

# **The Future of Animal Cruelty Investigations in Ontario Survey Information**

## **PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR**

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## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this study is to understand public perceptions about animal cruelty investigations/humane law enforcement and its future in Ontario. The survey is open to residents of Ontario who are 18 years of age or older. It will be online until Thursday, January 31, 2019.

## **WHAT'S INVOLVED**

You are asked to complete a short online survey once which should take about 10 minutes.

## **POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS**

Possible benefits of participation include greater awareness of the public's views of animal cruelty enforcement work and its future. There are no known or anticipated risks associated with participation in this study.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The survey is anonymous. Only general demographic characteristics are being collected. The data will be securely stored on the computer of the principal investigator and accessible only to members of the research team. The aggregated data may be shared with researchers studying animal cruelty investigations. The raw data will be deleted in 1-2 years.

## **VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION**

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose to stop completing the survey, your previously entered responses will be retained as part of the data pool.

## **PUBLICATION OF RESULTS**

Results of this study may be published in academic publications and presented at conferences, as well as in a public report, and may appear in the media. See the principal investigator's web site ([www.humanejobs.org](http://www.humanejobs.org)) for updates.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION AND ETHICS CLEARANCE**

If you have any questions about this study or require further information, you may contact Dr. Coulter using the contact information provided above. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University [file 18-116]. If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 Ext. 3035, reb@brocku.ca.

**1. By clicking yes, I confirm that I wish to participate in the research, am at least 18 years of age, and live in Ontario.**

- YES, confirmed.
- NO, declined.

**2. What is your gender?**

- Woman
- Man
- Other

**3. What is your age?**

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

**4. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?**

- Elementary school
- Secondary school
- College, trades, or equivalent
- University

**5. Although these categories are imperfect, please select the ethno-racial identity with which you most identify.**

- Aboriginal
- Asian
- Black
- Middle Eastern
- South Asian
- White
- Latin American / Hispanic

**6. If you would like to expand on your ethno-racial identity, please add your comments here.**

**7. Where do you live, primarily?**

- A town
- A city
- A rural area

**8. In what region of Ontario do you live, primarily?**

- North
- Southwest
- Golden Horseshoe (Hamilton-Niagara)
- Greater Toronto Area
- Toronto
- East

**9. Virtually all laws are enforced by publicly-funded law enforcement bodies and agencies. However, in Ontario, provincial law assigns the primary responsibility for investigating suspected animal cruelty to the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA) and its affiliate humane societies. The OSPCA and humane societies are charities reliant on donations. The OSPCA receives a small amount of public/government funding specifically for cruelty investigations. As a charity and private organization, the OSPCA is not subject to the same levels of oversight and accountability as public agencies or police forces. Were you aware of this?**

- Yes
- No
- Somewhat / some of it

**10. Currently, about 70 officers are responsible for animal cruelty investigations and for responding to at least 15,000 calls about suspected animal cruelty per year. Given the number of complaints and size of the province, do you think 70 officers focused on animal cruelty investigations is enough for Ontario?**

- Yes
- No

**11. The OSPCA continues to be responsible for animal cruelty investigations but is subject to greater oversight.**

- Strong support
- Support
- Do not support
- Unsure

**12. The OSPCA continues to be responsible for animal cruelty investigations but is subject to greater oversight and receives an increase in government funding (that is, more public money/tax dollars).**

- Strong support
- Support
- Do not support
- Unsure

**13. The officers and enforcement branch of the OSPCA are moved out of the OSPCA and into the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) to form a provincial unit focused on crimes against animals.**

- Strong support
- Support
- Do not support
- Unsure

**14. The OPP plays a larger role in enforcing animal cruelty laws.**

- Strong support
- Support
- Do not support
- Unsure

**15. Local police play a larger role in enforcing animal cruelty laws.**

- Strong support
- Support
- Do not support
- Unsure

**16. Specialized animal crimes units are created within local police forces.**

- Strong support
- Support
- Do not support
- Unsure

**17. Local animal services/animal control offices are given greater enforcement powers for suspected animal cruelty.**

- Strong support
- Support
- Do not support
- Unsure

**18. Partnerships are formed between the OSPCA/humane societies and police for animal cruelty investigations and prevention. (For example, the police would be responsible for front-line law enforcement, and the OSPCA could provide animal care and shelter, training, and/or other support.)**

- Strong support
- Support
- Do not support
- Unsure

**19. A new provincial agency (not part of the police) is created to investigate and enforce animal cruelty laws.**

- Strong support
- Support
- Do not support
- Unsure

**20. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs is granted legal authority to investigate suspected animal cruelty on farms.**

- Strong support
- Support
- Do not support
- Unsure

**21. The Ministry of Natural Resources is granted legal authority to investigate suspected animal cruelty when it involves wild animals.**

- Strong support
- Support
- Do not support
- Unsure

**22. The Ministry of Natural Resources is granted legal authority to investigate suspected animal cruelty when it involves animals on display in zoos or entertainment venues.**

- Strong support
- Support
- Do not support
- Unsure

**23. Community-based animal rescues, shelters, and sanctuaries are inspected and accredited in order to be able to care for animals seized during investigations.**

- Strong support
- Support
- Do not support
- Unsure

**24. Overall, do you think the enforcement of animal welfare laws in Ontario should be a public responsibility or assigned to a private organization/charity?**

- Public responsibility
- Private organization/charity

**25. How important is it to make it easy for the public to report suspected animal cruelty? (For example: through a dedicated central phone number and/or web site.)**

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not important

**26. When crimes are committed against animals, their bodies become evidence. Would you support public/governmental funding for a small team of veterinarians with expertise in veterinary forensics (that is, veterinary work focused on crimes against animals)?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

**27. Would you support stronger animal cruelty/welfare laws?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

**28. Do you think the legal system (such as Crown Attorneys and judges) should be taking crimes against animals more seriously?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

**29. Do you think that more attention should be paid to cruelty prevention and the promotion of animal welfare? For example, this could be through humane education and/or the regular inspection of businesses where animals are kept.**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

**30. Some animal cruelty investigations officers work with social service providers, particularly when they discover that animal cruelty is not taking place (or not taking place deliberately) but rather find that someone needs support or assistance with health, mental health, employment, or financial issues. Would you support greater or more formal collaboration between animal cruelty investigations and social services/non-profit groups to help people in need?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

**31. Animals are sentient beings who deserve to live without pain and suffering. Is this an important reason to strengthen Ontario's approach to animal cruelty investigations?**

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

**32. A significant amount of research has found that animal cruelty can occur alongside the abuse of children, women, and/or other people. This is called the human-animal violence link. Is this an important reason to strengthen Ontario's approach to animal cruelty investigations?**

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

**33. Animal cruelty — particularly larger manifestations of harm like dog and cock fighting — can occur alongside other crimes (for example: narcotics, firearms, human trafficking). Is this an important reason to strengthen Ontario's approach to animal cruelty investigations?**

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

**34. The entire province should have coverage for animal cruelty investigations. Is this an important reason to strengthen Ontario's approach to animal cruelty investigations?**

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

**35. Humane law enforcement officers should be available to respond to suspected animal cruelty complaints 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Is this an important reason to strengthen Ontario's approach to animal cruelty investigations?**

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

**36. If you have any comments on the future of animal cruelty investigations, enforcement, and prevention in Ontario you may include them here.**

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