



CHAPTER 3B REALITY PROGRAMMING

NOTE: In addition to the following, all American Humane Society *Guidelines* apply to reality shows.

ADVISORY: The less experienced the animals and the owner/handlers are with working in television production, the more important it is to have American Humane Society's oversight. American Humane Society recommends that productions use more than one Certified Animal Safety Representative™, to monitor the animals both on and off camera.

American Humane Society does not condone the use of private pets for film and television work, whether it is an extra's pet or a reality show contestant's pet. However, ALL animals deserve humane treatment and a high standard of care, whether or not they are professionally trained.

American Humane Society recognizes that reality programming may use private pets that are not trained for production work, but encourages producers to choose the human contestants with consideration for their animals' temperament as much as they choose those human contestants for demographic, gender, race, age and eccentricity of personality.

- Animals should be chosen for calm, socialized temperaments.
- The owner's stress compounds the animal's stress. An unqualified animal trainer/owner can have a negative effect on an animal.
- Animals need prior conditioning to perform in the environment of a television production.
- Do not expect untrained animals to perform tricks or stunts that are unnatural behaviors for the average pet.

- 3A-1..... Production should assign one or more specific crew members with responsibility ONLY for the needs of the animal “contestants.” American Humane Society prefers that these crew members have experience with the species of animals being used.
- 3A-2..... Animals should never be left unattended or unsecured in a manner that would be unsafe or uncomfortable for the animals. Animals shall not be left in the care of any person who is inexperienced in the proper care of the animals.
- 3A-3..... Camera angles and lighting should be done with a “stuffy” rather than the live animals.
- 3A-4..... A separate, quiet holding area away from the set is recommended for the animals when they are not in front of the camera.
- 3A-5..... A veterinarian experienced in the particular species being used should be on the set or on call within close proximity of the filming location. (Also see Chapter 2, *Veterinary Care Guidelines*.)
- 3A-6..... Should an animal exhibit aggression toward another animal or a person, that animal should be removed from the show.
- 3A-7..... If animals are to be transported to a location, there should be time allowed for acclimation to the new environment and rest time following travel, prior to the start of production.
- 3A-8*..... Animals used in filming require authorization from the USDA and, in some instances, from local and state agencies. When animals are traveling to a different state, they may require health certificates, specific vaccinations and other documentation. Check with all federal, state and local agencies.

