

1 AN ACT relating to animals.

2 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

3 ➔SECTION 1. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 525 IS CREATED TO  
4 READ AS FOLLOWS:

5 *As used in Sections 1 to 6 of this Act:*

6 *(1) "Animal control officer" has the same meaning as in KRS 258.095;*

7 *(2) "Cost of care" means any reasonable expense incurred in the seizure, care,*  
8 *keeping, treatment, or disposal of any animal, including but not limited to*  
9 *transportation, food, medicine, boarding, shelter, farrier costs, veterinary care, or*  
10 *other reasonable costs;*

11 *(3) "Extreme neglect" means failure, as an owner or person otherwise charged with*  
12 *the care of a dog or cat, to provide adequate food, water, space, shelter, or*  
13 *veterinary care that results in serious physical injury or death to a dog or cat;*

14 *(4) "Owner" or "keeper" means every person having a right of property in the*  
15 *animal;*

16 *(5) "Petitioner" means the law enforcement agency or animal control agency that*  
17 *seizes an animal and files a petition for forfeiture under Section 4 of this Act; and*

18 *(6) "Torture" means an action taken for the primary purpose of inflicting physical*  
19 *pain.*

20 ➔SECTION 2. KRS 525.135 IS REPEALED AND REENACTED TO READ  
21 AS FOLLOWS:

22 *(1) A person is guilty of animal abuse in the first degree when, except as otherwise*  
23 *authorized by law, the person:*

24 *(a) Intentionally, knowingly, wantonly, or recklessly causes serious physical*  
25 *injury or death to a dog or cat;*

26 *(b) Intentionally or knowingly tortures a dog or cat; or*

27 *(c) Intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly subjects a dog or cat to extreme*

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27

neglect.

(2) Animal abuse in the first degree is a Class D felony.

(3) In addition to any other punishment, the court may order that a person convicted of animal abuse in the first degree shall not be released on probation, shock probation, conditional discharge, or parole until he or she has served at least fifty percent (50%) of the sentence imposed if the defendant:

(a) Has previously been convicted of any offense under this section or Section 3, 7, 8, or 9 of this Act, or the equivalent laws of another jurisdiction;

(b) Committed the animal abuse as part of an incident of domestic violence and abuse under KRS Chapter 403 or dating violence and abuse under KRS Chapter 456; or

(c) Knowingly committed the animal abuse in the immediate presence of a minor child. For purposes of this paragraph, a minor child is in the immediate presence of animal abuse if the abuse is directly seen or heard by the minor child.

(4) Each act of torture, abuse, or extreme neglect of a dog or cat under this section shall constitute a separate offense.

(5) Nothing in this section shall apply to the killing or injuring of a dog or cat as part of:

(a) Normal and accepted veterinary practices performed by a licensed veterinarian;

(b) Bona fide animal research activities of institutions of higher education, or a business entity registered with the United States Department of Agriculture under the Animal Welfare Act or subject to other federal laws governing animal research;

(c) The training or engaging of a dog to accomplish a task or participate in an activity or exhibition carried out in accordance with recognized practices

1 and in a manner which does not adversely affect the health or safety of the  
2 dog; or

3 (d) The reasonable defense of self, another person, or a domestic animal  
4 against an aggressive or diseased dog or cat.

5 (6) Nothing in Sections 1 to 6, 7, 8, or 9 of this Act shall be interpreted to permit  
6 training a dog to fight for pleasure or profit.

7 ➔SECTION 3. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 525 IS CREATED TO  
8 READ AS FOLLOWS:

9 (1) A person is guilty of animal abuse in the second degree when, except as otherwise  
10 authorized by law, the person intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causes  
11 physical injury to a dog or cat.

12 (2) Animal abuse in the second degree is a Class A misdemeanor unless the  
13 defendant:

14 (a) Has previously been convicted of any offense under this section; Section 2,  
15 7, 8, or 9 of this Act; KRS 525.200 or 525.205; or the equivalent laws of  
16 another jurisdiction;

17 (b) Commits animal abuse as part of an incident of domestic violence and  
18 abuse under KRS Chapter 403 or dating violence and abuse under KRS  
19 Chapter 456; or

20 (c) Knowingly commits the animal abuse in the immediate presence of a minor  
21 child. For purposes of this paragraph, a minor child is in the immediate  
22 presence of animal abuse if the abuse is directly seen or heard by the minor  
23 child;

24 in which case it is a Class D felony.

25 (3) Each act of abuse of a dog or cat under this section shall constitute a separate  
26 offense.

27 ➔SECTION 4. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 525 IS CREATED TO

1 READ AS FOLLOWS:

2 (1) A peace officer, animal control officer, or law enforcement officer who has  
3 probable cause to believe there has been a violation of Sections 1 to 6, 7, 8, or 9 of  
4 this Act may seize and take custody of the animal involved.

5 (2) If any animal is seized under this section, the owner or keeper of the animal shall  
6 be liable for the cost of care of the animal.

7 (3) (a) If any animal is in the custody of a law enforcement agency or animal  
8 control agency pursuant to this section, the law enforcement agency or  
9 animal control agency may, pending the outcome of a criminal action  
10 charging a violation identified in subsection (1) of this section, and prior to  
11 the final disposition of such criminal charge, file a petition in the criminal  
12 case requesting that the court issue an order forfeiting the animal to the law  
13 enforcement agency or animal control agency.

14 (b) The petitioner shall serve a true copy of the petition upon the defendant. If  
15 the defendant is not able to be served notice after reasonable effort, the  
16 petition shall be conspicuously posted by the petitioner at the premises  
17 where the animal was seized.

18 (4) After filing of the petition, the court shall set a hearing date within fourteen (14)  
19 calendar days unless both parties agree otherwise. The owner or keeper of the  
20 seized animal shall be permitted to hire a licensed veterinarian of his or her  
21 choosing to examine the animal at a time and place agreed to by the petitioner.

22 (5) (a) At the hearing, the petitioner shall have the burden of establishing probable  
23 cause to believe that the animal was subjected to a violation identified in  
24 subsection (1) of this section. A prior finding of probable cause by a judge  
25 shall create a rebuttable presumption that probable cause exists for the  
26 forfeiture proceeding.

27 (b) If the court finds that probable cause exists, the court shall order the

1 immediate forfeiture of the animal to the petitioner, unless the defendant,  
2 within seventy-two (72) hours after the hearing, posts a security deposit or  
3 bond with the treasurer or chief financial officer of the city or the county  
4 treasurer, in an amount determined by the court to be sufficient to repay all  
5 reasonable costs incurred, and all reasonable costs anticipated to be  
6 incurred, for the care of the animal for at least thirty (30) days inclusive of  
7 the day of the initial seizure.

8 (c) If the court finds probable cause does not exist, the animal shall be returned  
9 to the defendant and the defendant shall not be responsible for any costs of  
10 the seizure, care, or treatment, unless the defendant is later found guilty or  
11 pleads guilty in the criminal case.

12 (6) (a) At the end of the thirty (30) days for which expenses are covered by the  
13 security deposit or bond, if the defendant desires to prevent disposition of  
14 the animal, the defendant shall post a new security deposit or bond with the  
15 treasurer or chief financial officer of the city or the county treasurer, which  
16 must be received by the expiration of the date of the previous security  
17 deposit or bond. The court may correct, alter, or otherwise adjust the new  
18 security deposit or bond upon a motion made before the expiration date of  
19 the previous security deposit or bond, except, that no person may file more  
20 than one (1) motion seeking an adjustment to the new security deposit or  
21 bond.

22 (b) If a security deposit or bond has been posted in accordance with this  
23 section, the petitioner may draw from that deposit or bond reasonable costs  
24 for keeping and caring for the animal from the date of the seizure to the  
25 date of final disposition of the animal in the criminal action.

26 (c) At the end of the time for which expenses are covered by the security deposit  
27 or bond, or if no security deposit or bond has been posted in accordance

1           with this section, the animal shall be deemed abandoned, and the petitioner  
2           may determine the disposition of the animal. The defendant shall be liable  
3           for all unpaid reasonable costs of the care, keeping, or disposal of the  
4           animal.

5           (d) Upon resolution of the criminal action, or relinquishment of the animal by  
6           the owner or keeper, remaining funds deposited with the municipal or  
7           county treasurer which have not and will not be expended in the care,  
8           keeping, or disposal of the animal shall be remitted to the defendant.

9           (e) Upon a criminal conviction for any violation of this section, a judge, in  
10           addition to any other penalty, shall in all felony convictions, and may in all  
11           misdemeanor convictions:

12           1. Order forfeiture of the seized animal or other animals owned or kept  
13           by the defendant;

14           2. Order restitution for reasonable unpaid cost of care of the seized  
15           animal;

16           3. Prohibit the defendant from having future possession or custody of  
17           any animal for a period of time the court deems reasonable and  
18           appropriate; and

19           4. Impose any other reasonable restrictions on the defendant's custody,  
20           control, or unsupervised access to animals as the court deems  
21           necessary for the protection of animals.

22           (7) (a) A law enforcement agency or animal control agency that seizes an animal  
23           pursuant to subsection (1) of this section may transfer the animal into the  
24           possession of a shelter or other animal care organization for purposes of  
25           providing care and shelter to the animal. If such a transfer is made, the law  
26           enforcement agency or animal control agency that seized the animal shall  
27           retain custody of the animal while the animal is in the possession of a

1           shelter or animal care organization.

2           (b) Any law enforcement agency, animal control agency, or designated shelter  
3           or animal care organization holding an animal pursuant to this section  
4           shall be immune from liability related to its care and possession of the  
5           animal. Immunity shall not extend to any person or organization acting in  
6           bad faith or in violation of the law.

7           (8) (a) A seized animal shall not be released, adopted, or disposed of if law  
8           enforcement or a prosecutor's office is holding the animal as evidence in an  
9           ongoing criminal proceeding, unless otherwise agreed upon by the  
10           prosecutor's office and the defendant.

11           (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, if, in the written  
12           determination of a licensed veterinarian, the seized animal is experiencing  
13           extreme pain or suffering, or is severely injured or diseased, and is not  
14           likely to recover, the law enforcement agency or animal control agency with  
15           custody of the animal may have the animal euthanized.

16           (9) (a) A proceeding under this section shall not be used as a basis for a  
17           continuance or to delay the criminal case, and proceedings in the criminal  
18           case, other than dismissal, shall not be used as a basis to delay or continue  
19           the forfeiture proceeding as provided in this section.

20           (b) Proceedings under this section are of a civil nature and governed by the  
21           Kentucky Rules of Civil Procedure, except as to limitations upon the  
22           discovery process. All discovery requests shall be granted only under the  
23           authority of the court. The court shall authorize discovery with the intent to  
24           provide the necessary information relating directly to the evidence for the  
25           probable cause proceeding under subsection (5) of this section. In no event  
26           shall the discovery mechanisms be used to unreasonably burden the  
27           opposing party. Discovery mechanisms shall not include the deposition of

1           any party, witness, or representative, the use of interrogatories, or the  
2           demand to inspect any records outside of the immediate reports and  
3           financial accountings for the animal in question.

4           ➔SECTION 5. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 525 IS CREATED TO  
5 READ AS FOLLOWS:

6           (1) A person who enters the passenger compartment of a car or truck for the purpose  
7           of removing a dog or cat shall be immune from civil liability for any resulting  
8           damage to the passenger car or truck if the person:

9           (a) 1. Makes a reasonable effort to locate the owner or other person  
10           responsible for the dog or cat;

11           2. Contacts local law enforcement, the local fire department, local  
12           animal control officers, or a 911 emergency telephone service; and

13           3. Has reason to believe, based on the circumstances at the time,  
14           including but not limited to the person's observations and perceptions,  
15           that the dog or cat is in immediate danger of death if not removed  
16           from the passenger car or truck before emergency responders can  
17           arrive;

18           (b) Uses no more force to enter the passenger car or truck and remove the dog  
19           or cat than is reasonably necessary under the circumstances; and

20           (c) 1. Remains with the dog or cat in a safe location, out of the elements but  
21           reasonably close to the passenger car or truck, until law enforcement,  
22           firefighters, animal control officers, or other emergency responders  
23           arrive; or

24           2. Reasonably determines that emergency conditions require leaving the  
25           scene with the animal, and places written notice on the passenger car  
26           or truck containing:

27           a. The person's contact information;



- 1                   **b. The reason entry into the passenger car or truck was made;**
- 2                   **c. The location of the dog or cat; and**
- 3                   **d. Notice that authorities have been contacted, and specifically**
- 4                               **which law enforcement agency or emergency services were**
- 5                               **contacted.**

6 **(2) This section shall not limit a person's immunity from civil liability or defenses**  
7 **established under any other section of the Kentucky Revised Statutes, available at**  
8 **common law, or if the person is acting in bad faith.**

9           ➔SECTION 6. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 525 IS CREATED TO  
10 READ AS FOLLOWS:

11 **Section 4 of this Act shall apply equally to any offspring born to an animal held in**  
12 **custody in accordance with Sections 1 to 6, 7, 8, and 9 of this Act when that animal was**  
13 **pregnant at the time of seizure.**

14           ➔Section 7. KRS 525.125 is amended to read as follows:

15 (1) As used in this section:

- 16 (a) "Dog" means a domesticated canid of the genus *canis lupus familiaris*; and
- 17 (b) "Dog fight" or "dog fighting" means any event that involves a fight conducted
- 18 or to be conducted between at least two (2) dogs for purposes of sport,
- 19 wagering, or entertainment, except that the term "dog fight" or "dog fighting"
- 20 shall not be deemed to include any activity the purpose of which involves the
- 21 use of one (1) or more dogs in hunting or taking another animal.

22 (2) The following persons are guilty of cruelty to animals in the first degree:

- 23 (a) Whenever a dog is knowingly caused to dog fight for pleasure or profit:
- 24 1. The owner of the dog;
- 25 2. The owner of the property on which the fight is conducted if the owner
- 26 knows of the dog fight; and
- 27 3. Anyone who participates in the organization of the dog fight; and

1 (b) Any person who knowingly owns, possesses, keeps, trains, sells, or otherwise  
2 transfers a dog for the purpose of dog fighting.

3 (3) Activities of dogs engaged in hunting, field trials, dog training, and other activities  
4 authorized either by a hunting license or by the Department of Fish and Wildlife  
5 Resources shall not constitute a violation of this section.

6 (4) Activities of dogs engaged in working or guarding livestock shall not constitute a  
7 violation of this section.

8 (5) Cruelty to animals in the first degree is a Class D felony.

9 **(6) A peace officer or animal control officer who has probable cause to believe there**  
10 **has been a violation of this section shall seize and take custody of the animal**  
11 **involved pursuant to Section 4 of this Act.**

12 **(7) Upon a criminal conviction for cruelty to animals in the first degree, the court, in**  
13 **addition to any other penalty, shall:**

14 **(a) Order forfeiture of any animal seized under Section 4 of this Act, including**  
15 **other animals owned or kept by the defendant;**

16 **(b) Order restitution for reasonable unpaid costs of care for an animal seized**  
17 **under Section 4 of this Act;**

18 **(c) Prohibit the defendant from having future possession or custody of any**  
19 **animal for a period of time the court deems reasonable and appropriate;**  
20 **and**

21 **(d) Impose any other reasonable restrictions on the defendant's custody,**  
22 **control, or unsupervised access to animals as the court deems necessary for**  
23 **the protection of the animals.**

24 ➔Section 8. KRS 525.130 is amended to read as follows:

25 (1) A person is guilty of cruelty to animals in the second degree when except as  
26 authorized by law he **or she** intentionally or wantonly:

27 (a) Subjects any animal to or causes cruel or injurious mistreatment through

1            abuse, abandonment, participation~~[participates]~~ other than as provided in  
2            KRS 525.125 in causing it to fight for pleasure or profit, ~~[(including[,])~~ but  
3            not limited to being a spectator or vendor at an event where a four (4) legged  
4            animal is caused to fight for pleasure or profit~~(,)]~~, mutilation, beating, torturing  
5            any animal other than a dog or cat, tormenting, failing to provide adequate  
6            food, drink, space, or health care, or by any other means;

7            (b) Subjects any animal in his custody to cruel neglect; or  
8            (c) Kills any animal other than a dog or cat~~[domestic animal killed]~~ by poisoning.  
9            ~~[This paragraph shall not apply to intentional poisoning of a dog or cat.~~  
10           ~~Intentional poisoning of a dog or cat shall constitute a violation of this~~  
11           ~~section.]~~

12           (2) Nothing in this section shall apply to the killing of animals:

- 13           (a) Pursuant to a license to hunt, fish, or trap;  
14           (b) Incident to the processing as food or for other commercial purposes;  
15           (c) For humane purposes;  
16           (d) For veterinary, agricultural, spaying or neutering, or cosmetic purposes;  
17           (e) For purposes relating to sporting activities, including but not limited to horse  
18           racing at organized races and training for organized races, organized horse  
19           shows, or other animal shows;  
20           (f) For bona fide animal research activities of institutions of higher education; or  
21           a business entity registered with the United States Department of Agriculture  
22           under the Animal Welfare Act or subject to other federal laws governing  
23           animal research;  
24           (g) In defense of self or another person against an aggressive or diseased animal;  
25           (h) In defense of a domestic animal against an aggressive or diseased animal;  
26           (i) For animal or pest control; or  
27           (j) For any other purpose authorized by law.

- 1 (3) Activities of animals engaged in hunting, field trials, dog training other than  
2 training a dog to fight for pleasure or profit, and other activities authorized either by  
3 a hunting license or by the Department of Fish and Wildlife shall not constitute a  
4 violation of this section.
- 5 (4) Cruelty to animals in the second degree is a Class A misdemeanor.
- 6 (5) If a person is convicted of or pleads guilty to an offense under subsection (1) of this  
7 section arising from the person's treatment of an equine, the court may impose one  
8 (1) or both of the following penalties against the person, in addition to fines and  
9 imprisonment:
- 10 (a) An order that the person pay restitution for damage to the property of others  
11 and for costs incurred by others, including reasonable costs, as determined by  
12 agreement or by the court after a hearing, incurred in feeding, sheltering,  
13 veterinary treatment, and incidental care of any equine that was the subject of  
14 the offense resulting in conviction; or
- 15 (b) An order terminating or imposing conditions on the person's right to  
16 possession, title, custody, or care of any equine that was the subject of the  
17 offense resulting in conviction.
- 18 **(6)** If a person's ownership interest in an equine is terminated by a judicial order under  
19 ~~paragraph (b) of this~~ subsection **(5)(b) of this section**, the court may order the  
20 sale, conveyance, or other disposition of the equine that was the subject of the  
21 offense resulting in conviction.
- 22 **(7) A peace officer, animal control officer, or law enforcement officer who has**  
23 **probable cause to believe there has been a violation of this section may seize and**  
24 **take custody of the animal involved pursuant to Section 4 of this Act.**
- 25 **(8) Upon a criminal conviction for cruelty to animals in the second degree, a judge,**  
26 **in addition to any other penalty, may:**
- 27 **(a) Order forfeiture of any animal seized under Section 4 of this Act, including**

- 1                   *other animals owned or kept by the defendant;*
- 2                   *(b) Order restitution for reasonable unpaid costs of care of any animal seized*
- 3                   *under Section 4 of this Act;*
- 4                   *(c) Prohibit the defendant from having future possession or custody of any*
- 5                   *animal for a period of time the court deems reasonable and appropriate;*
- 6                   *and*
- 7                   *(d) Impose any other reasonable restrictions on the defendant's custody, care,*
- 8                   *control, or unsupervised access to animals as the court deems necessary for*
- 9                   *the protection of animals.*

10           ➔Section 9. KRS 525.137 is amended to read as follows:

11           (1) As used in this section:

- 12                   (a) "Animal" means any nonhuman creature; and
- 13                   (b) "Sexual contact" means any act committed between a person and an animal
- 14                               for the purpose of sexual arousal, sexual gratification, abuse, or financial gain
- 15                               involving:
  - 16                                   1. Contact between the sex organs or anus of one and the mouth, sex
  - 17                                               organs, or anus of another;
  - 18                                   2. The insertion of any part of the animal's body into the vaginal or anal
  - 19                                               opening of the person; or
  - 20                                   3. The insertion of any part of the body of a person or any object into the
  - 21                                               vaginal or anal opening of an animal without a bona fide veterinary or
  - 22                                               animal husbandry purpose.

23           (2) A person is guilty of sexual crimes against an animal if he or she:

- 24                   (a) Engages in sexual contact with an animal;
- 25                   (b) Advertises, solicits, offers, or accepts the offer of an animal, or possesses,
- 26                               purchases, or otherwise obtains an animal, with the intent that the animal be
- 27                               subject to sexual contact; or

1 (c) Causes, aids, or abets another person to engage in sexual contact with an  
2 animal.

3 (3) Sexual crimes against an animal is a Class D felony.

4 (4) Nothing in this section shall apply to:

5 (a) Accepted veterinary practices;

6 (b) Artificial insemination of an animal for reproductive purposes;

7 (c) Accepted animal husbandry practices, including grooming, raising, breeding,  
8 or assisting with the birthing process of animals or any other procedure that  
9 provides care for an animal; or

10 (d) Generally accepted practices related to the judging of breed conformation.

11 (5) In addition to the penalty imposed in subsection (3) of this section, the court shall  
12 order a person convicted of violating this section to:

13 (a) Relinquish custody of all animals under the person's control. If the person  
14 convicted of violating this section is not the owner of the animal that was the  
15 subject of the violation, then the animal shall be returned to the owner of the  
16 animal. An animal returned to an owner under this section shall not be spayed  
17 or neutered prior to being returned;

18 (b) Not harbor, own, possess, or exercise control over any animal, reside in any  
19 household where animals are present, or work or volunteer in a place where  
20 the person has unsupervised access to animals for a minimum of five (5) years  
21 after completion of the imposed sentence;

22 (c) Attend an appropriate treatment program or obtain psychiatric or  
23 psychological counseling, at the person's expense; and

24 (d) Reimburse the agency caring for the animal for reasonable costs incurred for  
25 the care and treatment of the animal from the date of impoundment until the  
26 disposition of the criminal proceeding.

27 **(6) A peace officer or animal control officer who has probable cause to believe there**

1        *has been a violation of this section shall seize and take custody of the animal*  
2        *involved pursuant to Section 4 of this Act.*