



ANIMAL CRUELTY PREVENTION

Whether you are an animal lover or not, the reality is that animals are a big part of our community. Animal cruelty includes a range of things harmful to animals. Get educated on what you can do to help prevent animal cruelty, abuse and neglect.

Did you know?

- Homeless animals outnumber homeless people 5 to 1.
- You are required to have a breeder's permit to breed and sell animals.
- Children 10 years of age can be charged with animal cruelty for brutality against animals.

- Anyone under the age of 18 who is convicted of animal cruelty is required by law to undergo counseling.
- Animal abuse in the form of neglect is often one of the first indicators of distress in the household.
- Pet abuse was found in 88% of families under supervision for physical abuse.

ANIMAL CRUELTY

is either deliberate abuse or simply the failure to take care of an animal.

Animal cruelty includes a range of things harmful to animals. Intentional cruelty can range from failing to adequately provide an animal with food, water, shelter, socialization or veterinary care to torturing, maiming, mutilating or killing an animal. However, officers report that most cases they respond to are unintentional neglect.

In Texas, two types of laws protect animals from cruelty: civil laws and criminal laws.

These laws apply to domesticated animals such as house pets and livestock.

- In a civil case, if a judge rules that a person or people have been cruel to animals, the judge may take away their animals and/or order them to pay restitution.
- If prosecuted in a criminal case, a person may face penalties including fines, jail or both.

In Texas the following are prohibited by law:

- Torturing an animal.
- Failing to provide food, care or shelter.
- Abandoning an animal.
- Transporting or confining an animal in a cruel manner.
- Killing, seriously injuring or poisoning an animal.
- Causing an animal to fight with another.
- Using a live animal as a lure in a dog race.
- Tripping a horse.
- Injuring an animal belonging to another person.
- Seriously overworking an animal.

HARRIS COUNTY ANIMAL CRUELTY TASKFORCE

The Greater Houston Area now has a centralized reporting tool for citizens to report suspected animal cruelty.



If you suspect animal cruelty, abuse or neglect, we urge you to report:

- Online at www.927PAWS.org (preferred method)
- By calling 832-927-PAWS

DOG FIGHTING

Defined as “a sadistic “contest” in which two dogs—specifically bred, conditioned, and trained to fight—are placed in a pit (generally a small arena enclosed by plywood walls) to fight each other for the spectators’ entertainment and gambling.”

Dog fighting, in Texas, is a felony offense, and you may be charged with the following:

- Causing a dog to fight with another dog for money or without
- Participates in the earnings of a dog fight
- Operating a facility used for dog fighting
- Using or allowing others to use any real estate, building, room, tent arena, or other property for dog fighting
- Owning or training a dog with the intent that the dog be used for dog fighting
- Attending a dog fight

SIGNS OF ABUSE

- Pets with open sores, healed wounds or an injury or illness that is not being treated.
- Pets that are extremely thin or emaciated.
- Pets covered in fleas, ticks or other parasites
- Pets with heavy discharge from eyes or nose
- Pets whose collar or chain is so tight that it has become embedded in their neck
- Pets left outside in inclement weather without adequate shelter.
- Pets left in unsanitary environments
- Pets that are left in kennels or cages that are too small to stand, turn around, or make normal movements.
- Pets that are in kennels with multiple other animals.

STAYING SAFE AROUND ANIMALS

- Always ask permission from the owner before petting an animal
- Do not corner an animal
- Always remember to pet animals gently
- Do not pet service animals or police dogs known as K9
- Do not approach stray animals
- If a dog approaches you, stand still with your head down and arms by your side. Do not run!
- If a dog knocks you down or tries to attack you, lie still and quietly with your knees to your chest and your hands over your ears.
- If you are bitten, clean the wound immediately and contact animal control.
- Learn the warning signs of a scared or anxious animal:
 - Ears are erect or back
 - Body is stiff
 - Tail is stiff
 - Body is crouched with head down
 - Growling
 - Fur standing on end

KEEP YOUR ANIMAL SAFE

- Spay and neuter your pets
- If you keep your pet outside, make sure they have adequate shelter and plenty of water
- Never leave animals unattended in a vehicle
- Ensure your pet has a name tag with current contact information
- Vaccinate your pets annually and make sure your pet wears a current rabies tag
- Microchip your animal
- Train your pets, especially around children