

## Partnerships With The Humane Society Of Missouri

With so many priorities in municipalities, animal issues may fall low on the list. The Humane Society of Missouri can be a partner to assist in cases involving animal abuse and neglect in your jurisdiction.

### Who We Are

The Humane Society of Missouri (HSMO) was formed in 1870 to protect children and animals from the harsh treatments of the times. Over time, various government agencies began offering protection for children, so HSMO narrowed its focus to the humane treatment of animals. As one of the oldest and largest animal welfare organizations in the U.S., HSMO is an independent, non-profit organization that receives no funding from taxpayers or national animal welfare organizations.

HSMO offers a safe haven for companion animals of all types, caring for them in three, state-of-the-art facilities, the headquarters on Macklind Ave., in St. Louis City (cats, dogs and small animals); the Best Buddy Center in west St. Louis County (cats, dogs and small animals); and the Longmeadow Rescue Ranch, near Union, Missouri, (horses, goats, sheep, fowl and other farm animals). Rescued animals receive expert veterinary and shelter care, as well as enrichment to make them viable for adoption. HSMO responds to reports of abuse or neglect in all 114 Missouri counties.

In the 1960s, HSMO formed an investigative arm of the organization, originally called Rescues and Investigations (R&I). In the early part of this century, R&I was renamed the



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Animal Cruelty Task Force (ACT).

While ACT does not offer animal control services, we provide solutions to issues involving animals in situations such as hoarding, substandard puppy mills, abuse and neglect, as well as with enforcing animal trespass laws.

ACT also offers animal rescue, temporary sheltering and reunification services in times of local, state and national disaster. In fact, the Humane Society of Missouri serves as the primary animal welfare agency working with the State Emergency Management Agency when animals are involved in disasters. ACT members are

specialized in numerous areas of animal rescue. We have deployed to areas that have had hurricanes, tornadoes, floods and other natural and manmade disasters.

ACT employs five animal cruelty investigators based in the St. Louis Metro area; five animal cruelty investigators based strategically throughout the state; a lead dispatcher; a lead coordinator; and a department director. Department personnel are trained in animal-specific investigative techniques; evidence collection; animal handling and body condition scoring; large animal rescue operations; swift water rescue; low-angle rope rescue; and a myriad of other specialized training. ACT operates a fleet of trucks; vans; various enclosed, climate-controlled, animal transport trailers; horse trailers; boats; swift water and rope gear; as well as other high- and low-tech animal-handling equipment.

In addition, ACT offers educational opportunities to government entities at no charge. These courses cover animal handling training, how the law relates to animals, animal health considerations, and many more topics. Individual

courses can be tailored for your municipality's needs and can be held at your facilities or ours. Most of these courses are approved for Missouri Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) credits for law enforcement continuing education or Missouri Animal Control Association certifications. 🍃

**Debbie Hill** is the vice president of operations for the Humane Society of Missouri.



**ACT supports law enforcement in cases where animal abuse or neglect is suspected, by:**

- Conducting investigations;
- Educating owners;
- Taking animals into custody on voluntary surrenders;
- Assisting law enforcement with the process of 578.018 RSMo animal search and seizure warrants;
- Rescuing and holding animals prior to disposition;
- Collection of animal-related evidence;
- Detailed on-scene and animal condition reports;
- Forensic analysis/necropsies in animal-related crimes;
- Expert veterinary and investigator court testimony.

**Contact The Animal Cruelty Task Force**

If you suspect animal abuse or would like to learn more, contact the Animal Cruelty Task Force at (314) 647-4400 or (800) 383-9835 or visit [www.hsmo.org/animalcrueltytaskforce](http://www.hsmo.org/animalcrueltytaskforce). We look forward to enhancing your services and partnering to protect animals in Missouri. Together, we can give a voice to those that have none.

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