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Woman receives probation sentence after an animal neglect investigation results in more than 50 animals being recovered

Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill announced that 40-year-old Elicia Diaz-Caceres received 24 months of formal probation through the Multnomah County Justice Reinvestment Program after being convicted of seven counts of animal neglect in the second degree.

“Although Ms. Diaz-Caceres has a long history of animal neglect, this is a very intentional resolution that was thoroughly negotiated to ensure Ms. Diaz-Caceres receives dedicated treatment so no other animals are ever neglected or harmed in the future,” said Multnomah County Deputy District Attorney Nicole Jergovic, who litigated this case.

Pursuant to the plea agreement with the state, the court convicted Diaz-Caceres of six misdemeanor counts of animal neglect in the second degree and one felony count of animal neglect in the second degree. If she is successful completing all of the conditions of her probation, she may petition the court to reduce the felony conviction to a misdemeanor.

During this investigation, Multnomah County Animal Services and the Portland Police Bureau executed a court-authorized search warrant at Diaz-Caceres’ residence and removed 52 animals from the location due to deplorable conditions inside. The animals included dogs, rabbits and cats.

Investigators found multiple animals in a single crate, animals tied to furniture and in crates that had been stacked up inside the duplex. Many of the animals did not have access to water, including a dog that had 10 newborn puppies. There was also a small dog trapped in a crate, which also had open wounds that required stitching.

During a separate search warrant, law enforcement located three kittens that were tied up. One of the kittens was tangled so badly that it was unable to move. There was no water available to the kittens and they appeared thin with weepy eyes. Additionally, two guinea pigs were found in a cage that was filthy with both the cage and the food dish full of feces.

As part of her probation, Diaz-Caceres may not be in possession of any animals, she cannot live with anyone who owns or is in possession of animals without prior written permission of her probation officer, she must agree to random at-home visits by her probation officer, Multnomah County Animal Services and/or other law enforcement and complete any treatment or counseling that is recommended specifically for animal-related offenses.

DDA Jergovic, a veteran prosecutor, has received specialized training in prosecuting animal abuse and neglect cases, and has received the Oregon Humane Society’s highest award for individuals who have helped fight for better animal rights. She has also been recognized nationally for being an animal advocate.

The Multnomah County District Attorney’s Office recognizes the Multnomah County Animal Services for their dedicated efforts investigating this case.

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