



HOW TO HANDLE ISSUES OF ANIMAL ABUSE

Animal abuse is a very important matter that should not be taken lightly. It is a community-wide issue—even if it is only affecting the animals you look after at this time, if not dealt with, all of the animals *and people* in the community are at risk.

Although Community Cats Maryland cannot solve this problem for you, you can take steps to bring about change. We **strongly suggest** that you take the following steps in order to bring this matter to the attention of your City and get you and your community help to address this issue.

1. **REPORT THE ABUSE TO THE POLICE:** Call 911 *immediately* if you are witnessing abuse in progress, and request that a police officer come out to your home to take a report about BOTH animal abuse and/or any damage done to your property, or any injury to you. If you see an animal after abuse has occurred and did not witness the abuse, call the police precinct responsible for your neighborhood and request that a police officer come out to your home to take a report.
2. **REPORT THE ABUSE TO ANIMAL CONTROL:** For ALL cases of animal abuse, in addition to reporting it to the police, call 311 (or call Animal Control directly at 410-396-4698) to report the abuse. Ask for an Animal Control Officer to come to your home so that you can make your report.
3. **GET MEDICAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE INJURED ANIMAL:** If the abused animal is injured and still alive, get it to a veterinarian immediately. If you do not have the means to get the animal medical care, call 311 (or Animal Control directly at 410-396-4698) and request that an AC Officer come get the animal so it can get medical attention. Do this immediately. If you cannot catch and restrain the animal yourself, keep track of the animal and observe where it goes.
4. **DOCUMENT THE ABUSE:** Write down everything that happened—what you saw, what you heard, etc. If the animal was killed, make sure the AC Officer and police see the body. Photograph the body if possible. If the animal was only injured, take pictures of the injuries. Keep the photographs you take for use by the authorities to prosecute the abuser. Take photographs of damage to property as well.

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5. **FOLLOW UP FOR YOUR COMMUNITY:** Call your City Council representative and report the animal abuse, as well as any damage done to your property or harm to you. (If you do not know who your Council representative is, call the Board of Elections at 410-396-5550 and ask.) Let your representative know how the police and Animal Control responded to your call. Additionally:
 - Ask your City Council representative to call a community-wide meeting, inviting both the police and Animal Control to address animal abuse and cruelty.
 - Tell your City Council representative to report this animal abuse to the Mayor's Anti-Abuse Task Force.
6. **FOLLOW UP FOR YOUR CITY:** Make a report of the abuse to Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake's Anti-Animal Abuse Task Force. You can contact the Task Force by calling Zoe Michal at (410) 396-4804, or by e-mail at zoe.michal@baltimorecity.gov. You can also call the Mayor's office directly (410-396-3835) to lodge a complaint about abuse or inadequate police/animal control response.
7. **GET INVOLVED:** If you have the time and the means, please attend any meetings open to the public that deal with the issue of animal abuse in Baltimore City communities. Ask your City Council representative to notify you when there is such a meeting.
8. **TALK TO YOUR NEIGHBORS:** Ask them to join in your efforts to stop the animal abuse in your community. There is strength in numbers and together you can get the City to help your community with this problem.

These steps and calls can take time. However, it is more than worth your efforts and time. The only way to protect yourself, your community, and the animals in your community is to request the help of your local police, Animal Control, and City Council representatives. Baltimore City wants to hear from you on this matter. In addition, your efforts will help to protect not only yourself, but your entire community.

**Thank you for taking action to stop animal abuse.
It is only through your efforts that this will change.**