



*A monthly report of news from  
**THE GLOBAL RESOURCE CENTER ON THE LINK BETWEEN  
ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE***



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## **HUMAN MEDICINE... and THE LINK**

### **Please Respond to Our Survey About Link Awareness**

**I**n the [May 2025](#) LINK-Letter, we announced that we are conducting a survey to explore health care professionals' comfort level with recognizing and reporting incidents of child, elder and animal abuse. We are seeking responses from anyone who works in the human healthcare professions (e.g., MDs, DOs, nurse practitioners, nurses, physician assistants, etc.) as well as those who work in social service (e.g., therapists, psychologists, counselors, and social workers).



The survey is brief, taking approximately 5 minutes to complete and is entirely anonymous. This survey has been determined as IRB exempt status.

Please click on [this hyperlink](#) to complete the survey or, if it's more convenient, simply take a picture of this QR code with your phone. Thanks for participating!

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*Phil Arkow, Editor  
The National Link Coalition  
16 Grasshopper Drive  
Etowah, NC 28729  
<https://NationalLinkCoalition.org>  
[arkowpets@snip.net](mailto:arkowpets@snip.net)*

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# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE... and THE LINK

## PUPP Act Re-Introduced for Pet Co-Sheltering for the Homeless

**T**he movement to expand co-sheltering of pets from domestic violence shelters to shelters for unhoused individuals, many of whom were made homeless as a result of domestic violence, was advanced on Aug. 8 when U.S. Rep. Jason Crow (D-CO-6) re-introduced into Congress the **Providing for Unhoused People and Pets (PUPP) Act of 2025. H.R. 4921** would authorize the Secretary of Agriculture, acting in direct consultation with the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, to carry out a program to make \$5,000,000 in grants annually through 2030 to eligible entities for providing interim and permanent housing that accommodates homeless persons and homeless families, who have pets.

As with earlier 2021 and 2023 iterations of the bill (*See the [September 2022 LINK-Letter](#)*), grant funds could be used for acquiring, renovating, rehabilitating, repurposing, retrofitting, or constructing a property, and for pet-related operational costs. Facilities would be required to provide:

- **Appropriate supportive services:** including mental health, employment, substance use disorder, and wellness services, to occupants of the housing.
- **Veterinary services:** basic veterinary care and behavioral support for pets, including spay and neuter, basic wellness examinations, vaccinations, dental care, heartworm treatment and prevention, flea and tick treatment and prevention, and basic medical procedures, for pets of occupants of the housing.
- **Animal housing:** accommodations for pets of occupants of the housing that are appropriate for the layout and type of the interim or permanent housing, which may include crates and kennels.

Entities eligible to apply for the federal grants would include units of local government, nonprofit organizations, and organizations providing shelter or housing for homeless persons.

The 2022 version of the bill placed the program under the authority of the Department of Housing & Urban Development. The 2025 PUPP Act would fall under the purview of the Department of Agriculture.



**Clockwise, from top left: Reps. Jason Crow, Brian Fitzpatrick, Brittany Petterson, and Michael Lawler.**

The bill was referred to the Committees on Agriculture and Financial Services. Co-sponsors of the bipartisan 2025 bill include Reps. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-1), Brittany Petterson (D-CO-7), and Michael Lawler (R-NY-17).

The federal definition of “homeless” is located in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ([42 U.S.C. 11302](#)). It includes any individual or family who is experiencing trauma or a lack of safety related to, or fleeing or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous, traumatic, or life-threatening conditions related to the violence against the individual or a family member in their current housing situation, including where the health and safety of children are jeopardized; has no other safe residence; and lacks the resources to obtain other safe permanent housing.

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE... and THE LINK

## Video Helps Shelters To Build Pet Facilities



**Katie Campbell**

A one-hour [video](#) on “Domestic Violence Shelters and Pets: Creating a Pet-Friendly Program that Works for You” has been posted by [DomesticShelters.org](#).

In the video, Katie Campbell from [RedRover](#) discusses The Link between domestic violence and animal abuse, the importance of the human-animal bond, and how to create pet-friendly housing programs.

Campbell offers different models for pet-friendly housing and the importance of working with their communities, and information about RedRover’s domestic violence grants to help fund retrofitting shelters to accommodate survivors’ pets.

## One Health/One Welfare Conference to Address Co-Sheltering of Farm and Large Animals

Humane Canada, in partnership with World Animal Protection, has announced plans to host an inaugural [One Health, One Welfare Conference](#), utilizing the connections between animal welfare, human well-being, and environmental conservation to drive international policy coherence, enhance government investment returns, and promote preventive, upstream action across sectors. The Link between animal abuse and human violence is a key component of the One Welfare framework.

The conference will be held in Ottawa on Nov. 25-26. The speakers scheduled to present include Sue O’Neill, a Ph.D. student at the University of New Brunswick and a survivor of gender-based violence, who will address a relatively unexplored area in Link programming: finding temporary housing for farm and working animals owned by survivors of domestic violence.

“The Impact of the Bond Between Survivors of Gender-Based Violence, Larger Companion, Farmed and Working Animals” will review her study of this issue. As more domestic violence shelters become pet-friendly or offer off-site animal safekeeping options, survivors with farmed, larger companion, and working animals are often excluded from these programs. A new program in Maine will provide shelter for survivors’ horses (*See the [August 2025 LINK-Letter](#)*), but it is not known whether there are other similar programs in either the U.S. or Canada.



**Sue O’Neill**

O’Neill’s study is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada through the Canada Graduate Scholarship – Master’s (CGSM). She is gathering survivors’ voices as well as those of service providers to offer insight as to how the bond between survivors and their farmed, larger companion, and working animals impacts their safety decision-making.

O’Neill will share information on the entanglement of the violence Link, the human-animal bond with these types of animals and the complexities and challenges of experiencing and fleeing violence with these types of animals. She’ll offer a summary of the current research regarding survivors in rural, remote, northern, and farming communities, as well as the initial findings from her innovative study.





# THE COURTS... and THE LINK

## Defining Animals as “More Than Property” Based on Inherent “Dignity”

In the [December 2024 LINK-Letter](#), we reviewed a recent journal article by Canadian researcher Amy Fitzgerald who argued that the growing number of Link-related laws, such as states and provinces that allow courts to include pets in domestic violence protection orders or that include acts of animal abuse within statutory definitions of domestic violence, are helping to redefine animals as something more than their historical categorization as “property.” She proposed that the Link concept of framing animal maltreatment in terms of how animal abuse also harms people warrants positioning animals in a new legal category she called “more-than-property.”

It recently came to our attention that there is a potential precedent for animals being considered other than “property,” albeit not one based on The Link, in Switzerland. Since 1992, Swiss animal welfare has been strongly augmented by a constitutional provision warranting the protection of the “dignity of creature”, explicitly conceding esteem to all nonhuman living beings, namely animals, at the highest legal level. Since 2004, Swiss animals have not been considered “objects” but rather are seen as having their own status between objects and humans – somewhat “more than property”.

In Switzerland, the constitutional status of animal welfare as an essential principle of society resulted in an animal welfare act in 2005 based upon the dignity and well-being of animals and that prohibits both cruelty to animals and disrespect of their dignity. Animal welfare and “dignity of the creature” were defined within Articles 80 and 120, respectively, of the Swiss Constitution as basic principles.

Animal cruelty can theoretically be punished with fines of up to one million Swiss francs, depending on the offender’s income, and imprisonment for up to three years. Swiss anti-cruelty laws, however, appear to make no reference to animal abuse’s



Vanessa Gerritsen

potential impacts on human well-being, but rather are based upon the need to protect an animal’s inherent dignity and its well-being.

As an example, bestiality was prohibited in the Animal Welfare Act of 2008 based upon how humans’ having sex with animals demeans animals’ dignity. (By contrast, anti-bestiality laws in the U.S. in recent years have been framed as animal sexual abuse and enacted based upon documented Links with child sexual abuse and pornography.)

The appreciation of an animal’s dignity is described as “an acknowledgement of its intrinsic nature and a respect of animals in their being and otherness,” animal law attorney Vanessa Gerritsen wrote back in 2013.



-- Gerritsen, V. (2013). Animal welfare in Switzerland – Constitutional aim, social commitment, and a major challenge. *Global Journal of Animal Law*, 1, 1-15. <https://journal.fi/gjal/issue/view/11207>



### What is The LINK?

Legislation...

Intervention...

Networking...

Knowledge...

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

# THE COURTS... and THE LINK

## Bench Cards for Judges Working with Military Families Include The Link

Working in collaboration with the State Justice Institute, the National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges' [12-page guidance](#), *Military Families & the Courts*, offers bench card resources for judges working with military-connected families in child welfare, family violence and juvenile justice.

The resource packet emphasizes that judges may encounter military-connected families in every community – not just those hosting a military installation. “By virtue of their military connection and employment, active-duty personnel have unique priorities, resources, rights, constraints, and obligations that civilian individuals involved as parties in any family law matter do not have. It is important that judges are aware of the active duty status of a litigant as this status triggers a variety of considerations that judges need to take into account,” it states.

Each bench card sets forth targeted questions aimed at gathering relevant details about the family's circumstances, such as deployment status, base location, and access to military resources, to help judges make informed decisions. In two of the bench cards (Child Welfare and Family Violence), pets are included in the considerations.

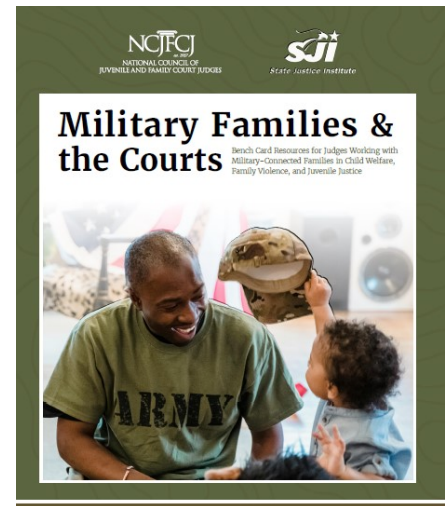
Each bench card offers a decision-tree series of questions to ask, followed with narratives about “Considerations,” “Necessary Information to Gather,” “Key Com-

ponents of a Court Order,” and “Timeline Considerations”.

The manual details differences between civilian and military protection orders and offers an extensive list of resources and a glossary of military terminology with which civilian judges may not be familiar.

A consideration listed in the Child Welfare bench card addresses Pet Safety: “Given the established correlation between animal cruelty and child abuse, judges should consider the safety and welfare of household pets when issuing orders. Additionally, assess the nature of the child's bond and attachment to any pets, as this relationship may be significant to the child's emotional well-being and stability.”

A consideration in the Family Violence bench card also notes Pet Safety: “To many, pets are important sources of comfort and companionship. Ask about pets in the home, concerns about their safety, and include them in orders when appropriate.”



A [webinar](#) describing the materials and how to implement them has also been posted online. A panel of judges Gayl Branum Carr, Jason S. Fleming, and John J. Romero, Jr., presented the 73-minute-long webinar.

NCJFCJ has already been instrumental in creating bench cards in Delaware, Georgia Florida, Oregon, Virginia, and Wisconsin. Similar bench tools are planned for Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, Nevada, Ohio, and Pennsylvania (See the [August 2025 LINK-Letter](#)).



### HELP US KEEP THE LINK FREE!

We at the National Link Coalition believe that information is power, and that power shouldn't be available only to those who can afford to pay. That's why we keep The LINK-Letter and the fabulous resources at [NationalLinkCoalition.org](http://NationalLinkCoalition.org) free of charge.

Thousands of people around the U.S. and world rely on our high-quality information to keep up-to-date on new developments in this rapidly-evolving, dynamic field.

Please support our mission and help keep The Link free for all by making a [tax-deductible contribution](#) to the National Link Coalition today.

## ANIMAL SEX ABUSE ... and THE LINK

### Hungarian Study Examines Zoophilia

**T**he need for better public education and legal reforms about animal sexual abuse in Hungary was highlighted in a study that examined public attitudes towards zoophilia .

Researchers at the University of Veterinary Medicine surveyed 1,753 people; 98.3% of respondents called zoophilia unacceptable from health and animal welfare perspectives. Following other European laws such as Switzerland's (See article elsewhere in this *LINK-Letter*), 98.9% of respondents believed animals possess "dignity", and 84.7% felt that zoophilia negatively impacts this dignity.

Gender and geography impacted responses: women and urban residents were more aware of the legal prohibition and more supportive of strict sanctions.

They cited One Health to describe adverse human health outcomes from sex with animals, and the trend of describing zoophilia as "animal sexual assault" resulting in pressure to strengthen laws.

"It is also crucial to note that zoophilic acts often serve as a predictor for other criminal offenses, and perpetrators of such acts are frequently observed to commit additional crimes, as well," they wrote.

-- Vetter, S., Szilassi, B., & Ózsvári, L. (2025). The public perception of zoophilic acts in Hungary. *Animals*, 15(4), 465. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani15040465>



## CHILD MALTREATMENT... and THE LINK

### Canadian Textbook on Forensic Interviewing Includes Addressing Animal Abuse

**A** landmark textbook to train child abuse investigators to improve their communication skills when conducting forensic interviews has been updated. Janne Holmgren, professor of economics, justice and policy studies at Mount Royal University in Calgary, Alta., wrote her original manual in 2016 (See the *April 2016 LINK-Letter*) with 10 chapters on forensic interviews, report writing, non-verbal behavior, false confessions, and interrogation models. The revised edition is lengthier and reflects technological changes in forensic interviewing, Canadian Criminal Code changes, and examples of best practices particularly when working with people of different cultures or with mental health issues.

As in the earlier edition, the new book includes an extensive section written by the National Link Coalition's Phil Arkow on child abuse and companion animals. In a chapter describing interviewing children who have experienced traumatic events, he describes the intense bonds with pets that may be broken when children or animals are abused or separated during crises, and how acts of animal cruelty should be considered Adverse Childhood Experiences. He cites extensive research on the Link between child and animal abuse and neglect.

Though written primarily for Canadian criminal justice proceedings, the concepts underlying these techniques in forensic



Janne Holmgren

investigations have wide applicability in other nations as well.

-- Holmgren, J.A. (2025). *Forensic Interviewing: A Canadian Critical and Practical Perspective*. Kendall Hunt.



### Permission to Reprint

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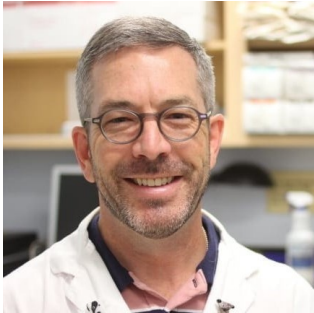
### For Additional Information

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



## OVC Veterinary Forensics Course Gains National Media Attention

**A**fter attending a conference that he said opened his eyes to The Link between animal abuse and human violence, a veterinarian at the Ontario Veterinary College at the University of Guelph has become a pioneer in veterinary forensics and taps into his medical knowledge to find justice for abused animals.



**Shane Bateman**

Shane Bateman designed the forensic veterinary program at OVC and gained national publicity on Canada's [CTV News](#) network in August. He offers a small group of students a week-long rotation featuring mock scenarios populated with stuffed animals and cadavers.

Students are also given lessons in animal welfare laws throughout the country. At the end of the program, they are asked to answer questions as expert witnesses.

Bateman acknowledges the forensics course enhances animal welfare and The Link, bringing animal abuse cases to light in order to help people also living in abusive situations.

"We know that when an animal has been injured in a home from these kids of family violence situations, that means the other people in that home are at a high risk of being injured themselves," Bateman told the network.

"A veterinarian acting on instincts and identifying this issue and bringing it to the appropriate authority's attention means that we potentially have the opportunity to intervene in that family and save injury or potentially save someone's life."

A former Chair of the Board of Directors of the Guelph Humane Society, Bateman also teaches practicing veterinarians the signs of animal abuse. This summer, he launched a continuing education series for equine vets who may encounter abuse in barns or stables.

"Animal welfare is such a core value of most veterinarians. It's part of why we come to the profession," Bateman said.



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***"When an animal has been injured in a home from these kids of family violence situations, that means the other people in that home are at a high risk of being injured themselves."***  
**— Shane Bateman**

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### *Join Us In Our Mission!*

Please help us educate and advocate to promote greater legislative, public and professional understanding of, and response to, The Link between animal abuse and other family and community violence! It is through the generosity of our donors that we are able to continue our trainings, publications, compilation of resources and research, and reporting on Link legislation. Your gift helps us prevent animal cruelty, domestic violence, child abuse and elder abuse and create a safer world. [Please click here](#) to make a secure and tax-deductible contribution.

# VETERINARY MEDICINE ... and THE LINK

## Serbian Veterinary Forensics Study Calls for Greater Response to Non-Accidental Injury



ФАКУЛТЕТ ВЕТЕРИНАРСКЕ МЕДИЦИНЕ  
FVM Faculty of VETERINARY MEDICINE

University of Belgrade

**A** new study examining the incidence of non-accidental injury (NAI) in dogs and cats is adding additional information to the growing interest in veterinarians' responsibilities in preventing abuse in Serbia (See the [March 2025](#) and [May 2025 LINK-Letters](#)) and adding to global calls to recognize animal abuse as a widespread problem impacting society in general.

The study, conducted by the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Belgrade, reviewed 338 dogs and 54 cats submitted for necropsy over a 10-year period to categorize the most common types of NAI and their prevalence in companion animals. The aim of the study was to point out the importance of recognizing NAI and reporting such cases, as well as prosecuting the perpetrators, in order to detect potentially existing violence or prevent future violence in society.

The authors said the high number of animals confirmed to have died from unnatural causes highlights the need for greater involvement from the police, prosecution, and society as a whole to reduce the number of violent animal deaths in the future.

"Animal cruelty poses intricate societal challenges, carrying adverse repercussions for both the victims and broader communities," they wrote, recommending that animals should be granted protections akin to those afforded to human crime victims.

Apart from the suffering caused by such cruelty, animals also face unfair treatment within the criminal justice system: between 2018-2022, 1,017 reports of abusing and killing animals were reported in Serbia but charges were filed in only 121 cases, resulting in 103 convictions.

"Companion animal abuse is a significant concern in our society, particularly for veterinarians and law enforcement agencies dedicated to its prevention. Veterinarians have a moral obligation to report any suspect-

ed cases of companion animal abuse to the appropriate authorities. Animals that have died under suspicious circumstances should undergo postmortem examination at reference laboratories staffed with experienced veterinary forensic pathologists," they wrote.

The lack of education among veterinarians, poor crime scene processing, prosecutorial disinterest, and challenges in guiding owners toward evidence collection are all

significant issues that represent just some of the problems when it comes to animal cruelty cases, they noted.

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***"Animal cruelty poses intricate societal challenges, carrying adverse repercussions for both the victims and broader communities."***

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"Companion animals are in the first place living beings able to feel pain, fear, and suffering, and they have a significant role as companions in human life," they concluded. "Cruelty toward animals is a global problem, the prevention of which is based on educating and raising awareness among citizens about:

- the rights and needs of animals;
- improving and enforcing laws regarding their welfare;
- promoting responsible ownership (microchipping, sterilization, neutering, immune-prophylaxis); and
- developing strategies to prevent animal abuse and killing, as well as by reporting such cases to the relevant authorities."

-- Radojkovic, J.A., Nesic, V., Bozovic, A.I., Davitkov, D., et al. (2024). Cruelty toward dogs and cats in the Republic of Serbia during a 10-year period. *Animals*, 14(13), 1926. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani14131926>





# VETERINARY MEDICINE... and The LINK

## Podcast Explains Why Every Practice Needs a Veterinary Social Worker

**T**he expansion of the social work field into Veterinary Social Work was featured in a [half-hour podcast](#) on the “Love, Baxter” YouTube channel when Valerie Bogie was interviewed about “Why Every Vet Clinic Needs a Veterinary Social Worker.”

Bogie, a Veterinary Social Worker and consultant who found her “dream job” in this field after experiencing burnout and compassion fatigue in earlier animal care work, reviewed the multiple facets of Veterinary Social Work: The Link between human and animal violence; assisting “pet parents” with animal-related grief and bereavement; animal-assisted interventions and their impact on the human-animal relationship; and intentional well-being for animal-related professionals.

***“You are not alone, and you don’t have to do it all. We want to keep you in the profession.”***  
— Valerie Bogie

Social workers are trained to work with people, and specialized Veterinary

Social Workers still help people – just in places where there’s a human-animal connection, Bogie explained. They’re trained in the nuances of the human-animal bond, our relationships with animals, “and how they support us in a way that a lot of people haven’t had that type of support,” she said.

Bogie explained how veterinarians “have to wear so many hats,” often also serving as a marriage counselor or dog trainer in addition to their extensive medical training. Veterinary Social Work adds another tool in the practitioner’s toolbox to assist with working with both clients and staff. “While you are looking to support the pet parents in their grieving or their decision-making with the support of a Veterinary Social Worker, you can also elevate the experience for your employees,” she said.

Veterinary Social Workers can look at the practice’s HR and office management policies to address the needs of the staff as well as the clients and animals, and improve communication skills.

Adam Greenbaum created the [Love, Baxter website](#), after his dog passed away in 2024, to support families through the most difficult moments of pet care with a goal of being the world’s largest end-of-life platform.

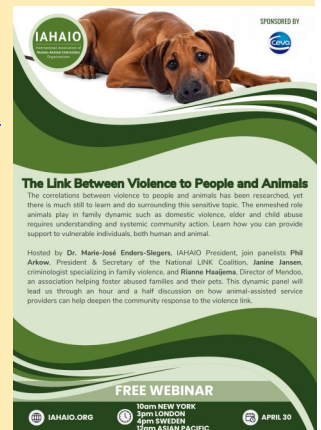


**Valerie Bogie**

Bogie concluded her interview with a reminder to veterinary professionals. “You are not alone, and you don’t have to do it all. There’s now this growing world of Veterinary Social Workers that are trained to support you, to support your staff, to support pet parents, to help you to be able to just practice veterinary medicine to the best of your ability. We want to keep you in the profession. It’s about doing it together and creating a cohesive team around the animal.”

## Raising Global LINK Awareness

**T**he International Association of Human-Animal Interaction Organizations (IAHAIO) has posted a recording of its [April 30, 2025 webinar](#) on “The Link Between Violence to People and Animals.” The panel was led by Marie-Jose Enders-Slegers and included Phil Arkow, President and Secretary of the National LINK Coalition, Janine Jansen, criminologist specializing in family violence, and Rianne Haaijema, Director of Mendoo, a Dutch association helping foster abused families and their pets.



# LEGISLATION... and THE LINK

Most state legislatures have adjourned or gone on summer recess, but we're still following 135 bills that were introduced this session in state legislatures and Congress. The bills are color-coded as follows:

- Purple bills affect domestic violence and pet protection orders
- Dark blue bills affect child abuse and maltreatment
- Grey bills affect abuse of the elderly and disabled
- Pink bills affect animal sexual abuse
- Green bills affect cross-reporting among animal care & control, veterinary and human services professionals
- Orange bills affect court-appointed advocates for animals
- Red bills affect animal hoarding
- Brown bills affect psychological assessments, interventions and treatments for animal cruelty offenders
- Light blue bills affect animal abuse Linked with other crimes

Please join us in following their progress and alert us to any additional bills we may have missed!

**Note:** Inclusion of a bill does not necessarily imply our endorsement of the measure or its specific language, but is included to demonstrate the breadth of proposals and the increased interest by legislators for laws addressing The Link between animal abuse and other crimes and acts of interpersonal violence.

## USA—FEDERAL BILLS

**H.R. 712, the Child and Animal Abuse Detection and Reporting Act**, would direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to include data on animal abuse in the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) clearinghouse for information relating to child abuse and neglect.

**H.R. 1477, the Animal Cruelty Enforcement (ACE) Act**, would establish an Animal Cruelty Crimes Section within the U.S. Department of Justice's Environment and Natural Resources Division.

**H.R. 3683, the FBI Animal Cruelty Taskforce Act**, would establish an animal cruelty crimes taskforce within the FBI to investigate and enforce federal laws, including cases of dogfighting, cockfighting, and crush videos.

**H.R. 3946, the Fighting Inhumane Gambling and High-risk Trafficking (FIGHT) Act** would make it illegal to engage a minor under age 16 in animal fighting ventures, including cockfighting.

**H.R. 4921, the Providing for Unhoused People and Pets (PUPP) Act**, would authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to make grants to modify and upgrade structures to serve as interim and permanent housing to accommodate unhoused individuals with pets

## ALASKA

**HB 101 died when the Legislature adjourned.** It would have allowed judges to consider a history of animal cruelty as an aggravating factor in imposing a sentence outside the sentencing guidelines for domestic violence or distributing material depicting bestiality to a minor under age 18..

## ARIZONA

**HB 2211 died when the Legislature adjourned.** It would have allowed petitioners to file for a "severe threat order of protection" to prevent a respondent who has threatened or committed injury, death or cruel mistreatment of an animal from possessing a firearm.

**HB 2530 died when the Legislature adjourned.** It would have clarified that persons who are experiencing homelessness, such as domestic violence victims, are permitted to bring service animals into homeless shelters.

**SB 1038 died when the Legislature adjourned.** It would have defined aggravated assault to include assault on an animal control officer.

**SB 1412 died when the Legislature adjourned.** It would have expanded the definition of "domestic violence", which includes cruelty, neglect or abandonment, to also include illegally killing a domestic animal.

## CALIFORNIA

**AB 561** would allow domestic violence survivors to file for protection orders — which can include protection of animals — electronically and to appear remotely at hearings.

**SB 221** would expand the definition of stalking to include willfully, maliciously, and repeatedly following or harassing another person and who makes a credible threat to place that person in reasonable fear for the safety of that person's pet, service animal, emotional support animal, or horse.

## FLORIDA

**CS/HB 255, and CS/SB 494 "Dexter's Law", was tabled when the Senate adjourned.** It would have provided harsher penalties for aggravated animal cruelty cases because the bill's sponsor wrote, "Individuals who commit these heinous acts typically don't stop at animals; they are better indicators of future violence, harassment, assault, rape, murder, and arson cases as found by the FBI. Animal abuse is a strong predictor of potential aggravated violence towards humans and animal abuse can serve as an early warning sign for family violence."

## GEORGIA

**SUCCESS!!! HB 177 was signed into law on May 13 and takes effect July 1.** It allows courts to issue protection orders that include “the care, custody and control of any animal owned, possessed, kept, or held as a household pet by either party or by a minor child living in the household or residence of either party.” Court orders can also prevent the respondent from harassing, harming, taking, transferring, encumbering, or concealing pets and committing animal cruelty.

**SB 102 died when the General Assembly adjourned.** It would have made it a crime to bring a minor under age 18 to a dog– or cock-fight.

## HAWAII

**HB 698 died when the Legislature adjourned.** It would have increased the criminal penalties for animal cruelty resulting in an animal’s death, dog fighting, causing the death of a service or law enforcement animal, sexual assault of an animal, and subjecting a minor to sexual contact with an animal. The bill was based on the recognition that: “animal cruelty offenders are a threat to the health and safety of all members of our communities, especially vulnerable populations”; that “animal cruelty is a predictive and co-occurring crime with violence against humans, including children, intimate partners, and the elderly”; and that “children who witness animal abuse are also more likely to abuse animals as teenagers and adults.”

**SB 460 died when the Legislature adjourned.** It would have recognized that children living in a home where domestic violence and threats of animal cruelty occur are victimized even if they have not been physically harmed, and would have given them standing to file for a protection order or a temporary restraining order.

## IDAHO

**SUCCESS!!! HB 380 was signed into law on March 26.** It creates two new crimes of Aggravated Lewd Conduct with a Minor Child, including bestiality. Penalties for offenders are mandatory 25 years-to-life if the victim is aged 13-16, and life imprisonment or the death penalty if the child is aged 12 or younger.

## ILLINOIS

**HB 72** would amend the Code of Criminal Procedure to provide that a person with three or more pending charges for domestic battery, battery, violation of a protection order, criminal damage to household property, or felony animal cruelty that poses a real and present threat to the safety of any person or the community, may be classified as a habitual misdemeanor offender.

**HB 1903** would create the Human Trafficking Order of Protection Act that would include allowing courts to order respondents to stay away from, taking, harming, or disposing of any animal harmed by the petitioner.

**HB 3367** would allow courts to appoint attorneys or law students to serve as special advocates in the interests of justice in any criminal case involving a dog or cat.

## IOWA

**HF 227 and HF 869 died when the Legislature adjourned.** They would have amended the Iowa Veterinary Practice Act to grant veterinarians immunity from administrative, civil, or criminal liability or disciplinary action, and not subject to confidentiality requirements, for acting in good faith and reporting to or cooperating with any peace officer investigating animal mistreatment, animal fighting or bestiality. Veterinarians would also have been immune when providing testimony in any case or assisting in the rescue of a threatened animal. Veterinarians who knowingly made a false report about a client’s alleged conduct would have been subject to disciplinary action, civilly liable for damages, and guilty of a misdemeanor.

## KENTUCKY

**HB 96 died when the General Assembly adjourned.** It would have defined “coercive control” to include intimidating or controlling or compelling conduct by damaging, destroying, threatening to damage or destroy, or forcing the other person to relinquish domestic animals. It would also have included communicating, either directly or indirectly, the intent to harm the other person’s domestic animals, including by use of physical violence; and causing isolation of the other person from domestic animals.

**HB 330 died when the General Assembly adjourned.** It would have required individuals who are subjects of a domestic violence protection order — which may include courts granting possession of the couple’s animals — to surrender any firearms. Protection orders would have been required to include language notifying the respondent about the firearms prohibition.

**HB 194 (“Kyan’s Law”) died when the General Assembly adjourned.** It would have required animal control officers to receive training on recognizing child abuse and would have added animal control officers to the list of people with a duty to report dependency, neglect or abuse of a child.

## LOUISIANA

**SUCCESS!!! S.B. 21** expands the definitions of “healthcare professional” and “healthcare facility” to include veterinarians, veterinary staff, and veterinary clinics for the purpose of including them in existing law penalizing assault and battery of human health care personnel and unlawful disruption of the operation of a human health care facility.

## MAINE

**H.P. 621 died in committee.** It would have created a new Class C criminal offense of Aggravated Operating a Motor Vehicle Under the Influence if the incident resulted in the death of a pet. Offenders would have faced a mandatory fine, incarceration, suspension of the driver’s license, mandatory community service related to animal welfare, and financial restitution to the pet’s owner.

Purple = Domestic Violence  
Dark Blue = Child Abuse  
Grey = Elder/Disabled Abuse  
Pink = Animal Sexual Abuse  
Green = Cross-Reporting  
Orange = Court Animal Advocates  
Red = Animal Hoarding  
Brown = Assessments/Interventions  
Light Blue = Link & Other Crimes



## MASSACHUSETTS

**H.1817** and **S.1206** would allow courts handling divorce settlements to consider, in assigning ownership, care and custody of a pet, “the best interests of the animal, including the animal’s health, safety, comfort and well being and whether any party or family member residing with any party has a history of abuse, cruelty or neglect to animals or humans.”

**H.1832** would add humane officers to the list of professions mandated to report child sexual abuse. Currently, animal control officers are mandated to report, but not humane officers.

**S.1234** would make any parent who allows their child to subject an animal to cruelty or abuse without taking steps to prevent, discourage or correct the action: liable for a fine of up to \$500; and required to undergo psychiatric evaluation. The child would be required to participate in psychiatric rehabilitation under a psychologist who specializes in bullying. The family could be prohibited from having any unsupervised contact with animals and all current animals would be relocated to foster care.

## MICHIGAN

**HB 4300** would create a Courtroom Animal Advocate Program allowing judges to appoint a volunteer pro bono attorney or law student to represent the interest of the animal or of justice in prosecutions involving welfare or custody of animals.

**SB 111** would allow elders and vulnerable adults to petition for personal protection orders that could include restraining or enjoining individuals from harming, removing or threatening the petitioner’s animal with the intent to cause the petitioner mental distress or to exert control over the petitioner.

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**SB 111 (Sub. S-1)** would allow elders and disabled and vulnerable adults to petition for a personal protection order that would include restraining an individual from harming, killing, torturing, neglecting, or removing an animal

## MINNESOTA

**HF 1816** and **SF 1163** would create a statewide Link-based Office of Animal Protection office in the Department Bureau of Criminal Apprehension to be more effective in enforcing animal cruelty laws that protect animals and people. The bills will carry over to the 2026 session.

## MISSOURI

**HB 1298, HB 1513, SB 65** and **SB 655 died when the Legislature adjourned.** They would have added animal control officers and humane investigators to the professionals mandated to report suspected elder abuse and child abuse. APS and CPS workers, foster care advocates and volunteers, and psychologists, mental health professionals, social workers, school counselors, teachers, other school professionals, juvenile officers, law enforcement officers, probation or parole officers, and home health aides would be required to report suspected animal abuse to a hotline established by the Missouri Animal Control Association, with immunity from civil and criminal liability for good-faith reporting. APS and CPS workers would be required to complete one hour of training on how to identify and report animal abuse or neglect and The Link between elder and animal abuse. Animal control officers and humane investigators would be required to complete one hour of training on how to identify and report child and elder abuse and their Links with animal abuse.

## NEBRASKA

**SUCCESS!!! LB 80** amends the state’s laws for issuing all-encompassing “protection orders” — which include provisions to award custody of pets to the petitioner and enjoin the respondent from harming the pets — to create new specific categories of “domestic abuse protection orders,” “harassment protection orders,” and “sexual assault protection orders.” Existing pet protection provisions would be retained only under a “domestic abuse protection order.”

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

**SUCCESS!!! HB 62 was signed into law.** It expands the state’s current provisions that include animal cruelty within the definition of domestic violence abuse to include this definition within military protective orders for active U.S. military and National Guard members.

**HB 593 was declared inexpedient to legislate.** It would have allowed a spouse to recover damages for the “loss of consortium” from a spouse who intentionally or recklessly causes the death of that person’s pet.

## NEW JERSEY

**A291** would expand the definitions of domestic violence, child abuse, elder abuse, and abuse of persons with a disability to include acts of animal cruelty against their animals. Veterinarians, veterinary technicians, domestic violence investigators, employees of the Department of Children & Families, employees of the Department of Human Services, Division of Aging, police officers, and caregivers at residential health care facilities would be required to report suspected animal cruelty to law enforcement with civil and criminal immunity for reporting in good faith.

**A 296 (“Shyanne’s Law”)** would require mental health evaluation for all animal cruelty offenders.

**A 310** would allow employees of the Division of Children Protection and Permanency who have reason to believe that an animal has been subjected to, or who witness an act of animal abuse, cruelty, or neglect, to report the suspected or witnessed act of animal abuse, cruelty, or neglect. Nothing in the bill requires an employee to report such an act. Employees who make a report, provide records or information relating to the report, or who testify in any judicial proceeding arising from the report, would be immune from liability for any actions taken in good faith.

**A369** would prohibit convicted animal cruelty offenders from having or being issued a permit a firearm for a handgun.

**A 1516** would add “coercive control” to the definition of domestic violence in Section 3 of P.L.1991, c.261 (C.2C:25-19) to include acts of cruelty against animals owned or possessed by an adult or emancipated minor.

**A 2250** would require humane law enforcement officers who have reasonable cause to believe that a person is a victim of domestic violence to report the situation to a local law enforcement agency, with immunity from civil and criminal liability for making a report in good faith. Currently, they are permitted — but not mandated — to report.

**A 2456** and **S282** would create a two-year pilot program to allow courts to appoint a pro bono attorney or law student special advocate to represent the best interests of, and justice for, animals in cruelty cases.

**A 3236** would expand the definition of domestic violence to include psychological abuse. While intimidating threats against a person's animals are not specifically included in the state's definition of domestic violence, courts are allowed to consider such acts as coercive control in determining whether to issue a protective order.

**A 3836** and **S 3362** would establish a \$1,000,000 Domestic Violence Shelter Pet Grant Program to provide funds to house pets in shelters with their owners. Qualifying shelters could apply for up to \$50,000 in grants.

**SB 26** would rename the Family Violence Protection Act as the Protection Against Abuse and Violence Act and replace the term "domestic abuse" with "abuse" that would now include "harm or threatened harm to an animal" within the definition of "abuse." Courts would be allowed to issue orders of protection that would enjoin the restrained party from committing or threatening to commit acts of "abuse" against the protected party or designated household members. Courts could also grant to any party the exclusive or shared possession and control of any animal kept, owned or leased by either party or any minor child in the household. The court could order any party to stay away from the animal and forbid the party from taking, transferring, concealing, mistreating, harming, or disposing of the animal.

## NEW MEXICO

**SB 26 died when the Legislature adjourned.** It would have defined coercive-control animal abuse as domestic violence and allowed pets to be included in protection orders. The bill would have renamed the Family Violence Protection Act as the Protection Against Abuse and Violence Act and replace "domestic abuse" with "abuse" that would include "harm or threatened harm to an animal" within the definition of "abuse." Courts could also grant to any party the exclusive or shared possession and control of any animal kept, owned or leased by either party or any minor child in the household. The court could order any party to stay away from the animal and forbid the party from taking, transferring, concealing, mistreating, harming, or disposing of the animal.

**SUCCESS!!! SB 50** adds dogfighting and cockfighting to the list of crimes defined as "racketeering".

## NEW YORK

**A 599** would add acts of animal fighting, aggravated cruelty to animals, poisoning animals, injuring certain domestic animals, or harming a service animal to the definition of "serious offense" making it a crime to possess a firearm.

**A 640** and **S 2296** would allow civil and criminal courts to order that a separate advocate be appointed to represent the animal's interests and help ensure the well-being of any living animal victims.

**A 664, S 1044, S 1562, and S 1563, "Buster's Law,"** would prohibit persons convicted of animal cruelty from possessing a companion animal until they have undergone psychiatric or psychological counseling establishing their mental capacity and ability to humanely care for the animal.

**A 690 and S 3491** would increase prison terms for acts of animal cruelty when committed in the presence of a child.

**A 730 and S 1205** would increase penalties for animal fighting and aggravated animal cruelty and requires defendants convicted of aggravated animal cruelty to undergo a psychiatric evaluation.

**A 740** would allow courts to take into consideration the well-being of a companion animal when determining custody of the animal during divorce and legal separation proceedings.

**A 850** would create new crimes of "cruelty to animals to threaten, intimidate or harass" for intentionally injuring or killing, with no justifiable purpose, a companion animal for the purpose of threatening, intimidating or harassing a family or household member. Felony penalties would be enhanced if the act occurred in the presence of a child.

**A 897** would criminalize knowingly causing a minor to attend an animal fight.

**A 1391** and **S 5544** would require persons charged with enforcing laws prohibiting cruelty to animals to file a report when, in the performance of their duties, they have reasonable cause to believe that abuse or maltreatment of a child has also occurred. The bill would further provide that persons charged with the responsibility of filing a report of child abuse or maltreatment would also have to file a report of suspected animal cruelty.

**A 1432** and **A 1885** would relocate anti-cruelty statutes into the Penal Code from the Agriculture & Markets Law, where placement suggests that cruelty is not a "real" crime since it is not in the penal law and diminishes the seriousness of such crimes. The bill cites academic studies that "have found a clear link between animal cruelty during youth and violence against humans as an adult" and numerous documented studies that show that "there is a direct link between acts of cruelty to animals and violence toward others, including child abuse, spousal abuse, elder abuse and other violent behavior."

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**A 1530** would establish “care and treatment of service animals, therapy dogs and companion animals in residential programs for victims of domestic violence.” These would include allowing residents’ service animals and therapy dogs full access to the shelters as long as they do not create an undue burden.

**A 1630** would amend provisions for the crimes of “sexual conduct with an animal,” a misdemeanor, and “sexual conduct with an animal resulting in injury or death,” a felony. Convicted offenders would be forced to relinquish all of their current animals and be permanently barred from keeping any animals, or residing, volunteering or working with animals.

**A 1689** cites the prosecution of animal cruelty as a way to protect public safety to require all New York State counties to have an assistant district attorney to oversee animal crimes, as several counties in the state have already done.

**A 1693** and **S 673** would establish the Housing People and Animals Together grant program to expand access for co-sheltering victims of domestic violence and people experiencing homelessness with companion animals.

**A 1816**, **S 3158** and **S 4633** would include animal fighting as a criminal act within the category of enterprise corruption crimes.

**A 1945** would enable veterinarians to earn continuing education credits for providing free veterinary care for individuals residing in domestic violence shelters.

**A 2387** and **S 6812** would establish a 24-hour toll-free animal abuse reporting hotline.

**A 3158** would require courts to require a mental health evaluation for offenders convicted of aggravated animal cruelty or animal fighting.

**A 3206** and **S 1159** would create a new category of “domestic violence crimes” to include interfering, harassing, intimidating, or harming a family or household member’s service animal.

**A 3528** would make the commission of an act of aggravated cruelty to animals in the presence of a child a Class D felony.

**A 4753** and **S 1753**, “Bella’s Law,” would require an investigation into possible domestic violence or abuse for persons who have been accused of animal abuse.

**A 5815** and **S 4613** would expand provisions of the Family Court Act, the Criminal Procedure Law, and the Domestic Relations Law, which currently allow courts to order respondents to refrain from harming the companion animals of the petitioner or a minor child, to also grant petitioners exclusive care, control or custody of any animal.

**A 6194** and **S 5998**, “Kyra’s Law,” would require courts determining child custody and visitation rights to consider credible evidence that includes any party’s history of domestic violence, child abuse, and threats to harm or kill companion animals.

**A 6397** and **S 7350** would expand the definition of aggravated animal cruelty to include causing serious physical injuries or the use of a weapon.

**A 6556** and **S 5514** would require courts to consider recent acts of aggravated cruelty to animals in determining whether grounds exist for issuing a temporary extreme risk protection order.

**A 7831**, **S 6986** and **S 7010** would make it a crime to assault a child protective services worker by releasing or failing to control an animal with the intent to obstruct the completion of their duties.

**S 470**, “Kirby and Quigley’s Law,” expands aggravated animal cruelty to include harm to a companion animal during the commission of a felony.

**S 1411** would require individuals convicted of animal cruelty to undergo a psychiatric analysis and evaluation.

**S 6880** would authorize a lengthier prison sentence for committing aggravated animal cruelty during an incident of domestic violence.

**A 8375** and **S 7612** would establish a co-shelter toolkit of best practices, resources, case studies, and information to inform and encourage implementing and sustaining co-sheltering models for victims of domestic violence and persons experiencing homelessness with companion animals.

**S 8030** would require certain animal cruelty offenders to undergo a presentencing forensic psychological evaluation and, based on such evaluation, to attend counseling, humane education, a rehabilitation program, or other such treatment.

**S 8035** would expand protection orders which allow courts to enjoin an individual from harming an animal to also allow courts to grant the petitioner exclusive care, custody or control of the animal.

## NORTH CAROLINA

**S 274** would repeal the archaic “crime against nature, with mankind or beast,” and replace it with the crime of “bestiality” as a Class I felony.

**S 573** would require judges to order convicted companion animal hoarders to undergo psychological evaluation and treatment.

**S 591** would make it a Class H felony to bring a minor under the age of 18 to a dog– or cock-fight.

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## OHIO

**HB 417** would require 2 hours of peace officers' required 24-hour annual continuing education to be dedicated to education about laws governing animal welfare and cruelty.

## OREGON

**SB 626 died when the Legislature adjourned.** It would have expanded the definition of child sexual abuse to include exposing children to acts of bestiality created by artificial intelligence.

## PENNSYLVANIA

**HB 97** would recognize that "companion animals are living beings that are generally regarded as cherished family members that offer their owners companionship, security and assistance," and as a "special category of personal property" need to be granted special consideration in the division of property during marriage dissolution. Parties could enter into an enforceable agreement regarding the care and/or possession of companion animals, and the court shall consider all relevant factors.

**HB 1611** would amend the Older Adults Protective Services Act to prohibit adult care homes, assisted living, home health care agencies, long-term nursing care, older adult daily living centers, and hospitals from employing someone within 20 years of having been convicted of sexual abuse of animals or children, among other crimes.

**SB 823** would allow state grants to law enforcement agencies to be used to investigate and enforce animal fighting.

## RHODE ISLAND

**H 5125 died in committee.** It would have amended existing law, which allows courts to include household pets in domestic violence protection orders, to also allow courts to award custody of pets to plaintiffs and offer an enforcement remedy such as a restraining order or other injunctive relief.

**H 5669 died in committee.** It would have added animal cruelty offenses of "unnecessary cruelty," malicious injury, killing, and abandonment to the definition of domestic violence crimes.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

**H 3143 died when the Legislature adjourned.** It would have allowed individuals convicted of felony-level animal cruelty to apply for a limited pardon that would enable them to possess a firearm for hunting purposes only, because animal cruelty is not considered a "crime of violence."

**H 3641 and H 4123 died when the Legislature adjourned.** They would have expanded the definition of child sexual abuse and obscenity to include exposing children to acts of bestiality created by computer generated images.

**SUCCESS!!! S 28 was signed into law.** It creates a sex offender registry in which "buggery" (South Carolina's archaic term for bestiality) is defined as a Tier 1 offense.

## TENNESSEE

**SUCCESS!!! HB 540 and S 916** were signed into law on April 24. They expand the definition of "racketeering activity" to include engaging others in the criminal activity of animal fighting.

## TEXAS

**HB 3049 died when the Legislature adjourned.** It would have designated animal control officers as "first responders" whose duties include responding rapidly to an emergency.

**HB 4563 died when the Legislature adjourned.** It would have allowed children or persons with a disability to be accompanied by a therapy or facility dog in various criminal proceedings.

**SB 1658 died when the Legislature adjourned.** It would have allowed courts to issue Extreme Risk Protective Orders, prohibiting respondents from possessing firearms; Texas protection orders already prohibit respondents from harming, threatening or interfering with the custody of the plaintiff's pet, companion animal or therapy animal.

**SB 1673 died when the Legislature adjourned.** It would have required courts to order individuals convicted of cruelty to non-livestock animals to undergo psychological counseling.

## UTAH

**SUCCESS!!! HB 159 was signed into law on March 25.** It allows Utah authorities to recognize domestic violence protection orders issued in Canada. Utah protection orders already include provisions protecting household animals.

**HB 461 failed to pass.** It would have allowed courts to order animal cruelty offenders to participate in animal cruelty prevention or education programs, or psychological counseling for treatment of mental health disorders that the contributed to the commission of the crime.

**SB 24 failed to pass.** It would have included threatening an animal or forcing or coercing a child to injure an animal to the definition of child abuse.

## VERMONT

**H.492 died when the General Assembly adjourned.** It introduced the concept of "coercive control" within the animal cruelty context. It proposed that persons who commit or threaten to commit animal cruelty upon an animal to influence a victim of domestic abuse may face additional criminal penalties.

## WEST VIRGINIA

**HB 2068 died when the Legislature adjourned.** It would have prohibited activities connected with sexual abuse of an animal, establish criminal penalties, provide for forfeiture of animals, and restrict ownership of animals upon conviction.

## The Link Training Calendar

More and more organizations are recognizing the value of training their staffs, multi-disciplinary groups, and the general public that preventing and responding to animal abuse can prevent other forms of family and community violence.

Here are some of the many training opportunities coming up — both in-person and virtual — in coming months. Click on the underlined hyperlinks for specific details and registration information.

If you're conducting a Link training, please let us know at least a month in advance so we can include it in the Calendar. And if you're looking for a speaker, please contact us so we can refer someone to you from our Speakers' Bureau.

## LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

**Sept. 9 (online):** Rebecca Stephens will present "Who Keeps the Dog?", a guide to navigating the legal and ethical complexities of pet custody during divorces, in a [webinar](#) for the International Association of Veterinary Social Work.

**Sept. 11 — United Kingdom (online):** Maya Badham of Safeguarding Animal & Human Survivors of Sexual and Domestic Abuse (SAHSDA) will present the "Safeguarding for Pet Professionals" [training](#) on how to recognize and respond to domestic and animal abuse.

**Sept. 16 — Redmond, Ore.:** Phil Arkow will present "Connecting the Dots in Animal Care & Control and Human Violence: How to Better Protect People AND Animals" at the [Oregon Animal Control Council](#) Training Conference.

**Sept. 16 — Newtown, Pa.:** Jessica Bibbo will present on the relationship between elder abuse and animal abuse at the Bucks County Area Agency on Aging's 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual [William J. Neff Sr. Symposium](#) on the Prevention of Crimes Against Older Adults

**Sept. 17-18 — Albuquerque, N. Mex.:** Phil Arkow, Andrew Campbell, Kevin Carhart, Claire Coughlin, Rosemary Cosgrove-Aguilar, MaryEllen Garcia, Melissa Riley, Melissa Sinclair Silver, Catherine Skinner, Sue Skinner, and Jennifer Woolf will present on multiple Link topics at Positive Links' [New Mexico Conference on The Link](#).

**Sept. 18 (online):** Det. Jeremy Hoffman of the Fairfax County, Va. Police Dept. will present "Chasing Monsters: Deviant Intersections of Animal Sex Abusers," in a [webinar](#) for the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys.

**Sept. 18 — London, U.K. (online):** The Links Group UK will present a free [webinar](#) for human welfare professionals, "Animal Abuse as a Strategy of Coercive Control: Safeguarding People and Animals."

**Sept. 23 — Pittsburgh, Pa. (online):** Janet Hoy-Gerlach will present "Ask About Pets! - A Trauma-Informed and Ethical Call to Action for Human Service Providers," in a [webinar](#) for BestyBnB.

**September 23-24 — Hartford, Conn.:** Andrew Campbell will present "Ending Generational Cycles of Familial Abuse", "Bad to the Bone: The Interconnectedness of Pet Abuse, Child Abuse, and Partner Abuse", "Developing a Multi-Disciplinary Perspective to Domestic Violence", "Here, There, and Everywhere: Harm Perpetrated in the Home Impacts the Entire Community", and "No Safe Place: How Domestic Violence Harms Children" at the Connecticut Children's Alliance's 7<sup>th</sup> Annual [Response to Recovery Conference](#).

**Sept. 24 — Belleville, Ill.:** Phil Arkow will present at the Downstate Illinois Conference for Children's Advocacy Centers.

**Sept. 25 (online):** Claire Coughlin and Val Peña from the Animal Welfare Institute will present "Safe Havens for Pets: Sheltering Resources for the Unhoused" in a Don't Forget the Pets [webinar](#).

**Sept. 25 — Wetherby, England:** The Links Group UK and the BSAVA will present a [Links Veterinary Training Initiative](#) for large, small and equine veterinary teams on a multi-agency approach to recognize and act on non-accidental injury and domestic abuse.

# LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES



**September 26-28: Toronto, Ont., Canada:** Kathleen Wood, Cathy Hessler and Rosa Figarola will be among the speakers addressing The Link at the [Canadian Animal Law & Advocacy Conference](#).

**Sept. 30 — Sacramento, Calif. (online):** Claire Ponder Selib from the National Organization for Victim Advocacy, and Ashley Rumschlag of DomesticShelters.org, will join Katie Campbell of RedRover in a [panel discussion](#) on The Link between animal abuse and human violence and RedRover's efforts to have 25% of domestic violence shelters pet-friendly by 2025.

**Oct. 1-2 — St. Louis, Mo. (online):** Eleven Missouri and national speakers will present on The Link at the Missouri Alliance for Animals' 5th annual [Safer Together Missouri](#) seminar.

**Oct. 6 — Chattanooga, Tenn.:** Kelly Bremkin will present on the services available to animal shelters from Veterinary Social Workers at the [Tennessee Animal Care & Control Conference](#).

**Oct. 9 — Colorado Springs, Colo. (online):** Elkie Wills of the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys' Human Animal Support Services, and Lauren Rogers from the San Diego Humane Society, will present "Building a Safety Net of Connections and Resources for Your Community" in a [Justice Clearinghouse webinar](#).

**Oct. 15 — Cincinnati, Ohio:** Law enforcement officers are invited to attend an [Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy](#) training on The Link, presented by Det. Todd Curtis and Vicki Deisner, at Great Oaks Career Campuses.

**Oct. 15 — Austin, Texas:** Phil Arkow will present "Partnering with Unseen Allies: How Animal Care & Control Can Protect Vulnerable Adults" at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual [Texas Adult Protective Services Conference](#).

**Oct. 16-19 — Bali, Indonesia:** Phil Arkow will present a workshop on the impact of online animal cruelty on children for Asia for Animal's [Social Media Animal Cruelty Coalition](#).

**Oct. 17-18 — Atlanta, Ga.:** Phil Arkow will present at the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual [Animal Protection & Wellness Expo](#).

**Oct. 19 — Greensboro, N. Car.:** Phil Arkow will present on "Another One Health Role for Veterinarians: Response to Animal cruelty and Other Family Violence" for the [North Carolina Veterinary Medical Association](#).

**Oct. 19 — United Kingdom (online):** Rebecca Stephens will present on "Veterinary Social Work: A New Approach to Honoring the Human-Animal Bond" as part of the [2025 Society for Companion Animal Studies Virtual Conference](#).

**Oct. 21 — Kansas City, Mo. (online):** Andria Gibbon of Protecting Paws for Life will present "Healing Together: Understanding and Supporting Pets Impacted by Domestic Violence," in a [webinar](#) for BestyBnB.

**Oct. 23 — United Kingdom (online):** Maya Badham of Safeguarding Animal & Human Survivors of Sexual and Domestic Abuse (SAHSDA) will [present](#) "Recognizing and Responding to Companion Animal Abuse as a Tactic of Coercive Control."

**Oct. 24 — Rockford, Ill.:** Phil Arkow will present "The Link between Animal Abuse and Human Violence: Creating Healthier Communities through Species-Spanning Recognition & Response at the Protecting Innovation Symposium at the [University of Illinois—Rockford](#) College of Medicine.

**Oct. 29 — Twinsburg, Ohio:** Law enforcement officers are invited to attend an [Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy](#) training on The Link, presented by Det. Todd Curtis and Vicki Deisner, at Kent State University—Twinsburg Campus.



# LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

**Oct. 29 — Kansas City, Mo.:** Claire Coughlin will present “Protecting People and Pets: Animals and Interpersonal Violence” at the [2025 National Conference on Domestic Violence](#).

**Nov. 5-7 — Pittsburgh, Pa.:** The Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, in partnership with the Animal Legal Defense Fund, will host the 14th [National Animal Cruelty Prosecution Conference](#).

**Nov. 11 — Glastonbury, Conn. (online):** Phil Arkow will present a webinar on “Kids, Critters and Vulnerable Women: Connecting the Dots Between Animal Abuse and Human Violence” for the [Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#).

**Nov. 12 — Sketchley Grange, England:** The Links Group UK and the BSAVA will present a [Links Veterinary Training Initiative](#) for large, small and equine veterinary teams on a multi-agency approach to recognize and act on non-accidental injury and domestic abuse.

**Nov. 18 — Morristown, N.J.:** Phil Arkow will present on “The ‘Dark Side’ of the Human-Animal Bond” to the Soothing Paws Program at the [Morristown Medical Center](#).

**Nov. 19 — Pittsburgh, Pa. (online):** Pennsylvania’s [Keystone LINK](#) will hold its regular monthly meeting.

**Nov. 25-26 — Ottawa, Ont., Canada:** Sue O’Neill of Humane Canada’s ACT program will be among the speakers addressing Link issues at the inaugural [One Health, One Welfare Conference](#) hosted by Humane Canada and World Animal Protection.

**Dec. 4 — Colorado Springs, Colo. (online):** Andrew Campbell will present “No Safe Place: How Domestic Violence Harms Children” in a [Justice Clearinghouse webinar](#).

**Dec. 5 — Hartford, Conn.:** Phil Arkow will present on The Link at the [University of Connecticut Law School](#).

**Jan. 21, 2026 — Springfield, Ohio:** Law enforcement officers are invited to attend an [Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy](#) training on The Link, presented by Det. Todd Curtis and Vicki Deisner, at Clark State College.

**Feb. 4, 2026 — Warren, Ohio:** Law enforcement officers are invited to attend an [Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy](#) training on The Link, presented by Det. Todd Curtis and Vicki Deisner, at Kent State University — Trumbull County Campus.

**March 26, 2026 — Colorado Springs, Colo.; (online):** Phil Arkow will present “Learn What the Monster Likes... and Feed It! Bridging the Animal Rights/Welfare/Control Gap by Focusing on The Link between Animal Abuse and Human Violence” in a [Justice Clearinghouse](#) webinar.

**Sept. 1, 2026 — Colorado Springs, Colo. (online):** Phil Arkow will present “Closing the ‘PAWS Gap’ in Victim Advocacy through Pet-Inclusive Services” in a webinar for the [Justice Clearinghouse](#).



## THE LINK... in the NEWS

### Woman Convicted of “Crush” Videos Back in Prison

**A** Kokomo, Ind. woman who had been convicted of torturing and killing animals on videos in violation of the federal PACT Act ([See the March 2021](#) and [August 2020 LINK-Letters](#)) was sentenced to another 18 months in federal prison for violating the terms of her release after authorities found her with a van filled with emaciated animals. [WISH-TV](#) reported that Krystal Scott, 24, had pled guilty to animal “crushing” in November 2021 and was sentenced to five years in prison. She created the videos which involved killing five dogs, five cats and 11 unborn kittens. She was released from prison in June 2023 but was soon re-arrested after acquiring animals from lost-dog postings on facebook. Indianapolis Animal Care Services said Scott was found in a Hardee’s parking lot with a U-Haul can that reeked of animals. Officers reportedly found 12 extremely dehydrated dogs and cats. She was fined \$25 on each of 12 counts of animal cruelty, but after the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department asked for the public’s health because Scott apparently used multiple aliases, the federal parole violation sentence was instituted.

### Ohioan with Criminal History Charged with Cruelty

**A** Warren, Ohio man who pled not guilty to charges of animal cruelty for allegedly attacking his dog being held at an animal rescue, is also facing charges of disorderly conduct and criminal trespass from a separate incident earlier in the week and has an extensive record of crimes against animals and people. The [Warren Tribune Chronicle](#) reported that after Benjamin J. Talanca, 39, retrieved his dog from the Healthy Hearts and Paws Project (HHPP) he began choking the dog, claiming “The CIA and government were after him,” according to police reports. Talanca was booked into the Trumbull County jail on an outstanding warrant.



Talanca had also been arrested last March after failing to appear in court on charges of animal cruelty, assault and burglary stemming from a December 2024 incident when he allegedly demanded getting his dog back from HHPP, which was holding the dog after Talanca had gotten into trouble with the police, and began beating it, according to [WFMJ-TV](#). The dog was apparently in HHPP’s care following [another incident](#) in June 2024 when Talanca allegedly assaulted a woman who tried to stop him from beating his dog.

Court records found that Talanca’s history includes charges of aggravated menacing (2022); assault and domestic violence (2021); felonious assault (2015); criminal trespass (2012); animals running at large and no registration (2005); and engaging in a fight (2004). In 2014 Talanca pled guilty to assault after he grabbed a gun and [shot and killed](#) an 18-year-old who was one of three home invaders who he said had attacked and beaten him using power tools and blocks of wood with screws in them.

### Man Charged with Strangulation, Child and Animal Abuse for Hanging Dog that Wouldn’t Learn English

**S**heriff’s deputies in St. Lucie County, Fla. arrested and charged Delfino Rosales, 59, of Fort Pierce with animal cruelty, child abuse and battery by strangulation for allegedly hanging a pitbull and beating it with a stick and then strangling his girlfriend when she confronted him about it. [News media](#) reported that Rosales said he was hitting the dog only because he was trying to teach it English and it wouldn’t listed because the dog only understood Spanish.



Deputies responding to a disturbance found the woman who said she had witnessed Rosales hang one of his dogs from a tree and beat it with a stick. A juvenile at the residence reportedly corroborated her account. Deputies allegedly found a noose in the backyard.

The woman told investigators that Rosales had hanged the same dog with a rope from a tree after the dog attacked one of his chickens. St. Lucie County animal control took custody of the dogs. Rosales was being held in jail on the charged and also on an immigration-related detainer.

## The LINK in the NEWS

### Police Seek Man for Allegedly Shooting Elderly Cancer Victim's Dog 12 Times

**M**emphis, Tenn. police were reportedly searching for a couple accused of burglarizing and robbing an elderly cancer patient and shooting her dog in front of her. [WREG-TV](#) reported that police issued an arrest warrant for Gavin Palpallatoc, 31, of Millington, Tenn., for aggravated robbery, aggravated burglary, aggravated cruelty to animals, and aggravated abuse of a vulnerable adult. Police said Palpallatoc dragged the dog from a 78-year-old woman's home and killed it by shooting it several times. Jane Reynolds, 52, was accused of asking him to kill her

neighbor's dog after it got into a fight with her dog in the mobile home park where they lived.

The victim, who was not identified, said Palpallatoc barged into her home and took her dog, a pit bull mix named "Cash." She then heard 12 gunshots. At least 13 shell casings were reportedly found on the ground. The woman, who is battling terminal cancer, had adopted Cash five years ago after losing her dog.



### Alleged N.Y. Drug Dealer and Girlfriend Indicted on Animal Cruelty and Narcotics Charges

**A**n alleged Long Island, N.Y. drug dealer and his girlfriend who reportedly kept four puppies in what the [New York Post](#) called "stomach-turning conditions" are facing multiple charges after selling more than two ounces of fentanyl – enough to kill 28,000 people – to an undercover investigator. The Suffolk County District Attorney's East End Drug Task Force indicted Troy Daniels, 44, of Middle Island, and Toni Gerwycki, 31, on four counts of animal cruelty. Daniels is also facing 18 felony drug charges. Prosecutors said officers recovered fentanyl, some of which was mixed with heroin or cocaine, inside the apartment. Daniels was being held on \$500,000 cash bail and faces up to 20 years in prison if convicted. All the dogs were taken to a veterinarian for treatment.



### Offender With a Family History Gets Additional Jail Time for Violating Probation

**R**andall Charlton, of Warren, Ohio, a convicted rapist who had pled guilty to abandoning an emaciated dog at the local waste facility ([See the May 2025 LINK-Letter](#)), was ordered to serve additional jail time for a probation violation. Meanwhile, a search of court records

found that his father also has a history of animal cruelty, aggravated menacing, and domestic violence charges. The younger Charlton was sentenced on April 15 to five days in jail, probation, and ordered not to have contact with any domesticated animal. [WKBN-TV](#) reported that authorities re-

### Woman with Child Abuse Convictions Charged with Leaving Pup in Hot Car to Die



**A** woman with a history of convictions for child endangerment was charged with felony animal cruelty after she allegedly left a puppy inside a hot car to die.

Tawana Cox, 49, was also charged with a misdemeanor count of falsification in the incident which occurred in Hartville, Ohio.

[WKYC-TV](#) reported that the temperature outside the store where she and her two children went shopping was 90°. Police estimated that with the windows rolled up, the interior temperature would be 109° after 10 minutes and up to around 140° after an hour. The dashboard and seats would exceed 180°.



## You Can Help Us Create Safer Communities!

The National Link Coalition is the only international education and advocacy organization working to prevent animal cruelty, domestic violence, child maltreatment, and elder abuse by showing how they are Linked. As the global resource center on The Link between animal cruelty and human violence we train multidisciplinary professionals, showcase programs, and publicize legislation and research to foster collaborations that create safer communities by recognizing that when animals are abused, people are at risk, and when people are abused, animals are at risk.

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