

8:00AM-8:05AM

Introduction & Announcements

Melissa Gillespie, Esq.

8:05AM-8:45AM

Sentience: 1 CLE; Skills

PANEL: John Di Leonardo; Elinor Molbegott, Esq. and Melissa Gillespie, Esq

Scientists overwhelmingly agree that animals are sentient, capable of experiencing positive and negative feelings such as pleasure, joy, pain, and distress, however, in the United States, animals are legally considered property. This session will discuss how countries around the world have recognized sentience in legislation and how legislators in the United States may evolve to better recognize animals as persons rather than objects.

8:45AM-9:35AM

Animal Crimes in New York and Related Laws 1 CLE; Skills

SPEAKER: Christiana Stover, Esq.

Discussion of various animal crimes including Domestic violence, Dog fighting, Cock fighting, and abuse

9:35AM-9:45AM

BREAK

9:45AM-10:35AM

HumaneLI: An In-Depth Review of Animals in Entertainment 1 CLE; Skills

PANEL: John Di Leonardo and Christiana Stover, Esq.

With Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus shutting down and returning animal-free in 2024, the use of animals for entertainment has never been more controversial. Humane Long Island's executive director will discuss local and federal laws governing the treatment of animals used for petting zoos, circuses, and "close encounters", including a discussion of recent law enforcement actions right here on Long Island.

10:35 AM-11:30 PM

Discussion of the New Companion Animal Care Standards Act 1 CLE; Skills

Libby Post and Melissa Gillespie, Esq.

On December 15, 2025, the Companion Animal Care Standards Act for Shelters and Rescues will take effect. Passed and signed into law by Governor Hochul in December 2022, the bill will raise the standard of care for homeless companion animals at shelters and rescues across New York State. All shelters and rescues will be licensed as animal shelters and will be inspected by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. The new standards are based on the Association of Shelter Veterinarian 2010 guidelines. These same guidelines are used for the Companion Animal Capital Fund which will also be discussed and has so far invested \$33M in capital improvements at animal welfare organizations throughout the state.

11:30 AM-11:45 AM

LUNCH

11:45AM-12:45 PM

Panel: Annual Update on NYS Animal Law Legislation and How Public Health Laws Impact Animal Legislation 1 CLE; Skills

PANEL: Brian Hackett, Elinor Molbegott, Esq. and Libby Post

A discussion providing an update on New York state pending and recently enacted animal protection bills; and a analysis of the nexus of animal legislation and public health laws. Also, a review of the procedures for getting a bill introduced and passed in the NYS Legislature including a review of the necessary procedures and obstacles which may be encountered along the way.

12:45 PM-1:35 PM

The Lawyer's Unique Role in Advancing Animals' Interests, Protection and Well-Being from the Inside Out (With Gratitude for Rule 2.1) 1 CLE; Ethics

SPEAKER: Jim F. Gesualdi, Esq

Ethically and responsibly advocating for animals as an attorney also as an advisor to those caring for animals with an in-depth review of Rule 2.1

1:35 PM-1:45 PM 0:10

BREAK

1:45 PM-2:40 PM

The Legal Realities of Animal Hoarding 1 CLE; Skills

SPEAKER: Brooke Salvatore, Esq.

Overview of animal hoarding criminal cases including the unique and complex issues associated with these cases including large-scale tactical responses, determination of custody status of the animals, underlying mental health issues of the defendants, and potential dispositions and sentences that defendants may receive in these cases.

SPEAKERS:

Christiana Stover, Esq.

John Di Leonardo, Executive Director, Humane Long Island

Brian Hackett, Director of Government and Community Relations, Associated Humane Societies

Elinor Molbegott, Esq. Law Offices of Elinor Molbegott

Brooke Salvatore, Esq. ADA Suffolk County District Attorney's Office

Jim F. Gesualdi, Esq. Law Offices of Jim Gesualdi

Melissa Gillespie, Esq. Law Offices of Melissa Gillespie

Libby Post, Executive Director, NYS Animal Protection Federation

Pioneers for Animal Welfare Society, Inc

A not-for-profit organization helping animals; pets and their guardians since 1977. For further information, visit: www.paws-li.org.