



**ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
GENERAL ORDER
ANIMAL CRUELTY OFFICER**



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To: All Deputy Sheriffs & Office Personnel
 From: Sheriff Carl E. DuBois
 Subject: General Order - Animal Cruelty Officer

PURPOSE: The purpose of this General Order is to establish the guidelines for and the responsibilities of the Animal Cruelty Officer (ACO).

I. POLICY.

- A. The Orange County Sheriff's Office provides for the investigation of animal cruelty complaints on the basis of a specific request or notification. In keeping with the mission of this Office, the Animal Cruelty Officer shall provide assistance in the prevention and detection of animal cruelty.
- B. The Animal Cruelty Officer shall be responsible for investigations dealing with cruelty, neglect and the mistreatment of animals. The ACO shall work under the supervision of the **Investigations Senior Investigator**. The ACO shall be subject to regular duties when there is a need to make such assignment.

II. PROCEDURE.

- A. **FUNCTION.** Whenever a complaint regarding animal cruelty is received it should be directed to the ACO. The ACO shall be a Deputy who is trained to handle and investigate animal cruelty cases.

II. B. COMPLAINTS. All animal cruelty complaints shall be investigated. Animal cruelty may initially be determined by the responding Deputy when the officer believes that the animal does not appear to be in extreme pain or in imminent danger of losing its life but is neglected or abused to a greater extent and when the animal may be in danger of losing its life. The responding Deputy shall take the necessary steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the animal by doing the following:

1. Notify the supervisor on duty who will then determine whether the ACO should be additionally called in.
2. The animal shall be taken to a safe location or to a veterinarian depending on what the circumstances require.
3. A report shall be taken and turned over to the animal cruelty officer for further investigation and follow up.

III. SUPERVISION.

- A. The ACO shall be under the general supervision of the Investigations Senior Investigator. The **Investigations Senior Investigator** shall be responsible for the oversight of the criminal investigation(s) being conducted by the ACO and shall provide investigative assistance and direction to the ACO.

IV. DEPLOYMENT.

- A. Response of an Animal Cruelty Officer shall be pre-authorized whenever possible by the **Investigations Senior Investigator** or the Captain.

V. INVESTIGATION EVALUATIONS.

- A. The Animal Cruelty Officer shall apprise the **Investigations Senior Investigator** on the status of all open investigations.

VI. NOTIFICATION OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION TO POLICE AGENCIES.

- A. When ever necessary it shall be the responsibility of the assigned Deputy and or ACO to contact the local and/or state police agency in the jurisdiction where the crime is suspected to have taken place. The assigned Deputy and/or ACO shall advise the law enforcement agency of the existence of the animal cruelty report and the fact that the Sheriff's Office is conducting an investigation into the report.

VII. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES.

- A. When receiving an animal cruelty complaint, the Deputy shall conduct an initial evaluation and assessment of the report.
- B. When conducting animal cruelty field investigations, for proper identification purposes, the Deputy and/or ACO shall wear the prescribed uniform. The ACO shall operate a marked Sheriff's vehicle, unless conducting surveillance or otherwise properly authorized to use an unmarked vehicle.
- C. The ACO shall be responsible for the proper and timely completion of all investigative and related police reports which may be required.
- D. The ACO shall seek legal advice and assistance when necessary, obtain bail recommendations, and make immediate notification to the Investigations Senior Investigator and/or Captain following the arrest of a suspect or the seizure of any animals.
- E. If the ACO anticipates the arrest of subject(s) and the seizure of animals, the Captain shall be notified. The appropriate arrangements for evidence collection, and the transport of animals shall be pre arranged.

- F. An AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE CARE FOR ANIMALS SEIZED AS EVIDENCE IN A CRUELTY CASE (*FORM TCF-21A*) shall be properly completed upon the seizure of any animal.
- G. When an arrest has been made, the ACO shall be responsible for appearing and testifying before any Grand Jury or court of law as required.
- H. A Deputy and/or the ACO who is trained in the investigation of animal cruelty may, when assigned, participate in community programs designed to educate and train agencies and organizations relating to the prevention, detection, reporting, and investigation of animal cruelty. The ACO may also participate, when assigned or authorized, in job related in-service training and community training seminars designated to improve the investigation of animal cruelty.

REFERENCE:

NYS LEAP STANDARD 43.6