

# Animal Hoarding Statistics

Up to a quarter million animals, 250,000 per year, are victims of hoarders. The amount of reported animal hoarding cases has doubled within the last 4 years alone.

72% of hoarders are women and the most common animal victims of hoarders are cats, followed by dogs.

Without appropriate post-intervention mental health treatment, recidivism rates for hoarders is nearly 100%.

## Best Practices

[Simply removing the animals from the residence does not solve the problem](#); the person still has the ability and the compulsive need to find more animals.

In order to help animal hoarders and animal victims, increased collaboration among agencies including animal protection agencies, veterinarians, and social and health services, allows earlier intervention and prevents escalation to more serious outcomes. This may help decrease the financial and welfare costs associated with animal hoarding and increase the chances of having a successful intervention. Veterinarians are taking more of a leadership role in the concept of “One Medicine” in relation to zoonotic diseases, antimicrobial resistance, and food safety. The concept of One Medicine unites medical professionals and bridges the gap between human and animal health.

In a One Medicine model, animal and human services work together with a case management approach. Due to the nature of the mental illness of hoarding, greater success is achieved when the hoarder is allowed perceived control or buy-in of the process. This may look like choosing which animals are surrendered this week; ‘helping’ the shelter by medicating sick animals in the home so they are then well enough to be surrendered to the shelter; bringing them to the shelter or helping to rehome animals themselves; and sometimes, being allowed to keep a select number of animals.

**With a documented history of abject failure under the old model of abruptly removing all animals and doling out punitive measures, the One Medicine model is the current best practice recommendation for municipal agencies. It is more humane for the animal victims, the hoarder, and the most likely option to reduce recidivism.**

## For more information:

[Hoarding of Animals Research Consortium](#) at Tufts University

[Animal Legal Defense Fund](#)

[Hoarding of animals: an under-recognized public health problem in a difficult-to-study population.](#)

[Understanding the human aspects of animal hoarding](#)