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States' Animal Cruelty Statutes:

Tennessee



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States' Animal Cruelty Statutes: Tennessee

Tenn. Code § 38-1-401 through 403

Tenn. Code § 39-14-201 through 219

Current through the 2023 First Extraordinary Session.

Tenn. Code § 38-1-401. Definitions

As used in this part, unless the context otherwise requires:

- (1) “Animal” means a domesticated living creature or a wild creature previously captured;
- (2) “Cruelty,” “abuse,” and “neglect” mean every act, omission, or neglect whereby unreasonable physical pain, suffering, or death is caused or permitted;
- (3) “Owner” means any person who is the legal owner, keeper, harbinger, possessor, or the actual custodian of an animal. “Owner” includes corporations as well as individuals; and
- (4) “Reasonable suspicion” means that it is objectively reasonable for a person to entertain a suspicion, based upon facts, that could cause a reasonable person in a like position, drawing, when appropriate, on the person's training and experience, to suspect animal cruelty, abuse, or neglect.

Tenn. Code § 38-1-402. Reports by protective services agency employees; confidentiality

- (a) Any state, county or municipal employee of a child or adult protective services agency, while acting in a professional capacity or within the scope of employment, who has knowledge of or observes an animal that the person knows or reasonably suspects has been the victim of cruelty, abuse, or neglect, shall report the known or reasonably suspected animal cruelty, abuse, or neglect to the entity or entities that investigate reports of animal cruelty, abuse, and neglect in that county.



(b) The report required under subsection (a) may be made within two (2) working days of receiving the information concerning the animal, by facsimile transmission of a written report presented in the form described in § 38-1-403, or by telephone, if all of the information that is required to be provided pursuant to § 38-1-403 is furnished. In cases where an immediate response may be necessary in order to protect the health and safety of the animal or others, the report may be made by telephone as soon as possible.

(c) Unless a duty exists under current law, nothing in this section shall be construed to impose a duty to investigate known or reasonably suspected animal cruelty, abuse, or neglect.

(d) Nothing in this part shall expand or limit confidentiality requirements under existing law relative to child or adult protective services. The name of any employee of a child or adult protective services agency who reports known or reasonably suspected animal cruelty, abuse or neglect shall remain confidential.

Tenn. Code § 38-1-403. Report forms; telephone reports; reporting exceptions

(a) If not made by telephone, reports made pursuant to § 38-1-402(a) may be made on a preprinted form prepared by the entity or entities that investigate reports of animal cruelty, abuse, and neglect in that county, that includes the definitions contained in § 38-1-401 and a space for the reporter to include each of the following:

- (1) The reporter's name and title;
- (2) The reporter's business address and telephone number;
- (3) The name, if known, of the animal's owner or custodian;
- (4) The location of the animal and the premises on which the known or reasonably suspected animal cruelty, abuse, or neglect took place;
- (5) A description of the location of the animal and the premises;
- (6) The type and numbers of animals involved;
- (7) A description of the animal and its condition; and



(8) The date, time, and a description of the observation or incident that led the reporter to suspect animal cruelty, abuse, or neglect and any other information the reporter believes may be relevant.

(b) Any employee making a report or telephone call pursuant to this part shall make all reasonable efforts to include the information delineated in subsection (a). Nothing in this section shall be construed to impose a duty to investigate known or reasonably suspected animal cruelty, abuse, or neglect.

(c) When two (2) or more employees of a state, county or municipal child or adult protective services agency are present and jointly have knowledge of known or reasonably suspected animal cruelty, abuse, or neglect, and where there is agreement among them, by mutual agreement, a report may be made by one (1) person. Any reporter who has knowledge that the person designated to report has failed to do so may thereafter make the report.

(d)

(1) Nothing in this part shall be construed as prohibiting legal hunting and fishing activities.

(2) Nothing in this part shall be construed as prohibiting the owner of livestock as defined in § 43-1-114 (b), or someone acting with consent of the owner of livestock, from engaging in usual and customary practices that are accepted by colleges of agriculture or veterinary medicine with respect to livestock, nor shall this part be construed as requiring the reporting of those practices.

(3) Nothing in this part shall be construed to apply to a veterinarian or veterinary technician engaged in accepted veterinary practices.

Tenn. Code § 39-14-201. Definitions

As used in this part, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1) "Animal" means a domesticated living creature or a wild creature previously captured;

(2) "Livestock" means all equine as well as animals which are being raised primarily for use as food or fiber for human utilization or consumption including, but not limited to, cattle, sheep, swine, goats, and poultry;



(3) "Non-livestock animal" means a pet normally maintained in or near the household or households of its owner or owners, other domesticated animal, previously captured wildlife, an exotic animal, or any other pet, including but not limited to, pet rabbits, a pet chick, duck, or pot bellied pig that is not classified as "livestock" pursuant to this part; and

(4) "Torture" means every act, omission, or neglect whereby unreasonable physical pain, suffering, or death is caused or permitted, but nothing in this part shall be construed as prohibiting the shooting of birds or game for the purpose of human food or the use of animate targets by incorporated gun clubs.

Tenn. Code § 39-14-202. Cruelty to animals

(a) A person commits an offense who intentionally or knowingly:

(1) Tortures, maims or grossly overworks an animal

(2)

A. Fails unreasonably to provide necessary food, water, care or shelter for an animal in the person's custody; or

B.

i. Fails unreasonably to provide access to necessary shelter for an animal other than a dog in the person's custody; or

ii.

(a) Unless exempted under subdivision

(a)(2)(B)(ii)(b), fails unreasonably to provide access to shelter in a structure that meets the following requirements for a dog in the person's custody that resides primarily outdoors:

(1) The structure is constructed of sound and substantial material, is sufficient to protect the dog from inclement weather, and is of a size appropriate to allow the dog to maintain normal body temperature;



(2) The structure must have a roof and be enclosed on all sides with an entrance of adequate size for the dog to enter, and have dimensions that allow the dog, while in the shelter, to stand erect, sit, turn around, and lie down in a normal position;

(3) The structure provides a solid surface, resting platform, pad, floormat, or similar device that is large enough for the dog to lie on in a normal manner and that can be maintained in a sanitary manner;

(4) From March through October, the structure is properly shaded, and from November through February, when necessary to protect the dog from cold and promote the retention of body heat, the shelter is fitted with a sufficient quantity of bedding material; and

(5) The structure or structures must be of a sufficient size or number to provide shelter to each dog present at the same time;

(b) The requirements in subdivision (a)(2)(B)(ii)(a) do not apply when a dog is actively engaged in lawful hunting; police, military, or patrol work; detection work; search-and-rescue; herding or livestock guarding; trials and other lawful competitions; service and assistance work; other working, sporting, and competitive functions; or while actively training for these purposes and functions;

(3) Abandons unreasonably an animal in the person's custody;

(4) Transports or confines an animal in a cruel manner; or

(5) Inflicts burns, cuts, lacerations, or other injuries or pain, by any method, including blistering compounds, to the legs or hooves of horses in order to make them sore for any purpose including, but not limited to, competition in horse shows and similar events.



(b) A person commits an offense who knowingly ties, tethers, or restrains a dog in a manner that results in the dog suffering bodily injury as defined in § 39-11-106.

(c) It is a defense to prosecution under this section that the person was engaged in accepted veterinary practices, medical treatment by the owner or with the owner's consent, or bona fide experimentation for scientific research.

(d) Whenever any person is taken into custody by any officer for violation of subdivision (a)(4), the officer may take charge of the vehicle or conveyance, and its contents, used by the person to transport the animal. The officer shall deposit these items in a safe place for custody. Any necessary expense incurred for taking charge of and sustaining the same shall be a lien thereon, to be paid before the same can lawfully be recovered; or the expenses, or any part thereof, remaining unpaid may be recovered by the person incurring the same of the owners of the animal in an action therefor.

(e) In addition to the penalty imposed in subsection (g), the court making the sentencing determination for a person convicted under this section shall order the person convicted to surrender custody and forfeit the animal or animals whose treatment was the basis of the conviction. Custody shall be given to a humane society incorporated under the laws of this state. The court may prohibit the person convicted from having custody of other animals for any period of time the court determines to be reasonable, or impose any other reasonable restrictions on the person's custody of animals as necessary for the protection of the animals.

(f)

(1) Nothing in this section shall be construed as prohibiting the owner of a farm animal or someone acting with the consent of the owner of that animal from engaging in usual and customary practices which are accepted by colleges of agriculture or veterinary medicine with respect to that animal.

(2) It is an offense for a person other than a law enforcement officer acting with probable cause to knowingly interfere with the performance of any agricultural practices permitted by subdivision (f)(1).

(3) An offense under subdivision (f)(2) is a Class B misdemeanor.



(g)

(1) Cruelty to animals is a Class A misdemeanor.

(2) A second or subsequent conviction for cruelty to animals is a Class E felony.

(3) Violation of any prohibition or restriction imposed by the sentencing court pursuant to subsection (e) is a Class A misdemeanor.

Tenn. Code § 39-14-203. Cock and animal fighting – Cock fighting paraphernalia.

(a) It is unlawful for any person to:

(1) Own, possess, keep, use or train any bull, bear, dog, cock, swine or other animal, for the purpose of fighting, baiting or injuring another such animal, for amusement, sport or gain;

(2) Cause, for amusement, sport or gain, any animal referenced in subdivision (a)(1) to fight, bait or injure another animal, or each other;

(3) Permit any acts stated in subdivisions (a)(1) and (2) to be done on any premises under the person's charge or control, or aid or abet those acts;

(4) Be knowingly present, as a spectator, at any place or building where preparations are being made for an exhibition for the fighting, baiting or injuring of any animal, with the intent to be present at the exhibition, fighting, baiting or injuring;

(5) Knowingly cause a person under eighteen (18) years of age to attend an animal fight; or

(6) Possess, own, buy, sell, transfer, or manufacture cock fighting paraphernalia with the intent that the paraphernalia be used in promoting, facilitating, training for, or furthering cock fighting.

(b) It is the legislative intent that this section shall not apply to the training or use of hunting dogs for sport or to the training or use of dogs for law enforcement purposes.



(c)

(1) Except for any offense involving a cock, an offense under subdivisions (a)(1)-(3) is a Class E felony. Notwithstanding § 40-35-111, in addition to any other penalty imposed, the court shall prohibit the defendant from having custody of any companion animal, as defined in § 39-14-212(b), for a period of at least two (2) years from the date of conviction and may impose a lifetime prohibition. The court shall prohibit any person convicted of a second or subsequent offense under this subdivision (c)(1) from having custody of any companion animal for the person's lifetime.

(2) An offense involving a cock under subdivisions (a)(1)-(3) is a Class A misdemeanor.

(d)

(1) A violation of subdivision (a)(4) or (a)(6) is a Class A misdemeanor.

(2) A violation of subdivision (a)(5) is a Class A misdemeanor. Notwithstanding § 40-35-111(e)(1), the fine for a violation of subdivision (a)(5) shall be not less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) nor more than two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500).

(e) It is not an offense to own, possess or keep cocks, or aid or abet the ownership, possession or keeping of cocks, for the sole purpose of selling or transporting cocks to a location in which possession or keeping of cocks is legal, as long as it does not violate any other part of this section or federal law.

(f)

(1) For purposes of this section, “cock fighting paraphernalia” means gaffs, slashers, heels, or any other sharp implement designed to be attached in place of the natural spur of a cock or game fowl.

(2) In determining whether a particular object is cock fighting paraphernalia, the court or other authority making that determination may, in addition to all other logically relevant factors, consider the following:

(A) Statements by the owner or anyone in control of the object concerning its use;



- (B) Prior convictions, if any, of the owner or of anyone in control of the object for violation of any state or federal law relating to cock fighting or any other violation of this part;
- (C) The presence and condition of any animal on the same property;
- (D) Instructions, oral or written, provided with the object concerning its use;
- (E) Descriptive materials accompanying the object that explain or depict its use;
- (F) The manner in which the object is displayed for sale;
- (G) The existence and scope of legitimate uses for the object in the community; and
- (H) Expert testimony concerning its use.

Tenn. Code § 39-14-204. Dyed baby fowl or rabbits

(a)

(1) It is unlawful for any person to:

(A) Sell, offer for sale, barter or give away baby chickens, ducklings or goslings of any age, or rabbits under two (2) months of age, as pets, toys, premiums or novelties, if those fowl or rabbits have been colored, dyed, stained or otherwise had their natural color changed; or

(B) Bring or transport such fowl or rabbits into the state for the purposes mentioned in subdivision (a)(1)(A).

(2) This section shall not be construed to prohibit the sale or display of baby chickens, ducklings, or other fowl or rabbits in proper facilities by breeders or stores engaged in the business of selling for purposes of commercial breeding and raising or laboratory testing.



(3) Each baby chicken, duckling, other fowl or rabbit sold, offered for sale, bartered or given away in violation of this section constitutes a separate offense.

(b) A violation of this section is a Class C misdemeanor.

Tenn. Code § 39-14-205. Intentional killing; police dogs; justifiable killing

(a)

(1) It is an offense to knowingly and unlawfully kill the animal of another without the owner's effective consent.

(2) A violation of subdivision (a)(1) is theft of property, graded according to the value of the animal, and punished in accordance with § 39-14-105.

(b) A person is justified in killing the animal of another if the person acted under a reasonable belief that the animal was creating an imminent danger of death or serious bodily injury to that person or another or an imminent danger of death to an animal owned by or in the control of that person. A person is not justified in killing the animal of another if, at the time of the killing, the person is trespassing upon the property of the owner of the animal.

Tenn. Code § 39-14-206. Taking fish caught by another

(a) It is unlawful for any person to take fish out of the box, net, basket or off the hook of another person, or to raise any box, net, basket, or trot-line, without the consent of the owner of the device, unless the fish is taken by an officer to be used as evidence in the prosecution of a violation of the game and fish laws.

(b) Any violation of this section is a Class C misdemeanor.

Tenn. Code § 39-14-207. Impounded animals; care

(a) In case any impounded animal is without necessary food and water for more than twelve (12) successive hours, it is lawful for any person, as often as necessary, to enter any place in which any animal is so confined, and to supply it with necessary food and water so long as it remains so confined. That person shall not be liable to any action for entry, and the reasonable cost



of the food and water may be collected from the owner or keeper of the animal. The animal shall not be exempt from levy and sale upon execution issued upon a judgment therefor.

(b) In case any animal is injured, diseased, suffering from the elements, or malnourished, and is found at large by any agent of any humane society chartered by the state, the agent may cause adequate veterinary treatment or shelter or nourishment to be furnished to the animal. The society shall have a right of action against the owner of the animal for all necessary and reasonable expenses so incurred. Within forty-eight (48) hours after taking custody of the animal, the society shall make reasonable efforts to notify the owner of the animal's whereabouts and condition. Nothing in this subsection (b) shall affect the right of action of the veterinarian or furnisher of goods or services against the person or persons with whom the veterinarian or furnisher of goods or services contracted for payment of charges. Any such right of action by a humane society may be voided by an owner who elects to forfeit the animal to the society rather than pay for the goods or services rendered.

Tenn. Code § 39-14-208. Injury to and value of guide dogs

A person who intentionally or knowingly unlawfully injures the guide dog of another and, thereby, permanently deprives the owner of the use of the guide dog's services commits theft of that animal and shall be punished under § 39-14-105. In determining the value of the guide dog for purposes of § 39-14-105, the court shall consider the value of the guide dog as both the cost of the dog as well as the cost of any specialized training the guide dog received.

Tenn. Code § 39-14-209. Horse shows; reports

(a) It is the duty of any person designated and acting as a ringmaster of any horse show or similar event to disqualify any horse determined by the ringmaster to be suffering from the causes set out in § 39-14-202(a)(5) from further participation in the show, and to make a report of the same, including the name of the horse, the owner of the horse, and the exhibitor of the horse, to the manager or chair of the show, who in turn shall report the same in writing to the district attorney general of the judicial district wherein the incident occurred for appropriate action.

(b) A violation of this duty is a Class C misdemeanor.



Tenn. Code § 39-14-210. Humane societies

(a) The agents of any society which is incorporated for the prevention of cruelty to animals, upon being appointed thereto by the president of such a society in any county, may, within that county, make arrests, and bring before any court thereof offenders found violating this part with regard to non-livestock animals.

(b) Any officers, agents, or members of such society may lawfully interfere to prevent the perpetration of any act of cruelty upon any animal in that person's presence. Any person who interferes with or obstructs any officer, agent, or member in the discharge of this duty commits a Class C misdemeanor.

(c) Any agent or officer of a society may lawfully destroy, or cause to be destroyed, any animal found abandoned or otherwise:

(1) Which is not properly cared for, appearing, in the judgment of two (2) reputable citizens, who are experts, called to view the same in the agent's or officer's presence, to be glandered, injured or diseased past humane recovery; or

(2) After a holding period of not less than seventy-two (72) hours and after having made a reasonable effort to locate and notify the owners, for the purpose of animal population control. If the animal bears any notification information on an identification tag or collar, or on a chip, if the agent or officer of the society has the use of a chip reader, the reasonable effort to locate and notify the animal's owners must be made within forty-eight (48) hours of the time that the society takes custody of the animal or, if the animal is taken into custody on a Friday, within two (2) business days of the date that the society takes custody of the animal.

(d) All fines, penalties and forfeitures imposed and collected in any county, under provisions relating to or in any way affecting animals, shall inure to the society in aid of the purpose for which it was incorporated, and no injunction shall be granted against the society or attorney or its officers or agents, except upon motion, after due notice and hearing.

(e) Any humane society chartered by the state, into whose custody shall lawfully come any animal, shall have a lien on that animal for the reasonable value of the goods and services necessarily rendered by, or at the instance of, the society to that animal.



(f) Upon seizure by law enforcement, custody of any animal victimized under this part shall be placed with any governmental animal control agency, law enforcement agency, or their designee. The governmental animal control agency, law enforcement agency, or their designee shall assist the animal and preserve evidence for prosecution.

(g)

(1)

(A) Any governmental animal control agency, law enforcement agency, or their designee into whose custody any animal victimized under this part is placed, may petition the court requesting that the person from whom the animal is seized, or the owner of the seized animal, be ordered to post security.

(B) The security shall be in an amount sufficient to secure payment of all reasonable expenses expected to be incurred by the governmental animal control agency, law enforcement agency, or their designee in caring and providing for the animal pending disposition of the criminal charges.

(C) Reasonable expenses include, but are not necessarily limited to, the estimated costs of veterinary care and treatment for the animal as well as the estimated costs of boarding and otherwise caring for the animal.

(D) The amount of security shall be determined by the court after taking into consideration all of the facts and circumstances of the case. If the posting of security is ordered pursuant to this subsection (g), then the governmental animal control agency, law enforcement agency, or their designee may draw from the security the actual costs incurred in caring and providing for the seized animal pending disposition of criminal charges.

(2) If the person from whom the animal is seized is the owner of the animal and the person has not posted the security ordered pursuant to subdivision (g)(1) within ten (10) business days following the issuance of a security order, the animal shall be deemed to have been abandoned and shall be forfeited to the governmental animal control agency, law enforcement agency, or their designee for



disposition in accordance with reasonable practices for the humane treatment of animals. However, if the person from whom the animal was seized is not the owner of the animal and the person has not posted the court-ordered security within fifteen (15) days, the court shall order the governmental animal control agency, law enforcement agency, or their designee to make all reasonable efforts to determine who the owner of the animal is and to notify the owner of the pending proceeding.

(3) No animal shall be deemed to have been abandoned and forfeited to the governmental animal control agency, law enforcement agency, or their designee until reasonable attempts to determine and notify the owner have been made. If the owner of the animal cannot be located after reasonable efforts or the owner is located and notified but does not post, within ten (10) business days, the court-ordered security plus the costs reasonably incurred by the governmental animal control agency, law enforcement agency, or their designee for housing and caring for the animal since its seizure, the animal shall be deemed to have been abandoned and shall be forfeited to the governmental animal control agency, law enforcement agency, or their designee for disposition in accordance with reasonable practices for the humane treatment of animals.

(4) Nothing in this subsection (g) shall be construed to prevent the voluntary, permanent relinquishment of any animal by its owner to a governmental animal control agency, law enforcement agency, or their designee in lieu of posting security. The voluntary relinquishment has no effect on the outcome of the criminal charges.

Tenn. Code § 39-14-211. Examination of livestock; authorized examiners

(a) No entry onto the property of another, arrest, interference with usual and customary agricultural or veterinary practices, confiscation, or any other action authorized by this part or any other law shall be taken in response to an allegation that this part has been violated with regard to livestock unless, prior to or at the time of such action:

- (1) The livestock in question has been examined by:
 - (A) The commissioner of agriculture or the commissioner's duly authorized agent trained to conduct livestock cruelty examinations;



(B) A graduate of an accredited college of veterinary medicine specializing in livestock practice; or

(C) A graduate of an accredited college of agriculture with a specialty in livestock; and

(2) Upon examination of the livestock, the commissioner, commissioner's agent, or graduate has probable cause to believe that a violation of this part has occurred with regard to the livestock.

(b) If a person authorized by this section to make a probable cause examination of livestock does not examine the livestock within twenty-four (24) hours of receiving the allegation, a licensed veterinarian may make the inspection, and the veterinarian's findings shall be afforded the same presumption and effect as an examination conducted by a person authorized pursuant to subsection (a).

Tenn. Code § 39-14-212. Aggravated cruelty to animals; definitions; penalties

(a) A person commits aggravated cruelty to animals when, with no justifiable purpose, the person intentionally or knowingly:

(1) Kills, maims, tortures, crushes, burns, drowns, suffocates, mutilates, starves, or otherwise causes serious physical injury, a substantial risk of death, or death to a companion animal; or

(2) Fails to provide food or water to the companion animal resulting in a substantial risk of death or death.

(b) For purposes of this section:

(1) [Deleted by 2021 amendment.]

(2) "Companion animal" means any non-livestock animal as defined in § 39-14-201;

(3) "Elderly" means any person sixty-five (65) years of age or older; and

(4) "Minor" means any person under eighteen (18) years of age.



(c) Subsection (a) is not to be construed to prohibit or interfere with the following endeavors:

- (1) Dispatching an animal in any manner absent of aggravated cruelty;
- (2) Engaging in lawful hunting, trapping, or fishing activities, including activities commonly associated with the hunting of small game as defined in § 70-1-101(a);
- (3) Dispatching rabid or diseased animals;
- (4) Dispatching animals posing a clear and immediate threat to human safety;
- (5) Performing or conducting bona fide scientific tests, experiments or investigations within or for a bona fide research laboratory, facility or institution;
- (6) Performing accepted veterinary medical practices or treatments;
- (7) Dispatching animals in accordance with § 44-17-403(e);
- (8) Engaging, with the consent of the owner of a farm animal, in usual and customary practices which are accepted by colleges of agriculture or veterinary medicine with respect to that animal;
- (9) Dispatching wild or abandoned animals on a farm or residential real property; or
- (10) Applying methods and equipment used to train animals.

(d) Aggravated cruelty to animals is a Class E felony.

(e) In addition to the penalty imposed by subsection (d), the sentencing court shall order the defendant to surrender custody and forfeit all companion animals as defined in subdivision (b)(2), and may award custody of the animals to the agency presenting the case. Notwithstanding § 40-35- 111, the court shall prohibit the defendant from having custody of companion animals for at least two (2) years from the date of conviction and may impose a lifetime prohibition. The court may also impose any other reasonable restrictions on the person's custody of other animals as is necessary for the protection of the animals. The court shall prohibit any person convicted of a second or



subsequent offense under this section from having custody of any companion animal for the person's lifetime.

(f) In addition to the penalty imposed by subsection (d), the court may require the defendant to undergo psychological evaluation and counseling, the cost to be borne by the defendant. If the defendant is indigent, the court may, where practicable, direct the defendant to locate and enroll in a counseling or treatment program with an appropriate agency.

(g) If a defendant convicted of a violation of this section resides in a household with minor children or elderly individuals, the court may, within fifteen (15) days, send notification of the conviction to the appropriate protective agencies.

(h) In addition to the penalty imposed by subsection (d), the defendant may be held liable to the impounding officer or agency for all costs of impoundment from the time of seizure to the time of proper disposition of the case.

(i)

(1) In addition to the penalty imposed by subsection (d), the defendant may be held liable to the owner of the animal for damages.

(2) If an unlawful act resulted in the death or permanent disability of a person's guide dog, then the value of the guide dog shall include, but shall not necessarily be limited to, both the cost of the guide dog as well as the cost of any specialized training the guide dog received.

(j)

(1) If a juvenile is found to be within the court's jurisdiction, for conduct that, if committed by an adult, would be a criminal violation involving cruelty to animals or would be a criminal violation involving arson, then the court may order that the juvenile be evaluated to determine the need for psychiatric or psychological treatment. If the court determines that psychiatric or psychological treatment is appropriate for that juvenile, then the court may order that treatment.

(2)

(A) Notwithstanding subdivision (j)(1), if a child is adjudicated delinquent for conduct involving the intentional torturing, mutilating, maiming, burning, starving to death,



crushing,
impaling of a domesticated
order that the child adjudicated
or psychological evaluation and
and treatment.

disfiguring, drowning, suffocating, or
dog or cat, then the court shall
delinquent receive a psychiatric
any recommended counseling

(B) The court shall order that the cost of any evaluation,
counseling, and treatment required under subdivision (j)(2)(A) be
paid in accordance with § 37-1-150.

(C) If the court finds a parent or guardian to be in contempt of
court for failure to comply with a court order issued under this
subdivision (j)(2), then the court is authorized to punish the
parent or guardian pursuant to § 37-1-158.

(k) This section does not preclude the court from entering any other order of
disposition allowed under this chapter.

(l) This section is not to be construed to change, modify, or amend any
provision of title 70, involving fish and wildlife.

(m) This section does not apply to activities or conduct that are prohibited by §
39-14-203.

(n) This section does not apply to equine animals or to animals defined as
livestock by § 39-14-201.

Tenn. Code § 39-14-213. Removal of electronic or radio dog collar or microchip implant; crime and penalty

(a) A person who removes from a dog an electronic or radio transmitting collar
or microchip implant without the permission of the owner of the dog and with
the intent to prevent or hinder the owner from locating the dog commits a Class
B misdemeanor, punishable by fine only; provided, however, that, if the dog
wearing an electronic or radio transmitting collar or microchip implant is lost
or killed as the proximate result of the removal of the collar or implant, the
person commits a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by fine only.

(b) Upon conviction for a violation of this section, the court shall order that the
violin pay as restitution to the owner the actual value of a dog lost or
killed as a result of the removal of an electronic or radio transmitting collar



or microchip implant from the dog by the violator. The court may also order the violator to pay as restitution to the owner any breeding revenues forfeited due to the loss or death of a dog.

Tenn. Code § 39-14-214. Sexual activity with animals

(a) A person commits an offense who knowingly:

- (1) Engages in any sexual activity with an animal;
- (2) Causes, aids, or abets another person to engage in any sexual activity with an animal;
- (3) Permits any sexual activity with an animal to be conducted on any premises under the person's charge or control;
- (4) Engages in, organizes, promotes, conducts, advertises, aids, abets, participates in as an observer, or performs any service in the furtherance of an act involving any sexual activity with an animal for a commercial or recreational purpose; or
- (5) Photographs or films, for purposes of sexual gratification, a person engaged in a sexual activity with an animal.

(b) A violation of this section is a Class E felony.

(c) In addition to the penalty imposed in subsection (b):

(1) The court may order that the convicted person do any of the following:

(A) Not harbor or own animals or reside in any household where animals are present;

(B) Participate in appropriate counseling at the defendant's expense; or

(C) Reimburse the animal shelter or humane society for any reasonable costs incurred for the care and maintenance of any animals taken to the animal shelter or humane society as a result of conduct proscribed in subsection (a); and



(2) Notwithstanding § 40-35-111, the court shall prohibit the convicted person from having custody of any companion animal, as defined in § 39-14-212(b), for a period of at least two (2) years from the date of conviction and may impose a lifetime prohibition. The court shall prohibit any person convicted of a second or subsequent offense under this section from having custody of any companion animal for the person's lifetime.

(d) Nothing in this section may be considered to prohibit accepted animal husbandry practices or accepted veterinary medical practices.

(e) If the court has reasonable grounds to believe that a violation of this section has occurred, the court may order the seizure of all animals involved in the alleged violation as a condition of bond of a person charged with a violation.

(f) For purposes of this section:

(1) “Animal” has the same meaning as the term is defined in § 63-12-103;

(2) “Photographs” or “films” means the making of a photograph, motion picture film, videotape, digital image, or any other recording, sale, or transmission of the image; and

(3) “Sexual activity” means physical sexual contact between the person and the animal.

Tenn. Code § 39-14-215. Emergency care for non-livestock animal; steps to locate owner; civil liability

(a) For purposes of this section:

(1) “Animal control agency” means a county or municipal animal shelter, dog pound, or animal control agency, private humane society, state, county or municipal law enforcement agency, or any combination thereof, that temporarily houses stray, unwanted or injured animals;

(2) “Emergency” means a natural disaster, including earthquake, fire, flood, or storm; a hazardous chemical or substance incident; a vehicular collision with an animal, or other transportation



accident where an
its health or life;

animal is injured or in need of assistance to protect

(3) “Emergency care” means medical and other health treatment, services, or accommodations that are provided to an injured or ill animal for a medical condition or injury of such a nature that the failure to render immediate care would reasonably likely result in the deterioration of a sick or injured animal's condition or in the animal's death;

(4) “Livestock” means all equine as well as animals which are being raised primarily for use as food or fiber for human utilization or consumption including, but not limited to, cattle, sheep, swine, goats, and poultry;

(5) “Non-livestock animal” means a pet normally maintained in or near the household or households of its owner or owners, other domesticated animal, previously captured wildlife, an exotic animal, or any other pet, including, but not limited to, pet rabbits, a pet chick, duck, or pot-bellied pig that is not classified as “livestock” pursuant to this part;

(6) “Running at large” means that a non-livestock animal goes uncontrolled by the animal's owner upon the premises of another without the consent of the owner of the premises, or other person authorized to give consent, or goes uncontrolled by the owner upon a highway, public road, street, or any other place open to the public generally; and

(7) “Stray animal” means that a non-livestock animal is roaming with no physical restraint without an identification tag, collar, or chip and that has no record of ownership.

(b)

(1) Any person who in good faith and without compensation for services provides, renders, or obtains emergency care for a non-livestock animal that is running at large, abandoned, injured or in distress due to an emergency, or for a stray non-livestock animal, shall not be subject to civil liability for any injuries or harm to such animal resulting from the rendering or obtaining of emergency care, or any act or failure to act to provide or arrange for further emergency care for such



animal, if such person's actions do not constitute malice, gross negligence, or criminal misconduct.

(2)

(A) If a person fails to take reasonable steps to locate the owner of such animal prior to rendering or obtaining emergency care, then subdivision (b)(1) shall not apply.

(B) Taking reasonable steps to locate the owner of such animal includes:

(i) Attempting to contact the owner using any notification information located on the animal's identification tag, collar, or chip within forty-eight (48) hours of the time that the person takes custody of the animal or, if the animal is taken into custody on a Friday, within two (2) business days of the date that the person takes custody of the animal; and

(ii)

(a) Providing notice to an appropriate animal shelter, dog pound, animal control agency or humane shelter operated by the municipality, county, or other governmental agency located where the person resides that the animal is in the custody of the person. The person shall also notify an appropriate shelter in the location where the person took custody of the animal, if the location is outside of the municipality or county where the person resides.

(b) The person shall give to the shelter or shelters such person's contact information.

(C) This subdivision (b)(2) shall not apply if the animal is determined by a licensed veterinarian to:

(i) Need immediate emergency care to alleviate pain or save the life of the animal; or



(ii) Exhibit visible signs of recent abuse as described in § 39-14-202.

(c) Notwithstanding § 63-12-142, a licensed veterinarian, or ancillary veterinary personnel employed by and working under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian, who, in good faith, at the request of someone other than the owner renders:

(1) Emergency care to an ill or injured non-livestock animal is not liable to the owner of the animal for any civil damages arising from the treatment provided to the animal except in cases of malice, gross negligence, or criminal misconduct; or

(2) Treatment other than emergency care to a non-livestock animal is not liable to the owner of the animal for any civil damages arising from the treatment provided to the animal except in cases of malice, gross negligence, or criminal misconduct, only if the person requesting the treatment certifies in writing to the veterinarian, or ancillary veterinary personnel, that such person has taken reasonable steps to locate the owner as provided in subdivision (b)(2).

(d) An animal control agency or an employee of an animal control agency acting within the scope of such employment, who, in good faith, takes into its custody and cares for a stray or abandoned non-livestock animal, or a non-livestock animal running at large for which reasonable steps to locate the owner of such animal are taken, that has been delivered to such agency or employee by an individual or group of individuals not affiliated with the agency, shall not be subject to civil liability for its care of such animal if the agency or employee's actions do not constitute malice, gross negligence or criminal misconduct.

(e) Except as provided in subsection (c), this section shall not in any way limit the application of, or supersede, § 44-17-203, § 44-17-403(e) or § 63-12-142.

Tenn. Code § 39-14-216. Service animals; offenses; restitution

(a)

(1) As used in this section, “service animal” means:



(A) Any animal that is individually trained, or being trained by an employee or puppy raiser from a recognized training agency or school to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability; and

(B) Any police dog, fire dog, search and rescue dog, or police horse.

(2) Other species of animals not specified in this subsection (a), whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition.

(3) For purposes of a service animal as defined under subdivision (a)(1)(A), the work or tasks performed by the service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing nonviolent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors. The crime deterrent effects of the animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of subdivision (a)(1)(A).

(b) It is an offense to knowingly:

(1) Maim or otherwise inflict harm upon a service animal;

(2) Attempt to maim or otherwise inflict harm upon a service animal; or

(3) Permit an animal that the person owns or is in the immediate control of to maim or otherwise inflict harm upon a service animal.



(c) It is an offense to recklessly maim or otherwise inflict harm upon a service animal or permit an animal that the person owns or is in the immediate control of to maim or otherwise inflict harm upon a service animal.

(d) It is an offense to knowingly interfere with a service animal in the performance of its duties, or permit an animal that the person owns or is in control of to interfere with a service animal in the performance of its duties.

(e)

(1) A violation of subsection (b) or (c) is a Class A misdemeanor.

(2) A violation of subsection (d) is a Class C misdemeanor.

(f)

(1) In addition to any other penalty provided by this section, a person convicted of a violation of subsection (b), (c) or (d) shall be ordered by the court to make full restitution for all damages that arise out of or are related to the offense, including incidental and consequential damages incurred by the service animal's handler or the recognized training agency or school.

(2) "Restitution," for purposes of this section, includes:

(A) The value of the service animal if the animal is disabled or can no longer perform service animal duties;

(B) Replacement and training or retraining expenses of the service animal or handler if necessary to restore the animal to service animal capabilities;

(C) Veterinary and other medical and boarding expenses for the service animal;

(D) Medical expenses for the handler; and

(E) Lost wages or income incurred by the handler during any period that the handler is without the services of the service animal.



(g) If the violation of this section involves a guide dog and the offense results in injury to the dog that permanently deprives the owner of the use of the guide dog's services, nothing in this section shall preclude prosecution and conviction for such conduct under § 39-14-208.

Tenn. Code § 39-14-217. Aggravated cruelty to livestock

(a) As used in this section only, “livestock” means all equine as well as animals which are being raised primarily for use as food or fiber for human utilization or consumption, including, but not limited to, cattle, sheep, swine, and goats.

(b) Except as provided in subsections (d) and (e), a person commits aggravated cruelty to a livestock animal who, in a depraved and sadistic manner, intentionally engages in any of the conduct described in subdivisions (c)(1)–(12), the conduct results in serious bodily injury to the animal or the death of the animal, and is without justifiable or lawful purpose.

(c) The following conduct constitutes aggravated cruelty to livestock animals if accomplished in the manner described in subsection (b):

- (1) Setting an animal on fire;
- (2) Burning an animal with any hot object;
- (3) Cutting or stabbing an animal with any object;
- (4) Causing blunt force trauma to an animal;
- (5) Securing an animal to a vehicle and dragging it;
- (6) Blinding an animal;
- (7) Applying acid or other caustic substance or chemical to any exposed area of an animal or forcing the animal to ingest the substance;
- (8) Hanging a living animal;
- (9) Skinning an animal while it is still alive;
- (10) Administering electric shock to an animal;



(11) Drowning an animal; or

(12) Shooting an animal with a weapon.

(d) Subsections (b) and (c) shall not be construed to apply to, prohibit or interfere with the following:

(1) Any provision of title 70, involving fish and wildlife, or any hunting, trapping, or fishing activities lawful under such title;

(2) Activities or conduct that are prohibited by § 39-14-203; or

(3) Dispatching an animal in any manner not prohibited by this section.

(e) The following shall not be construed as aggravated cruelty to a livestock animal as defined in this section:

(1) Dispatching rabid, diseased, sick or injured livestock animals;

(2) Dispatching livestock animals posing a clear and immediate threat to human safety;

(3) Performing or conducting bona fide scientific tests, experiments or investigations within or for a bona fide research laboratory, facility or institution;

(4) Performing accepted veterinary medical practices or treatments;

(5) Engaging, with the consent of the owner of a livestock animal, in usual and customary practices which are accepted by colleges of agriculture or veterinary medicine with respect to that animal;

(6) Dispatching wild or abandoned livestock animals on a farm or residential real property; or

(7) Applying methods and equipment used to train livestock animals.

(f) In addition to the penalty imposed by subsection (j), the defendant may be held liable to:

(1) The owner of the livestock animal for damages; and



(2) The impounding officer or agency for all costs of impoundment from the time of seizure to the time of proper disposition of the case.

(g) In addition to the penalty imposed by subsection (j), the sentencing court may order the defendant to surrender custody and forfeit all livestock animals, and may award custody of the animals to the agency presenting the case. The court may prohibit the defendant from having custody of other livestock animals for any period of time the court determines to be reasonable, or impose any other reasonable restrictions on the person's custody of livestock animals as is necessary for the protection of the animals.

(h) In addition to the penalty imposed by subsection (j), the court may require the defendant to undergo psychological evaluation and counseling, the cost to be borne by the defendant. If the defendant is indigent, the court may, where practicable, direct the defendant to locate and enroll in a counseling or treatment program with an appropriate agency.

(i) This section does not preclude the court from entering any other order of disposition allowed under this chapter.

(j) Aggravated cruelty to a livestock animal is a Class E felony.

Tenn. Code § 39-14-218. Animal cremation receipts

(a) As used in this section, “cremation” means the heating process by which the remains of a deceased animal are reduced to bone fragments through combustion and evaporation; provided, however, that “cremation” does not include any reduction of animal remains to bone fragments that is incidental to the preparation of food or any manufacturing process.

(b) No person who, for remuneration, engages in the cremation of animal remains in this state, shall fail to ensure that a written receipt is provided to each person who delivers animal remains to such person for cremation. The receipt shall be signed by both the person who receives the animal remains and the person who delivered the animal remains for cremation and shall indicate:

(1) The name of the deceased animal, if any;

(2) The date and time of delivery;



(3) The name of the person who delivered the animal remains for cremation; and

(4) The name of the person who received the animal remains for cremation from the person identified in subdivision (b)(3).

(c) At the time of releasing the cremated remains of an animal, a person who, for remuneration, engages in the cremation of animal remains in this state shall ensure that a written receipt signed by both the person who released the cremated animal remains and the person who received the cremated animal remains is provided to the person who received the cremated animal remains. The receipt shall indicate:

(1) The name of the deceased animal, if any;

(2) The date and time of the release;

(3) The name of the person to whom the cremated animal remains were released; and

(4) The name of the person who released the cremated animal remains to the person identified in subdivision (c)(3).

(d) The requirements of this section shall not apply to veterinarians licensed to practice in this state in accordance with the Tennessee Veterinary Practice Act, compiled in title 63, chapter 12.

(e) Failure to provide a receipt as required by subsection (b) or (c) is a Class E felony. In addition to any authorized period of incarceration, failure to provide a receipt as required by subsection (b) or (c) is punishable by a fine in the amount of no less than five hundred dollars (\$500).

Tenn. Code § 39-14-219. Knowing killing or injuring or police dog, fire dog, search and rescue dog, service animal, or police horse.

(a) It is an offense to knowingly and unlawfully cause serious bodily injury to or kill a police dog, fire dog, search and rescue dog, service animal, or police horse without the owner's effective consent.

(b)



(1) An offense under subsection (a) is a Class D felony.

(2) If conduct that is in violation of this section is also a violation of § 39-14-205 or any other criminal offense, the offense may be prosecuted under any of the applicable statutes.

(c) A person is justified in killing or injuring the animal of another if the person acted under a reasonable belief that the animal was creating an imminent danger of death or serious bodily injury to that person or another or an imminent danger of death to an animal owned by or in the control of that person. A person is not justified in killing or injuring the animal of another if, at the time of the killing, the person is trespassing upon the property of the owner of the animal. The justification for killing or injuring the animal of another authorized by this subsection (c) does not apply to a person who, while engaging in or attempting to escape from criminal conduct, kills or injures a police dog that is acting in its official capacity. In that case, subsection (a) applies to the person.

