

1           AN ACT relating to animal welfare.

2    *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

3           ➔SECTION 1. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 17 IS CREATED TO  
4 READ AS FOLLOWS:

5    (1) As used in this section:

6           (a) "Animal abuse offender registry" means the registry for animal abuse  
7           offenders established under subsection (2) of this section;

8           (b) "Animal abuse offense" means a violation of KRS 525.125, 525.130,  
9           525.135, 525.137, 525.200, or 525.205;

10           (c) "Department" means the Department of Kentucky State Police;

11           (d) "Offender" means any person who has been convicted of, pled guilty to, or  
12           entered an Alford plea to an animal abuse offense; and

13           (e) "Offender information" means an offender's name, age, county of  
14           residence, current photograph, a description of the crime or crimes  
15           committed, and other identifying information determined necessary by the  
16           department.

17           (2) The department shall develop and operate an animal abuse offender registry by  
18           January 1, 2027.

19           (3) (a) After the department has developed the animal abuse offender registry and  
20           it is operational, an offender, upon his or her release by a court or the,  
21           Parole Board, Department of Corrections, Department of Juvenile Justice,  
22           or any detention facility shall be required to register with the department for  
23           two (2) years for a first animal abuse offense, and five (5) years for each  
24           subsequent animal abuse offense. The person in charge of the release shall  
25           facilitate the registration process.

26           (b) All required registration periods for animal abuse offenses shall run  
27           consecutively. At the conclusion of an offender's registration period, the

1                   department shall remove the corresponding offender information from the  
2                   animal abuse offender registry.

3                   (4) Any person required to register under subsection (3)(a) of this section shall be  
4                   informed of the duty to register:

5                   (a) By the court at the time of sentencing if the court grants probation or  
6                   conditional discharge or does not impose a penalty of incarceration; or

7                   (b) If incarcerated, by the official in charge of the place of incarceration upon  
8                   release.

9                   (5) (a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this subsection, any person required  
10                   to register under subsection (3)(a) of this section shall be required to pay a  
11                   fee of one hundred dollars (\$100) to the department at the time of  
12                   registration, and an additional one hundred dollars (\$100) annually for  
13                   each year the person is required to be registered. The fee shall be deposited  
14                   by the department into the animal abuse offender registry fund established  
15                   in subsection (11) of this section.

16                   (b) The department shall waive a registration fee if the registrant is found by a  
17                   court of competent jurisdiction to be an indigent person as defined in KRS  
18                   31.100.

19                   (c) A registrant shall not be prevented from registering because of failure to  
20                   pay the registration fee.

21                   (6) (a) Once the department has developed the animal abuse offender registry, the  
22                   department shall establish a website available to the public. The website  
23                   shall display offender information and shall be updated at least once every  
24                   thirty (30) days.

25                   (b) Upon receiving notice from a court that an offender is required to register,  
26                   the department shall post the offender information provided by the court on  
27                   the website, and shall provide the offender information to each county

1 sheriff.

2        (7) The department shall promulgate administrative regulations to establish and  
3        operate the animal abuse offender registry, including but not limited to policies  
4        and procedures:

5 (a) **For compiling, publishing, and maintaining offender information;**

**(b) Detailing how an individual may be removed from the registry; and**

7 (c) *To ensure compliance with all other state and federal laws.*

8 (8) Any department employee who disseminates or does not disseminate offender  
9 information in good-faith compliance with this section shall be immune from  
10 criminal and civil liability for the dissemination or lack thereof.

11        **(9) Any person required to register under this section who knowingly violates any**  
12        ***provision of this section is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.***

13 (10) Any person required to register under this section who knowingly provides false,  
14 misleading, or incomplete information in relation to the registry is guilty of a  
15 Class A misdemeanor.

16     (11) (a) The animal abuse offender registry fund is created as a restricted fund that  
17        shall consist of moneys deposited pursuant to this section and shall be used  
18        for the purposes set forth in paragraph (c) of this subsection. The  
19        department shall administer the fund.

24                   (c) All moneys in the fund shall be used by the department to develop and  
25                   operate the animal abuse offender registry in accordance with this section.

26 ➔ SECTION 2. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 620 IS CREATED TO  
27 READ AS FOLLOWS:

1    Any person employed by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services who reasonably  
2    believes that an animal the employee observed while performing job-related duties is  
3    being abused or neglected in violation of KRS 525.125, 525.130, 525.135, 525.137,  
4    525.200, or 525.205 shall make an oral or written report to law enforcement.

5        ➔Section 3. KRS 321.188 is amended to read as follows:

6    If a veterinarian finds that an animal with which the veterinarian has a VCPR has been  
7    abused in violation of KRS 525.125, 525.130, 525.135,[or] 525.137, 525.200, or  
8    525.205, the veterinarian shall[may] make a report to:  
9        (1) The Office of the State Veterinarian for any animal for which an on-farm livestock  
10       or poultry care standard has been promulgated under KRS 257.196; or  
11       (2) Law enforcement for any other animal.