

What is animal abuse?

Animal abuse, also known as animal cruelty, involves causing physical pain, suffering, or death to an animal, often a domesticated one, beyond what is necessary for normal discipline. This can include neglect that is so severe, such as withholding food and water, that the animal has suffered, died, or been put in immediate danger of death. Animal abuse can be a precursor to violence against humans and may be a part of domestic violence. Family pets are often targeted by abusers as a means of exerting power and control over their partners. It has been reported that a significant number of domestic violence victims are unable to leave their abusers due to concerns about their pets' well-being. Recognizing red flags of animal abuse, such as poor body condition, lack of food or water, lack of shelter, and evidence of fighting or mistreatment, can help in identifying and addressing cases of animal abuse. If you suspect animal abuse or are in an abusive relationship and concerned about the safety of your pet, our agency can provide assistance and support.