



OPPORTUNITIES IN
ANIMAL LAW



**ANIMAL LEGAL
DEFENSE FUND**



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Opportunities in Animal Law

The Animal Legal Defense Fund is a nonprofit organization founded in 1979 with the mission to protect the lives and advance the interests of animals through the legal system. Our work includes:

- filing lawsuits to stop animal abuse and expand the boundaries of animal law;
- providing free legal assistance to prosecutors handling cruelty cases;
- working to strengthen state anti-cruelty statutes;
- encouraging the federal government to enforce existing animal protection laws;
- providing public education;
- and nurturing the future of animal law.

Simply defined, animal law is the combination of statutory and case law that relates to or has an impact on nonhuman animals. It encompasses companion animals, wildlife, and animals used in entertainment, research, and raised for food. Animal law permeates and affects most traditional areas of the law – including tort, contract, criminal, constitutional, family, environmental, administrative, and trust law.

The field of animal law has grown tremendously in recent decades. The rapid expansion of [Animal Legal Defense Fund student chapters](#) and [animal law courses](#) is one benchmark of that growth. In 2000, there were around ten student chapters and animal law classes. Today that number has grown to more than 200 student chapters and 165 law schools in the U.S. and Canada that have offered at least one course in animal law – and the list continues to grow.

As animal law continues to rapidly develop, along with interest from students, practitioners, and academics, it has entered the mainstream as a cutting-edge and important new field. The Animal Legal Defense Fund has supported this growth with increased academic opportunities and educational resources. Additionally, there are a growing number of opportunities in academia, private practice, and the nonprofit sector.

We created this booklet as a resource for Law School Career Services Offices to share with the growing number of law students interested in using their degree to protect animals and advance their interests through the legal system.

Part 1: Law Student Opportunities

Animal Law Clerkship Program

Each summer, fall, and spring several promising law students are given the opportunity to learn more about animal law by participating in the Animal Legal Defense Fund Clerkship Program. Positions are available with our Criminal Justice Program, where the primary focus is on criminal cases involving animal cruelty, and our Litigation Program, where the primary focus is on civil animal law issues. Postings can be found here: aldf.org/article/clerkships-internships-fellowships. Many other animal protection organizations offer legal internships as well, including the Humane Society of the United States, ASPCA, Mercy for Animals, and the Animal Welfare Institute.

Animal Law Scholarship Program

Each year, the Animal Legal Defense Fund awards a limited number of Advancement of Animal Law Scholarships to student chapter members entering their second or third year of law school who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to animal law and the Animal Legal Defense Fund's mission while in law school, and anticipate participating in the field after graduation. The deadline and application guidelines can be found here: <http://aldf.org/article/advancement-of-animal-law-scholarships>.

Publishing Opportunities

Because animal law intersects with most traditional legal fields, there are myriad publishing opportunities in academic law journals. However, there are currently seven journals with an animal law focus:

- Animal Law eJournal (Syracuse University College of Law)
- Animal Law Review (Lewis & Clark Law School)
- Global Journal of Animal Law (Åbo Akademi University Department of Law, Finland, available online)
- Journal of Animal & Environmental Law (University of Louisville Brandeis School of Law)
- Journal of Animal & Natural Resource Law (Michigan State University College of Law)
- Mid-Atlantic Journal on Law & Public Policy (Maryland State Bar Association [MSBA] Animal Law Section and the annual MSBA Animal Law Symposium)
- Journal of International Wildlife Law & Policy (Taylor & Francis)

Animal Legal Defense Fund Email Lists

Students can subscribe to the Animal Legal Defense Fund's Law Student eNewsletter and receive information about:

- Employment, internship, and volunteer opportunities
- Grants and scholarships
- Educational opportunities
- Upcoming animal law events
- Writing contests
- Case updates
- Chapter project ideas

Students can also sign up for Animal Legal Defense Fund Action Alerts and receive urgent updates on cases around the country and actions they can take to help win justice for animals. Letters, emails, and phone calls from concerned members of the public often make the crucial difference for animals in cases of criminal animal cruelty and proposed legislation. Sign up for these lists here: aldf.org/signup.

Animal Legal Defense Fund Law Student Membership

The Animal Legal Defense Fund offers a special membership for law students (dues are \$15 per year, but this fee is waived for members of active student chapters). The application can be found here: aldf.org/article/law-student-member-application. Membership benefits include:

- The Animal Legal Defense Fund's quarterly print newsletter, *The Animals' Advocate*
- One issue of *Animal Law Review* – the first animal law journal, run by Lewis & Clark Law School students

We also offer a complimentary one-year Animal Legal Defense Fund attorney membership to recent law graduates. The application can be found here: aldf.org/article/new-law-graduate-attorney-membership-application.

Animal Legal Defense Fund Student Chapters

Student chapters are law student organizations that are affiliated with the Animal Legal Defense Fund and share its mission – to protect the lives and advance the interests of animals through the legal system. Within recent years, interest in the growing field of animal law has been steadily expanding.

By way of comparison, there were only 12 student chapters in 2000. As of December 2017, there were more than 200, including chapters at the top ten U.S. law schools. Many scholars compare animal law today to the emergent environmental law movement in the 1970s. Today's student chapter members will be instrumental in advancing legal protections for animals as tomorrow's animal protection lawyers, prosecutors, and judges.

The steps required to form a student chapter vary depending on each law school's requirements for student groups, but the process is very easy. The Animal Legal Defense Fund has created materials to help with the process, including sample by-laws, chapter requirements, and a step-by-step guide to forming a chapter. These materials can be found here: aldf.org/article/how-to-start-a-student-chapter-at-your-law-school.

Student chapters find many creative ways to contribute to the animal law movement: working with their school to add an animal law course to the curriculum (more than 165 law schools in the U.S. and Canada have offered such a class; a list of law schools that have offered at least one animal law course can be found here: aldf.org/article/animal-law-courses), inviting speakers to talk about various issues, screening films, tabling to raise awareness about animal protection issues, and so on. More project ideas can be found here: aldf.org/article/student-chapter-project-ideas.

Because animal law intersects with many other areas of the law, there are countless opportunities for collaboration with other student groups when seeking to organize a speaker panel or other event. Here are some examples of that intersection:

- Environmental law: factory farming and water/air pollution
- Constitutional law: civil liberties, animal advocacy, and "Ag-Gag" laws
- Women's law: link between domestic violence and animal cruelty
- Human rights law: slaughterhouses and human rights abuses

- Criminal law: animal cruelty prosecution; activist defense
- International law: wildlife poaching and trafficking
- Trust law: enforceable trusts for companion animals
- Tort law: veterinary malpractice; damages for wrongful death or injury to a companion animal
- Family law: animal custody disputes in divorces and separations
- Landlord & tenant law: housing disputes involving “no pets” policies and discrimination laws
- Consumer protection law: food safety; puppy “lemon laws;” false advertising

For help forming a student chapter, contact us at ALP@aldf.org or visit aldf.org/startachapter.

Free Materials

- Tabling materials (brochures, newsletters, stickers, posters, etc.): student chapters can request materials here: aldf.org/tablingmaterials.
- “Animal Law & the Curriculum” packet and other resources for course advocacy. More info: aldf.org/article/how-to-start-an-animal-law-class-at-your-school.

Animal Law Academy

The Animal Legal Defense Fund’s Animal Law Academy provides educational webinars covering both substantive and practical topics in animal law presented by experts in the field. This online series is an interactive, convenient, and free way to learn more about the rapidly developing field of animal law and stay updated on the latest news. More information can be found at aldf.org/academy.

Annual Animal Law Conference and Student Convention

The long-running Animal Law Conference, co-presented by the Animal Legal Defense Fund, the Center for Animal Law Studies at Lewis & Clark (L&C) Law School, and the L&C Animal Legal Defense Fund student chapter, is an annual academic conference addressing the subject of animal law. The preeminent event in the field, the Animal Law Conference is the central gathering point of the global animal law community and gives attorneys, law students, professors, and advocates from around the world a place to share ideas, knowledge, and practical skills about advancing the interests of animals through the legal system. Visit the conference website: animallawconference.org.

Recently, due to steadily increasing interest from law students, the Animal Legal Defense Fund began holding a Student Convention leading up to the conference. The Convention brings together student chapter members from law schools across the country (and beyond) to meet, share ideas, and receive career advice from leaders in the animal law field. Both of these events are invaluable educational and networking opportunities for students interested in animal law. See: aldf.org/studentconvention.

Project and Travel Grants

Through the Animal Legal Defense Fund’s student chapter grants program, established student chapters can apply for funding to support animal law projects that advance the Animal Legal Defense Fund’s mission. Travel grants are also available to help chapter members attend the Animal Law Conference, Student Convention, and other animal law events. The grant guidelines and application can be found here: aldf.org/grants, aldf.org/travelgrants.

The Center for Animal Law Studies at Lewis & Clark Law School

The Center for Animal Law Studies (CALs) in Portland, Oregon, a collaborative effort between the Animal Legal Defense Fund and Lewis & Clark Law School, offers the most extensive animal law curriculum in the world. Students may choose from a wide variety of courses focusing on animal-related issues and may also specialize in animal law by earning an Animal Law Certificate. In addition, students may participate in the Animal Law Clinic, Animal Law Summer Program, Animal Law Review, Student Animal Legal Defense Fund, and the annual Animal Law Conference.

Lewis & Clark also offers the world's first advanced legal degree in animal law. The Animal Law LL.M. Program is designed for U.S. and international law school graduates who wish to focus on animal law in practice, teaching, research, or public policy. For more information, visit the CALs website: law.lclark.edu/centers/animal_law_studies

Part 2: Legal Professional Opportunities

Graduation and Beyond

Because interest in animal law is growing much faster than the animal law job market, we encourage students interested in animal law to keep your options open. The unfortunate reality is that many law students who go to law school to practice animal law will not be able to find paying positions in the field when they graduate. We advise staying open to the possibility of practicing some other kind of law that may involve animal protection indirectly, such as: environmental law, family law, constitutional law, or criminal law. Or consider doing animal law as a pro bono side project. One way to do this is to join the Animal Legal Defense Fund's Pro Bono Program and become part of our growing volunteer attorney network: aldf.org/how_we_work/collaboration. Our attorney members help with:

- Research and writing
- Citation checking
- Filing amicus briefs
- Litigating cases
- Assisting prosecutors with animal cruelty cases

There are a number of ways to forge a career in animal law if you keep an open mind and entrepreneurial spirit. Besides doing pro bono work for the Animal Legal Defense Fund, other options include:

- *Staff Attorney* – Work for an animal protection organization.
- *Private Practitioner* – Devote your practice to a variety of animal related issues, including veterinary malpractice, landlord/tenant issues, trusts for companion animals, and custody disputes.
- *Lobbyist/Legislator* – Use your degree to advocate for animal-friendly legislation.
- *Prosecutor* – Work within the criminal justice system to enforce animal cruelty laws.
- *Governmental Agency* – Work for federal or state agencies whose policies have a significant impact on animals (e.g. the USDA, Bureau of Land Management, or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).

The Practice of Animal Law

The Animal Legal Defense Fund publishes two ongoing series that highlight the animal law careers of former student chapter members and the important work of our pro bono attorney members. You may find these helpful in considering the practice of animal law:

- Law Graduates: Where Are They Now? aldf.org/WATN
- Attorney and Paralegal Member Spotlight: aldf.org/probonospotlight

Litigation Fellowship with the Animal Legal Defense Fund Animal Law Institute

The Animal Legal Defense Fund offers a Litigation Fellowship through its Animal Law Institute. The Institute trains promising litigators in strategic impact litigation to further the Animal Legal Defense Fund's mission to protect the lives and advance the interests of all animals. The fellow will learn to develop state and federal strategic impact litigation and legislation to better the lives and legal status of animals. The model applicant must have earned a J.D. within the past three years, excelled in school, earned strong work references, and have a sincere and proven interest in animal protection. The primary focus of this fellowship is on civil animal law issues, but fellows will be exposed to criminal anti-cruelty cases as well. If there is an opening, the posting can be found here: aldf.org/clerkships.

Fellowships with the Harvard Animal Law & Policy Program

The Harvard Animal Law & Policy Program offers Academic Fellowships and Policy Fellowships, which provide opportunities for outstanding scholars and legal practitioners to undertake research, writing, and scholarly engagement on projects that further the Program's mission. Applicants must have an advanced degree in (J.D., LL.M., S.J.D., or Ph.D.) and be a recent graduate, junior academic, or mid-career practitioner committed to pursuing publishable research that will make a significant contribution in the area of animal law and policy. For information on fellowship opportunities, visit animal.law.harvard.edu/fellowship/ or contact: alpp@law.harvard.edu.

Animal Legal Defense Fund Pro Bono Program Attorney Membership

The Animal Legal Defense Fund would not be able to use the law to advance the interests of animals without the support of legal professionals nationwide. Attorneys can join our Pro Bono Program by completing an application found at aldf.org/article/attorney-membership-application. Membership benefits include:

- The Animal Legal Defense Fund's quarterly print newsletter, *The Animals' Advocate*
- One issue of the scholarly journal, *Animal Law Review*
- Email updates on animal law-related:
 - Cases and news
 - Educational opportunities
 - Events, such as conferences and academic symposia
 - Volunteer opportunities
 - Employment opportunities at law firms and nonprofit organizations across the country

To request more information about the Animal Legal Defense Fund's Pro Bono Program, contact: probono@aldf.org.

New Law Graduate Attorney Membership

The Animal Legal Defense Fund supports and encourages dedication to the field of animal law by offering free attorney memberships in our Pro Bono Program to recent law school graduates for one year. Applicants also receive a free gift, which includes an Animal Legal Defense Fund tote bag, mug, and lint roller. Find the application for new graduates here: aldf.org/article/new-law-graduate-attorney-membership-application.

Animal Legal Defense Fund Action Alerts

Attorney members can also sign up for Animal Legal Defense Fund Action Alerts and receive urgent updates on cases around the country, and what they can do to help win justice for animals. Letters, emails, and phone calls from concerned members of the public often make the crucial difference for animals in cases of criminal animal cruelty and proposed legislation. You can sign up for these lists here: www.aldf.org/signup.

Law Professional Resources

The Animal Legal Defense Fund has numerous resources for law professionals interested in the field of animal law: aldf.org/article/law-professionals. Examples of the type of assistance available are included below.

- *Animal Law Instructors:* The Animal Legal Defense Fund works closely with law students and law professionals to advance the emerging field of animal law. Moving toward the day when animal law is part of the curriculum at every law school, we collaborate with students, faculty, and school administrations to facilitate the development of animal law courses. The Animal Legal Defense Fund also provides resource guidance to individuals interested in teaching animal law, including casebooks, sample exams, syllabi, and articles of interest.
- *Law Firm Pro Bono Coordinators:* The Animal Legal Defense Fund partners with pro bono coordinators interested in developing animal law volunteer opportunities at their firms. The practice of animal law allows for increasingly more opportunities to set precedent and develop cutting-edge legal theories. The Animal Legal Defense Fund works with many of the largest law firms in the country.
- *Bar Association Animal Law Sections and Committees:* The Animal Legal Defense Fund works with bar association members interested in forming committees and/or sections that deal exclusively with animal law. Contact information for regional, state, and national animal law sections and committees, including the American Bar Association Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Section Animal Law Committee, can be found here: aldf.org/bar.

Legal Resources

The Animal Legal Defense Fund has many legal resources for animal advocates on our website. Here are two examples (a full list can be found on our website here: aldf.org/resources):

- *Animal Protection Laws of the United States of America*: This is the must-have resource for lawyers, law professors, law students, legislators, other legal professionals, and anyone who wants the most comprehensive animal protection laws collection of its kind available: aldf.org/article/animal-protection-laws-of-the-united-states-of-america.
- *Annual U.S. & Canadian Animal Protection Law Rankings*: The Rankings Report assesses the strength and comprehensiveness of each jurisdiction's animal protection laws. The rankings are based on a detailed comparative analysis of the animal protection legislation of each jurisdiction, province or territory. Each jurisdiction is attributed a numerical ranking based upon its cumulative score and is grouped into a top, middle, or bottom tier. United States rankings can be found at: https://aldf.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Rankings-Report-2017_FINAL-1.pdf. Canadian rankings can be found at: <https://aldf.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/2017-Canadian-Rankings-Report-1.pdf>