

Services and Activities

Training, Curriculum Development and Research

We offer workshops, lectures, wet-labs and on-line training for a variety of professional audiences. Course topics include: Basic and Advanced Veterinary Forensic Sciences, Animal Crime Scene Analysis, Forensic Photography, Bloodstain Analysis and Mock Trial Exercises.

Since 2009, the ASPCA has made an ongoing gift to the University of Florida to establish The ASPCA Center for Veterinary Forensic Sciences (<http://forensics.med.ufl.edu/>). This partnership is making use of the resources of the William R. Maples Center for Forensic Medicine (<http://maples-center.ufl.edu/>) to develop a program of undergraduate and graduate education, professional training, certification and research to aid in the application of veterinary forensics to animal cruelty investigation and response. The Center maintains diagnostic anthropology and toxicology laboratories and is currently developing a DNA section for the analysis of animal specimens.

Case Response and Expert Witness Testimony

We help agencies plan for evidence collection in actions that may involve the evaluation and/or treatment of animals. The ASPCA Crime Scene Investigation mobile unit may be available for use in settings requiring processing of large or complicated scenes. We can provide crime scene assistance to help investigators identify evidence that may be significant in developing a cruelty case and can help review and interpret evidence gathered by other investigators.

We can provide direct and expert witness testimony regarding veterinary and related evidence that has been gathered in the context of a cruelty case, as well as sentencing recommendations for offenders. We can assist prosecutors in planning for cruelty case courtroom presentation to make the most effective use of evidence that has been gathered.

Referrals to Outside Experts

We can assist in identifying outside resources for analysis that may help build a stronger case. We can then provide guidance on the proper handling of such evidence.

Publications and Communications

We continue to advance this emerging field through a variety of professional publications and original research.



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ABOUT THE ASPCA®

Founded in 1866, the ASPCA® (The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals®) is the first humane organization established in the Americas and serves as a leading voice for animal welfare. One million supporters strong, the ASPCA's mission is to provide effective means for the prevention of cruelty to animals throughout the United States. As a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation, the ASPCA is a national leader in the areas of anti-cruelty, community outreach and animal health services. The ASPCA, which is headquartered in New York City, offers a wide range of programs, including a fleet of five mobile spay/neuter clinics, its own humane law enforcement team, and a groundbreaking veterinary forensics team and mobile animal CSI unit. For more information, please visit www.aspcapro.com.

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ASPCA® Professional Services



Veterinary Forensics Service

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Our Mission

The mission of the ASPCA® Veterinary Forensics Service is to advance the application of veterinary medicine and forensic sciences to the investigation, prosecution and prevention of cruelty to animals. We do this by providing training and direct assistance to veterinary, law enforcement and animal care and control professionals.

We place our major emphasis on assisting in cases that involve criminal charges related to animal abuse or neglect. We also provide assistance in dealing with animal-related evidence in crimes that involve human victims. These include domestic violence, child abuse and elder abuse.

ASPCA experts have a wide range of experience assisting federal, state and local law enforcement agencies in the investigation and prosecution of crimes involving animals. We work closely with animal care and control agencies, veterinary associations and individual practitioners to help them accurately tell the stories of animals who may have suffered or died.

As the penalties for animal abuse increase, the courts are requiring higher standards of evidence in these cases. We can help you meet these new standards.



Our Resources

Veterinary Forensics Sciences Service Personnel

Members of the ASPCA Veterinary Forensic Sciences Service offer a broad range of professional backgrounds and training. Our experience includes animal behavioral studies and evaluations, rehabilitation of abused and neglected animals, veterinary treatment of neglected and abused animals, crime scene analysis, forensic entomology, forensic toxicology, forensic psychology, identification and removal of buried remains, and forensic death investigations.



The ASPCA Anti-Cruelty Group

The Veterinary Forensic Sciences Service is part of the ASPCA Anti-Cruelty Group (ACG). Along with the Bergh Memorial Animal Hospital and the Field Investigations and Response Team (FIR), the ACG protects animals by providing support in large scale puppy mill investigations, dog fighting, animal hoarding and other cruelty cases throughout the United States. Personnel at the Bergh Memorial Animal Hospital include veterinarians and veterinary technicians trained to recognize and treat signs of neglect and animal cruelty. The FIR team assists animal victims of both natural and man-made disasters, and works with law enforcement agencies, emergency responders and shelters to rescue animals from life-threatening situations.

Mobile Crime Scene Unit

Two mobile Crime Scene Units are available to assist law enforcement in their efforts to build cases against and prosecute animal cruelty offenders. The CSI units are climate controlled motor coaches customized by La Boit, Inc. Both vehicles are equipped with a generator



and on-board water source. The vehicles allow for on-site veterinary examinations and forensic testing, ensuring a controlled environment for the proper collection and documentation of evidence. The vehicles feature digital photography equipment, alternate light sources for trace and biological evidence visualization, medical examination and surgical equipment, a digital x-ray, evidence collection supplies, as well as grave detection and exhumation equipment. One CSI unit is based at the ASPCA headquarters in New York, and the other is at the University of Florida.

Animal Crime Scene Investigation Response Vehicle

For accessing areas too cumbersome for the mobile Crime Scene Unit, we have a mobile Animal Crime Scene Investigation response vehicle. The 2010 Subaru Outback was generously donated by Subaru of America, Inc. The CSI response vehicle is outfitted with many unique features including a slide-out examination table, evidence refrigerator, laptop computer station and exterior power outlets. The vehicle was specially designed to transport animal victims, store evidence from crime scene investigations and provide access to areas that are typically off-limits due to challenging terrain.

