

1997 Enacted and Vetoed Legislation

The following list is a compilation of state laws and resolutions passed in 1997 that had a positive, negative, or neutral impact on animals. For a copy of any of these laws and resolutions, or if you have questions, additions, or corrections, please e-mail Julie Janovsky at jjanovsky@hsus.org.

ARIZONA

Pet Store Regulations

Established that a person who unknowingly purchases an unhealthy dog or cat has legal recourse: shops must refund the purchase price, pay veterinary bills up to the amount of the purchase price, or provide—free of charge—a replacement animal of the purchaser's choice.

CALIFORNIA

Euthanasia Procedures

Permitted veterinary technicians to directly purchase, possess, and administer sodium pentobarbital.

Animal Abandonment

Authorized animal control agencies to euthanize any abandoned fighting animal or bird after 14 days; and permitted agencies to seek restitution from those convicted of animal fighting.

COLORADO

Animal Cruelty Penalties

Allowed courts to mandate counseling and fines for animal cruelty; and gave courts the option of requiring individuals convicted of animal cruelty to complete a treatment program, such as anger management.

CONNECTICUT

Specialty License Plates

Permitted residents to purchase animal-friendly automobile license plates that benefit dog and cat sterilization programs.

Wildlife Management

Required state-licensed businesses to follow basic humane guidelines when removing troublesome wildlife from homes, factories, and offices.

DELAWARE

Dog Licensing

Established that individuals found guilty for failure to license a dog, allowing a dog to run at large, or allowing a female dog in heat to run at large, must pay an increased fine and a minimum, non-suspending fine for a subsequent offense within 12 months.

HAWAII

Guide/Service Dogs

Established that refusing to engage in a real estate transaction with a person using a guide or service dog is a discriminatory practice.

Rabies Management

Established new guidelines for handling rabies outbreaks within the state.

LOUISIANA

Animal Cruelty Penalties

Required individuals charged with animal cruelty to post a bond (money to cover the cost of care for animals who were confiscated) with the court to prevent the animal from being euthanized or adopted, with the security in an amount reasonable to secure payment for all reasonable expenses the organization may incur--including medical care and boarding of the animal.

MARYLAND

Dissection Alternatives

Required school boards to publish course-specific information on alternatives to dissection; and required schools that use dissection as a learning activity to provide an alternative method of learning.

MICHIGAN

Animal Shelter Procedures

Required that all dogs and cats adopted from animal shelters must be sterilized; and established that a deposit, required at the time of the

adoption, must be refunded once the adopter provides a veterinarian's written certification of sterilization.

MISSISSIPPI

Exotic Animals

Required that owners of animals such as bears, elephants, lions, primates, tigers, and wolves must have a permit, with the permits issued only to individuals who are able to meet strict and restrictive criteria.

Animal Seizure

Allowed courts in Mississippi to appoint a law enforcement agency to seize, protect, and care for an animal if there is probable cause to believe the animal is being treated cruelly, neglected, or abandoned.

MONTANA

Animal Shelter Procedures

Requires that all dogs and cats adopted from animal shelters must be sterilized; and established that a deposit, required at the time of the

adoption, must be refunded once the adopter provides a veterinarian's written certification of sterilization.

NEBRASKA

Animal Cruelty Penalties

Established that individuals convicted of animal cruelty may be ordered to reimburse animal shelters or other private agencies for expenses incurred in conjunction with the care, impoundment, or disposal of the animal involved in the case.

NEVADA

Animal Shelter Procedures

Required that all dogs and cats adopted from animal shelters must be sterilized; and established that a deposit, required at the time of the adoption, must be refunded once the adopter provides a veterinarian's written certification of sterilization.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Spaying/Neutering Procedures

Established that veterinarians who conduct spaying and neutering of companion animals are eligible for reimbursement, promotion, and other costs associated with the program.

Dog Licensing

Established that individuals who own a dog over the age of four months must have a dog license.

Rabies Vaccinations

Required dog owners to furnish verification (from a licensed veterinarian) that their dog has been vaccinated against rabies.

Sick Animals

Established that if captive wildlife is infected with a contagious disease, then the animal must be quarantined or isolated, under stipulations deemed necessary by the Commissioner of Agriculture.

Game Management

Established the Animal Damage Control (ADC) Commission to review fish and game laws relating to damage by game birds and game.

NEW JERSEY

Animal Cruelty Enforcement

Authorized trained and certified animal control officers to enforce animal cruelty laws, replacing a law that previously authorized only the New Jersey SPCA to enforce the state's anticruelty statutes; and required animal control officers to pass a special training course.

NEW YORK

Dangerous Dogs

Allowed a judge to order immediate euthanasia or permanent confinement for dogs that pose a serious and unjustified imminent threat of harm to a person.

Vehicular Accidents

Increased the fine for vehicular hit and run of a pet from \$25 to \$100, and up to \$150 for a second or subsequent offense; and included cats in the legislation—previously, the law only applied to dogs, horses and livestock.

Animal Health Emergencies

Protected veterinarians from liability (prosecution) when they provide compensation emergency treatment to injured animals.

Animal Cruelty Penalties

Required individuals charged with animal cruelty to post a bond (money to cover the cost of care for animals who were confiscated) with the court to prevent the animal from being euthanized or adopted, with the security in an amount reasonable to secure payment for all reasonable expenses the organization may incur--including medical care and boarding of the animal.

NORTH CAROLINA

Dogfighting Penalties

Established that a person who participates in dogfighting events or baiting of a dog is guilty of a felony-level penalty on a first offense; and established that a person who participates as a spectator at an exhibition featuring the fighting or baiting of a dog is guilty of a Class H felony.

NORTH DAKOTA

Sick Animals

Sets guidelines for dealing with animals suspected of exposing people to rabies, including a 10-day quarantine for domestic dogs and cats; and requires law enforcement to exterminate or quarantine such animals on request from the state health department.

OKLAHOMA

Animal Pounds

Authorized communities to enact bans on pound seizures; however, if a community does not enact a ban, a pound seizure mandate still exists.

OREGON

Pet Owner/Rental Agreements

Allowed tenants to keep a pet that is otherwise legally living with the tenant at the time the landlord provided notice of a pet policy change at a rental property; and permitted the tenant to replace a pet with a pet similar to the one living with the landlord at the time of the policy change.

Reporting Animal Abuse

Established that veterinarians and veterinary technicians who report suspected neglect or abuse of animals to peace officers or animal control officers will have immunity from civil or criminal liability for making the report.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pet Store Regulations

Established that a person who purchased an unhealthy dog has legal recourse: shops must refund the purchase price, pay veterinary bills up to the amount of the purchase price, or provide—free of charge—a replacement animal of the purchaser's choice.

RHODE ISLAND

Dissection Alternatives

Gave students the right to refuse to dissect animals; and required schools that use dissection as a learning activity to provide an alternative method of learning.

Reporting Animal Abuse

Created a task force on the connection between human violence and animal cruelty, with the purpose being to produce legislation to require cross-reporting between the Department for Children, Youth and Families and Animal Control Officers.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Law Enforcement Animals

Required that police and fire rescue dogs be allowed in hotels while police officers and firemen perform official duties.

TENNESSEE

Euthanasia Procedures

Allowed veterinary technicians to directly purchase, possess, and administer sodium pentobarbital.

Animal Abandonment

Established that an animal is considered abandoned by its owner if false information (address, telephone number, etc.) is given; and allowed the veterinarian to dispose of the animal as deemed proper.

Animal Health Emergencies

Established that licensed veterinarians and ancillary veterinary personnel who render gratuitous emergency treatment to ill or injured animals are not liable to the pet owner for any civil damages arising from the treatment (except in the case of gross negligence).

Animal Cruelty Management

Established that county agricultural extension agents and veterinarians specializing in livestock are the only individuals permitted to investigate equine (and other livestock) cruelty.

TEXAS

Specialty License Plates

Allowed residents to purchase animal-friendly automobile license plates that benefit dog and cat sterilization programs.

Dangerous Dogs

Changed the provisions regarding dogs that cause serious death to include dogs that cause serious bodily injury among those that can be seized by court order by animal control instead of local police.

Animal Cruelty Penalties

Established that a third animal-cruelty offense is a felony.

VIRGINIA

Dangerous Dogs

Established that a governing body of any county, city or town can enact a dangerous dog ordinance which require the following provisions: a dangerous dog certificate/tag to identify his/her animal as dangerous, mandatory sterilization, and liability insurance coverage, to the value of at least \$50,000, to cover dog bites.

Wolf Hybrids

Authorized localities to establish a permitting system for wolf hybrids; and required adequate confinement for and responsible ownership of wolf hybrids, who can be highly unpredictable.

Animal Shelter Procedures

Required shelters and pounds to submit a report to the state veterinarian at the end of each calendar year summarizing the disposition of all animals in their care.

WEST VIRGINIA

Hunting Regulations

Established that off-season possession of wildlife, including wildlife or wildlife parts taken within or outside of the state, is illegal.

Hunting Regulations

Established that the season in which dogs are to be trained for hunting and tracking wild animals must be uniform throughout the state.