



THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES

First Strike for Prosecutors: Effective Prosecution of Animal Cruelty Crimes

Webinar Overview

Animal cruelty cases can present unique problems for prosecutors and law enforcement officers. Key elements for effective prosecutions were reviewed including: using the right tools in investigating, appropriately charging animal cruelty and animal fighting cases and gathering the right team for prosecution, such as expert witnesses. In addition, the link between animal cruelty and future violent behavior - including a focus on family violence and juvenile crime was discussed.

Suggestions for Effective Prosecution

- ✓ Know and understand the state laws and statutes
- ✓ Foster relationships with law enforcement officers and other officers charged with handling animal cruelty cases
- ✓ Produce reliable evidence and use rigorous evidence collection methods using photographs and expert testimony such as veterinarians
- ✓ Understand the connection between animal cruelty and other types of violence and criminal activity. The ability to tie crimes together can lead to a stronger case.

Education and outreach campaigns highlighting the link between violence against animals and interpersonal violence can help law enforcement officers and those charged with investigating animal cruelty. This information is crucial to more effective prosecutions.

It can also drive public awareness. If you are in need of education or outreach resources, such as these please contact us: hsa@humanesociety.org



Additional Resources

- Lex Canis, the newsletter of the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys' program is devoted to enhancing the prosecutorial response to animal cruelty and fighting crimes: <https://awionline.org/content/lex-canis>
- Resources for Prosecutors: http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/abuse_neglect/prosecutors_resources.html
- *First Strike: The Violence Connection* provides specific information about the connection between animal and interpersonal violence: http://www.humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/abuse/first_strike.pdf
- To find state specific laws on animal cruelty: <https://www.asPCA.org/fight-cruelty/advocacy-center/state-animal-cruelty-laws>