

Guidance on reporting animal abuse when in Greece

Under the Greek law (Article 16, Law 4039/2012 & Article 1, Law 1197/1981) defines **ANY** of the following acts to be forms of animal abuse:

Active animal abuse:

- Poisoning;
- Hanging;
- Drowning;
- Crushing;
- Mutilation:
 - Cutting or cropping an animal's ears and/or;
 - Docking the animal's tail;
- Abandonment;
- Neglect;
- Illegal trading
- Sexual abuse

Passive animal abuse:

- Animals that are subject to constant or prolonged exposure to adverse or extreme weather conditions (heat, cold, rain, etc.)
- Animals that have no access to an appropriate dry and comfortable shelter, kept on balconies, roof terraces, yards, fields, etc.;
- Animals that are constantly chained;
- Animals that do not have access to appropriate food and/or water;
- Animals that are not vaccinated and/or de-wormed on a regular basis;
- Animals that lack veterinary care;
- Animals that do not have access to daily exercise and daily walks.

IT IS VITAL THAT YOU FOLLOW THE STEPS BELOW SO THAT GAWF, AAH, CAN WORK WITH YOU TO RESOLVE INCIDENTS OF ANIMAL ABUSE THAT YOU HAVE WITNESSED.

YOU - as the eyewitness to the abuse – **MUST FIRST PRESS CHARGES WITH THE LOCAL POLICE (Telephone Number 100).** The Police are the **ONLY AUTHORITY** who have the power to investigate and act on animal abuse cases. **NO ANIMAL WELFARE ORGANISATION CAN LEGALLY INTERFERE WITHOUT A POLICE REPORT AND A REQUEST FROM THE POLICE TO ASSIST.**

If you are an eyewitness to any abuse, please follow these steps to ensure that a prosecution ensues:

Step 1 - Immediately call the Police (Phone Number 100):

- The Police will attend and record the incident. The Police officers who attend once you have made your report cannot press any charges. They will record the incident and take a statement from you. If you are willing to press charges, they will also arrest the perpetrator. **In cases of active abuse, having more witnesses to confirm the abuse will strengthen the prosecution case.**
- **Take pictures and use a date stamp** as this will help to clarify the period over which the abuse has taken place. Try and show:
 - The animal/s condition;
 - The location
 - The environment the animal is being kept in;
 - The daily living conditions:
 - Access to shelter;
 - Access to food and water;
 - Any chains or tethers etc.
 - Any act/s of cruelty or abuse

NB: TAKING PICTURES OF THE INTERIOR OF A HOUSE, THE RESIDENTS OF THE PREMISES OR ANYTHING THAT MIGHT REVEAL THE SPECIFIC ADDRESS IS PROHIBITED.

Step 2 – Visit the Police Station – either the local one or any other Police Station

- **YOU MUST GO TO THE NEAREST POLICE STATION OR ANY OTHER POLICE STATION** (either option is totally legal) **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (WITHIN 48 HOURS OF WITNESSING THE ABUSE)** in order to press charges.
- This enables the police to arrest the suspect within the 48 hours. After this deadline, the suspect cannot be arrested until after a trial has been completed.
- Make a report, clearly stating the whole situation so that a case file on active/passive animal abuse can be opened and a prosecution started.
- **YOU MUST** obtain a **PROTOCOL NUMBER** from the police for the reported incident.

NB WITHOUT A PROTOCOL NUMBER YOU HAVE NOT OFFICIALLY REPORTED THE INCIDENT AND YOU CANNOT FOLLOW IT UP.

Step 3 – If the animal's health is in imminent danger

- **Formally request that the** Police report the incident to the relevant Veterinary Department/Ministry Vet. **PLEASE NOTE: THE RELEVANT VETERINARY DEPARTMENT/MINISTRY VET CANNOT RESPOND WITHOUT A POLICE REPORT AND REQUEST FOR HELP.**