



STEPHEN A. ZAPPALA, JR.  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

## COUNTY OF ALLEGHENY

### OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

303 COURTHOUSE  
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA 15219-2489  
PHONE (412) 350-4401 | FAX (412) 350-4414

April 12, 2023

Val Martin

Request filed via: [www.MuckRock.com](http://www.MuckRock.com)

Response filed at: [www.MuckRock.com/respond/1470191](http://www.MuckRock.com/respond/1470191)

In re: Open Records Request dated April 4, 2023

Dear Mr. Martin,

I am the Open Records Officer for the District Attorney of Allegheny County. On April 4, 2023, I received your April 4, 2023, request asking for:

“Any information regarding the event posted on Facebook Page – Veterinarian Forensics Training Webinar for Law Enforcement. The Webinar was open to the public and was presented on December 7th, 2020 at 1PM EST and was sponsored by the Allegheny County District Attorneys Office.”

First, for clarity, I would note that I am responding to your request today (April 12, 2023) because today is the fifth business day since you filed your request on April 4, 2023, as our office was closed on April 7, 2023.

Secondly as to your request, upon receiving your request, I contacted the individuals within my office who I believed might have knowledge about the involvement of the District Attorney's Office in the December 7, 2020, training that you referenced in your request. I was advised that no members of the District Attorney's Office presented any materials or instruction at that December 7, 2020, training but that the Allegheny County District Attorney's Office provided the District Attorney Office's "seal" for the promotional flyer for this event. I have included that flyer from the event in response to your request and I have also included an email that approved the use of our seal for that event.

Moving forward, if you have any questions or if you feel that this response was in error for some reason, then please feel free to contact us.



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Also, please be advised that if you consider this response to be a denial of your request, then pursuant to Section 1101 of the Right to Know Law you have 15 days to appeal my decision to the Office of Open Records, 333 Market Street, 16th Floor Harrisburg, PA 17101-2234.

Sincerely,

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Keaton Carr  
Assistant District Attorney  
Open Records Officer  
412-350-4534



## Veterinary Forensics Training for Law Enforcement

Hosted by Allegheny County District Attorney's Office, Animal Friends and the Humane Society of the United States

This FREE training is open to Law Enforcement, Animal Control, Humane Investigators, Code Enforcement Officers, Veterinarians, Judges and Prosecutors

Topics to be covered:

- Crime scene analysis and documentation
- Evidence recognition - animal vs. human cases
- Key steps for the investigator
- Crime scene considerations for different types of cruelty
- Application of forensics

➤ Approved for two hours of RACE CE credits for veterinarians and veterinary technicians

Date: Monday – December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Hours: 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Registration: [https://humanesociety.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_90vZx04dSee-3j2CvfunvQ](https://humanesociety.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_90vZx04dSee-3j2CvfunvQ)



## Carr, Keaton

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**From:** Borrelli, Lisa  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2023 11:46 AM  
**To:** Open Records Requests  
**Cc:** Spangler, Rebecca; Newman, Rachel; Delaney, Laurie; Gettings, Lynn  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] Re: Pittsburgh LE trainings. (Animal Cruelty)

Here is the email I found relating to the open records request.

*Lisa A. Borrelli*

Lisa A. Borrelli, Esq.  
Assistant District Attorney  
Office of the Allegheny County District Attorney  
1444 Hillsdale Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15216  
412-350-5166 (Office)  
412-388-5343 (Fax)

**From:** Borrelli, Lisa <lborrelli@alleghenycountyda.us>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 19, 2020 9:46 AM  
**To:** Spangler, Rebecca <RSpangler@alleghenycountyda.us>  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Pittsburgh LE trainings. (Animal Cruelty)

Thank you.

Lisa A. Borrelli, Esq.  
Assistant District Attorney  
Allegheny County Office of the District Attorney  
phone: 412-350-5166  
fax: 412-392-0369

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**From:** Spangler, Rebecca <RSpangler@alleghenycountyda.us>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 19, 2020 9:45:09 AM  
**To:** Borrelli, Lisa <lborrelli@alleghenycountyda.us>  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL] Re: Pittsburgh LE trainings. (Animal Cruelty)

Yes, this is appropriate.

Rebecca D. Spangler  
First Assistant District Attorney  
Office of the District Attorney of Allegheny County  
303 Allegheny County Courthouse  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
Telephone: 412-350-1974  
Fax: 412-350-3311

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recipient(s), please note that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply e-mail and destroy all copies of the original message.

**From:** Borrelli, Lisa <[lborelli@alleghenycountyda.us](mailto:lborelli@alleghenycountyda.us)>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 19, 2020 9:30 AM  
**To:** Spangler, Rebecca <[RSpangler@alleghenycountyda.us](mailto:RSpangler@alleghenycountyda.us)>; Manko, Mike <[MManko@alleghenycountyda.us](mailto:MManko@alleghenycountyda.us)>  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Pittsburgh LE trainings. (Animal Cruelty)

Good morning,

I know you are incredibly busy but I was wondering if you needed any further information to determine whether using our seal was appropriate for this class?

The publication is pending and they would like an answer.

Thank you,  
Lisa

Lisa A. Borrelli, Esq.  
Assistant District Attorney  
Allegheny County Office of the District Attorney  
phone: 412-350-5166  
fax: 412-392-0369

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**From:** Borrelli, Lisa <[lborelli@alleghenycountyda.us](mailto:lborelli@alleghenycountyda.us)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 13, 2020 2:33:26 PM  
**To:** Spangler, Rebecca <[RSpangler@alleghenycountyda.us](mailto:RSpangler@alleghenycountyda.us)>; Manko, Mike <[MManko@alleghenycountyda.us](mailto:MManko@alleghenycountyda.us)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: [EXTERNAL] Re: Pittsburgh LE trainings

Please let me know if this helps. And if so, if the seal can be used.

Thank you,  
Lisa

Lisa A. Borrelli, Esq.  
Assistant District Attorney  
Allegheny County Office of the District Attorney  
phone: 412-350-5166  
fax: 412-392-0369

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**From:** Christine Mastroianni <[cmastroianni@humanesociety.org](mailto:cmastroianni@humanesociety.org)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 13, 2020 2:31:34 PM  
**To:** Carol Whaley <[cwhaley@thinkingoutsidethecage.org](mailto:cwhaley@thinkingoutsidethecage.org)>; Borrelli, Lisa <[lborelli@alleghenycountyda.us](mailto:lborelli@alleghenycountyda.us)>  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL] Re: Pittsburgh LE trainings

Hi Carol and Lisa! Absolutely- attached here is the rough draft of the flyer and below is a course summary and instructor background. Please let me know if you need anything else!

***Animal cruelty and veterinary forensics: tips for successful investigations***

*Veterinary forensics play an important role in both animal and human related crimes. This course will review animal-related evidence documentation and the critical role it plays in an animal crimes investigation. Specifically, Dr. Merck will review crime scene analysis: differentiating types of animals, blood stain pattern analysis, forensic entomology, forensic botany, trace evidence, time of death assessments and measurements, and key steps for the investigator.*

*Dr. Melinda Merck is the owner of Veterinary Forensics Consulting in Austin, Texas and a Law Enforcement Trainer with the Humane Society of the United States. She is a nationally recognized expert, and provides case consultations, assistance with crime scene investigation examinations of live and deceased victims, and frequently testifies as a veterinary forensics expert. She provides support to large scale operations including exhumations of burial sites and examination of skeletal animal remains. Dr. Merck provides training for veterinary, attorney and law enforcement professionals internationally on the use of veterinary forensic science and medicine in the investigation and prosecution of animal cruelty cases and the link to crime against humans.*

**From:** Carol Whaley <[cwhaley@thinkingoutsidethecage.org](mailto:cwhaley@thinkingoutsidethecage.org)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, October 13, 2020 9:08 AM

**To:** Borrelli, Lisa <[lborrelli@allegHENYcountyda.us](mailto:lborrelli@allegHENYcountyda.us)>; Christine Mastroianni <[cmastroianni@humanesociety.org](mailto:cmastroianni@humanesociety.org)>

**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL] Re: Pittsburgh LE trainings

Hello Christine,

Are you able to provide an excerpt from the material used for the Forensics training?  
See Lisa's email below.

Thank you.

Carol Whaley

Senior Director of Clinic and Community Services

p. 412.847.7094

f. 412.847.8455

e. [cwhaley@ThinkingOutsideTheCage.org](mailto:cwhaley@ThinkingOutsideTheCage.org)

w. [www.ThinkingOutsideTheCage.org](http://www.ThinkingOutsideTheCage.org)

Work Days: Sunday – Thursday

Animal Friends|562 Camp Home Road | Pittsburgh, PA 15237

*For low-cost veterinary care options or how to support these efforts call 412.847.7004*



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**From:** Borrelli, Lisa [<mailto:lborrelli@allegHENYcountyda.us>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, October 13, 2020 8:53 AM

**To:** Carol Whaley

**Subject:** Fwd: [EXTERNAL] Re: Pittsburgh LE trainings

External Email - Be a cautious clicker and always confirm *in person or by phone* any email requests involving money.

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Carol,

It sounds like our office is interested in putting our seal on the flyer but there are questions. Can you please send me an excerpt of the materials? And maybe a draft of the flyer if you have that?

Thank you,  
Lisa

Lisa A. Borrelli, Esq.  
Assistant District Attorney  
Allegheny County Office of the District Attorney  
phone: 412-350-5166  
fax: 412-392-0369