

717B.2 Animal abuse — penalties.

1. A person commits animal abuse when the person intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly acts to inflict injury, serious injury, or death on an animal by force, violence, or poisoning.

2. [This section](#) shall not apply to any of the following:

a. An owner of the animal, or a person acting with the consent of the owner, who euthanizes an animal in a reasonable manner, if at the time of the euthanasia, the animal is in a state of permanent pain or suffering.

b. A person acting to carry out an order issued by a court.

c. A veterinarian practicing veterinary medicine as provided in [chapter 169](#).

d. A person acting in order to carry out another provision of law which allows the conduct.

e. A person taking, hunting, trapping, or fishing for a wild animal as provided in [chapter 481A](#).

f. A person acting to protect the person's property from a wild animal as defined in [section 481A.1](#).

g. A person acting to protect a person from injury or death caused by a wild animal as defined in [section 481A.1](#).

h. A person reasonably acting to protect the person's property from damage caused by an unconfined animal.

i. A person reasonably acting to protect a person from injury or death caused by an unconfined animal.

j. A local authority reasonably acting to destroy an animal, if at the time of the destruction, the owner of the animal is absent or unable to care for the animal, and the animal is permanently distressed by disease or injury to a degree that would result in severe and prolonged suffering.

k. A research facility, as defined in [section 162.2](#), if the research facility has been issued or renewed a valid authorization by the department pursuant to [chapter 162](#), and performs functions within the scope of accepted practices and disciplines associated with the research facility.

l. An act required to be carried out by a commercial establishment to care for an animal in its possession or under its control as described in [section 162.10A, subsection 1](#), provided that the commercial establishment complies with applicable standard of care requirements pursuant to [subsections 1 and 2](#) of that section.

3. A person who commits animal abuse that causes injury, other than serious injury or death, to an animal is guilty of a serious misdemeanor.

4. A person who commits animal abuse that causes serious injury or death to an animal is guilty of an aggravated misdemeanor.

5. Notwithstanding [subsection 4](#), a person who commits animal abuse that causes serious injury or death to an animal is guilty of a class "D" felony if the person has previously been convicted of committing animal abuse pursuant to [this section](#), animal neglect punishable as a serious misdemeanor or aggravated misdemeanor pursuant to [section 717B.3](#), animal torture pursuant to [section 717B.3A](#), injury to or interference with a police service dog pursuant to [section 717B.9](#), bestiality pursuant to [section 717C.1](#), or an act involving a contest event prohibited in [section 717D.2](#).

[94 Acts, ch 1103, §13](#); [2008 Acts, ch 1058, §20](#); [2020 Acts, ch 1111, §5](#)

Referred to in [§162.10A, 717B.1, 717B.3, 717B.3A, 717B.3B, 717C.1](#)