**Legal Analysis and Preventive Strategies of Animal Cruelty**

**Prevention/ Intervention Strategies**

Current and historical prevention efforts have been instituted to ensure that animal cruelty is kept at bay. The intervention programs function by providing viable options to address the gap and provide early intervention. This is aimed at reducing cruelty to animals and humans, and reducing the rate of recidivism. The first step in preventing animal abuse is to recognize that it is a mistake. Once the required level of awareness has been achieved, the society will become cognizant of the crime they are performing (Gullone, 2014). The measures outlined seek to ensure that animal cruelty comes to an end. First, there are standardized data-reporting protocols to provide actual statistics to show the gravity of the issue, and encourage reporting of cases. Additionally, notable coalitions have been established to ensure they sensitize the society on the appropriate measures to put in place to control animal abuse.

In the United States, there are standardized data-reporting protocols that have been established to obtain reliable estimates of the prevalence of animal cruelty at the national, state and local levels. Availability of data makes it easy for target prevention, education and rescue efforts. Education plays a pivotal role in enlightening the society to advocate for higher standards of animal welfare. All individuals are admonished to bear responsibility for the animals. In case one comes across animals that have suffered abandonment, they ought to be fostered. The foster homes should serve the temporary role of ensuring the animals recover, as they await to get new homes (Nurse, 2016). Increasing awareness to the public has been achieved through supporting international campaigns and running of customized animal welfare education courses. Offering training across disciplines and the development of cross-reporting mechanisms empowers the animal welfare workers to know the strategy to employ in the right context.

Another efficient strategy is the coalitions among organizations that are focused on violence prevention. The coalitions have been proven to harness the expertise, leverage, resources that can access diverse groups of stakeholders to catalyze changes in the society. The coalitions involve animal welfare organizations, police, animal control officers, veterinarians and social service workers (Lockwood & Arkow, 2016). The coalitions also develop active lines of communication among agencies with increased probability of interacting with the perpetrators of animal cruelty. Consequently, effective coalitions prevent redundant efforts, permit sharing of resources, extend service areas and address larger concerns that may arise from animal cruelty. Through the intervention of the teams, they develop the requisite cross-training and reporting mechanisms. This permits them to better protect the victims of animal cruelty and address the underlying causes of animal cruelty.

Veterinarians have been trained to recognize and report non-accidental injuries. Considering majority of the animal cruelty offenders hardly seek for treatment for the animals, the vets are in a better place to tell whether there has been a history of animal cruelty. The veterinarians look into the animal dynamics which highlight that the injury was not accidental (Gullone, 2014). The major symptoms include missing or inconsistent explanations, implying that the owner had a hand in causing the injury. Furthermore, unusual animal behavior provides extra information, especially when the animals are subdued or openly frightened when in the owner’s presence. Despite the fact that none of the warning signs are diagnostic on their own, veterinarians ought to become suspicious when they occur in combination.

**Legal Analysis**

Animal protection laws have been enacted and enforced at the individual levels of government. Primarily, animal protection legislation occurs at the state level (Nurse, 2016). The Animal Welfare Act was signed into law in 1966, and serves as the primary federal animal protection law. It focused on animals kept in zoos and those used for experimental purposes, seeking to protect their cause. The AWA outlines the minimum standards which must be adhered to when dealing with the animals during handling, treatment and transportation. As in Anderson v. Moore, the appellant ignored advice to provide reasonable quantities of food for the sheep. This was dismissed due to the claims of adhering to veterinary advice. The “28 Hour Law” enacted in 1873 demands vehicles transporting animals for slaughter to stop for every 28 hours to permit the animals to exercise, and have food and water. Despite having numerous exceptions, the law safeguards animal welfare. In Amos v. State, the appellant was found guilty of the offense of cruelty to a non-livestock animal after beating it to death with a broom.

Currently, animal cruelty has become a federal crime following the unanimous passing of the Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture Act (PACT). It focuses on the most egregious forms of animal cruelty such as drowning, suffocation, burning, sexual exploitation and impaling. PACT is a significant step forward for animals, in spite of the several exemptions like ‘customary and normal’ agricultural and veterinary practices. In City of Cleveland v. Turner, the defendant was convicted of bestiality, with evidence drawn from the explicit letters written to the boyfriend outlining acts of bestiality (Wise, 2014). Some of the laws find it difficult to strike a balance between animal welfare and that of human beings. In Corn v. Daly, the Chihuahua bit his daughter, raising multiple arguments. In this setting, Daly challenged the animal cruelty law as being vague due to its inconsiderate nature. Accordingly, prosecution under modern anti-cruelty laws demands determination if the victim is covered by the laws. The generalization of terms has proven to lead to arguments, particularly those with cruelty and torture. The legal framework aims at curbing animal cruelty by all means, thus enacting the anti-cruelty laws.

References

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