

[RCWs](#) > [Title 16](#) > [Chapter 16.52](#) > [Section 16.52.205](#)[16.52.200](#) << [16.52.205](#) >> [16.52.207](#)**RCW 16.52.205****Animal cruelty in the first degree.**

(1) A person is guilty of animal cruelty in the first degree when, except as authorized in law, he or she intentionally (a) inflicts substantial pain on, (b) causes physical injury to, or (c) kills an animal by a means causing undue suffering or while manifesting an extreme indifference to life, or forces a minor to inflict unnecessary pain, injury, or death on an animal.

(2) A person is guilty of animal cruelty in the first degree when, except as authorized by law, he or she, with criminal negligence, starves, dehydrates, or suffocates an animal and as a result causes: (a) Substantial and unjustifiable physical pain that extends for a period sufficient to cause considerable suffering; or (b) death.

(3) A person is guilty of animal cruelty in the first degree when he or she:

(a) Knowingly engages in any sexual conduct or sexual contact with an animal;

(b) Knowingly causes, aids, or abets another person to engage in any sexual conduct or sexual contact with an animal;

(c) Knowingly permits any sexual conduct or sexual contact with an animal to be conducted on any premises under his or her charge or control;

(d) Knowingly engages in, organizes, promotes, conducts, advertises, aids, abets, participates in as an observer, or performs any service in the furtherance of an act involving any sexual conduct or sexual contact with an animal for a commercial or recreational purpose; or

(e) Knowingly photographs or films, for purposes of sexual gratification, a person engaged in a sexual act or sexual contact with an animal.

(4) Animal cruelty in the first degree is a class C felony.

(5) In addition to the penalty imposed in subsection (4) of this section, the court may order that the convicted person do any of the following:

(a) Not harbor or own animals or reside in any household where animals are present;

(b) Participate in appropriate counseling at the defendant's expense;

(c) Reimburse the animal shelter or humane society for any reasonable costs incurred for the care and maintenance of any animals taken to the animal shelter or humane society as a result of conduct proscribed in subsection (3) of this section.

(6) Nothing in this section may be considered to prohibit accepted animal husbandry practices or accepted veterinary medical practices by a licensed veterinarian or certified veterinary technician.

(7) If the court has reasonable grounds to believe that a violation of this section has occurred, the court may order the seizure of all animals involved in the alleged violation as a condition of bond of a person charged with a violation.

(8) For purposes of this section:

(a) "Animal" means every creature, either alive or dead, other than a human being.

(b) "Sexual conduct" means any touching or fondling by a person, either directly or through clothing, of the sex organs or anus of an animal or any transfer or transmission of semen by the person upon any part of the animal, for the purpose of sexual gratification or arousal of the person.

(c) "Sexual contact" means any contact, however slight, between the mouth, sex organ, or anus of a person and the sex organ or anus of an animal, or any intrusion, however slight, of any part of the body of the person into the sex organ or anus of an animal, or any intrusion of the sex organ or anus of the person into the mouth of the animal, for the purpose of sexual gratification or arousal of the person.

(d) "Photographs" or "films" means the making of a photograph, motion picture film, videotape, digital image, or any other recording, sale, or transmission of the image.

[2015 c 235 § 6; 2006 c 191 § 1; 2005 c 481 § 1; 1994 c 261 § 8.]

NOTES:

Finding—Intent—1994 c 261: See note following RCW **16.52.011**.

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