibit possession of animals as penalties to give law enforcement needed tools for early intervention before a situation becomes a full-blown cruelty case. The bill is in the Agriculture Committee.

### *Psychological Evaluation of Offenders*



**Connecticut H 6251** would require police, prosecutors and judges to receive training or education on The Link between animal abuse and commission of crimes so that cases are prosecuted and adjudicated with an understanding and consideration of such information, and require any and all resolutions to animal cruelty cases to include mandatory psychological evaluation and sessions to identify the potential for more serious criminal behavior. The bill is in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.



**Missouri HB 643** would allow courts to impose psychological or psychiatric evaluation and treatment for adult and juvenile animal cruelty offenders. Evaluation and treatment would be mandatory for animal torture or motivation or upon second and subsequent convictions. **HB 373** would require mental health evaluations for offenders of bestiality and animal hoarding; it is in the Rules Committee.



**New Jersey S 1760** establishes the animal cruelty crime of animal hoarding and requires mental health counseling for all adult and juvenile animal cruelty offenders, including animal hoarders. The bill is in the Senate Energy & Environment Committee. **S 2179 (“Shyanne’s Law”)** would require mental health evaluation for all animal cruelty offenders; that bill is in the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee.



**New York S230** would require courts to order psychiatric analysis and evaluation of animal abusers and to unseal the records of juvenile animal abuse offenders. **S229** would require courts to impose psychiatric evaluations for defendants convicted of aggravated animal cruelty. The bills are in the Agriculture Committee.



**New York A524, S1257 and S1259** would prohibit persons convicted of “Buster’s Law” (aggravated cruelty to animals) from owning pets unless authorized by a court order after appropriate psychiatric or psychological testing determined the person showed clear and convincing evidence of capable and sound mental capacity and ability to properly care for the animal. The bills are in the Assembly and Senate Agriculture Committees.

## THE LINK... IN THE NEWS

### Man Gets 40 Years in Double Homicide Where Dog was Also Killed

A man accused of killing two women at separate residences in early 2019, plus animal cruelty and tampering with evidence for killing a dog and trying to clean up the scene to hide the evidence ([See the April 2019 LINK-Letter](#)), has pled guilty to double homicide charges. Shannon Scott, now 53, of Murray, Ky., took a plea agreement that calls for him to serve 40 years in the deaths of Tera Todd, 37, and Evelyn Scott, 77. The [Murray Ledger & Times](#) reported that Scott must serve at least 20 years before he becomes eligible for possible parole. Scott was Evelyn Scott's caretaker, who owned the dog, and was the boyfriend of Todd. It was unclear whether the animal cruelty case was dropped as part of the plea bargain.



Shannon Scott

### Failed Relationship with Ex-Girlfriend Leads to Arson and Cruelty Charges



Michael Paul Busico

Authorities in West Valley, Utah arrested Michael Paul Busico, 40, on charges of criminal trespass, theft, arson, and animal torture for allegedly setting on fire a dog belonging to a woman in retaliation for a failed relationship. [The Deseret News](#) reported that police said Busico stole the dog from the victim's home. The fire caused severe damage to the dog that will require thousands of dollars for medical care. Brush also caught fire as a result of the incident, which is believed to have involved an accelerant. Police were told that Busico had a dispute with the victim's mother over \$1,200 and a past relationship that had ended.



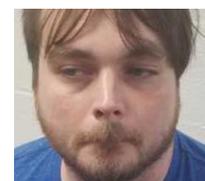
Isaiah Beavers

### Convicted Felon Charged in Shotgun Shooting of Dog

A convicted felon was charged with unlawful possession of a firearm, driving with a suspended license and aggravated animal cruelty for allegedly tying a dog to a tree and shooting it with a shotgun for attempting to bite him and his girlfriend. Isaiah Beavers, 30, of Cocoa, Fla., apparently tied the dog to a tree in a public park and fled. [Florida Today](#) reported that police found a shotgun in the hatch of the SUV. Beavers was being held without bond in the Brevard County Jail and the dog had to be euthanized.

### Man Accused of Assaulting Puppy and Girlfriend

John Dudley, Jr., 30, of Bristol, Tenn., was arrested and charged with domestic violence assault and cruelty to animals for allegedly punching and kicking a 5-month-old puppy and pushing a woman into a wall and holding a knife to her throat. [WCYB-TV](#) reported that police said Dudley attacked the pup after it bit him while he was trying to put it in a bathtub and then assaulted the woman. The following day, Dudley returned to the residence and got into an argument with the woman, who said Dudley had held a knife to her throat, threatened to kill her and would kill everyone she loved and then himself if she left him. Dudley is on supervised probation. The dog sustained injuries to its jaw and a paw and appeared to have lost several teeth. There were apparently previous beatings. The owner surrendered the dog to a rescue group.



John Dudley, Jr.



**Kevin Billups**

### Teaching Aide Charged with Animal and Child Sexual Abuse

An elementary school teaching assistant was charged with eight counts of “buggery” and eight counts of sexual exploitation of a minor after police, acting on a tip, reportedly found a video of Kevin Christopher Billups, 34, of Columbia, S.C., performing sex acts with an animal. The [Lexington County Chronicle & Dispatch-News](#) reported that investigators executing a search warrant of his home found hundreds of images and videos of child pornography. Parents of students in his classroom were notified of the incident, and the dog has been relocated to the care of an animal rescue organization.



### Sexually Violent Predator Arrested After Failing to Appear on Animal Cruelty Charges

A Longmont, Colo. man who had been designated by the courts as a “sexually violent predator” following a 2016 sex assault case, and who had been re-arrested in 2020 for allegedly abusing his girlfriend’s cats and dog, was arrested at a Greyhound bus station in Indiana after he failed to register as a sex offender and appear for a court

**Nathaniel Stark**

date. Nathaniel Stark, 25, missed a Jan. 6 hearing on two felony counts of aggravated cruelty to animals and three misdemeanor counts of cruelty to the cats, “Toby” and “Xander,” and the dog, “Caidee.” He was still on probation for the 2016 case where he pled guilty to assault and two counts of unlawful sexual contact and was sentenced to one year in jail, 18 months of work release and 10 years of sex offender intensive supervised probation. The [Boulder Daily Camera](#) reported that Stark was deemed by the courts to be a “sexually violent predator,” a designation given to sexual offenders who are considered a high risk to reoffend.



**Ricardo Saldivar**

### Witness Knocks Alleged Killer of Grandmother and Dog Unconscious with a Rock

The Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department was holding Ricardo Saldivar, 23, of Upland, Calif., under \$1,000,000 bond on suspicion of stabbing a San Dimas, Calif. grandmother and her dog to death. [KTLA-TV](#) reported that a man named Joe Cohen, who had earlier been targeted by Saldivar, spotted the attack on the woman and knocked Saldivar unconscious by throwing a rock and hitting him in the face. Deputies

found Jeanne Edgar, 66, and her dog with multiple stab wounds. Witnesses said the attacker kept yelling that he was going to kill someone and ran after Cohen before turning his attention to Edgar who was walking her dog.

### Police Nab Home Invader Seeking Two Cats

Police in Laurium, Mich. arrested a man on March 24 suspected of breaking into a home at 4:15 a.m., holding a gun to the resident’s head and demanding that the resident give him two cats. The suspect, 52, who was not identified in [media reports](#), took one cat, which was later recovered. He was charged with home invasion and felonious assault.



**Prentiss Madden**

### **Veterinarian Charged with Child and Animal Pornography**

A South Florida veterinarian is facing years in federal prison after being charged with alleged possession of child pornography and sexual abuse of a dog. Prentiss Madden, 40, had been fired two weeks previously as medical director of Caring Hands Animal Hospital in Aventura when the hospital learned he was under investigation for violating the PACT Act, the 2019 federal law that outlaws video productions of animal abuse for viewers’ sexual gratification. Investigators reportedly responded to a tip that Madden had over 1,600 files of suspected child pornography, according to the [Miami Herald](#). Homeland Security agents reportedly also found social media chats in which Madden is believed to have discussed sexual abuse of animals and children.



**Branden Richter**

### **Ex-con Charged with Biting K-9 Dog’s Ear in Resisting Arrest**

Branden Anthony Richter, 33, of Belleview, Fla., is facing charges of aggravated assault on a police officer and battery on a police K-9 for allegedly resisting arrest and biting the ear of a police dog. The Marion County Sheriff’s Office said chaos ensued when deputy Brandon Donahue tried to serve Richter on several outstanding warrants. Richter reportedly tried to flee and pointed a loaded gun at the deputy but the dog, “Scout,” brought him down. Bodycam footage revealed a long, violent struggle over the pistol during which Richter allegedly bit both the deputy and Scout and tried to choke it, [Fox 35 Orlando](#) reported. Donahue and Scout were recovering from their injuries. Marion County jail records indicate Richter was also facing previous charges of resisting arrest, escaping, motor vehicle theft, and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

### **Cold Case Unit Investigating Death of Alabama Man and Dog**

The Alabama Attorney General’s Office’s Cold Case Unit has taken over the investigation of a 2015 incident in which a man and his dog were found in a burnt truck behind an old school building. [WIAT-TV](#) reported that on March 21, 2015, hunters found the bodies of Eric Cates and his dog, “Gypsy,” in Walker County. The county sheriff’s office was the original lead agency in the case, believed to be either a drug overdose or an accident, but investigators are now treating the case as a homicide because Cates might have been an undercover informant. The Sumiton police department is also assisting. The Attorney General has appealed to anyone with information to contact the office at 1-866-419-1236.



**Eric Cates**



**Arthur Kelvin Lovell**

### **Convicted Stabber Admits to Having Sex with Dogs**

A Houston, Texas man who was sentenced in March to 45 years in prison for a stabbing attack in 2014 told authorities that he had sex with dogs and kept their skulls at the head of his bed. Prosecutors with the Harris County District Attorney’s Office discovered during their investigation that Arthur Kelvin Lovell, 34, had a violent history with animals, which was presented during his two-day trial. Lovell was convicted of assault with a deadly weapon for stabbing a day laborer outside a Houston convenience store; the victim survived, according to the [Associated Press](#).

## Home Invader Bitten by Dog, Charged with Assault

Police in Wylie, Texas charged Thong Quoc Pham, 53, with aggravated assault with a deadly weapon and animal cruelty for allegedly breaking into a home where the family dog, an 8-year-old named “Marley,” alerted the family and bit the knife-wielding intruder. [KDFM-TV](#) reported that the Newsom family was getting ready for bed when they heard Marley alerting them to the intruder hiding in a corner with a knife. Both Marley and Taylor Newsom were slashed with the knife, but both fought back before the intruder escaped. A daughter called 911 and Pham was found hiding by a creek and arrested. Security footage appears to also show him stealing flotation noodles from a swimming pool. Pham’s residence is listed as Garland, Texas, and he has a record of criminal charges ranging from assault to burglary.



Thong Quoc Pham

## *LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES*

**NOTE: The pandemic has caused most in-person trainings to be canceled, rescheduled or converted into virtual formats. Click on the underlined hyperlinks for more detailed information.**

**April 13 – Novato, Calif. (online):** Phil Arkow will present “Connecting the Dots: Addressing The Link between Animal, Domestic, Child, and Elder Abuse to Create a Safer Community” for the [Marin Humane Society](#) and the Center for Domestic Peace.

**April 15 – Rockville, Md. (online):** Phil Arkow will conduct a webinar on “The Link between Elder Abuse and Animal Abuse and Opportunities for Eldercare Agencies” for the [ElderSAFE Center](#).

**April 16 – Midlothian, Texas (online):** Phil Arkow will present on the animal abuse/domestic violence Link for the [Dallas Indian Mission United Methodist Church](#).

**April 21 – Bernville, Pa. (online):** The [Keystone Link](#) will hold its recurring meeting.

**April 23 (online):** Ashley Stanley of Wayside Waifs will present “No More Bullying: Violence Prevention through Humane Education at the Association of Professional Humane Educators’ [2021 Virtual Conference](#).”

**April 23 – Union County, Ky.:** Joye Keeley of the [Kentucky Link Coalition](#), and Sgt. Lisa Nagle of the Louisville Metro Police Dept., will conduct a training about The Link and animal fighting for law enforcement, animal control, school staffs, and other professionals.

**April 28 (online):** Lesley Winton of Fostering Compassion will present “Connecting Neglected Children with rescued Animals to Help Reverse the Cycle of Abuse and Foster Compassion” at the Association of Professional Humane Educators’ [2021 Virtual Conference](#).

**April 28 – Pullman, Wash. & Ft. Collins, Colo. (online):** Phil Arkow will lecture on animal abuse’s Link to human violence for the [Human Animal Interaction Research course](#) co-taught by Washington State and Colorado State Universities.

**April 30 – Pulaski, Va. (online):** Phil Arkow will present a webinar on “The Link between Animal Abuse and Human Violence and its Implications for the Criminal Justice System” for the [Pulaski Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court](#).

**May 5 (online):** Allie Phillips, of Sheltering Animals and Families Together (SAF-T)<sup>®</sup>, and Wendy Mota of Futures Without Violence, will present a [webinar](#), “Sheltering Animals and Families Together (SAF-T)<sup>®</sup> -- Actionable Insights from the Field.”

**May 11 – Sacramento, Calif. (online):** Katie Campbell of RedRover will present “Pet-Friendly Domestic Violence Shelters” in a webinar for the [Justice Clearinghouse](#).

**May 12 (online):** Phil Arkow will present on “Interpersonal Violence and Animal Cruelty” for the National Organization for Victim Assistance’s [National Victim Assistance Academy](#).

**May 12 – Pittsfield, Mass. (online):** [HAVEN](#) – the Human-Animal Violence Education Network – will hold its regular meeting.

**May 19 – Springfield, Mo.:** Phil Arkow will present “The Link Between Human and Animal Abuse: Connecting the Dots” and “How to Implement the Animal Abuse Link Concepts Into Your Work” at the [Missouri Office of Prosecution Services’ 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Family and Sexual Violence](#).

**May 19 – Bernville, Pa. (online):** The [Keystone Link](#) will hold its recurring meeting.

**June 2 (online):** Allie Phillips, of Sheltering Animals and Families Together (SAF-T)<sup>®</sup>, and Wendy Mota of Futures Without Violence, will present a [webinar](#), “Supporting Children with Therapy Animals: Human-Animal Interactions for Children Survivors of Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment.”

**June 10 (online):** Elizabeth Strand will describe ways to integrate the four pillars of Veterinary Social Work – The Link between Human & Animal Violence, Compassion Fatigue & Conflict Management, Animal-related Grief & Bereavement, and Animal-assisted Interventions – into animal shelter settings at the Association for Animal Welfare Advancement’s [2021 Spring Conference](#).

**June 16 – Bernville, Pa. (online):** The [Keystone Link](#) will hold its recurring meeting.

**July 15 (online):** Emily Lewis of the Animal Legal Defense Fund will present a [webinar](#) on “Preserving the Bond and Preventing Cruelty: The Veterinarian’s Role” for the Justice Clearinghouse.

**July 21 – Bernville, Pa. (online):** The [Keystone Link](#) will hold its recurring meeting.

**July 30 – Minneapolis, Minn. (online):** Phil Arkow will present “One Health and the ‘Dark Side’ of the Human-Animal Bond: Preparing a Protocol Response to Suspected Animal Cruelty, Abuse and Neglect” at the [AVMA Convention](#).

**Aug. 18 – Bernville, Pa. (online):** The [Keystone Link](#) will hold its recurring meeting.

**Sept. 9 – Las Vegas, Nev.:** Phil Arkow will present “The ‘Dark Side’ of the Human-Animal Bond: Preparing a Protocol Response to Suspected Animal Cruelty, Abuse & Neglect,” and Nicole Forsyth will present “Exploring the Role of the Veterinary Community in Helping Break Cycles of Abuse in Domestic Violence,” at the [WVC Annual Conference](#).

**Sept. 15 – Burgos, Spain (online):** Phil Arkow will present a keynote address on “The Interconnection Between Animal and Human Abuse and Neglect” at the [One Welfare World Conference](#).

**Sept. 15 – Bernville, Pa. (online):** The [Keystone Link](#) will hold its recurring meeting.

**Oct. 20 – Bernville, Pa. (online):** The [Keystone Link](#) will hold its recurring meeting.

**Nov. 4-5 – Ottawa, Ont., Canada (online):** The Canadian Violence Link Coalition will hold its [National Violence Link Conference](#).

**Nov. 6 – Ottawa, Ont., Canada (online):** The Canadian Violence Link Coalition will hold its annual one-day [Prosecution of Animal Abuse Conference](#).

**Nov. 6-7 – Maple Ridge, B.C., Canada (online):** Phil Arkow will conduct a webinar on “Veterinarians’ Response to Animal Abuse and Domestic Violence” for the [Canadian Veterinary Medical Association/Society of BC Veterinarians Chapter](#).

**Nov. 11 (online):** Massachusetts Assistant District Attorney Erin Aiello and Janette Reever with Humane Society International will present a webinar on “Preparing for Court: Tips for Effective Testimony about Animal Crimes,” including special considerations for cases related to intimate partner violence, for the [Justice Clearinghouse](#).

**Nov. 11 (online):** Phil Arkow will present on The Link for [One Health Partners](#).

**Nov. 12 – Ottawa, Ont., Canada:** The Canadian Violence Link Coalition will host a special half-day [Violence Link Workshop](#) specifically for multi-disciplinary criminal justice professionals working in the Ottawa community whose work intersects with The Violence Link.

**Nov. 17 – Bernville, Pa. (online):** The [Keystone Link](#) will hold its recurring meeting.

**Nov. 18 – Alexandria, Va. (online):** Phil Arkow will discuss “How Pet-Inclusive Social Work and Cross-Reporting Can Improve Delivery of Domestic Violence Victim Services” for the National Organization for Victim Assistance’s [National Advocacy Learning Center](#).

**Dec. 15 – Bernville, Pa. (online):** The [Keystone Link](#) will hold its recurring meeting.



## ABOUT THE NATIONAL LINK COALITION



The National Link Coalition is an informal, multidisciplinary 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**

Chair, Animal Abuse & Family Violence Prevention Project,  
The Latham Foundation  
Etowah, N. Car.

**Lesley Ashworth**

Former Director, Domestic Violence/Stalking Program,  
Columbus City Attorney's Office/Prosecution Division  
Blowing Rock, N. Car.

**Diane Balkin, J.D.**

Retired Chief Deputy District Attorney, Denver, Colo.  
Retired Senior Staff Attorney, Animal Legal Defense Fund  
Denver, Colo.

**Barbara W. Boat, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor, Univ. of Cincinnati College of Medicine  
Exec. Director, Childhood Trust, Cincinnati Children's Hospital  
Cincinnati, Ohio

**Steve Dale**

Nationally Syndicated Radio Host and Author  
Chicago, Ill.

**The Hon. Rosa C. Figarola**

Circuit Probate Judge, 11<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit  
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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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**Mark Kumpf, CAWA**

Director, Detroit Animal Care & Control  
Detroit, Mich.

**Randall Lockwood, Ph.D.**

Consultant, ASPCA  
Falls Church, Va.

**Paul Needham**

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

**Emily Patterson-Kane, Ph.D. (ALTERNATE)**

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**Gale Rasin, J.D.**

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