

July 2025

The ACO Voice

A Monthly Magazine from the Animal Control & Care Academy ■ The Only Monthly Publication Dedicated to Animal Control



When Lying Becomes a Crime...

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Notes from our CEO...

Greetings to all!

July is moving right along, and we've made it through our busiest time of the year — the 4th of July holiday. Hopefully everyone stayed safe, and owners have reclaimed any firework-induced stray intakes.

This month we focus on a situation ACOs and shelters are encountering more frequently. False information from owners or people finding animals, combined with low adoptions and lack of space is placing a huge burden on all of us. This includes people "shelter surfing" to find a facility accepting animals or meeting their "no kill" demands. Animals are the ones losing when displaced strays aren't where their owners may be living and looking for them while owned animals that are claimed to be "stray" are filling shelters with extra mandatory holding periods instead of being available for immediate disposition.

How you deal with this and what are the options? How do you handle these citizens? We talk about some of these issues in this month's article but also go over more in both our Shelter Technician Certification and Comprehensive Animal Management courses (coming to Kansas City and Clarksville). Hope to see you there!

Thanks and stay safe!

Mark Kumpf, CAVA

CEO / Master Instructor ACCA

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A Look at When Lying to an Animal Control Officer Can Be a Crime

"I don't have to tell you anything! I have the right to remain silent and the right to free speech!" The contradiction in assertions notwithstanding, the argument of the suspect is largely without merit depending on the context of the lie. Lying to animal control officers is not always a violation of law, depending on the nature of the lie. Yes, a suspect has the right to not talk to animal control officers. Yes, a suspect has the right to remain silent. Yes, the suspect has the right to free speech, but the suspect does not have the right to interfere with the animal control officer in the performance of his or her duties, interfere with an investigation, or if the lie is a "material falsehood." Making false statements to an animal control officer, like any other law enforcement

official, can result in citations and charges of obstruction of justice or other similar offenses.

When animal control agencies are typically understaffed and are constantly responding to unfounded complaints or neighborhood disputes, the complainant is interfering with an animal control officer's performance of legitimate duties, actual complaints and real offenses. Generally, when these situations arise, especially in neighborhood disputes, both parties get warned not to make further unfounded or false complaints in an attempt to get the other person in trouble. Usually, a firm warning and explanation that they could be charged with making false statements or interference stops the dispute. However, some people

just don't learn until the tickets are issued, or until they are arrested.

Lying, in and of itself however, isn't an offense until certain conditions are met. If the subject lies about something unrelated to the accusation or to an active investigation, it's probably not going to be considered an offense.

Federal law, 18 USC Section 1001, makes it illegal to lie to federal law enforcement officials if the lie is relevant to their investigation. Under state laws like Maryland's Criminal Code Section 9-501 (2004), Arizona's ARS § 13-2907.01, Missouri's RSMo 575.080 and Mississippi's Code § 97-35-47 and others, lying to state or municipal law enforcement officials is a crime if the lie is relevant to their investigation. Unfortunately, while most animal control officers are considered law enforcement officials, they are not able to enforce those statutory laws and must call on police or prosecutors to get action taken against someone for lying. Some local municipal governments have, however, added ordinances specifically making it an offense to make false statements or to interfere with animal control officers.

"It shall be unlawful for the owner, harbinger or keeper of an animal or any other person to make false statements to animal control officers," or "It shall be unlawful for any person to interfere with an animal control officer in the performance of their duties..." are commonly phrased animal control ordinances.

Other issues or offenses could be possible when

someone lies to animal control officers and the lies are relevant to the investigation. Obstruction of justice occurs if the lie hinders the officer's ability to perform their duties. Material falsehood occurs if the lie misleads or influences the investigation. A prime example of that could be neighborhood disputes where the alleged offender makes accusations against others to try to shift the investigation or mitigate their culpability. False statements could also include fabricating evidence or complaints to get someone else in trouble or mislead an ACO's investigation.

Depending on the circumstances and the language of an ordinance or state statute, lying to the animal control officer can lead to misdemeanor or felony charges, leading potentially monetary fines or short to significant jail time.

While not every lie to an animal control official is a crime, intentionally providing false information that obstructs the officers performance of duty or is material to an investigation can lead to serious legal consequences. The key word here is *intentionally*.

Often witnesses, reporting party, or even the accused make statements based on what they believe to be true only to learn they were mistaken. Without intent, it's probably not going to qualify, but intentionally making false statements, however you word it, causes interference to investigations, interferes with the ACO's duty performance and other issues which should be considered and addressed accordingly.



Upcoming Training Opportunities

For a registration form, visit www.accacademy.net or call 937-825-6709.



Professional Development Course • Hosted by Williamson County Animal Control
July 15-17, 2025 • Marion, Illinois

Schedule of Training

Day 1 - Officer Safety and Protection; Basic Animal Control Investigations

Day 2 - Courtroom Testimony and Report Writing, Safe Handling, Capture And Restraint

Day 3 - Baton/Bitestick Certification; Oleoresin Capsicum Aerosol Training Certification

Training Course for Animal Control Professionals • Hosted by Coffeyville Animal Control
July 21-25, 2025 • Coffeyville, Kansas

Schedule of Training

Day 1 - Canine Behavior and Aggressive Dogs; Challenging Encounters in Animal Control; Community Cooperation – Outreach and Education; Diversion – Alternative Enforcement Programs

Day 2 - Interpersonal Communications; Officer Safety and Protection

Day 3 - Safe Animal Handling/Capture and Restraint Equipment; Stress Management Compassion Fatigue; Sovereign Citizens

Day 4 - Lifting and Loading Certification; Oleoresin Capsicum (OCAT) Certification

Day 5 - Chemical Immobilization

Comprehensive Animal Management Certification • Hosted by the Platte County Sheriff's Office
August 4-7, 2025 • Kansas City, Missouri

Schedule of Training:

Advanced Case Supervision; Basic Budget Planning; Disciplinary Investigations; Equipment, Vehicles and Operational Needs; Evaluating Staff; Interviewing and Selection; Managing Generational Employees; Meetings: Individual, Specific Groups, Entire Staff; Policy and Procedures: Review and Development; Pushing Paperwork: Reports, Memos and Correspondence; Supervising Daily Operations; Training and Staff Development; Transition from Staff to Supervisor; Workplace Harassment and Violence

Comprehensive Animal Management Certification • Hosted by Montgomery County Animal Care & Control
August 13-15, 2025 • Clarksville, Tennessee

Schedule of Training

Advanced Case Supervision; Basic Budget Planning; Disciplinary Investigations; Equipment, Vehicles and Operational Needs; Evaluating Staff; Interviewing and Selection; Managing Generational Employees; Meetings: Individual, Specific Groups, Entire Staff; Policy and Procedures: Review and Development; Pushing Paper-work: Reports, Memos and Correspondence; Supervising Daily Operations; Training and Staff Development; Transition from Staff to Supervisor; Workplace Harassment and Violence

Training Course for Animal Control Professionals • Hosted by West Des Moines Animal Control
August 18-20, 2025 • West Des Moines, Iowa

Schedule of Training

Day 1 - Canine Behavior and Aggressive Dogs; Courtroom Testimony and Report Writing; Sovereign Citizens; Community Cooperation: Outreach and Education

Day 2 - Investigative Techniques for Cruelty and Neglect Complaints

Day 3 - Understanding the "Link" in Animal Abuse; Evidence Law and Collection; Diversion – Alternative Enforcement Programs; Challenging Encounters in Animal Control

Basic Animal Control Officer Certification • Hosted by Cusseta-Chattahoochee County Animal Control
August 18-21, 2025 • Cusseta, Georgia

Schedule of Training

Laws and Enforcement Procedures; Interpersonal Communication; Officer Safety and Protection; Basic Animal Control Officer Investigations; Evidence Law and Collection; Courtroom Testimony and Report Writing; Canine Behavior and Aggressive Dogs; Safe Animal Handling/Capture and Restraint Equipment

Baton/Bitestick Certification • Hosted by Cusseta-Chattahoochee County Animal Control
August 22, 2025 • Cusseta, Georgia

Basic Animal Control Officer Certification • Hosted by the Fargo Police Department
August 25-27, 2025 • Fargo, North Dakota

Schedule of Training

Laws and Enforcement Procedures; Interpersonal Communication; Officer Safety and Protection; Basic Animal Control Officer Investigations; Evidence Law and Collection; Courtroom Testimony and Report Writing; Canine Behavior and Aggressive Dogs; Safe Animal Handling/Capture and Restraint Equipment

Chemical Immobilization Certification • Hosted by the Fargo Police Department
August 28, 2025 • Fargo, North Dakota

Bite Stick/Baton Certification • Hosted by the Fargo Police Department
August 29, 2025 • Fargo, North Dakota

Animal Shelter Technician Certification • Hosted by the Platte County Sheriff's Office
October 27-29, 2025 • Kansas City, Missouri

Schedule of Training:

Animal Care in a Sheltering Environment; Animal Disposition Options; Animal Identification: Breed and Description; Animal Shelter Design and Operations; Animal Shelter Record-Keeping; Canine and Feline Behaviors and Assessments; Disease Exposures in a Sheltering Environment; Emergency Animal Sheltering; Proactive Animal Sheltering

Advanced ACO Certification • Hosted by Cusseta-Chattahoochee County Animal Control
November 3-6, 2025 • Cusseta, Georgia

Schedule of Training

Animal Attack Investigation and Reporting; Animal Crime Scene Photography, Videography and Sketching; Animal Hoarding Investigations; Illegal Animal Fighting; Livestock and Exotics Cases; Obtaining and Executing Search Warrants; Officer Safety in the Field; Proactive Animal Control; Using Forensics in Animal Cruelty Investigations

Chemical Immobilization Certification • Hosted by Cusseta-Chattahoochee County Animal Control
November 7, 2025 • Cusseta, Georgia



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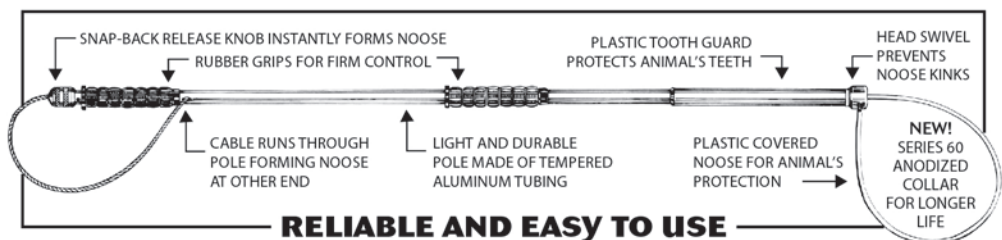
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"The ACO Voice"

2025 Advertising Rates

"The ACO Voice" is an electronic magazine that is published 12 times each year by the Animal Control & Care Academy to provide information of interest to Animal Control Officers. Advertising is provided on a space-available basis.

Publication Dates: The first week of each month.

Available ad sizes are: Full Page (7½" x 10") and Half Page (7½" x 5")

Advertising Rates			
	Three Times Full Color or B/W	Six Times Full Color or B/W	Twelve Times Full Color or B/W
Full Page	\$150 x 3	\$125 x 6	\$100 x 12
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Payments: Payments must be made in advance via check or credit card (PayPal).

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Our flat-rate display advertisement program is simple. Our monthly e-magazine offers you an affordable way to get your services and products out to a highly targeted audience of animal control professionals.

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You may download the current edition of our e-magazine via this link:

<https://accacademy.net/newsletter>

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Sincerely,

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