



NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

The LINK-Letter Vol. 14, No. 9 September 2021

A monthly report of news from THE NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER



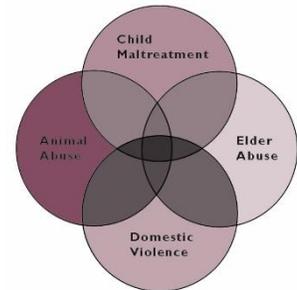
ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE



www.NationalLinkCoalition.org

[Phil Arkow](#), Coordinator and Editor

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LAW ENFORCEMENT... and THE LINK

FBI Journal Spotlights The Link, Calls for Multidisciplinary Responses

The FBI's [Law Enforcement Bulletin](#) on Aug. 10 published an article on "The Link Between Animal Cruelty and Human Violence," noting that animals, like children, are among the most vulnerable victims in society and consequently at high risk for cruelty. "Historically, animal cruelty has been considered an isolated issue, but recent research shows a well-documented Link that it is a predictive or co-occurring crime with violence against humans (including intimate partners, children, and elders) and is associated with other types of violent offenses," write Charlie Robinson and Victoria Clausen of the FBI's Behavioral Analysis Unit.



"Increased awareness of this linkage and a collaborative approach to these investigations strengthens the identification and reduction of such crimes," they argue, tracing how the separation of child and animal protection services hindered acknowledgement of The Link. This is changing, however, as an increasing number of fields are recognizing the correlation and seriousness of these crimes.

The Link field has further evolved to recognize how animals are abused to manipulate, control and punish human victims in domestic violence and create an atmosphere of fear and control. They cite extensive Link research that also describes animal cruelty as a predictor of current and future violence, including crimes of assault, rape, murder, arson, domestic violence, and sexual abuse of children. "Being cognizant of this link allows for law enforcement to recognize that animal cruelty indicates other possible offenses are occurring in the household," they write.

The article reviews federal legislation, other crimes often associated with dog- and cock-fighting, and the inclusion of four types of animal cruelty in the FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). It describes two ASPCA studies that identified significant gaps in law enforcement officers' training and familiarity with animal cruelty and animal fighting issues.

"A multidisciplinary, cross-reporting approach to animal cruelty as well as to other crimes involved with animal cruelty creates an opportunity to save lives," they conclude. "Having background knowledge of The Link between animal cruelty and violence can make a considerable difference in an investigation,

and several key agencies can work together in a multidisciplinary team to achieve this goal. Child protective services, animal protection groups, veterinarians, domestic violence shelters, medical providers, and law enforcement share a unique opportunity to create an integrative approach to investigations and The Link. Establishing relationships will help with educating each other, being proactive, and identifying resources.”

Police Shootings of Dogs and People Linked

Widespread national discussions about police reform and racial justice are now seen as also including a Link component, with recent evidence that the locations of police shootings of dogs correlate closely geographically with low-income communities of color where police shootings of people are also concentrated.



On July 19, the U.S. House of Representatives’ Committee on Appropriations submitted a [report](#) in conjunction with [H.R. 4505](#), the Appropriations Bill for Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies for fiscal 2022. H.R. 4505 aims to help reform law enforcement practices across the country and ensure the civil rights of all Americans. The report describing the \$81.3 billion measure included language proposed by the ASPCA regarding police encounters with dogs, situations in which officers often shoot first and ask questions later.

The measure recommends appropriating \$95 million for the Office of Justice Programs’ research, evaluation and statistics divisions, to fund research into such issues as crime and offender data collection, solitary confinement practices, access to mental health services for law enforcement officers, community-based public safety strategies, and monitoring sexual abuse in organizations that serve youths. Included in this section is the following language from the ASPCA:

Police Use of Force Against Pets.— It has been estimated that thousands of dogs are killed annually by law enforcement officers. Many states and municipalities do not require that police shootings directed at pets be reported. However, data from some localities suggests that anywhere from 25–75 percent of all law enforcement firearms discharges are directed at dogs, and that these incidents are geographically clustered in low-income communities of color where police shootings involving people are also concentrated. Police shootings directed at pets escalate encounters with policed communities and erode trust in law enforcement.

The Committee is concerned about the lack of data and reporting requirements for such encounters, and urges the Department [of Justice] to include these incidents involving pets in any nationwide federal database created to track law enforcement’s use of force against people, or to provide Congress with a report within 180 days on how the Department can collect and maintain comprehensive data on law enforcement’s use of force against people and pets, as well as any policy recommendations needed to implement that data collection.

“Considering this language was a new request this year, their attention to the issue is pretty awesome,” said Katie Kraska, ASPCA federal legislative director for government relations. The measure, if approved by the House, would then go to the Senate.

Online Graduate Course on “Animal CSI” Focuses on The Link

A new online, four-unit graduate-level [certificate program in Animal Cruelty Investigations](#) offered by the University of New Haven in Connecticut begins with a unit on The Link between animal cruelty and interpersonal violence. Virginia Maxwell, Associate Professor in the Henry C. Lee College of Criminal Justice and Forensic Science and course coordinator, says the program will illustrate why it is so critical to intervene in cases of animal cruelty.



Virginia Maxwell

“Animal abuse is a predictor,” said Maxwell, who is also a passionate advocate for farm animals. “Child abuse, elder abuse, intimate partner abuse, and animal abuse all go hand in hand. If you have domestic violence in a household, most of the time you have animal cruelty going on as well. If we can intercept a teenager who is abusing animals, maybe we can stop them before they abuse people.”

Maxwell, who wrote a journal article last year on documenting and processing animal cruelty scenes (*See the [February 2021 LINK-Letter](#)*), developed the one-year program that begins this fall. Because it is fully online, it is open to students around the world. Students will be also able to begin the program in January.

“The program is basically the first of its kind in the country,” said Dr. Maxwell, who is also co-writing a textbook on crime scene investigation for animal cruelty. “There aren’t many programs like this out there, and I’m excited to get it off the ground. It’s been a dream of mine to do this.”

Designed for students in a wide variety of fields, the certificate is intended for those who might be first responders to an animal cruelty case, such as police and animal control officers. It also is geared toward lawyers as well as veterinarians or veterinary students who, Maxwell said, don’t always get to take a course on veterinary forensics.

The program includes four courses, and Maxwell hopes to later add electives to the curriculum. The first class, taught by criminal justice professor Leila Dutton explores The Link. The initial course is followed by “Animal Cruelty Investigation,” taught by Lisa Dadio, a retired police lieutenant from the New Haven Police Department. It explores search warrants, documenting crime scenes and writing reports.

Maxwell teaches the third course, which covers forensic investigation of animal cruelty, including the evidence generated by certain types of cases. The final course is an independent study, enabling the students to explore what is most meaningful for them and to work closely with the instructors.

“I’m hoping this opportunity will give students a new perspective, maybe jumpstart a career change or change the way they’re currently doing their job,” said Maxwell. “I hope they realize how important this is, and not just because they are animal lovers. It’s important from the human perspective, too, because of this incredible Link between animal cruelty and other criminal behavior.”

Criminals in Wild Animal Petting Zoos called “Con”-servationists

While most Link activity has focused on the connections between interpersonal violence and the abuse of companion animals, there is growing interest as to how The Link plays out in regards to wild animals, particularly in the criminal activities involved with the illegal wildlife trade. The issue was most recently popularized by the conviction of “Tiger King” “Joe Exotic” Maldonado-Passage, who was sentenced to 22 years in prison for conspiring in a murder-for-hire scheme to silence a critic and for multiple violations of the Endangered Species Act and the Lacey Act involving wildlife importation (*See the [February 2020 LINK-Letter](#)*).



The New York City Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild hosted a webinar on July 23 on the subject of the ownership of exotic big cats in the U.S. The [100-minute video](#) features an extensive interview with Tim Harrison, a former police officer and director of [Outreach for Animals](#), an organization of law enforcement, paramedic, firefighting, medical, and veterinary officials who educate the public on proper behavior around wildlife.

Harrison called many exotic animal dealers and exhibitionists, including many who run tourist attraction wild animal theme parks and petting zoos where children get to play with tiger cubs, “con-servationists” because the animal parks are a front for other crimes. Convicts, drug dealers and child molesters are converging in this industry, he said. “It’s more nefarious than you think it is.”

Harrison cited several cases of wild animal park personnel and exotic animal dealers in which homicides, narcotics trafficking and other criminal offenses occur. He cited an assistant director of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service’s Office of Law Enforcement who testified at a hearing that wildlife crime is often associated with other crimes including fraud, narcotics, money laundering, and smuggling. Child trafficking and child molesting are also found in the trade, Harrison added.

Following Harrison’s presentation, a panel of journalists, psychologists and lawyers discussed the potential overlap between the “dark personality space” of psychopathy and exotic animal ownership.

“The animals are in danger all the time, but start thinking about it,” he said, advising parents not to put the children in the hands of potential child molesters. “Why would you let your family and friends go anywhere near where people like that work?”

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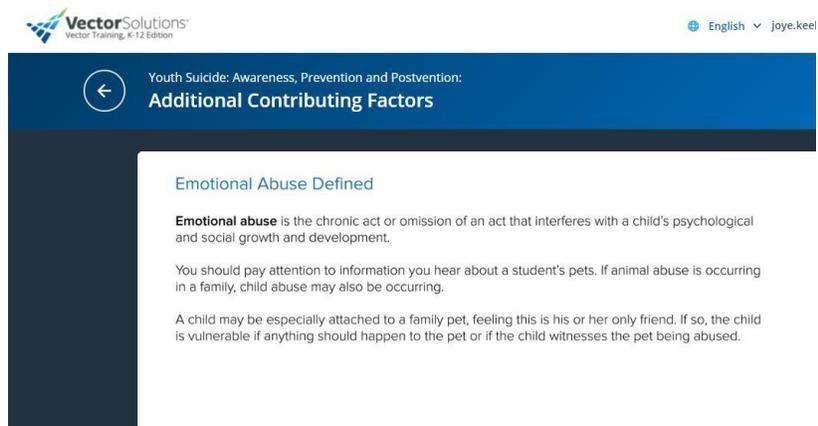
For Additional Information

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

CHILD MALTREATMENT... and THE LINK

Animal Abuse Linked as Risk Factor for Children's Suicide

What may be the first reference to pet abuse being a warning sign in connection with the risk of children's committing suicide has appeared in Louisville, Ky. Joye Keeley, who coordinates the Kentucky Link Coalition and is a Captain for the Jefferson County Public Schools system, tells *The LINK-Letter* that everyone in the JCPS system is required to take an online [suicide prevention training](#).



The screenshot shows a slide from a training module. At the top left is the Vector Solutions logo with the text 'Vector Training, K-12 Edition'. At the top right are the options 'English' and 'Joye.Keel'. The slide title is 'Youth Suicide: Awareness, Prevention and Postvention: Additional Contributing Factors'. The main content is under the heading 'Emotional Abuse Defined' and includes the following text: 'Emotional abuse is the chronic act or omission of an act that interferes with a child's psychological and social growth and development. You should pay attention to information you hear about a student's pets. If animal abuse is occurring in a family, child abuse may also be occurring. A child may be especially attached to a family pet, feeling this is his or her only friend. If so, the child is vulnerable if anything should happen to the pet or if the child witnesses the pet being abused.'

The program, conducted by Vector Solutions (formerly SafeSchools), is available nationally. One part of the training mentions The Link to animal abuse in the segment on child abuse as a contributing factor for suicide. The unit describes emotional abuse as the chronic act or omission of an act that interferes with a child's psychological and social growth and development.

"You should pay attention to information you hear about a student's pets. If animal abuse is occurring in a family, child abuse may also be occurring," advises the training module. "A child may be especially attached to a family pet, feeling this is his or her only friend. If so, the child is vulnerable if anything should happen to the pet or if the child witnesses the pet being abused."

Report Cites Benefits of Cross-Reporting Child and Animal Abuse

An extensive research project by a Lewis & Clark Law School student examines the complexities, challenges, risks, and benefits of cross-reporting laws between child protection and animal protection employees. Tarun Bishop writes that while these laws empower professionals to take action to curb patterns of violence and intervene earlier, and a Connecticut study reported that almost half of animal cruelty reports were connected to child endangerment, there is still more work to do as many states have not enacted cross-reporting laws and agencies may find it difficult to overcome the challenges.



Tarun Bishop

Bishop cites research about the adverse impacts of violence upon children and how their warm bonds with pets can be exploited by abusers who threaten to harm the animals if the children do not obey. Increased discussion within the legal system about The Link between child and animal abuse has made advancements in addressing these issues, notably by enacting mandatory reporting laws. However, only a minimal number of states mandate or permit child protection employees to report suspected animal abuse, and animal protection employees to report child abuse.

Bishop argues that animal welfare agencies may be “first responders” to human abuse cases and human abuse agencies may function as “first responders” to animal abuse cases. “All of this has given rise to the importance of cross-reporting,” he writes.

He describes the benefits of mandatory cross-reporting for earlier intervention and prevention of injuries to humans and animals. “Child and animal abuse are underreported, which makes it ever more important to identify these kinds of abuse when possible. Further, if child and animal protection agencies are overburdened, it can be useful if they can work together, as this fosters collaboration in uprooting patterns of violence and abuse. Cross-reporting, whether mandated by law or not, works as an additional layer of safety for vulnerable members of households.”

“If child and animal protection agencies are overburdened, it can be useful if they can work together, as this fosters collaboration in uprooting patterns of violence and abuse.”

On the other hand, cross-reporting is not without risks. False reporting is possible, particularly for people of color. “While these concerns are noteworthy and valid, the benefits of mandatory cross-reporting laws probably outweigh the costs

because early intervention allows appropriate officials to assess each situation for potential abuse, and provides an opportunity to uproot patterns of abuse early on. The negative effects can be minimized if, at each stage of the investigation, the officials use discretion based on training and collaboration (e.g., to only send a case to trial if there is probable cause after consultation with animal and/or child experts).”

There do not appear to be any appellate cases that challenge cross-reporting of animal abuse, although court challenges to mandatory reporting of child abuse involve privacy rights, discriminatory reporting practices, and violation of Constitutional rights against self-incrimination and illegal search-and-seizure.

He cites distinctions among various states’ one-way and two-way reporting laws covering which employees are mandated or permitted to cross-report and the few training programs that can help them identify likely patterns of abuse and distinguish between abused, neglected, injured, and chronically ill animals or children.

“There may be a misunderstanding of the importance of cross-reporting by child protection workers. Workers may see the need to report suspected animal abuse as an additional burden or obstacle to resolving family violence when their primary concern is for the child. Concern over accusing a parent of an additional crime when the goal is to keep the family intact safely may arise. However, this can be mitigated by proper training in the dynamics of family violence that includes expression of violence on pets,” he advises.

Cross-reporting laws “may be difficult to enforce, because mandated cross-reporters may lack the experience and training needed to recognize the signs of animal abuse. Many people are unfamiliar with the needs of certain species of animals, and may not know how to determine whether the animals’ living conditions are salubrious to the animals’ health or meet their needs.

“While it is clearly a minority of states with cross-reporting laws, the research shows the benefits,” he concludes. “However, this must be combined with proper training and legislative definitions that are clear and cover all forms of abuse. As research becomes more clear, and the public is more informed, it is likely that more states will enact mandatory cross-reporting laws.”

-- Bishop, T. (2021). Detail discussion of cross-reporting laws for child abuse and animal abuse. Michigan State University College of Law. <https://www.animallaw.info/article/detailed-discussion-cross-reporting-laws>.

DOMESTIC ABUSE... and THE LINK

Maine Becomes 5th State to Require Courts to Consider Pets' Welfare in Divorce Settlements

Maine has become the fifth state to grant courts the power to award custody of companion animals in divorce proceedings' property settlement disputes to the party determined to be in the animals' best interests. This process, which mirrors provisions long in place for child custody, was first introduced in Alaska in 2016 and can be a key factor particularly when domestic violence is an issue in the divorce. Similar laws were enacted in Illinois (2017), California (2018), and New Hampshire (2019).



Maine LD 535 was scheduled to be carried over to a future legislative session. Due to a need to get a budget passed quickly, the Maine Legislature took the unusual step of passing the budget and adjourning the session with a number of bills carried over. However, the Legislature then went back into a special session shortly thereafter and continued working on a number of bills. **LD 535** was passed and went into law without the Governor's signature in June. It will go into effect in October.

The new law revises Sec. 1. 19-A MRSA §953, sub. 10, to say that courts shall award ownership of companion animals to only one party after considering all relevant factors, including but not limited to:

- A. The well-being and basic daily needs of the companion animal;
- B. The amount of time each party has spent with the companion animal during the marriage tending to the companion animal's nutritional, grooming, physical and medical needs;
- C. The ability of a party to continue to own, support and provide adequate care for the companion animal;
- D. The emotional attachment of a party to the companion animal;
- E. The emotional attachment of any child in the household to the companion animal and the benefit to the child of the companion animal's remaining in the primary residence of the child;
- F. Any domestic violence between the parties or in the household of the parties; and
- G. Any history of animal abuse or other unsafe conditions for the companion animal.

Paid Fellowship Available to Assist Homeless Persons with Pets

My Dog Is My Home, a national nonprofit dedicated to expanding access to shelter for individuals, including survivors of domestic violence, experiencing homelessness and their companion animals, is accepting applications for a paid fellowship for the fall cycle of the Co-Sheltering Collaborative. The person selected will assist My Dog Is My Home with administrative tasks related to the collaborative and the annual co-sheltering conference.



The position offers a monthly stipend of \$1,400 for one semester, with potential for a fellowship extension for a full academic year depending on funding availability. The fellow can work remotely for approximately 14 hours per week. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until the position is filled. Details about the position and the application process are on the [organization's website](#).



National Initiative in Canada to Address Gap In Pet-Friendly Sheltering Opportunities

The Canadian government is funding a national initiative to address the gap in domestic violence shelters that are able to accommodate the pets of survivors. Humane Canada (formerly the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies), the organizer of the [Canadian Violence Link Coalition](#), has announced they are the recipient of a multi-year grant from the Canadian government's Department for Women and Gender Equality's (WAGE) Feminist Response and Recovery Fund.

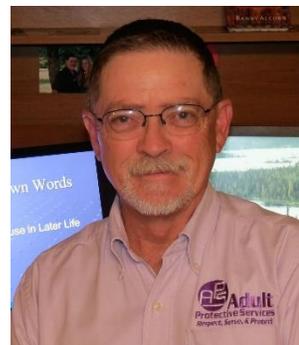
The grant recognizes the Violence Link, the evidence-based connections between violence against animals and violence against people. Research shows that animal abuse often occurs before or alongside family violence. With 62% of Canadians owning at least one pet, a significant number of women fleeing gender-based violence confront a system which does not make adequate provision for their pets. In statistics similar to U.S. findings, a Canadian study found that 56% of domestic abuse victims delayed leaving abusive partners due to concerns for their pets' safety (*See the [October 2018 LINK-Letter](#)*).

"No survivor should be forced to choose between their own safety and that of their pet," said Hannah Brown of Humane Canada's Violence Link coalition. Building on the work of the Coalition, the WAGE grant will launch Humane Canada's national project aimed at addressing this gap in the system in order to stop the cycle of violence, thereby protecting both women and their pets.

ELDER ABUSE... and THE LINK

Paul Needham Honored with National Elder Abuse Prevention Award

Paul Needham, who serves on the National Link Coalition's steering committee, was honored recently with the [Institute on Violence, Abuse and Trauma](#)'s Rosalie S. Wolf Memorial Elder Abuse Prevention Award. Needham, of Shawnee, Okla., retired a few years ago from the Oklahoma Department of Human Services' Family Support Services Division Training Unit. He had been Lead Trainer and Training Developer for Adult Protective Services Academies since 2003. He chairs the National Adult Protective Services' Education Committee and continues to travel nationally to train APS workers.



Paul Needham

Paul has chaired the elder abuse track for the Oklahoma Conference on Aging and has served on the Board of Directors of the National Staff Development and Training Association and as a trainer for the National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life.

IVAT wrote, "This award is presented to the individual that best illustrates dedication and commitment to the ideals of Rosalie Wolf in the prevention and reduction of incidents of elder abuse through research, education, policy, and practice. Mr. Needham has spent over 35 years in the realm of Adult Protective Services and elder abuse in such positions as a front-line worker, supervisor, investigator, and trainer. His numerous years of work and experience exemplify his dedication and true passion in servicing those elders who have experienced trauma and abuse. His actions carry on the legacy of this award as well as expand the nation's understanding on issues of elder abuse!"

Congratulations, Paul!

SOCIAL WORK... and THE LINK

Online Program on Assessment and Treatment of Animal Offenders

The New York University's Silver School of Social Work and the Animals & Society Institute will present a [two-part live online program](#) on "BARK: Behavior, Accountability, Responsibility, and Knowledge: A Diversion Intervention for Adults Who Abuse Animals." The event will take place Wed., Oct. 13, and Thurs., Oct. 21, from 6:00 – 7:30 pm EDT.



Ken Shapiro & Kimberly Spanjol

The BARK diversion program is a group intervention based on the identification, assessment, and treatment of adults who abuse animals using the AniCare Approach. The course will provide guidance on how to identify, assess, and treat adults who have abused animals. Topics covered include: how to frame the therapy; establish a working relationship; deal with resistance; establish accountability; and clarify values related to animals. It also teaches self-management skills including empathy, accommodation, reciprocity, nurturance, anger management, and stress-management.

Presenters will be Kenneth Shapiro, a retired clinical psychologist and founder of the Animals & Society Institute, and Kimberly Spanjol, a criminologist and assistant professor of criminal justice and sociology at Iona College. The course is NYSED and ASWB/ACE approved for 3 CE contact hours.

Animal-Assisted Social Work Faculty Members Sought



Slippery Rock University in Pennsylvania has announced that its animal-assisted social work program is expanding and the university is actively recruiting new faculty members for the Fall and Spring. Yvonne Eaton-Stull, associate professor and MSW Program Director, tells *The LINK-Letter* that the program "is growing by leaps and bounds."

Applications are invited for a nine-month appointment as a full-time social work faculty member on a tenure track for the Spring 2022 semester. The position will require teaching four classes in both the BSSW and MSW programs with three preparations and some office work. Application details are available from the [Office of Human Resources](#).

Veterinary Social Work Opportunities at Two Universities

Two full-time veterinary social work positions have opened up. An embedded VSW position is available at the [Tuskegee College of Veterinary Medicine](#). Applications are being accepted until Oct. 10. The [University of Tennessee](#) is seeking an AlignCare VSW position in the Program for Pet Health Equity.



What is The LINK?

Legislation...

Intervention...

Networking...

Knowledge...

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

RAISING LINK AWARENESS

Spotabuse Posters Inform Visitors in Virginia Courthouse



Milwaukee's renowned Spotabuse.org campaign – a collaboration between six community agencies to fight domestic violence by having the public report animal abuse to 911 (See the [June 2014 LINK-Letter](#)) – has been promoted in Virginia. The Hon. Lee Chitwood, a family courts judge in Pulaski, Va., obtained three of the Spotabuse posters and had them installed in a court waiting room. The posters describe how dogs and cats can not only help find bombs and drugs, but can also reduce blood pressure, stress and domestic abuse and aid the blind, elderly and abused. The Milwaukee campaign Links the district attorney, police, animal control, humane society, domestic violence shelter, and a PR agency with dramatic, graphic images of abused vulnerable victims.

Link Module Developed for Animal Control Officers' Training



NATIONAL ANIMAL
CARE & CONTROL ASSOCIATION

The National Link Coalition has authored a training module on the Link between animal abuse and human violence that is being incorporated into the [Level I training program](#) for animal control officers conducted by the National Animal Care & Control Association (NACA).



"Protecting Public Safety by Preventing and Responding to Animal Abuse" was designed by National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow in conjunction with the Justice

Clearinghouse. The eight-lesson program includes a series of recorded PowerPoints addressing:

- Introduction
- Getting started
- Why is The Link important?
- Why should animal abuse be taken seriously?
- Child maltreatment and animal abuse
- The Link between domestic violence and animal abuse
- Elder abuse and animal abuse
- Legislative responses and your next steps

The 80-minute module aims to help animal control officers understand how their work with animals impacts human health and safety, and to encourage them to establish collaborative community systems that interface with their colleagues in human services. Such coordinated efforts can result in more comprehensive public safety programming than traditional siloed approaches.

The program encourages ACOs to sign up for *The LINK-Letter* and to use our [National Directory of Abuse Investigation Agencies](#) to help them identify the resources for reporting suspected child maltreatment, elder abuse and domestic violence in their specific community.

Each lesson contains a series of test questions. The lessons on child, elder and domestic abuse each include a “cheat sheet” list of typical signs that the ACO should look for which might suggest suspected family violence. The lessons include maps depicting mandatory reporting states, and a variety of interactive activities.

Arkow, whose first 20 years in the Link field involved working for a humane society that had major city and county animal control contracts, was a co-founder of NACA.

VETERINARY MEDICINE... and THE LINK

60% of DVMs Consider Animal Abuse an Important Welfare Issue



Nienke Endenburg & Gregg Takashima

61.8% in North America, 56.4% in Europe, 55.1% in Africa, 50% in South America, and 46% in Oceania.

What is believed to be the first global survey to examine which animal welfare issues are considered to be the most important by companion animal veterinarians worldwide is reporting that 60% of responding veterinarians consider animal abuse to be either “very important” or “important.” When broken down by geographical region, these percentages varied: animal abuse was considered to be very important or important by 71.8% of veterinarians in Asia,

The survey of 1,015 respondents found that overall, the top three animal welfare concerns reported worldwide were pet obesity, age-related issues and lack of knowledge, although there were differences across regions possibly due to cultural and socioeconomic factors. Other animal welfare issues among the 20 items in the survey included: incorrect or inappropriate nutrition; genetic or breed-related issues; lack of routine prophylaxis; delay or refusal to euthanize; uncontrolled or overbreeding; lack of socialization; and separation-related behaviors.

The study also examined age and gender differences in participants’ responses, with female veterinarians reporting more welfare issues than their male counterparts and older veterinarians reporting fewer welfare concerns than younger veterinarians.

-- Endenburg, N., Takashima, G., van Lith, H.A., Bacon, H., & Hazel, S.J., et al. (2021). Animal welfare worldwide: The opinion of practicing veterinarians. *Journal of Applied Welfare Science*, 24(3), 215-237.

ANIMAL SEXUAL ABUSE... and THE LINK

Scandinavian Articles Review Animal Sexual Abuse Literature

What may be the first academic journal article in Norway to address animal sexual abuse cites several Link authorities in an extensive synopsis of some of the available literature from the perspectives of law, veterinary science and psychology. The article notes that while sexual contact between humans and animals has been documented for centuries, its prevalence today remains unknown. It notes that research on individuals who have sexual contact with animals has largely been conducted on individuals who are incarcerated or who are recruited from the internet and who consider themselves zoophiles.



Anja Vaskinn (left) & Karianne Muri

Anja Vaskinn, of the Norwegian Center for Research on Mental Illness at the University of Oslo, and Karianne Muri of the Department of Production Animal Medicine, Norwegian University of Life Sciences Veterinary College, discuss whether human beings who conduct sexual acts with animals are at increased risk of interpersonal violence. They also discuss the claims that zoophilia may be a sexual orientation and that sexual contact should be tolerated as long as the animal does not suffer, and the opposing view that sexual contact with animals is always wrong because it involves coercion, violates the rights of others, and because the animal cannot provide genuine consent or report abuse. This lack of consent is paramount to current psychiatric classifications of zoophilia, and reporting of animal abuse is one of the exceptions to health professionals' duty of confidentiality, they emphasize.

The article concludes that there are many European countries that ban either all or selected sexual acts with animals and that the dynamics of power and control are present in sexual intercourse with animals in the same way as in partner violence, child abuse and sexual violence. Against this backdrop, sexual acts against an animal cannot be defended, they conclude.

-- Vaskinn, A., & Muri, K. (2021). *Mennesker som utøver seksuelle handlinger med dyr (People who engage in sex with animals)*. *Tidsskrift for Norsk psykologforening (Journal of the Norwegian Psychological Association)*, 58(5), 368-377. DOI: [10.52734/5BE9k482](https://doi.org/10.52734/5BE9k482)



Ann-Sofie Lönngren

Meanwhile, a Swedish author has written an extensive look at how bestiality has been portrayed in Swedish literature. Ann-Sofie Lönngren, a literature professor at Södertörn University in Stockholm, describes the contemporary revulsion to people having sex with animals as emerging from long-standing Christian social condemnations and severe punishments for sodomy. This tradition was particularly strong in Sweden where bestiality was made a capital crime in the 13th-14th Centuries, with death penalties for both humans and animals. These offenses, as well as sodomy, were seen as less objective as Sweden became more progressive in its attitude toward same-sex relationships, with bestiality seen as a form of animal cruelty rather than a deviant sexual behavior. The rise of animal pornography has resulted in a dichotomy: the re-criminalization and a continuation of the social taboo, while queer theory has begun to address sex with animals within a wider spectrum of sexual norms.

-- Lönngren, A.-S. (2020, Fall). "That's when he comes rushing into her life": Swedish literary depictions of human-animal sexual contact at the turn of the twenty-first century. *Humanimalia* 12(1), 167-187.

THE LINK... IN THE LEGISLATURES

Link Bills We're Watching

Many state legislatures sessions have ended or are on summer break, but we're still anticipating another record year for bills addressing animal abuse and its Links to other forms of family and community violence. Here are the **121 bills** that we know to have been introduced so far. [Please let us know](#) of any others that we may have missed.

Domestic Violence/Pet Protection Orders



Canada Bill C-3 requires Canadian judges to receive training on the Violence Link between animal abuse and sexual and domestic violence as part of their continuing legal education. The bill passed Parliament's Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs and **was enacted by Royal Assent** on May 6 as 2021 Annual Statute c.8.



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 was being held in the House Judiciary and Rules Committees.**



Arkansas HB 1724 cites the lockdown pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic as "a worst-case scenario for victims experiencing domestic violence" and the rationale to expand existing provisions that allow courts to include pets in domestic violence orders of protection. The measure also allows courts to issue protection orders based on a respondent's "course of control" or "disturbing the peace." The premise for the measure states that the COVID-19 shelter-in-place and other restrictions are being used "as a scare tactic to keep victims isolated from their children or support systems. **It became law on April 30 as Act 1068.**



California AB 258 would require emergency shelter and transitional housing programs for the homeless to allow residents to keep pets. The Assembly Judiciary Committee approved it and sent it to the Appropriations 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 passed the Senate and the Assembly Committee on Housing & Community Development and was sent to the Assembly Appropriations Committee. (It is not clear whether these bills would cover homeless persons who are fleeing domestic violence.)



California SB 320 would amend the law which requires violators of domestic violence protection orders (which may include pet protection provisions) to surrender ammunition as well as any firearms. It passed the Senate and the Assembly Public Safety and Judiciary Committees and was referred to the Appropriations Committee.



Connecticut SB 6 would have added "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 died** 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 as **D.C. Act 23-571**. It clarifies procedures by which victims of intrafamily offense, sexual assault, child sex trafficking, 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/household member, or cruelty to animals owned by an intimate partner, or family/household member. Courts may also issue an anti-stalking order if the petitioner fears a household animal is endangered by the respondent. **It was expected to take effect May 18.**



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 Rules 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. The bills were in the Committee on Committees **when the Legislature adjourned.**



Maine LD 535 requires courts adjudicating the dissolution of marriages to consider the well-being of companion animals in the disposition of property. The bill became law in June without the Governor’s signature and **will go into effect in October.**



Maryland SB 159/HB 281 requires new humane society and animal control officers to undergo 80 hours of training, and existing personnel to receive six hours of continuing education annually, on topics including the association between animal abuse and abuse of the elderly or domestic violence. The bills passed both houses and **were signed into law on May 18.**



Massachusetts S.939/H.1820 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. The bills are in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.



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 SB 71 allows 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 Senate and the House and **was signed into law** by Gov. Mike Parson on June 29. It takes effect on Aug. 28.





Nevada AB 350 would have increased the penalty for harming or killing a companion animal from a Category C felony to a Category B felony if the act was committed to threaten, intimidate or terrorize a person. The bill was in the Judiciary Committee **when the legislature adjourned.**



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 passed both the Senate and the Assembly.



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 bills passed the Senate and Assembly and are back in the Senate.



The Ohio Supreme Court on April 15 **closed a gap** in its inclusion of pets in domestic violence prevention orders by finally including a prohibition against respondents removing, damaging, hiding, or disposing of companion animals in the standard protection order form. Although these provisions were first enacted in 2014, they were not specifically included in the standardized form until this year.



Pennsylvania HB1031 would amend the Protection from Abuse Act to allow courts to grant temporary ownership rights over companion animals in protection orders and direct defendants from possessing, contacting, attempting to contact, transferring, or relocating companion animals or entering the property of anyone sheltering the animal. Final agreements would allow courts to direct defendants to not abuse, harass, stalk, threaten or use physical force against the animal. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.



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 have required the public to be informed about the availability of provisions to include pets and other companion animals in protective orders. The bill passed the House and was in the Senate Jurisprudence Committee **when the Legislature adjourned.**



Washington HB 1293, the “Survivors’ Justice Act,” would have allowed 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 have imposed 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 was in the Committee on Public Safety **when the legislative session ended.**

Animal Abuse and Elder/Disabled Abuse



Maryland SB 159/HB 281 requires new humane society and animal control officers to undergo 80 hours of training, and existing personnel to receive six hours of continuing education annually, on a variety of topics including the association between animal abuse and abuse of the elderly or domestic violence. The bills were **signed into law on May 18.**



Maryland HB 234/SB 607 prohibits the willful and malicious killing, injuring, or interfering with a service animal. Offenders face up to two years in prison and/or a \$2,500 fine and may have to pay restitution for all damages. **The bill was signed into law and takes effect Oct. 1.**



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.



Pennsylvania HB 1681 would impose a 25-year ban on offenders convicted of sexual intercourse with an animal from employment working with care-dependent adults. Facilities covered by the employment ban would include residential care homes, long-term nursing homes, home health care agencies, hospices, adult daily living centers, personal care homes, assisted living residences, and any other public or private organization that uses public funds to provide care to care-dependent individuals. The bill is in the House Committee on Aging and Older Adult Services.

Animal Hoarding



Missouri HB 373 would have added animal hoarding to the definition of animal neglect and require mental health evaluations for offenders. It was in the Rules Committee **when the legislative session ended.**



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 2nd 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.

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 expands the permitted use of certified facility dogs for child witnesses to also include vulnerable witnesses (e.g., with intellectual or developmental disabilities), and expands the areas where these dogs may assist witnesses from courthouses to also include law enforcement investigations, children’s advocacy centers, prosecutors’ offices, and offices of court-appointed special advocates and guardians ad litem. **The bill was signed into law on April 21.**



Florida SB 96 / HB 7039 establishes 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 requires child protective investigators to report known or suspected animal cruelty and grants them criminal, civil and administrative immunity for such reports. It similarly requires 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 will jointly develop a one-hour training module on The Link and on timely cross-reporting procedures. It also redefines bestiality as “sexual contact with an animal” and bans animal pornography. **SB 96** passed the Senate 40-0 and the House 116-0 and **was signed into law** by Gov. Ron DeSantis on June 29. It took effect on July 1.



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. The bill was in the Committee on Committees **when the Legislature adjourned.**



Maryland HB 186/SB7 expands the existing “Court Dog and Child Witness Program,” which allows facility dogs or therapy dogs to accompany child witnesses in court proceedings and other court processes, to now include such dogs in Veterans Treatment Courts. The program is also renamed as the “Court Dog Program.” The measure was **signed into law on May 18.**





Massachusetts H.1716/S. 943 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. The bills are in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.



Missouri SB 71 allows 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 Senate and the House and **was signed into law** by Gov. Mike Parson on June 29. It takes effect on Aug. 28.



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 and **S 4130** 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 and Senate Codes Committees.



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.



North Carolina HB 544 would make it a felony to permit a person under age 18 to attend or participate in any dog- or cock-fighting. The bill passed the House and is in the Senate Committee on Rules and Operations.



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 passed the Senate and is in the House Judiciary Committee.



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



Texas HB 1071 allows 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 was signed into law on June 3 and took effect on Sept. 1.**



Washington HB 1292 would have created a new crime of “providing harmful material to a minor” that would have included “patently offensive representations or descriptions” of bestiality and animal mutilation, dismemberment, rape, or torture. The bill was in the Committee on Public Safety **when the legislative session ended.**

Animal Sexual Abuse



Colorado Ballot Initiative 16, proposed for 2022, “Protect Animals from Unnecessary Suffering and Exploitation” (PAUSE), would amend bestiality statutes to criminalize safe and common artificial insemination of dogs, horses and livestock as a “sexual act with an animal.” Colorado veterinarians and animal welfare groups are opposed to the proposal.



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



Florida SB 96/HB 7039 redefines bestiality as “sexual contact with an animal” and bans animal pornography. It also establishes 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. The new law raises bestiality from a 1st-degree misdemeanor to a 3rd-degree felony. **SB 96** passed the Senate and House unanimously and **was signed into law** on June 29 and took effect on July 1.



Hawai’I SB 343/HB1085 establishes the crime of sexual assault of an animal as a Class C felony, or Class B felony if committed in the presence of a minor. Because animal sexual assault is strongly linked to child sexual abuse, interpersonal violence and other animal cruelty, convicted offenders will now be required to surrender all sexually abused animal(s), reimburse animal services agencies for the animals’ care and medical treatment, attend psychiatric or psychological counseling, make restitution to animals’ owners, and be prohibited from owning any animals, residing in any household where animals are present, and working or volunteering with animal establishments for at least five years after release from incarceration. **The measure was signed into law on June 7 and took effect immediately,**



Missouri HB 373 would have required mental health evaluations for offenders of bestiality and animal hoarding; it was in the Rules Committee **when the legislative session ended.**



New York A614 would make sexual contact with animals a felony if serious injury or death of the animal occurs, require offenders to relinquish all animals, bar them from future possession of animals, and undergo psychological evaluation. It is in the Agriculture Committee.



Oregon Ballot Initiative 13, proposed for 2022, would add breeding domestic, livestock and equine animals to the definition of sexual assault of an animal.

 **Washington HB 1292** would have made 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 was in the Public Safety Committee **when the legislature adjourned.**

 **West Virginia HB 2827** would have created a new felony offense of sexual crimes against animals. The bill was in the Judiciary Committee **when the Legislature adjourned.**

 **Wyoming HB46** defines and creates the misdemeanor crime of bestiality; The bill passed the House 60-0 and the Senate 30-0. On March 30 it was signed into law and took effect on July 1.



Animal Abuse and Other Crimes

 **U.S. H.R. 1016**, the Animal Cruelty Enforcement (ACE) Act, introduced because of cited Links between animal cruelty and violence against humans, 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's Environmental and Natural Resources Division. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee's subcommittee on Antitrust, Commercial and Administrative Law.

 **Illinois HB 3531** would expand the state's criminal code prohibitions of violent video games to include games in which a character kills or causes serious physical or psychological harm to an animal. Psychological harm would be defined as including depictions of child abuse, sexual abuse, animal abuse, domestic violence, and violence against women. The bill is in the House Rules 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. The bill was in the Committee on Committees **when the Legislature adjourned.**

 **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 Senate Agriculture and Assembly Codes 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/S6112** would define animal fighting as a criminal act when referring to enterprise corruption. The bills are in the Assembly and Senate Codes Committees.



New York A7267 would require the prosecutor in each county to appoint an assistant district attorney to oversee the prosecution of crimes against animals. The bill is in the Local Governments Committee.



Oregon HB 2271 would have appropriated 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 was in the House Judiciary Committee **when the legislature adjourned.**



Pennsylvania HB 1570 (“Cash’s Law”) would allow courts to add a sentencing enhancement in cases of burglary or criminal trespass where a domestic animal is harmed or killed in the course of that crime. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.



Washington HB 1038 would have barred individuals convicted or found not guilty by reason of insanity of animal cruelty 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 was in the Committee on Civil Rights & Judiciary **when the legislative session ended.**

Cross-Reporting



Florida HB 47 and SB 216 (“Allie’s Law”) would have required 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 have allowed 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 died** in the House Regulatory Reform Subcommittee; **SB 216 and SB 218 died** in the Senate Agriculture Committee.



Hawai’i HB1086/SB609 requires veterinarians to report animal injury, death or abuse to law enforcement where there is reasonable cause to believe that the animal is a victim of dogfighting or animal abuse. The measures give veterinarians immunity for civil liability for making the reports. **HB1086 was signed into law** on June 28 and took effect immediately.



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 was in the Senate Agriculture Committee **when the Legislature adjourned.**



Massachusetts H.1716/S.943 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. The bills are in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.

 **Missouri HB 643** would have given immunity from civil liability to anyone who reports suspected animal cruelty in good faith; intentional filing of a false report would have been a misdemeanor and civilly liable. The bill was in the House Committee on Crime Prevention **when the legislative session ended.**

 **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-A/S 5023-A** 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 would allow the disclosure of records concerning the animal's condition and treatment. (Existing law allows voluntary reporting.) The bills have passed the Senate and Assembly.

 **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** adds 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 was signed into law on June 11.**



 **Texas HB 4330** would have required veterinarians to report suspected cruelty of non-livestock animals to the county sheriff or municipal police agency; reports made in good faith would have been 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. The bill was in the House Committee on Criminal Jurisprudence **when the Legislature adjourned.**

“CASA for Animals”



Florida S 1316/H 1003 would have provided 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 died** 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 Rules 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 A 5315/S 3525-A would allow courts to appoint volunteer lawyers and law students to advocate for animals' interests and to help ensure the well-being of living animal victims in civil and criminal 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 and Senate Judiciary Committees recommended they be **held for further study**.

Psychological Evaluation of Offenders



Connecticut H 6251 would have required 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 died** in the Joint Committee on the Judiciary.



Missouri HB 643 would have allowed courts to impose psychological or psychiatric evaluation and treatment for adult and juvenile animal cruelty offenders. Evaluation and treatment would have been mandatory for animal torture or motivation or upon second and subsequent convictions. **HB 373** would have required mental health evaluations for offenders of bestiality and animal hoarding. The bills **died when the legislature adjourned**.



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.



Texas SB 48 allows courts to require defendants convicted of certain animal cruelty and animal fighting crimes to undergo psychological counseling or other appropriate treatment programs. **The measure was signed into law on June 14 and takes effect on Sept. 1.**

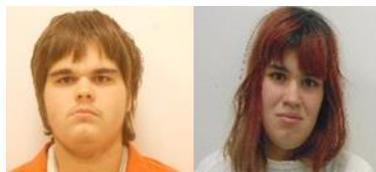




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THE LINK... IN THE NEWS

Couple with Animal Cruelty History Charged in Death of 10-Day-Old Daughter



Matthew & Elizabeth Sebolka

A Richmond, Va. couple – one of whom has a history of animal cruelty – have been charged in the abuse of their 10-day-old baby daughter after trying to blame the infant’s skull fracture and other injuries resulting in her death on the family cat. [WTVR-TV](#) reported that Matthew Lee Sebolka, 23, told detectives his daughter, Raven Michelle, was sitting in her car seat while he went to the bathroom; he allegedly then claimed when he returned the cat was sitting on the baby’s neck. He then reportedly called the girl’s mother, Elizabeth Tyler Sebolka, who took the girl to a hospital on a city bus because she had a rash and puffy eyes. The medical examiner called the newborn’s death 11 days later a homicide from a fractured skull, bruising and possible signs of suffocation. The couple were initially charged with abuse and neglect of a child causing serious injury but additional charges may be possible. Matthew Sebolka had previously been charged with animal cruelty which were dropped when he was convicted on three counts of inadequate animal care.



Colton Hurley

Man Gets 9 Years in Prison After Shooting Horse and Himself in Domestic Violence/Child Abuse Incident

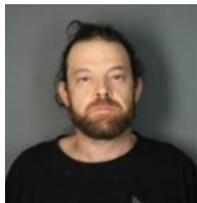
In one of the few cases that has come to our attention Linking domestic violence and cruelty to a horse, a South Carolina man was sentenced to nine years in prison after pleading guilty to attempted murder and shooting a horse and himself in the face with a stolen shotgun.

Colton David Hurley was arrested on April 9, 2018, and charged with attempted murder, kidnapping, “aggravated ill treatment of an animal,” child neglect, burglary, and weapons offenses. The Laurens County Sheriff’s Office reported that deputies arriving at a residence in the community of Hickory Tavern heard multiple gunshots and saw two crashed vehicles. Hurley had come to the residence looking for the unidentified victim and rammed her vehicle multiple times when she returned home.

After escaping her vehicle Hurley pursued her, tackling and assaulting her, before she was able to escape again. Hurley went to a nearby residence and stole a shotgun which he then used to shoot and kill a horse at point-blank range before capturing the woman and a small child and forcing them to watch while he turned the shotgun on himself. He pled guilty to the attempted murder charge and was sentenced on July 17, 2019. Hurley had also been charged earlier in 2018 with domestic violence.

“The Laurens County Sheriff’s Office is continuing my commitment to battle domestic violence in our communities and will strive to assist domestic violence victims escape these types of volatile relationships,” said Sheriff Don Reynolds following the arrest. “Hurley’s actions during this incident caused the victim to fear for her life and unnecessarily caused the death of an animal. Domestic violence and the inhumane and ill treatment of animals will not be tolerated.”

Man Charged with Shooting at Officers as Dogs and Goat Are Rescued



James Bryan

Police in Elmira, N.Y. charged James Bryan, 44, with reckless endangerment after a standoff in which shots were fired at a SWAT team, firearms and a marijuana-growing operation were recovered, animal control took possession of three dogs and a goat that were living in the basement, and code enforcement declared the residence uninhabitable. Witnesses told [WETM-TV](#) that Bryan had allegedly shot someone before police arrived and that two dogs were trying to attack someone else. Several people in the house who had warrants out for their arrest were also taken into custody. Police said further charges were likely and that the investigation was continuing.

Man Charged with Strangling Dog and Woman, Warning Her She Was Next



David Dally

David A. Dally, 55, of Island Lake, Ill., was charged with aggravated cruelty to animals, aggravated domestic battery and two counts of domestic battery for allegedly strangling a woman’s small dog and then strangling the woman as she tried to help the dog. The [Northwest Herald](#) reported that Dally also allegedly strangled a female household member. Police said that Dally had been arguing with the woman when he strangled the dog and threw it against the wall, then strangled her and warned her she was “next” as she tried to help the dog. When officers arrived, Dally reportedly picked up the dog, which was dead, and continued to pet it as if it were alive.

Woman with Narcotics History Gets Probation in Dog Cruelty Case

A Tennessee woman who had previously been convicted for marijuana possession, and whose husband had been convicted and sentenced to 17 years in federal prison on methamphetamine trafficking charges, received two years' probation for the chaining and emaciation of a dog that eventually had to be euthanized. The [Crossville, Tenn. Chronicle](#) reported that Jordyn Shae Howard, 26, pled guilty to the offense which occurred in 2019. The incident involved a dog found tethered to a tree on a chain padlocked to the dog's collar that was being fed and kept warm by volunteer animal advocates. A volunteer later took the dog to a veterinary hospital where it received the lowest rank on the Body Condition Scoring chart and had to be euthanized because it could not recover. She was also sentenced to 150 hours of community service, restitution for the veterinary care, was banned from having animals for four years, and subjected to random drug testing. Her husband at the time, Jason L. Howard, 36, was [sentenced in 2020](#) when he was caught transporting nearly a kilogram of methamphetamine and a loaded firearm after meeting with a known drug trafficker in Georgia.



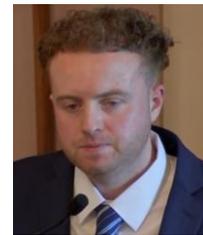
Jordyn Shae Howard

Man Convicted in Murder of Police Officer and Shooting of K-9



Sgt. Gannon & Nero

A Massachusetts jury convicted Thomas Latanowich, 32, of Somerville on charges of second-degree murder and mistreating a police dog in the killing of Yarmouth police Sgt. Sean Gannon and shooting his K-9 partner "Nero." Latanowich escaped a first-degree murder conviction, which would have required a mandatory life sentence without parole, but will still face at least 25 years in prison for the murder and 10-to-15 years for other



Thomas Latanowich

charges including being a career criminal. [NBC10 Boston](#) reported that Gannon was killed while attempting to serve an arrest warrant in 2018 on Latanowich for allegedly violating probation. A [Sean M. Gannon Memorial Fund](#) has been established to support charitable organizations. "Nero" survived the shooting.

Woman Charged with Throwing Ex-Boyfriend's Cat in River

An Oak Hill, Fla. woman who was apparently upset at her boyfriend not moving out fast enough after the couple broke up was charged with animal cruelty and assault for allegedly throwing his cat in the intracoastal waterway. According to [Volusia County Sheriff's Department reports](#), Christa Anne Thistle, 53, began removing her ex's belongings, including his cat named "Stanley", from their RV in a campground. Thistle then reportedly threw Stanley in the river while he was still caged in a crate. The boyfriend jumped into the river to save the cat. The assault charge came after she allegedly demanded to make a phone call, bond out and kill her ex-boyfriend. Stanley was taken to Volusia County Animal Services for evaluation.



Christa Thistle

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.

Sept. 11-14 – Orlando, Fla.: Katie Campbell of RedRover will present “Domestic Violence and Pets: Creating Pet-Friendly Programs that Work” at the National Organization for Victim Assistance’s 47th [Annual Training Event](#).

Sept. 15-16 – Burgos, Spain (online): Phil Arkow will present a keynote address on “The Interconnection Between Animal and Human Abuse and Neglect,” and Laura Wauthier of the University of Edinburgh will present “What Kind of Bond? Measuring Children’s Attachment to Pets and Understanding Its Role in Chases of Childhood Animal Harm,” at the [One Welfare World Conference](#).

Sept. 15-16 – Oklahoma City, Okla.: Andrew Campbell will present “Disaster Without, Disaster Within: Family Violence, Natural Disasters and the COVID-19 Pandemic” and “Stuck in the Middle with You: Risks of Harm for Children and Pets in Domestically Violent Homes” at the Oklahoma Attorney General Office’s [Partners for Change Conference](#).

Sept. 19 – Godmachester, U.K. (online): Lesley Winton will present “Reversing the Cycle of Abuse and Fostering Compassion” at the [Society for Companion Animal Studies’ conference](#) on Animal-Assisted Interventions: Research Meets Practice.”

Sept. 21 – Columbus, Ohio (online): Phil Arkow, Jessica Bibbo, Barbara Boat, Vicki Deisner, Janet Hoy-Gerlach, and others will conduct an [all-day webinar](#) on “Better Together: Cross-Reporting for Humane and Human Services,” with details on how Ohio’s new **HB 33** cross-reporting law is addressing The Link.

Sept. 22 – Harrisburg, Pa.. (online): The [Keystone Link](#) will hold its recurring meeting.

Sept. 22 (online): The ASPCA will conduct a [Zoom webinar](#) called “Northern Tier Shelter Initiative: Collaborating with Indigenous Communities in the Northern Tier to Advance Animal and Human Welfare.”

Sept. 27 – Reno, Nev. (online): Kathleen Wood of the Animal Legal Defense Fund will conduct a “Monday Morning Moments” [webinar](#) for the National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges’ Judicial Wellness Initiative on “Wellness and Animal Companionship.”

Sept. 29 (online): Andrew Campbell will discuss academic literature and victim accounts of partner, child, elder, and pet abuse in rural communities in “The Road Less Traveled: Family Violence in Rural Communities” for the [Justice Clearinghouse](#) webinar series.

Oct. 4-5 (online): Allie Phillips will give a virtual presentation on “Animal Abuse & Family Violence: Rural Strategies to Keep Families Safe,” and on pet-friendly domestic violence sheltering, for the [Institute for Coordinated Community Response](#).

Oct. 5 – Washington, D.C. (online): Phil Arkow, Kristin Burki of the National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL), and Blair Decker of the Safety Network for Abused Animals and People (SNAAP) in the District of Columbia will lead a panel discussion on domestic violence, elder abuse and animal abuse for the [Network for Victim Recovery of DC](#).

Oct. 7 – Sylvester, Ga.: Jessica Rock and Douglas Bridges will discuss The Link between animal abuse, dogfighting and other violent crimes as part of an [all-day training](#) on Animal Law & Investigation hosted by the Worth County Sheriff's Office.

Oct. 10 – Tokyo, Japan (online): The Animal Literary Research Institute and the Japanese Association for the Promotion of Canine Good Citizens will present “The Link between Animal Abuse and Elder Abuse” and “Why People Abuse Animals” in the [5th seminar](#) of the Online Seminar Series Exploring The LINK between Animal Abuse and Interpersonal Violence.”

Oct. 10 – Westerville, Ohio: Alba Martinez will present on The Link and veterinary forensics at the Ohio Association of Veterinary Technicians' [Discovery 2021 conference](#).

Oct. 13 & Oct. 21 – New York City, N.Y. (online): The New York University's Silver School of Social Work and the Animals & Society Institute will present a [two-part live online program](#) on “BARK: Behavior, Accountability, Responsibility, and Knowledge: A Diversion Intervention for Adults Who Abuse Animals” incorporating the AniCare Approach.

Oct. 15-17 – Portland, Ore. (online): The Animal Legal Defense Fund's [Animal Law Conference](#) will feature 16 presentations on a variety of topics related to The Link.

Oct. 18-29 – San Diego, Calif. (online): The San Diego Humane Society's Humane Law Enforcement [Training Academy](#) for animal care and control officers includes modules on domestic violence and child and elder abuse.

Oct. 20 – Boulder, Colo. (online): John Romero and Justice Montoya-Lewis will present “On the Bench: The Link Between Animal Cruelty, Domestic Violence and Child Abuse and Neglect -What Tribal Judges Can Do,” at the National American Indian Court Judges Association's 52nd annual [Virtual Conference](#).

Oct. 27 – Harrisburg, Pa. (online): The [Keystone Link](#) will hold its recurring meeting.

Oct. 29 – New Rochelle, N.Y. (online): Phil Arkow will present “The ‘Dark Side’ of the Human-Animal Bond: Animal Abuse and its Link with Human Violence” for an [Animal and Human Health class](#) at Iona College.

Nov. 1 – Wilmington, Del.: Phil Arkow will keynote an all-day multidisciplinary Link training for the Delaware Family Courts system.

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](#). Prosecutors Tara Dobec and Christian Lim will provide updates on recent animal abuse and Violence Link cases.

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

Nov. 10 – Forsyth, Ga.: The [Georgia Public Safety Training Center](#) and Animal Law Source will partner for the Crimes Against Animals Symposium, which will feature presentations on “The Link – Animal Cruelty & Human Violence” and “Correlation Between Human Trafficking and Sex Crimes Against Animals & Children.”

Nov. 11 (online): Massachusetts Assistant District Attorney Erin Aiello and Janette Reeve 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. 11 (online): The [Small & Rural Law Enforcement Executives Association](#) will conduct a Link webinar.

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. 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](#).

Nov. 24 – Harrisburg, Pa. (online): The [Keystone Link](#) will hold its recurring meeting.

Dec. 1-3 – Baton Rouge, La.: The Association of Prosecuting Attorneys and Animal Legal Defense Fund will conduct the 10th [National Animal Cruelty Prosecution Conference](#).

Dec. 22 – Harrisburg, Pa. (online): The [Keystone Link](#) will hold its recurring meeting.

Jan. 25, 2022 (online): Phil Arkow will present “Connecting the Dots in Criminal Justice: Preventing Crimes Against People by Focusing on Animal Abuse” for the [Justice Clearinghouse](#) webinar series.

Jan. 26, 2022 – Harrisburg, Pa. (online): The [Keystone Link](#) will hold its recurring meeting.

Feb. 17-18, 2022 – Columbus, Ohio: Phil Arkow will present “Recognizing, Recording and Reporting Suspected Animal Abuse and Neglect” and “All in This Together: Pooling Limited Shelter Resources to Help People and Animals” for the [Midwest Veterinary Conference](#).

May 3, 2022 (online): Phil Arkow will present “The Forgotten Partner in Responding to Animal Abuse: The Veterinarian” for the [Justice Clearinghouse](#) webinar series.



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.

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