

“Animal Cruelty Facts and Stats.” The Humane Society of the United States, Web. 1 Mar 2021.

[www.humanesociety.org/resources/animal-cruelty-facts-and-stats](http://www.humanesociety.org/resources/animal-cruelty-facts-and-stats)

Many animal abuse facts help people understand the severity of animal abuse and cruelty since some cases aren't reported and there are much more than officially documented. There are different types of people who abuse animals, being connected with people who commit violent crimes or who abuse children or spouses as well. Animal abuse can take different forms, either being in organized crimes like fights, animal hoarding, or in just common animal cruelty. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) has tried to get stronger laws instituted and wanted to get training so officers can recognize signs of these crimes, even getting the Pets and Women's Safety (PAWS) Act passed to help women escape from domestic abuse and keep their pets safe. Animal abuse is tracked officially by the FBI, which helps collect data on animal abuse so it can be prevented. The data covers simple/gross neglect, intentional abuse and torture, organized abuse, and animal sexual abuse.

- “The animals whose abuse is most often reported are dogs, cats, horses, and livestock. Undercover investigations have revealed that animal abuse abounds in the factory farm industry. But because of the weak protections afforded to livestock under state cruelty laws, only the most shocking cases are reported, and few are ever prosecuted.”
- “Data on domestic violence and child abuse cases reveal that a staggering number of animals are targeted by those who abuse their children or spouses.”

Gjelten, E.A. “Animal Cruelty Laws in Pennsylvania.” Lawyers.com, 3 Jan. 2019. Web. 1 Mar 2021.

[www.lawyers.com/legal-info/criminal/animal-law/animal-cruelty-laws-in-pennsylvania.html](http://www.lawyers.com/legal-info/criminal/animal-law/animal-cruelty-laws-in-pennsylvania.html)

Animal cruelty is a serious charge, and you can either be charged a fine or stay in prison, be charged for a misdemeanor, or a felony. It is illegal to abuse, beat, torture, abandon, or mistreat an animal, and the punishment varies based on the circumstance. Neglecting an animal in any way, whether it be not providing necessities, locking it in a car during hot weather, or tethering it up for more than nine hours without the needed care, is met with a penalty from a fine to felony charges, all based on the severity of the risk or injuries. Procedures such as ear cropping, tail docking, cutting vocal cords, or cesarean birth that is not carried out by a certified vet with anesthesia are considered animal cruelty. You can be fined for poisoning an animal, and if it was intentional, it's a misdemeanor. You can also be charged with a felony for partaking in organized animal fighting to any degree.

- “It’s a felony in Pennsylvania to participate in organized animal fighting in any way, from owning or training the animals to betting on a fight or simply attending as a spectator.”
- “The state also outlaws neglecting any animals in your custody by not providing for their basic needs, including:  
necessary food and drinkable water  
access to protection from the weather and clean shelter that allows the animals to stay dry and retain their normal body temperature, and  
needed veterinary care. As with animal cruelty, penalties for neglect range from fines to felony charges, depending on the extent of the risk or resulting injuries.”

Miller, Cassie. “How Pa. Courts Are Handling Cases of Animal Abuse: The Numbers Racket.”

*Pennsylvania Capital-Star*. 27 July 2020. Web. 1 Mar 2021.

[www.penncapital-star.com/government-politics/animal-abuse-in-pennsylvania-the-numbers-rack-et/](http://www.penncapital-star.com/government-politics/animal-abuse-in-pennsylvania-the-numbers-rack-et/)

In Pennsylvania, the penalties for animal abuse have increased and animals are being protected. Data collected from the (AOPC) helps monitor the number of cases reported statewide and by county. Libre's Law, an act that raised animal abuse penalties in Pennsylvania, has caused a spike in animal abuse offenses from 2017-2019. In those 3 years, over 4,000 animal abuse cases were filed. Several counties in Pennsylvania have made up 3-13 percent of the statewide animal abuse cases. From these cases, it can be determined what the percentage of defendants in animal abuse cases' gender and/or age is.

- "The majority of defendants fell into the 46-65 age range (25 percent). Just 2 percent of defendants were under 18, 13 percent were between the ages of 19-25, 24 percent were between the ages of 26-35 and 20 percent were between the ages of 36-45."
- "In 2017, 965 offenses were reported. In 2018, that number climbed to 11,836. By 2019, the number of offenses reported were 8,405. The total number of animal abuse cases filed from 2017-2019 statewide is 4,804, according to the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts."

Miller, Rudy. "Which Pa. Counties Have the Most Animal Cruelty Offenses?"

*Lehighvalleylive.com*. 27 Aug. 2018. Web. 1 Mar 2021.

[www.lehighvalleylive.com/news/2018/08/which\\_pa\\_counties\\_have\\_the\\_mos.html](http://www.lehighvalleylive.com/news/2018/08/which_pa_counties_have_the_mos.html)

Many animal abuse laws and policies have been put in place to prohibit, limit, and, overall, stop animal abuse and cruelty. The Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) monitors the offenses and provides data on it that can be viewed. The number of cases

in 31 Pennsylvania counties ranges from 19 to 888 in 2018, because there is a difference in how cases are reported. In most counties, charges can be directed straight to a district judge, but, in Philadelphia, it has to be brought to a detective. Humane officers also need to notify the defendant that they have been charged with an animal abuse offense, so if they ignore it or let the animal go, the police can't do anything, explaining the low number of cases in Philadelphia. Delaware, Snyder, Wyoming, Crawford, Erie, and Fayette have under 30 total cases of animal cruelty, neglect, and aggravated cruelty. Dauphin, Cambria, Lancaster, Philadelphia, Tioga, Lehigh, Beaver, Lycoming, and Northampton have 30-45 total cases. Bradford, York, Armstrong, Chester, Jefferson, and Lackawanna have 55-100 total cases. Mercer, Indiana, Somerset, and Washington have 110-150 total cases. Bucks, Allegheny, Montgomery, Luzerne, and Westmoreland have 200-890 total cases. Overall, Pennsylvania has over 4,000 reported animal abuse cases around 2018.

- "...Libre's Law went into effect. The Pennsylvania law is named for a Boston Terrier puppy found hours from death on a Lancaster County farm, according to a pennlive.com report. The law improves tethering conditions for animals left outside, strengthens punishments against abusers and assures that abusers lose their animals..."
- "Also, humane officers in Philadelphia must serve defendants with a summons when they're charged with an animal cruelty offense. In other counties, the summons can be mailed to a defendant. 'So if the individual hides in house refusing to answer or abandons an animal and we cannot find them, we cannot charge with a summary offense'..."

Schaefer, Mari A. "Five Things to Know about Pa.'s New Animal Cruelty Law." *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. 28 June 2017. Web. 1 Mar 2021.

[www.inquirer.com/philly/news/animal-cruelty-pennsylvania-libres-law-20170628.html](http://www.inquirer.com/philly/news/animal-cruelty-pennsylvania-libres-law-20170628.html)

After Libre's law, an animal-abuse legislation named after an abused puppy was passed. Libre, a Boston terrier, was found starving, covered in mange, barely alive on an Amish dog-breeding farm in Lancaster County in 2016. He was saved by a delivery-truck man, being saved from his impending doom. When his law was passed, dog tethering laws have been improved, stating that a dog cannot be tied down for more than nine hours in 24 hours and the tether must be three times the dog's length. In harsh conditions, a dog can't be tethered for more than 30 minutes and must always have access to water and shade. Animal cruelty penalties are strengthened as well. Humane Society officers and veterinarians can't be sued for wrongly accusing someone of animal cruelty. The abuse of horses is treated the same as cats, dogs, or other pets. Anyone that is officially convicted of anything animal-cruelty related has to give up their animal.

- "The law stiffens the penalties for cruelty. Officers will be able to file felony-level charges for first-time cruelty. Dog-fighting and killing an endangered species are already felonies"
- "They can now report animal cruelty without fear of being sued if they're wrong. Under the new law, abuse of horses will now be treated the same as that of cats, dogs, and other pets."

Wise, Jenna. "Over 20,000 Animal Cruelty Charges Filed in Pa. since Passing Of Libre's Law". Penn Live, 23 July 2020. Web. 15 Mar 2021.

[www.pennlive.com/crime/2020/07/over-20000-animal-cruelty-charges-filed-in-pa-since-passing-of-libres-law.html](http://www.pennlive.com/crime/2020/07/over-20000-animal-cruelty-charges-filed-in-pa-since-passing-of-libres-law.html)

Libre's law has made the number of animal cruelty charges rise exponentially. It allows police and prosecutors to charge people accused of long-term animal abuse more severely, as well as providing strict tethering rules and a grading system and penalties based on the extremity of the charge. Through the 21, 206 animal cruelty cases in 2019, 52 percent were about animal neglect, 41 percent were about animal cruelty, and 7 percent were about aggravated cruelty.

- “More than 20,000 charges involving extreme animal abuse and neglect have been filed in Pennsylvania in the two years since the law went into effect making it easier for prosecutors to apply harsher charges, according to state data.”
- “ Libre's Law also provided tethering guidelines, set up a grading system and penalty levels, that would vary based on the severity of the charges.”