

ANIMAL PROTECTION LAWS OF KENTUCKY



Animal Protection Laws of Kentucky

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This chapter contains Kentucky’s general animal protection and related statutes with an effective date on or before September 1, 2020. It begins with a detailed overview of the provisions contained in these laws, followed by the full text of the statutes themselves. The various provisions are organized into categories with the relevant part of each statute italicized.

Kentucky may employ similar provisions within other non-animal-specific criminal and civil statutes; may have other more specific statutes in addition to those included; and may have a variety of animal-related regulations in effect. Because the law is continually evolving, always review an official source for the most current language of any statute.

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1. <u>DEFINITION OF "ANIMAL"</u>	<p>"[E]very warm-blooded living creature except a human being" KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 446.010</p>
2. <u>GENERAL CRUELTY *</u>	<p>Definitions KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 446.010</p> <p>Cruelty to animals KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.130 <i>Class A misdemeanor</i></p> <p>Torture of dog or cat KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.135 <i>1st offense: Class A misdemeanor</i> <i>1st offense if serious injury/death: Class D felony</i> <i>Subsequent offenses: Class D felony</i></p>
3. <u>EXEMPTIONS</u>	<p>Veterinary practices, research animals, wildlife, accepted farm animal husbandry practices, slaughter, pest control, zoos/circuses, other KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.125(3),(4) KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.130(2),(3) KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.135(4),(5) KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.137(4)</p>
4. <u>FIGHTING & RACKETEERING</u>	<p>NOTE: seizure statute specific to animal fighting is available in the <u>seizure</u> section of this document.</p> <p>Various animal fighting activities with dogs KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.125(2) <i>Class D felony</i></p> <p>Various (non-dog) animal fighting activities, including being a vendor or spectator at a fight with a 4-legged animal (Note, under the language of this statute, conducting a cockfight would be criminalized, but being a spectator/vendor at a cockfight would not) KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.130(1)(a)</p>

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	<i>Class A misdemeanor</i>
5. <u>SEXUAL ASSAULT</u>	<p>A person is guilty of sexual crimes against an animal if he or she engages in sexual contact with an animal; advertises, solicits, offers, or accepts the offer of an animal, or possesses, purchases, or otherwise obtains an animal, with the intent that the animal be subject to sexual contact; or causes, aids, or abets another person to engage in sexual contact with an animal.</p> <p>KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.137</p> <p><i>Class D felony</i></p>
6. <u>CRUELTY TO WORKING ANIMALS</u>	<p>Assault on a service animal in first degree</p> <p>KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.200</p> <p><i>Class D felony</i></p> <p>Assault on a service animal in second degree</p> <p>KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.205</p> <p><i>Class B misdemeanor</i></p>
7. <u>MAXIMUM PENALTIES & STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS**</u>	<p><i>Class B misdemeanor</i> <i>90 days imprisonment and \$250 fine</i></p> <p>KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 532.090 KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 534.040</p> <p><i>Class A misdemeanor</i> <i>1 year imprisonment and/or \$500 fine</i></p> <p>KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 532.090(1) KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 534.040(2)(a)</p> <p><i>Class D felony</i> <i>5 years imprisonment and \$10,000 fine</i></p> <p>KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 532.060(2)(d) KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 534.030(1)</p> <p>Statute of Limitations <i>Misdemeanor: 1 year</i> Ky. Rev. Stat. § 500.050(2) <i>Felony: none</i> Ky. Rev. Stat. § 500.050(1)</p>

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8. <u>CROSS ENFORCEMENT & REPORTING</u>	<p>-----</p>
9. <u>VETERINARIAN REPORTING & IMMUNITY</u>	<p>Veterinarians may report suspected animal cruelty or fighting without a court order, subpoena or client waiver, and are not liable for any action resulting from the disclosure.</p> <p><i>KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 321.185</i> <i>KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 321.188</i></p>
10. <u>LAW ENFORCEMENT POLICIES</u>	<p>Qualified dog wardens and officers and agents of humane societies shall have the powers of peace officers (except for the power of arrest), and may be issued search warrants.</p> <p><i>KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 436.605</i></p>
11. <u>SEIZURE</u>	<p>Dog wardens, peace officers and humane officers shall be issued search warrants for reasonable cause.</p> <p><i>KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 436.605(2)</i></p> <p>All animals of the same species, which are on the property when an animal is caused to fight for pleasure or profit, in violation of the provisions of KRS 525.125 and 525.130, shall be confiscated and turned over to the county animal control officer employed, appointed, or contracted with as provided by KRS 258.195, if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the animals were on the property for the purpose of fighting.</p> <p><i>KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 436.610</i></p>
12. <u>COURTROOM ANIMAL ADVOCATE PROGRAM</u>	<p>-----</p>
13. <u>PROTECTION ORDERS†</u>	<p>-----</p>
14. <u>RESTITUTION †</u>	<p>Court may order restitution for conviction arising from treatment of equine.</p> <p><i>KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.130(5)(a)</i></p> <p>The court shall order a person convicted of sexual crimes against an animal to reimburse the agency caring for the animal for reasonable</p>

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	<p>costs incurred. KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.137(5)(d)</p> <p>Court may order restitution for conviction of assaulting a service animal. KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.215</p>
15. <u>FORFEITURE & POSSESSION BANS †</u>	<p>Court may order forfeiture of equine that was subject of conviction. KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.130(5)(b)</p> <p>The court shall order a person convicted of sexual crimes against an animal to relinquish custody or all animals under the person's control; and to not harbor, own, possess, or exercise control over any animal, reside in any household where animals are present or work or volunteer in a place where the person has unsupervised access to animal for a minimum of five (5) years after completion of the imposed sentence. KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.137(5)(a), (b)</p>
16. <u>COURT-ORDERED TREATMENT†</u>	<p>The court shall order a person convicted of sexual crimes against an animal to attend an appropriate treatment program or obtain a psychiatric or psychological counseling, at the person's expense. KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.137(5)(c)</p>
17. <u>HOT CARS</u>	-----
18. <u>CIVIL NUISANCE ABATEMENT</u>	-----
19. <u>AG-GAG LAWS</u>	-----
20. <u>BREED SPECIFIC LEGISLATION</u>	-----

* States may have other more specific statutes in addition to the general animal protection statutes referenced in this table.

** Despite statutory maximums, states often employ sentencing guidelines that may significantly alter the allowable sentence.

† This table generally references only those provisions that are within each state's animal protection statutes. States may employ similar provisions within other non-animal-specific criminal and civil

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statutes, and may also have a variety of animal-related regulations in effect.

1. DEFINITION OF “ANIMAL”

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 446.010. Definitions for statutes generally.

As used in the statute laws of this state, unless the context requires otherwise:

- (1) “Action” includes all proceedings in any court of this state;
- (2) “Animal” includes every warm-blooded living creature except a human being;
- (3) “Attorney” means attorney-at-law;
- (4) “Bequeath” and “devise” mean the same thing;
- (5) “Bequest” and “legacy” mean the same thing, and embrace either real or personal estate, or both;
- (6) “Business trust” includes, except when utilized in KRS Chapter 386, a “statutory trust” as organized under KRS Chapter 386A;
- (7) “Case plan” means an individualized accountability and behavior change strategy for supervised individuals that:
 - (a) Targets and prioritizes the specific criminal risk factors of the individual based upon his or her assessment results;
 - (b) Matches the type and intensity of supervision and treatment conditions to the individual’s level of risk, criminal risk factors, and individual characteristics, such as gender, culture, motivational stage, developmental stage, and learning style;
 - (c) Establishes a timetable for achieving specific behavioral goals, including a schedule for payment of victim restitution, child support, and other financial obligations; and
 - (d) Specifies positive and negative actions that will be taken in response to the supervised individual’s behaviors;
- (8) “Certified mail” means any method of governmental, commercial, or electronic delivery that allows a document or package to have proof of:
 - (a) Sending the document or package;
 - (b) The date the document or package was delivered or delivery was attempted; and
 - (c) The signature of the receipt of the document or package;
- (9) “Company” may extend and be applied to any corporation, company, person, partnership, joint stock company, or association;
- (10) “Corporation” may extend and be applied to any corporation, company, partnership, joint stock company, or association;
- (11) “Criminal risk factors” are characteristics and behaviors that, when addressed or changed, affect a person’s risk for committing crimes. The characteristics may include but are not limited to the following risk and criminogenic need factors: antisocial behavior; antisocial personality; criminal thinking; criminal associates; dysfunctional family; low levels of employment or education; poor use of leisure and recreation; and substance abuse;
- (12) “Cruelty” as applied to animals includes every act or omission whereby unjustifiable

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- physical pain, suffering, or death is caused or permitted;
- (13) “Directors,” when applied to corporations, includes managers or trustees;
- (14) “Domestic,” when applied to a corporation, partnership, business trust, or limited liability company, means all those incorporated or formed by authority of this state;
- (15) “*Domestic animal*” means any animal converted to domestic habitat;
- (16) “Evidence-based practices” means policies, procedures, programs and practices proven by scientific research to reliably produce reductions in recidivism when implemented competently;
- (17) “Federal” refers to the United States;
- (18) “Foreign,” when applied to a corporation, partnership, business trust, or limited liability company, includes all those incorporated or formed by authority of any other state;
- (19) “Generally accepted accounting principles” are those uniform minimum standards of and guidelines to financial accounting and reporting as adopted by the National Council on Governmental Accounting, under the auspices of the Municipal Finance Officers Association and by the Financial Accounting Standards Board, under the auspices of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants;
- (20) “Graduated sanction” means any of a wide range of accountability measures and programs for supervised individuals, including but not limited to electronic monitoring; drug and alcohol testing or monitoring; day or evening reporting centers; restitution centers; disallowance of future earned compliance credits; rehabilitative interventions such as substance abuse or mental health treatment; reporting requirements to probation and parole officers; community service or work crews; secure or unsecure residential treatment facilities or halfway houses; and short-term or intermittent incarceration;
- (21) “Humane society,” “society,” or “Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals,” means any nonprofit corporation, organized under the laws of this state and having as its primary purpose the prevention of cruelty to animals;
- (22) “Issue,” as applied to the descent of real estate, includes all the lawful lineal descendants of the ancestors;
- (23) “Land” or “real estate” includes lands, tenements, and hereditaments and all rights thereto and interest therein, other than a chattel interest;
- (24) “Legatee” and “devisee” convey the same idea;
- (25) “*Livestock*” means *cattle, sheep, swine, goats, horses, alpacas, llamas, buffaloes, or any other animals of the bovine, ovine, porcine, caprine, equine, or camelid species;*
- (26) “May” is permissive;
- (27) “Month” means calendar month;
- (28) “Oath” includes “affirmation” in all cases in which an affirmation may be substituted for an oath;
- (29) “Owner” when applied to any animal, means any person having a property interest in such animal;
- (30) “Partnership” includes both general and limited partnerships;
- (31) “Peace officer” includes sheriffs, constables, coroners, jailers, metropolitan and urban-county government correctional officers, marshals, policemen, and other persons with

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- similar authority to make arrests;
- (32) “Penitentiary” includes all of the state penal institutions except the houses of reform;
- (33) “Person” may extend and be applied to bodies-politic and corporate, societies, communities, the public generally, individuals, partnerships, joint stock companies, and limited liability companies;
- (34) “Personal estate” includes chattels, real and other estate that passes to the personal representative upon the owner dying intestate;
- (35) “Pretrial risk assessment” means an objective, research based, validated assessment tool that measures a defendant’s risk of flight and risk of anticipated criminal conduct while on pretrial release pending adjudication;
- (36) “Registered mail” means any governmental, commercial, or electronic method of delivery that allows a document or package to have:
- (a) Its chain of custody recorded in a register to enable its location to be tracked;
 - (b) Insurance available to cover its loss; and
 - (c) The signature of the recipient of the document or package available to the sender;
- (37) “Regular election” means the election in even-numbered years at which members of Congress are elected and the election in odd-numbered years at which state officers are elected;
- (38) “Risk and needs assessment” or “validated risk and needs assessment” means an actuarial tool scientifically proven to determine a person’s risk to reoffend and criminal risk factors, that when properly addressed, can reduce that person’s likelihood of committing future criminal behavior;
- (39) “Shall” is mandatory;
- (40) “State” when applied to a part of the United States, includes territories, outlying possessions, and the District of Columbia; “any other state” includes any state, territory, outlying possession, the District of Columbia, and any foreign government or country;
- (41) “State funds” or “public funds” means sums actually received in cash or negotiable instruments from all sources unless otherwise described by any state agency, state-owned corporation, university, department, cabinet, fiduciary for the benefit of any form of state organization, authority, board, bureau, interstate compact, commission, committee, conference, council, office, or any other form of organization whether or not the money has ever been paid into the Treasury and whether or not the money is still in the Treasury if the money is controlled by any form of state organization, except for those funds the management of which is to be reported to the Legislative Research Commission pursuant to KRS 42.600, 42.605, and 42.615;
- (42) “Supervised individual” means an individual placed on probation by a court or serving a period of parole or post-release supervision from prison or jail;
- (43) “Sworn” includes “affirmed” in all cases in which an affirmation may be substituted for an oath;
- (44) “Treatment” when used in a criminal justice context, means targeted interventions that focus on criminal risk factors in order to reduce the likelihood of criminal behavior. Treatment options may include, but shall not be limited to, community-based programs

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that are consistent with evidence-based practices; cognitive-behavioral programs; faith-based programs; inpatient and outpatient substance abuse or mental health programs; and other available prevention and intervention programs that have been scientifically proven to produce reductions in recidivism when implemented competently.

“Treatment” does not include medical services;

- (45) “United States” includes territories, outlying possessions, and the District of Columbia;
- (46) “Vacancy in office,” or any equivalent phrase, means such as exists when there is an unexpired part of a term of office without a lawful incumbent therein, or when the person elected or appointed to an office fails to qualify according to law, or when there has been no election to fill the office at the time appointed by law; it applies whether the vacancy is occasioned by death, resignation, removal from the state, county or district, or otherwise;
- (47) “Violate” includes failure to comply with;
- (48) “Will” includes codicils; “last will” means last will and testament;
- (49) “Year” means calendar year;
- (50) “City” includes town;
- (51) Appropriation-related terms are defined as follows:
 - (a) “Appropriation” means an authorization by the General Assembly to expend, from public funds, a sum of money not in excess of the sum specified, for the purposes specified in the authorization and under the procedure prescribed in KRS Chapter 48;
 - (b) “Appropriation provision” means a section of any enactment by the General Assembly which is not provided for by KRS Chapter 48 and which authorizes the expenditure of public funds other than by a general appropriation bill;
 - (c) “General appropriation bill” means an enactment by the General Assembly that authorizes the expenditure of public funds in a branch budget bill as provided for in KRS Chapter 48;
- (52) “Mediation” means a nonadversarial process in which a neutral third party encourages and helps disputing parties reach a mutually acceptable agreement. Recommendations by mediators are not binding on the parties unless the parties enter into a settlement agreement incorporating the recommendations;
- (53) “Biennium” means the two (2) year period commencing on July 1 in each even-numbered year and ending on June 30 in the ensuing even-numbered year;
- (54) “Branch budget bill” or “branch budget” means an enactment by the General Assembly which provides appropriations and establishes fiscal policies and conditions for the biennial financial plan for the judicial branch, the legislative branch, and the executive branch, which shall include a separate budget bill for the Transportation Cabinet;
- (55) “AVIS” means the automated vehicle information system established and maintained by the Transportation Cabinet to collect titling and registration information on vehicles and boats and information on holders of motor vehicle operator’s licenses and personal identification cards; and
- (56) “Cooperative,” except in KRS Chapter 272, includes a limited cooperative association.
- (57) “Unmanned Aircraft system” means an aircraft that is operated without the possibility

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of direct human interaction from within or on the aircraft and includes everything that is on board or otherwise attached to the aircraft and all associated elements, including communication links and the components that control the small unmanned aircraft, that are required for the safe and efficient operation of the unmanned aircraft in the national airspace system.

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 - (c) Establishes a timetable for achieving specific behavioral goals, including a schedule for payment of victim restitution, child support, and other financial obligations; and
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- (12) “Cruelty” as applied to animals includes every act or omission whereby unjustifiable physical pain, suffering, or death is caused or permitted;

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- (13) “Directors,” when applied to corporations, includes managers or trustees;
- (14) “Domestic,” when applied to a corporation, partnership, business trust, or limited liability company, means all those incorporated or formed by authority of this state;
- (15) “Domestic animal” means any animal converted to domestic habitat;
- (16) “Evidence-based practices” means policies, procedures, programs and practices proven by scientific research to reliably produce reductions in recidivism when implemented competently;
- (17) “Federal” refers to the United States;
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- (21) “*Humane society*,” “*society*,” or “*Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals*,” means any nonprofit corporation, organized under the laws of this state and having as its primary purpose the prevention of cruelty to animals;
- (22) “Issue,” as applied to the descent of real estate, includes all the lawful lineal descendants of the ancestors;
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- (25) “Livestock” means cattle, sheep, swine, goats, horses, alpacas, llamas, buffaloes, or any other animals of the bovine, ovine, porcine, caprine, equine, or camelid species;
- (26) “May” is permissive;
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- (28) “Oath” includes “affirmation” in all cases in which an affirmation may be substituted for an oath;
- (29) “Owner” when applied to any animal, means any person having a property interest in such animal;
- (30) “Partnership” includes both general and limited partnerships;
- (31) “Peace officer” includes sheriffs, constables, coroners, jailers, metropolitan and urban-county government correctional officers, marshals, policemen, and other persons with similar authority to make arrests;

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- (32) “Penitentiary” includes all of the state penal institutions except the houses of reform;
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- (a) Its chain of custody recorded in a register to enable its location to be tracked;
 - (b) Insurance available to cover its loss; and
 - (c) The signature of the recipient of the document or package available to the sender;
- (37) “Regular election” means the election in even-numbered years at which members of Congress are elected and the election in odd-numbered years at which state officers are elected;
- (38) “Risk and needs assessment” or “validated risk and needs assessment” means an actuarial tool scientifically proven to determine a person’s risk to reoffend and criminal risk factors, that when properly addressed, can reduce that person’s likelihood of committing future criminal behavior;
- (39) “Shall” is mandatory;
- (40) “State” when applied to a part of the United States, includes territories, outlying possessions, and the District of Columbia; “any other state” includes any state, territory, outlying possession, the District of Columbia, and any foreign government or country;
- (41) “State funds” or “public funds” means sums actually received in cash or negotiable instruments from all sources unless otherwise described by any state agency, state-owned corporation, university, department, cabinet, fiduciary for the benefit of any form of state organization, authority, board, bureau, interstate compact, commission, committee, conference, council, office, or any other form of organization whether or not the money has ever been paid into the Treasury and whether or not the money is still in the Treasury if the money is controlled by any form of state organization, except for those funds the management of which is to be reported to the Legislative Research Commission pursuant to KRS 42.600, 42.605, and 42.615;
- (42) “Supervised individual” means an individual placed on probation by a court or serving a period of parole or post-release supervision from prison or jail;
- (43) “Sworn” includes “affirmed” in all cases in which an affirmation may be substituted for an oath;
- (44) “Treatment” when used in a criminal justice context, means targeted interventions that focus on criminal risk factors in order to reduce the likelihood of criminal behavior. Treatment options may include, but shall not be limited to, community-based programs that are consistent with evidence-based practices; cognitive-behavioral programs; faith-

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based programs; inpatient and outpatient substance abuse or mental health programs; and other available prevention and intervention programs that have been scientifically proven to produce reductions in recidivism when implemented competently.

“Treatment” does not include medical services;

- (45) “United States” includes territories, outlying possessions, and the District of Columbia;
- (46) “Vacancy in office,” or any equivalent phrase, means such as exists when there is an unexpired part of a term of office without a lawful incumbent therein, or when the person elected or appointed to an office fails to qualify according to law, or when there has been no election to fill the office at the time appointed by law; it applies whether the vacancy is occasioned by death, resignation, removal from the state, county or district, or otherwise;
- (47) “Violate” includes failure to comply with;
- (48) “Will” includes codicils; “last will” means last will and testament;
- (49) “Year” means calendar year;
- (50) “City” includes town;
- (51) Appropriation-related terms are defined as follows:
 - (a) “Appropriation” means an authorization by the General Assembly to expend, from public funds, a sum of money not in excess of the sum specified, for the purposes specified in the authorization and under the procedure prescribed in KRS Chapter 48;
 - (b) “Appropriation provision” means a section of any enactment by the General Assembly which is not provided for by KRS Chapter 48 and which authorizes the expenditure of public funds other than by a general appropriation bill;
 - (c) “General appropriation bill” means an enactment by the General Assembly that authorizes the expenditure of public funds in a branch budget bill as provided for in KRS Chapter 48;
- (52) “Mediation” means a nonadversarial process in which a neutral third party encourages and helps disputing parties reach a mutually acceptable agreement. Recommendations by mediators are not binding on the parties unless the parties enter into a settlement agreement incorporating the recommendations;
- (53) “Biennium” means the two (2) year period commencing on July 1 in each even-numbered year and ending on June 30 in the ensuing even-numbered year;
- (54) “Branch budget bill” or “branch budget” means an enactment by the General Assembly which provides appropriations and establishes fiscal policies and conditions for the biennial financial plan for the judicial branch, the legislative branch, and the executive branch, which shall include a separate budget bill for the Transportation Cabinet;
- (55) “AVIS” means the automated vehicle information system established and maintained by the Transportation Cabinet to collect titling and registration information on vehicles and boats and information on holders of motor vehicle operator’s licenses and personal identification cards; and
- (56) “Cooperative,” except in KRS Chapter 272, includes a limited cooperative association.
- (57) “Unmanned Aircraft system” means an aircraft that is operated without the possibility of direct human interaction from within or on the aircraft and includes everything that is

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on board or otherwise attached to the aircraft and all associated elements, including communication links and the components that control the small unmanned aircraft, that are required for the safe and efficient operation of the unmanned aircraft in the national airspace system.

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.130. Cruelty to animals in the second degree; exemptions.

- (1) *A person is guilty of cruelty to animals in the second degree when except as authorized by law he intentionally or wantonly:*
- (a) *Subjects any animal to or causes cruel or injurious mistreatment through abandonment, participates other than as provided in KRS 525.125 in causing it to fight for pleasure or profit (including, but not limited to being a spectator or vendor at an event where a four (4) legged animal is caused to fight for pleasure or profit), mutilation, beating, torturing any animal other than a dog or cat, tormenting, failing to provide adequate food, drink, space, or health care, or by any other means;*
 - (b) *Subjects any animal in his custody to cruel neglect; or*
 - (c) *Kills any animal other than a domestic animal killed by poisoning. This paragraph shall not apply to intentional poisoning of a dog or cat. Intentional poisoning of a dog or cat shall constitute a violation of this section.*
- (2) Nothing in this section shall apply to the killing of animals:
- (a) Pursuant to a license to hunt, fish, or trap;
 - (b) Incident to the processing as food or for other commercial purposes;
 - (c) For humane purposes;
 - (d) For veterinary, agricultural, spaying or neutering, or cosmetic purposes;
 - (e) For purposes relating to sporting activities, including but not limited to horse racing at organized races and training for organized races, organized horse shows, or other animal shows;
 - (f) For bona fide animal research activities of institutions of higher education; or a business entity registered with the United States Department of Agriculture under the Animal Welfare Act or subject to other federal laws governing animal research;
 - (g) In defense of self or another person against an aggressive or diseased animal;
 - (h) In defense of a domestic animal against an aggressive or diseased animal;
 - (i) For animal or pest control; or
 - (j) For any other purpose authorized by law.
- (3) Activities of animals engaged in hunting, field trials, dog training other than training a dog to fight for pleasure or profit, and other activities authorized either by a hunting license or by the Department of Fish and Wildlife shall not constitute a violation of this section.
- (4) *Cruelty to animals in the second degree is a Class A misdemeanor.*
- (5) If a person is convicted of or pleads guilty to an offense under subsection (1) of this

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section arising from the person's treatment of an equine, the court may impose one (1) or both of the following penalties against the person, in addition to fines and imprisonment:

- (a) An order that the person pay restitution for damage to the property of others and for costs incurred by others, including reasonable costs, as determined by agreement or by the court after a hearing, incurred in feeding, sheltering, veterinary treatment, and incidental care of any equine that was the subject of the offense resulting in conviction; or
- (b) An order terminating or imposing conditions on the person's right to possession, title, custody, or care of any equine that was the subject of the offense resulting in conviction.

If a person's ownership interest in an equine is terminated by a judicial order under paragraph (b) of this subsection, the court may order the sale, conveyance, or other disposition of the equine that was the subject of the offense resulting in conviction.

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.135. Torture of dog or cat.

- (1) *As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires, "torture" means the intentional infliction of or subjection to extreme physical pain or injury, motivated by an intent to increase or prolong the pain of the animal.*
- (2) *A person is guilty of torture of a dog or cat when he or she without legal justification intentionally tortures a domestic dog or cat.*
- (3) *Torture of a dog or cat is a Class A misdemeanor for the first offense and a Class D felony for each subsequent offense if the dog or cat suffers physical injury as a result of the torture, and a Class D felony if the dog or cat suffers serious physical injury or death as a result of the torture.*
- (4) Nothing in this section shall apply to the killing or injuring of a dog or cat:
 - (a) In accordance with a license to hunt, fish, or trap;
 - (b) For humane purposes;
 - (c) For veterinary, agricultural, spaying or neutering, or cosmetic purposes;
 - (d) For purposes relating to sporting activities including but not limited to training for organized dog or cat shows, or other animal shows in which a dog or a cat, or both, participate;
 - (e) For bona fide animal research activities, using dogs or cats, of institutions of higher education; or a business entity registered with the United States Department of Agriculture under the Animal Welfare Act or subject to other federal laws governing animal research;
 - (f) In defense of self or another person against an aggressive or diseased dog or cat;
 - (g) In defense of a domestic animal against an aggressive or diseased dog or cat;
 - (h) For animal or pest control; or
 - (i) For any other purpose authorized by law.
- (5) Activities of animals engaged in hunting, field trials, dog training other than training a

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dog to fight for pleasure or profit, and other activities authorized either by a hunting license or by the Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources shall not constitute a violation of this section.

- (6) The acts specified in this section shall not constitute cruelty to animals under KRS 525.125 or 525.130.

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3. EXEMPTIONS

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.125. Cruelty to animals in the first degree.

- (1) As used in this section:
 - (a) “Dog” means a domesticated canid of the genus *canis lupus familiaris*; and
 - (b) “Dog fight” or “dog fighting” means any event that involves a fight conducted or to be conducted between at least two (2) dogs for purposes of sport, wagering, or entertainment, except that the term “dog fight” or “dog fighting” shall not be deemed to include any activity the purpose of which involves the use of one (1) or more dogs in hunting or taking another animal.
- (2) The following persons are guilty of cruelty to animals in the first degree:
 - (a) Whenever a dog is knowingly caused to dog fight for pleasure or profit:
 1. The owner of the dog;
 2. The owner of the property on which the fight is conducted if the owner knows of the dog fight; and
 3. Anyone who participates in the organization of the dog fight; and
 - (b) Any person who knowingly owns, possesses, keeps, trains, sells, or otherwise transfers a dog for the purpose of dog fighting.
- (3) *Activities of dogs engaged in hunting, field trials, dog training, and other activities authorized either by a hunting license or by the Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources shall not constitute a violation of this section.*
- (4) *Activities of dogs engaged in working or guarding livestock shall not constitute a violation of this section.*
- (5) Cruelty to animals in the first degree is a Class D felony.

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.130. Cruelty to animals in the second degree; exemptions.

- (1) A person is guilty of cruelty to animals in the second degree when except as authorized by law he intentionally or wantonly:
 - (a) Subjects any animal to or causes cruel or injurious mistreatment through abandonment, participates other than as provided in KRS 525.125 in causing it to fight for pleasure or profit (including, but not limited to being a spectator or vendor at an event where a four (4) legged animal is caused to fight for pleasure or profit), mutilation, beating, torturing any animal other than a dog or cat, tormenting, failing to provide adequate food, drink, space, or health care, or by any other means;
 - (b) Subjects any animal in his custody to cruel neglect; or
 - (c) Kills any animal other than a domestic animal killed by poisoning. This paragraph shall not apply to intentional poisoning of a dog or cat. Intentional poisoning of a dog or cat shall constitute a violation of this section.

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- (2) *Nothing in this section shall apply to the killing of animals:*
- (a) *Pursuant to a license to hunt, fish, or trap;*
 - (b) *Incident to the processing as food or for other commercial purposes;*
 - (c) *For humane purposes;*
 - (d) *For veterinary, agricultural, spaying or neutering, or cosmetic purposes;*
 - (e) *For purposes relating to sporting activities, including but not limited to horse racing at organized races and training for organized races, organized horse shows, or other animal shows;*
 - (f) *For bona fide animal research activities of institutions of higher education; or a business entity registered with the United States Department of Agriculture under the Animal Welfare Act or subject to other federal laws governing animal research;*
 - (g) *In defense of self or another person against an aggressive or diseased animal;*
 - (h) *In defense of a domestic animal against an aggressive or diseased animal;*
 - (i) *For animal or pest control; or*
 - (j) *For any other purpose authorized by law.*
- (3) *Activities of animals engaged in hunting, field trials, dog training other than training a dog to fight for pleasure or profit, and other activities authorized either by a hunting license or by the Department of Fish and Wildlife shall not constitute a violation of this section.*
- (4) Cruelty to animals in the second degree is a Class A misdemeanor.
- (5) If a person is convicted of or pleads guilty to an offense under subsection (1) of this section arising from the person's treatment of an equine, the court may impose one (1) or both of the following penalties against the person, in addition to fines and imprisonment:
- (a) An order that the person pay restitution for damage to the property of others and for costs incurred by others, including reasonable costs, as determined by agreement or by the court after a hearing, incurred in feeding, sheltering, veterinary treatment, and incidental care of any equine that was the subject of the offense resulting in conviction; or
 - (b) An order terminating or imposing conditions on the person's right to possession, title, custody, or care of any equine that was the subject of the offense resulting in conviction.
- If a person's ownership interest in an equine is terminated by a judicial order under paragraph (b) of this subsection, the court may order the sale, conveyance, or other disposition of the equine that was the subject of the offense resulting in conviction.

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.135. Torture of dog or cat.

- (1) As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires, “torture” means the intentional infliction of or subjection to extreme physical pain or injury, motivated by an intent to increase or prolong the pain of the animal.

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- (2) A person is guilty of torture of a dog or cat when he or she without legal justification intentionally tortures a domestic dog or cat.
- (3) Torture of a dog or cat is a Class A misdemeanor for the first offense and a Class D felony for each subsequent offense if the dog or cat suffers physical injury as a result of the torture, and a Class D felony if the dog or cat suffers serious physical injury or death as a result of the torture.
- (4) *Nothing in this section shall apply to the killing or injuring of a dog or cat:*
- (a) *In accordance with a license to hunt, fish, or trap;*
 - (b) *For humane purposes;*
 - (c) *For veterinary, agricultural, spaying or neutering, or cosmetic purposes;*
 - (d) *For purposes relating to sporting activities including but not limited to training for organized dog or cat shows, or other animal shows in which a dog or a cat, or both, participate;*
 - (e) *For bona fide animal research activities, using dogs or cats, of institutions of higher education; or a business entity registered with the United States Department of Agriculture under the Animal Welfare Act or subject to other federal laws governing animal research;*
 - (f) *In defense of self or another person against an aggressive or diseased dog or cat;*
 - (g) *In defense of a domestic animal against an aggressive or diseased dog or cat;*
 - (h) *For animal or pest control; or*
 - (i) *For any other purpose authorized by law.*
- (5) *Activities of animals engaged in hunting, field trials, dog training other than training a dog to fight for pleasure or profit, and other activities authorized either by a hunting license or by the Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources shall not constitute a violation of this section.*
- (6) The acts specified in this section shall not constitute cruelty to animals under KRS 525.125 or 525.130.

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.137. Sexual crimes against an animal.

- (1) As used in this section:
- (a) “Animal” means any nonhuman creature; and
 - (b) “Sexual contact” means any act committed between a person and an animal for the purpose of sexual arousal, sexual gratification, abuse, or financial gain involving:
 1. Contact between the sex organs or anus of one and the mouth, sex organs, or anus of another;
 2. The insertion of any part of the animal’s body into the vaginal or anal opening of the person; or
 3. The insertion of any part of the body of a person or any object into the vaginal or anal opening of an animal without a bona fide veterinary or animal husbandry purpose.

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- (2) A person is guilty of sexual crimes against an animal if he or she:
 - (a) Engages in sexual contact with an animal;
 - (b) Advertises, solicits, offers, or accepts the offer of an animal, or possesses, purchases, or otherwise obtains an animal, with the intent that the animal be subject to sexual contact; or
 - (c) Causes, aids, or abets another person to engage in sexual contact with an animal.
- (3) Sexual crimes against an animal is a Class D felony.
- (4) *Nothing in this section shall apply to:*
 - (a) *Accepted veterinary practices;*
 - (b) *Artificial insemination of an animal for reproductive purposes;*
 - (c) *Accepted animal husbandry practices, including grooming, raising, breeding, or assisting with the birthing process of animals or any other procedure that provides care for an animal; or*
 - (d) *Generally accepted practices related to the judging of breed conformation.*
- (5) In addition to the penalty imposed in subsection (3) of this section, the court shall order a person convicted of violating this section to:
 - (a) Relinquish custody of all animals under the person's control. If the person convicted of violating this section is not the owner of the animal that was the subject of the violation, then the animal shall be returned to the owner of the animal. An animal returned to an owner under this section shall not be spayed or neutered prior to being returned;
 - (b) Not harbor, own, possess, or exercise control over any animal, reside in any household where animals are present, or work or volunteer in a place where the person has unsupervised access to animals for a minimum of five (5) years after completion of the imposed sentence;
 - (c) Attend an appropriate treatment program or obtain psychiatric or psychological counseling, at the person's expense; and
 - (d) Reimburse the agency caring for the animal for reasonable costs incurred for the care and treatment of the animal from the date of impoundment until the disposition of the criminal proceeding.

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4. FIGHTING AND RACKETEERING

NOTE: seizure statute specific to animal fighting is available in the [seizure](#) section of this document.

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.125. Cruelty to animals in the first degree.

- (1) As used in this section:
 - (a) “Dog” means a domesticated canid of the genus *canis lupus familiaris*; and
 - (b) “Dog fight” or “dog fighting” means any event that involves a fight conducted or to be conducted between at least two (2) dogs for purposes of sport, wagering, or entertainment, except that the term “dog fight” or “dog fighting” shall not be deemed to include any activity the purpose of which involves the use of one (1) or more dogs in hunting or taking another animal.
- (2) *The following persons are guilty of cruelty to animals in the first degree:*
 - (a) *Whenever a dog is knowingly caused to dog fight for pleasure or profit:*
 1. The owner of the dog;
 2. *The owner of the property on which the fight is conducted if the owner knows of the dog fight; and*
 3. *Anyone who participates in the organization of the dog fight; and*
 - (b) Any person who knowingly owns, possesses, keeps, trains, sells, or otherwise transfers a dog for the purpose of dog fighting.
- (3) Activities of dogs engaged in hunting, field trials, dog training, and other activities authorized either by a hunting license or by the Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources shall not constitute a violation of this section.
- (4) Activities of dogs engaged in working or guarding livestock shall not constitute a violation of this section.
- (5) *Cruelty to animals in the first degree is a Class D felony.*

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.130. Cruelty to animals in the second degree; exemptions.

- (1) *A person is guilty of cruelty to animals in the second degree when except as authorized by law he intentionally or wantonly:*
 - (a) Subjects any animal to or causes cruel or injurious mistreatment through abandonment, *participates other than as provided in KRS 525.125 in causing it to fight for pleasure or profit (including, but not limited to being a spectator or vendor at an event where a four (4) legged animal is caused to fight for pleasure or profit)*, mutilation, beating, torturing any animal other than a dog or cat, tormenting, failing to provide adequate food, drink, space, or health care, or by any other means;
 - (b) Subjects any animal in his custody to cruel neglect; or

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- (c) Kills any animal other than a domestic animal killed by poisoning. This paragraph shall not apply to intentional poisoning of a dog or cat. Intentional poisoning of a dog or cat shall constitute a violation of this section.
- (2) Nothing in this section shall apply to the killing of animals:
- (a) Pursuant to a license to hunt, fish, or trap;
 - (b) Incident to the processing as food or for other commercial purposes;
 - (c) For humane purposes;
 - (d) For veterinary, agricultural, spaying or neutering, or cosmetic purposes;
 - (e) For purposes relating to sporting activities, including but not limited to horse racing at organized races and training for organized races, organized horse shows, or other animal shows;
 - (f) For bona fide animal research activities of institutions of higher education; or a business entity registered with the United States Department of Agriculture under the Animal Welfare Act or subject to other federal laws governing animal research;
 - (g) In defense of self or another person against an aggressive or diseased animal;
 - (h) In defense of a domestic animal against an aggressive or diseased animal;
 - (i) For animal or pest control; or
 - (j) For any other purpose authorized by law.
- (3) Activities of animals engaged in hunting, field trials, dog training other than training a dog to fight for pleasure or profit, and other activities authorized either by a hunting license or by the Department of Fish and Wildlife shall not constitute a violation of this section.
- (4) Cruelty to animals in the second degree is a Class A misdemeanor.
- (5) If a person is convicted of or pleads guilty to an offense under subsection (1) of this section arising from the person's treatment of an equine, the court may impose one (1) or both of the following penalties against the person, in addition to fines and imprisonment:
- (a) An order that the person pay restitution for damage to the property of others and for costs incurred by others, including reasonable costs, as determined by agreement or by the court after a hearing, incurred in feeding, sheltering, veterinary treatment, and incidental care of any equine that was the subject of the offense resulting in conviction; or
 - (b) An order terminating or imposing conditions on the person's right to possession, title, custody, or care of any equine that was the subject of the offense resulting in conviction.

If a person's ownership interest in an equine is terminated by a judicial order under paragraph (b) of this subsection, the court may order the sale, conveyance, or other disposition of the equine that was the subject of the offense resulting in conviction.

ANIMAL PROTECTION LAWS OF KENTUCKY**5. SEXUAL ASSAULT****KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.137. Sexual crimes against an animal.**

- (1) *As used in this section:*
- (a) *“Animal” means any nonhuman creature; and*
 - (b) *“Sexual contact” means any act committed between a person and an animal for the purpose of sexual arousal, sexual gratification, abuse, or financial gain involving:*
 - 1. *Contact between the sex organs or anus of one and the mouth, sex organs, or anus of another;*
 - 2. *The insertion of any part of the animal’s body into the vaginal or anal opening of the person; or*
 - 3. *The insertion of any part of the body of a person or any object into the vaginal or anal opening of an animal without a bona fide veterinary or animal husbandry purpose.*
- (2) *A person is guilty of sexual crimes against an animal if he or she:*
- (a) *Engages in sexual contact with an animal;*
 - (b) *Advertises, solicits, offers, or accepts the offer of an animal, or possesses, purchases, or otherwise obtains an animal, with the intent that the animal be subject to sexual contact; or*
 - (c) *Causes, aids, or abets another person to engage in sexual contact with an animal.*
- (3) *Sexual crimes against an animal is a Class D felony.*
- (4) *Nothing in this section shall apply to:*
- (a) *Accepted veterinary practices;*
 - (b) *Artificial insemination of an animal for reproductive purposes;*
 - (c) *Accepted animal husbandry practices, including grooming, raising, breeding, or assisting with the birthing process of animals or any other procedure that provides care for an animal; or*
 - (d) *Generally accepted practices related to the judging of breed conformation.*
- (5) *In addition to the penalty imposed in subsection (3) of this section, the court shall order a person convicted of violating this section to:*
- (a) *Relinquish custody of all animals under the person’s control. If the person convicted of violating this section is not the owner of the animal that was the subject of the violation, then the animal shall be returned to the owner of the animal. An animal returned to an owner under this section shall not be spayed or neutered prior to being returned;*
 - (b) *Not harbor, own, possess, or exercise control over any animal, reside in any household where animals are present, or work or volunteer in a place where the person has unsupervised access to animals for a minimum of five (5) years after completion of the imposed sentence;*

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- (c) Attend an appropriate treatment program or obtain psychiatric or psychological counseling, at the person's expense; and
- (d) Reimburse the agency caring for the animal for reasonable costs incurred for the care and treatment of the animal from the date of impoundment until the disposition of the criminal proceeding.

ANIMAL PROTECTION LAWS OF KENTUCKY**6. CRUELTY TO WORKING ANIMALS****KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.200. Assault on a service animal in the first degree.**

- (1) *A person is guilty of assault on a service animal in the first degree when, without legal justification or lawful authority:*
 - (a) *He or she intentionally kills or causes serious physical injury to a service animal;*
 - (b) *He or she intentionally causes physical injury to a service animal by means of a deadly weapon or dangerous instrument; or*
 - (c) *He or she wantonly causes serious physical injury to a service animal by means of a deadly weapon or dangerous instrument.*
- (2) *For the purposes of this section, "service animal" has the same meaning as in KRS 525.010, except that "service animal" does not include assistance dogs as in KRS 525.010(6)(h).*
- (3) *Assault on a service animal in the first degree is a Class D felony.*

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.205. Assault on a service animal in the second degree.

- (1) *A person is guilty of assault on a service animal in the second degree when he intentionally and without legal justification or lawful authority causes physical injury to a service animal.*
- (2) *Assault on a service animal in the second degree is a Class B misdemeanor.*

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7. MAXIMUM PENALTIES & STATUTES OF LIMITATIONS

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 500.050. Time limitations.

- (1) *Except as otherwise expressly provided, the prosecution of a felony is not subject to a period of limitation and may be commenced at any time.*
- (2) *Except as otherwise expressly provided, the prosecution of an offense other than a felony must be commenced within one (1) year after it is committed.*
- (3) For a misdemeanor offense under KRS Chapter 510 when the victim is under the age of eighteen (18) at the time of the offense, the prosecution of the offense shall be commenced within five (5) years after the victim attains the age of eighteen (18) years.
- (4) For purposes of this section, an offense is committed either when every element occurs, or if a legislative purpose to prohibit a continuing course of conduct plainly appears, at the time when the course of conduct or the defendant's complicity therein is terminated.

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 532.060. Sentence of imprisonment for felony.

- (1) *A sentence of imprisonment for a felony shall be an indeterminate sentence, the maximum of which shall be fixed within the limits provided by subsection (2), and subject to modification by the trial judge pursuant to KRS 532.070.*
- (2) *Unless otherwise provided by law, the authorized maximum terms of imprisonment for felonies are:*
 - (a) For a Class A felony, not less than twenty (20) years nor more than fifty (50) years, or life imprisonment;
 - (b) For a Class B felony, not less than ten (10) years nor more than twenty (20) years;
 - (c) For a Class C felony, not less than five (5) years nor more than ten (10) years; and
 - (d) *For a Class D felony, not less than one (1) year nor more than five (5) years.*
- (3) For any felony specified in KRS Chapter 510, KRS 530.020, 530.064(1)(a), or 531.310, the sentence shall include an additional five (5) year period of postincarceration supervision which shall be added to the maximum sentence rendered for the offense. During this period of postincarceration supervision, if a defendant violates the provisions of postincarceration supervision, the defendant may be reincarcerated for:
 - (a) The remaining period of his initial sentence, if any is remaining; and
 - (b) The entire period of postincarceration supervision, or if the initial sentence has been served, for the remaining period of postincarceration supervision.
- (4) In addition to the penalties provided in this section, for any person subject to a period of postincarceration supervision pursuant to Section 35 of this Act his or her sentence shall include an additional one (1) year period of postincarceration supervision following release from incarceration upon expiration of sentence if the offender is not otherwise

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subject to another form of postincarceration supervision. During this period of postincarceration supervision, if an offender violates the provisions of supervision, the offender may be reincarcerated for the remaining period of his or her postincarceration supervision.

- (5) The actual time of release within the maximum established by subsection (1), or as modified pursuant to KRS 532.070, shall be determined under procedures established elsewhere by law.

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 532.090. Sentence of Imprisonment for Misdemeanor.

A sentence of imprisonment for a misdemeanor shall be a definite term and shall be fixed within the following maximum limitations:

- (1) *For a Class A misdemeanor, the term shall not exceed twelve (12) months; and*
- (2) *For a Class B misdemeanor, the term shall not exceed ninety (90) days.*

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 534.030. Fines for felonies.

- (1) *Except as otherwise provided for an offense defined outside this code, a person who has been convicted of any felony shall, in addition to any other punishment imposed upon him, be sentenced to pay a fine in an amount not less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) and not greater than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) or double his gain from commission of the offense, whichever is the greater.*
- (2) In determining the amount and method of paying a fine for commission of a felony, the court shall consider, among others, the following factors:
 - (a) The defendant's ability to pay the amount of the fine;
 - (b) The hardship likely to be imposed on the defendant's dependents by the amount of the fine and the time and method of paying it;
 - (c) The impact the amount of the fine will have on the defendant's ability to make reparation or restitution to the victim; and
 - (d) The amount of the defendant's gain, if any, derived from the commission of the offense.
- (3) When a defendant is convicted of two (2) or more felonies committed through a single act and is sentenced to fines pursuant to subsection (1), the aggregate amount of the fines shall not exceed ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) or double the amount of the defendant's gain from commission of the offenses, whichever is the greater.
- (4) Fines required by this section shall not be imposed upon any person determined by the court to be indigent pursuant to KRS Chapter 31.
- (5) This section shall not apply to a corporation.

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KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 534.040. Fines for Misdemeanors and Violations.

- (1) Fines and imprisonment for misdemeanors shall not be mutually exclusive. In any case where imprisonment is authorized, a fine may be levied in addition to the imprisonment, or a fine may be levied as an alternative to imprisonment. Similarly, a fine may be levied in lieu of imprisonment. Whether the fine is to be levied as the sole penalty or as an additional or alternative penalty shall be in the discretion of the judge or jury as the case may be. If the trial is by jury, the jury shall have the discretion. This rule shall apply in all cases where a fine is not the exclusive penalty authorized by law.
- (2) *Except as otherwise provided for an offense defined outside this code, a person who has been convicted of any offense other than a felony shall be sentenced, in addition to any other punishment imposed upon him, to pay a fine in an amount not to exceed:*
 - (a) *For a Class A misdemeanor, five hundred dollars (\$500); or*
 - (b) *For a Class B misdemeanor, two hundred fifty dollars (\$250); or*
 - (c) *For a violation, two hundred fifty dollars (\$250).*
- (3) This section shall not apply to a corporation.
- (4) Fines required by this section shall not be imposed upon any person determined by the court to be indigent pursuant to KRS Chapter 31.

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8. CROSS ENFORCEMENT & REPORTING

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9. VETERINARY REPORTING & IMMUNITY

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 321.185. Veterinarian-client-patient relationship.

- (1) In order for a veterinarian to practice veterinary medicine, a relationship among the veterinarian, the client, and the patient shall be established and maintained.
 “Veterinarian-client-patient relationship” means that:
- (a) The veterinarian has assumed the responsibility for making judgments regarding the health of the animal and the need for veterinary treatment, and the client, whether owner or other caretaker, has agreed to follow the instructions of the veterinarian;
 - (b) There is sufficient knowledge of the animal by the veterinarian to initiate at least a general or preliminary diagnosis of the medical condition of the animal. This means that the veterinarian has recently seen and is personally acquainted with the keeping and care of the animal by virtue of an examination of the animal or by medically appropriate and timely visits to the premises where the animal is kept; and
 - (b) The practicing veterinarian is readily available or shall provide medical service for follow-up in case of adverse reactions or failure of the regimen of therapy. A new regimen of therapy shall be contingent only upon cooperation of the client and availability of the subject animal.
- (2) The veterinarian shall maintain records which document patient visits, diagnosis, treatment, and other relevant information.
- (3)
- (a) *A veterinarian shall not violate the confidential relationship between the veterinarian and the veterinarian’s client.*
 - (b) *A veterinarian shall not release information concerning a client or care of a client’s animal, except:*
 - 1. *On the veterinarian’s receipt of:*
 - a) *A written authorization or other form of waiver executed by the client; or*
 - b) *An appropriate court order or subpoena; or*
 - 2. *In cases of animal abuse, pursuant to Section 1 of this Act.*
 - (c) *A veterinarian who releases information under paragraph (b) of this subsection shall not be liable to any person, including the client, for an action resulting from the disclosure.*
 - (d) The privilege provided by this subsection is waived by the client or the owner of an animal treated by the veterinarian to the extent the client or owner places at issue in a civil or criminal proceeding:
 - 1. The nature and extent of the animal’s injuries; or
 - 2. The care and treatment of the animal provided by the veterinarian.
 - (e) This subsection shall not apply to:

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1. An inspection or investigation conducted by the board or an agent of the board; or
 2. The veterinary reporting requirements and regulatory authority of the Kentucky Horse Racing Commission to inspect, investigate, and supervise horses and other participants in horse racing as provided by KRS Chapter 230 and the administrative regulations promulgated under KRS Chapter 230, or any other law applicable to the regulation of horse racing in the Commonwealth.
- (4) Veterinarians providing copies of records under this section may charge no more than the actual cost of copying, including reasonable staff time.

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 321.188. Reporting of animal abuse.

If a veterinarian finds that an animal with which he or she has a veterinarian-client-patient relationship has been abused in violation of KRS 525.125, 525.130, 525.135, or 525.137, the veterinarian may make a report to:

- (1) The Office of the State Veterinarian for any animal for which an on-farm livestock or poultry care standard has been promulgated under KRS 257.196; or*
- (2) Law enforcement for any other animal.*

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10. LAW ENFORCEMENT POLICIES

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 436.605. Animal control officers and humane agents have powers of peace officers except power of arrest; search warrants; execution of search warrants; arrest by peace officer.

- (1) *Animal control officers and officers and agents of humane societies who are employed by, appointed by, or have contracted with a city, county, urban-county, charter county, or consolidated local government to provide animal sheltering or animal control services shall have the powers of peace officers, except for the power of arrest, for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of the Kentucky Revised Statutes relating to cruelty, mistreatment, sexual crimes against, or torture of animals, provided they possess the qualifications required under KRS 61.300.*
- (2) *When any peace officer, animal control officer, or any officer or agent of any society or association for the prevention of cruelty to animals duly incorporated under the laws of this Commonwealth who is employed by, appointed by, or has contracted with a city, county, urban-county, charter county, or consolidated local government to provide animal sheltering or animal control services makes an oath before any judge of a District Court that he has reasons to believe or does believe that an act of cruelty, mistreatment, sexual crimes against, or torture of animals is being committed in a building, barn, or other enclosure, the judge shall issue a search warrant directed to the peace officer, animal control officer, or officer or agent of the society or association for the prevention of cruelty to animals to search the premises. *If a peace officer finds that an act of cruelty, mistreatment, sexual crimes against, or torture of animals is being perpetrated, the offender or offenders shall be immediately arrested by the peace officer and brought before the court for trial. If an animal control officer or an officer or agent of a society or association for the prevention of cruelty to animals finds that an act of cruelty, mistreatment, sexual crimes against, or torture of animals is being perpetrated, the officer or agent shall summon a peace officer to arrest the offender or offenders and bring them before the court for trial.**

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11. SEIZURE

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 436.605. Animal control officers and humane agents have powers of peace officers except power of arrest; search warrants; execution of search warrants; arrest by peace officer.

- (1) Animal control officers and officers and agents of humane societies who are employed by, appointed by, or have contracted with a city, county, urban-county, charter county, or consolidated local government to provide animal sheltering or animal control services shall have the powers of peace officers, except for the power of arrest, for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of the Kentucky Revised Statutes relating to cruelty, mistreatment, sexual crimes against, or torture of animals, provided they possess the qualifications required under KRS 61.300.
- (2) *When any peace officer, animal control officer, or any officer or agent of any society or association for the prevention of cruelty to animals duly incorporated under the laws of this Commonwealth who is employed by, appointed by, or has contracted with a city, county, urban-county, charter county, or consolidated local government to provide animal sheltering or animal control services makes an oath before any judge of a District Court that he has reasons to believe or does believe that an act of cruelty, mistreatment, sexual crimes against, or torture of animals is being committed in a building, barn, or other enclosure, the judge shall issue a search warrant directed to the peace officer, animal control officer, or officer or agent of the society or association for the prevention of cruelty to animals to search the premises. If a peace officer finds that an act of cruelty, mistreatment, sexual crimes against, or torture of animals is being perpetrated, the offender or offenders shall be immediately arrested by the peace officer and brought before the court for trial. If an animal control officer or an officer or agent of a society or association for the prevention of cruelty to animals finds that an act of cruelty, mistreatment, sexual crimes against, or torture of animals is being perpetrated, the officer or agent shall summon a peace officer to arrest the offender or offenders and bring them before the court for trial.*

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 436.610. Confiscation of animals on premises where violations of KRS 525.125 and 525.130 occur.

All animals of the same species, which are on the property when an animal is caused to fight for pleasure or profit, in violation of the provisions of KRS 525.125 and 525.130, shall be confiscated and turned over to the county animal control officer employed, appointed, or contracted with as provided by KRS 258.195, if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the animals were on the property for the purpose of fighting.

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12. COURTROOM ANIMAL ADVOCATE PROGRAM

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13. PROTECTION ORDERS

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14. RESTITUTION

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.130. Cruelty to animals in the second degree; exemptions.

- (1) A person is guilty of cruelty to animals in the second degree when except as authorized by law he intentionally or wantonly:
 - (a) Subjects any animal to or causes cruel or injurious mistreatment through abandonment, participates other than as provided in KRS 525.125 in causing it to fight for pleasure or profit (including, but not limited to being a spectator or vendor at an event where a four (4) legged animal is caused to fight for pleasure or profit), mutilation, beating, torturing any animal other than a dog or cat, tormenting, failing to provide adequate food, drink, space, or health care, or by any other means;
 - (b) Subjects any animal in his custody to cruel neglect; or
 - (c) Kills any animal other than a domestic animal killed by poisoning. This paragraph shall not apply to intentional poisoning of a dog or cat. Intentional poisoning of a dog or cat shall constitute a violation of this section.
- (2) Nothing in this section shall apply to the killing of animals:
 - (a) Pursuant to a license to hunt, fish, or trap;
 - (b) Incident to the processing as food or for other commercial purposes;
 - (c) For humane purposes;
 - (d) For veterinary, agricultural, spaying or neutering, or cosmetic purposes;
 - (e) For purposes relating to sporting activities, including but not limited to horse racing at organized races and training for organized races, organized horse shows, or other animal shows;
 - (f) For bona fide animal research activities of institutions of higher education; or a business entity registered with the United States Department of Agriculture under the Animal Welfare Act or subject to other federal laws governing animal research;
 - (g) In defense of self or another person against an aggressive or diseased animal;
 - (h) In defense of a domestic animal against an aggressive or diseased animal;
 - (i) For animal or pest control; or
 - (j) For any other purpose authorized by law.
- (3) Activities of animals engaged in hunting, field trials, dog training other than training a dog to fight for pleasure or profit, and other activities authorized either by a hunting license or by the Department of Fish and Wildlife shall not constitute a violation of this section.
- (4) Cruelty to animals in the second degree is a Class A misdemeanor.
- (5) *If a person is convicted of or pleads guilty to an offense under subsection (1) of this section arising from the person's treatment of an equine, the court may impose one (1) or both of the following penalties against the person, in addition to fines and imprisonment:*

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- (a) *An order that the person pay restitution for damage to the property of others and for costs incurred by others, including reasonable costs, as determined by agreement or by the court after a hearing, incurred in feeding, sheltering, veterinary treatment, and incidental care of any equine that was the subject of the offense resulting in conviction; or*
- (b) *An order terminating or imposing conditions on the person's right to possession, title, custody, or care of any equine that was the subject of the offense resulting in conviction.*

If a person's ownership interest in an equine is terminated by a judicial order under paragraph (b) of this subsection, the court may order the sale, conveyance, or other disposition of the equine that was the subject of the offense resulting in conviction.

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.137. Sexual crimes against an animal.

- (1) As used in this section:
 - (a) "Animal" means any nonhuman creature; and
 - (b) "Sexual contact" means any act committed between a person and an animal for the purpose of sexual arousal, sexual gratification, abuse, or financial gain involving:
 1. Contact between the sex organs or anus of one and the mouth, sex organs, or anus of another;
 2. The insertion of any part of the animal's body into the vaginal or anal opening of the person; or
 3. The insertion of any part of the body of a person or any object into the vaginal or anal opening of an animal without a bona fide veterinary or animal husbandry purpose.
- (2) A person is guilty of sexual crimes against an animal if he or she:
 - (a) Engages in sexual contact with an animal;
 - (b) Advertises, solicits, offers, or accepts the offer of an animal, or possesses, purchases, or otherwise obtains an animal, with the intent that the animal be subject to sexual contact; or
 - (c) Causes, aids, or abets another person to engage in sexual contact with an animal.
- (3) Sexual crimes against an animal is a Class D felony.
- (4) Nothing in this section shall apply to:
 - (a) Accepted veterinary practices;
 - (b) Artificial insemination of an animal for reproductive purposes;
 - (c) Accepted animal husbandry practices, including grooming, raising, breeding, or assisting with the birthing process of animals or any other procedure that provides care for an animal; or
 - (d) Generally accepted practices related to the judging of breed conformation.
- (5) *In addition to the penalty imposed in subsection (3) of this section, the court shall order a*

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person convicted of violating this section to:

- (a) Relinquish custody of all animals under the person's control. If the person convicted of violating this section is not the owner of the animal that was the subject of the violation, then the animal shall be returned to the owner of the animal. An animal returned to an owner under this section shall not be spayed or neutered prior to being returned;
- (b) Not harbor, own, possess, or exercise control over any animal, reside in any household where animals are present, or work or volunteer in a place where the person has unsupervised access to animals for a minimum of five (5) years after completion of the imposed sentence;
- (c) Attend an appropriate treatment program or obtain psychiatric or psychological counseling, at the person's expense; and
- (d) *Reimburse the agency caring for the animal for reasonable costs incurred for the care and treatment of the animal from the date of impoundment until the disposition of the criminal proceeding.*

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.215. Defendant's liability for damages upon conviction of assault on a service animal.

In any case in which a defendant is convicted of a violation of the provisions of KRS 525.200 or 525.205, the defendant may be ordered to make restitution to the person or agency owning the animal for any veterinary bills, replacement costs of the animal if it is disabled or killed, and the salary of the animal handler for the period of time his services are lost to the agency or self-employment.

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15. FORFEITURE & POSSESSION BANS

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.130. Cruelty to animals in the second degree; exemptions.

- (1) A person is guilty of cruelty to animals in the second degree when except as authorized by law he intentionally or wantonly:
- (a) Subjects any animal to or causes cruel or injurious mistreatment through abandonment, participates other than as provided in KRS 525.125 in causing it to fight for pleasure or profit (including, but not limited to being a spectator or vendor at an event where a four (4) legged animal is caused to fight for pleasure or profit), mutilation, beating, torturing any animal other than a dog or cat, tormenting, failing to provide adequate food, drink, space, or health care, or by any other means;
 - (b) Subjects any animal in his custody to cruel neglect; or
 - (c) Kills any animal other than a domestic animal killed by poisoning. This paragraph shall not apply to intentional poisoning of a dog or cat. Intentional poisoning of a dog or cat shall constitute a violation of this section.
- (2) Nothing in this section shall apply to the killing of animals:
- (a) Pursuant to a license to hunt, fish, or trap;
 - (b) Incident to the processing as food or for other commercial purposes;
 - (c) For humane purposes;
 - (d) For veterinary, agricultural, spaying or neutering, or cosmetic purposes;
 - (e) For purposes relating to sporting activities, including but not limited to horse racing at organized races and training for organized races, organized horse shows, or other animal shows;
 - (f) For bona fide animal research activities of institutions of higher education; or a business entity registered with the United States Department of Agriculture under the Animal Welfare Act or subject to other federal laws governing animal research;
 - (g) In defense of self or another person against an aggressive or diseased animal;
 - (h) In defense of a domestic animal against an aggressive or diseased animal;
 - (i) For animal or pest control; or
 - (j) For any other purpose authorized by law.
- (3) Activities of animals engaged in hunting, field trials, dog training other than training a dog to fight for pleasure or profit, and other activities authorized either by a hunting license or by the Department of Fish and Wildlife shall not constitute a violation of this section.
- (4) Cruelty to animals in the second degree is a Class A misdemeanor.
- (5) *If a person is convicted of or pleads guilty to an offense under subsection (1) of this section arising from the person's treatment of an equine, the court may impose one (1) or both of the following penalties against the person, in addition to fines and imprisonment:*

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- (a) An order that the person pay restitution for damage to the property of others and for costs incurred by others, including reasonable costs, as determined by agreement or by the court after a hearing, incurred in feeding, sheltering, veterinary treatment, and incidental care of any equine that was the subject of the offense resulting in conviction; or
- (b) *An order terminating or imposing conditions on the person's right to possession, title, custody, or care of any equine that was the subject of the offense resulting in conviction.*

If a person's ownership interest in an equine is terminated by a judicial order under paragraph (b) of this subsection, the court may order the sale, conveyance, or other disposition of the equine that was the subject of the offense resulting in conviction.

KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.137. Sexual crimes against an animal.

- (1) As used in this section:
 - (c) "Animal" means any nonhuman creature; and
 - (d) "Sexual contact" means any act committed between a person and an animal for the purpose of sexual arousal, sexual gratification, abuse, or financial gain involving:
 1. Contact between the sex organs or anus of one and the mouth, sex organs, or anus of another;
 2. The insertion of any part of the animal's body into the vaginal or anal opening of the person; or
 3. The insertion of any part of the body of a person or any object into the vaginal or anal opening of an animal without a bona fide veterinary or animal husbandry purpose.
- (2) A person is guilty of sexual crimes against an animal if he or she:
 - (a) Engages in sexual contact with an animal;
 - (b) Advertises, solicits, offers, or accepts the offer of an animal, or possesses, purchases, or otherwise obtains an animal, with the intent that the animal be subject to sexual contact; or
 - (c) Causes, aids, or abets another person to engage in sexual contact with an animal.
- (3) Sexual crimes against an animal is a Class D felony.
- (4) Nothing in this section shall apply to:
 - (a) Accepted veterinary practices;
 - (b) Artificial insemination of an animal for reproductive purposes;
 - (c) Accepted animal husbandry practices, including grooming, raising, breeding, or assisting with the birthing process of animals or any other procedure that provides care for an animal; or
 - (d) Generally accepted practices related to the judging of breed conformation.
- (5) *In addition to the penalty imposed in subsection (3) of this section, the court shall order a*

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person convicted of violating this section to:

- (a) Relinquish custody of all animals under the person's control. If the person convicted of violating this section is not the owner of the animal that was the subject of the violation, then the animal shall be returned to the owner of the animal. An animal returned to an owner under this section shall not be spayed or neutered prior to being returned;*
- (b) Not harbor, own, possess, or exercise control over any animal, reside in any household where animals are present, or work or volunteer in a place where the person has unsupervised access to animals for a minimum of five (5) years after completion of the imposed sentence;*
- (c) Attend an appropriate treatment program or obtain psychiatric or psychological counseling, at the person's expense; and*
- (d) Reimburse the agency caring for the animal for reasonable costs incurred for the care and treatment of the animal from the date of impoundment until the disposition of the criminal proceeding.*

ANIMAL PROTECTION LAWS OF KENTUCKY**16. COURT-ORDERED TREATMENT****KY. REV. STAT. ANN. § 525.137. Sexual crimes against an animal.**

- (1) As used in this section:
 - (a) “Animal” means any nonhuman creature; and
 - (b) “Sexual contact” means any act committed between a person and an animal for the purpose of sexual arousal, sexual gratification, abuse, or financial gain involving:
 1. Contact between the sex organs or anus of one and the mouth, sex organs, or anus of another;
 2. The insertion of any part of the animal’s body into the vaginal or anal opening of the person; or
 3. The insertion of any part of the body of a person or any object into the vaginal or anal opening of an animal without a bona fide veterinary or animal husbandry purpose.
- (2) A person is guilty of sexual crimes against an animal if he or she:
 - (a) Engages in sexual contact with an animal;
 - (b) Advertises, solicits, offers, or accepts the offer of an animal, or possesses, purchases, or otherwise obtains an animal, with the intent that the animal be subject to sexual contact; or
 - (c) Causes, aids, or abets another person to engage in sexual contact with an animal.
- (3) Sexual crimes against an animal is a Class D felony.
- (4) Nothing in this section shall apply to:
 - (a) Accepted veterinary practices;
 - (b) Artificial insemination of an animal for reproductive purposes;
 - (c) Accepted animal husbandry practices, including grooming, raising, breeding, or assisting with the birthing process of animals or any other procedure that provides care for an animal; or
 - (d) Generally accepted practices related to the judging of breed conformation.
- (5) *In addition to the penalty imposed in subsection (3) of this section, the court shall order a person convicted of violating this section to:*
 - (a) Relinquish custody of all animals under the person’s control. If the person convicted of violating this section is not the owner of the animal that was the subject of the violation, then the animal shall be returned to the owner of the animal. An animal returned to an owner under this section shall not be spayed or neutered prior to being returned;
 - (b) Not harbor, own, possess, or exercise control over any animal, reside in any household where animals are present, or work or volunteer in a place where the person has unsupervised access to animals for a minimum of five (5) years after completion of the imposed sentence;

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- (c) *Attend an appropriate treatment program or obtain psychiatric or psychological counseling, at the person's expense; and*
- (d) Reimburse the agency caring for the animal for reasonable costs incurred for the care and treatment of the animal from the date of impoundment until the disposition of the criminal proceeding.

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17. HOT CARS

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18. CIVIL NUISANCE ABATEMENT

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19. AG-GAG LAWS

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20. BREED SPECIFIC LEGISLATION
