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The mistreatment (abuse) of domestic animals and the corresponding punishment in Panama.

The laws against the mistreatment of pets not only seek to raise awareness in our society but also seek to prevent acts of intolerance and even violence between people.

A few weeks ago, a video circulated on social networks where a person burned a dead cat with a lighter. These images generated repudiation in the population, as well as a strong rejection by various organizations in defense of animals, who requested an exemplary punishment, which, according to the media, led the authorities to arrest the alleged perpetrator.

The abuse of domestic animals is a social problem that has been ignored for a long time.

Animal abuse covers various aspects, from the abandonment of the pet itself, not providing adequate food, the lack of optimal hygienic-sanitary conditions, not providing timely veterinary care, and inflicting physical and even psychological punishment.

In the Panamanian legislation, the rights of animals are not recognized, they are only protected. In this sense, Law 70 of 2012 on the Protection of Domestic Animals, which was modified by Law 133 of 2020, empowers judges to sanction conducts that constitute mistreatment or abuse of domestic animals.

With the last modification introduced, it was possible to increase the penalties provided for in



article 421 of the Unified Single Text of the Penal Code, with which today, for whoever causes death or serious injury to a domestic animal, there is a penalty of 2 to 4 years in prison.

What other legal consequences does the mistreatment of a pet have? Misdemeanors such as negligence, abandonment, and injury to animals are in the jurisdiction of justices of the peace and carry fines ranging from \$100.00 to \$1,000.00, community work, and attending a 40-hour course against this abuse and about animal rights.

However, this regulation is still relatively unknown and has not succeeded in dissuading people from such conducts, some even openly show themselves on social media committing acts of cruelty against pets.

The laws against the mistreatment of pets not only seek to raise awareness in our society but also seek to prevent acts of intolerance and even violence between people.

No to the mistreatment of domestic animals.