

HSLF of Kansas Fact Sheet

Kids and Pets Left in Hot Cars



"Many people think leaving their animal in a hot car, even for a quick errand is safe as long as a window is cracked. That type of thinking led to the death of a kitten in Tyler (TX); it died from heat related seizures. The kitten's body temperature reached 111°."

Sharon Cummings,
myarklamiss.com, 2018



"Well-meaning parents and caregivers of all socioeconomic levels leave children and animals alone in automobiles every day. It is critical for protections to be in place so that good Samaritans can step in without hesitation to rescue them when minutes are the difference between life and death."

Janette E. Fennell, Founder and
President, KidsAndCars.org

On a 90° day, the temperature inside a parked car can rocket to 109° in just 10 minutes. An animal or child left unattended in a hot car can suffer irreparable organ damage and even death. Each year in the United States, one child dies every nine days due to hot car heatstroke and hundreds of animals perish.

KS HB 2516, passed during the 2018 legislative session, grants good Samaritans the legal right and immunity (under certain conditions) from civil liability to rescue a vulnerable person or domestic animal (livestock not included) from a locked vehicle when the individual believes that the person or animal is in imminent danger unless saved.

Do you see a person or animal trapped in a hot car? Before you exercise your legal right to rescue them, please be sure to check the following:

- Is the car locked?
- Is the person or animal suffering in imminent danger?
- Have you notified local law enforcement?
- Are you using reasonable force to break entry?
- Can you remain with the person or animal until law enforcement arrives?
- Is the animal in question domestic? This law does not apply to livestock animals.

This law will go into effect July 1st, 2018.

Kansas joins 20 states protecting good Samaritans from legal retribution for assisting people or animals in imminent danger when trapped in a hot car.

The Risk and Danger

Although the danger of hot cars has existed for as long as we have transported children and pets in vehicles, there is now more information than ever that supported this legislation:

- Since pets do not sweat the way we do, they cannot cool their body efficiently. An animal can sustain brain damage, organ damage or failure or die from a heatstroke within just 15 minutes of being trapped in a hot car.
- 80% of the temperature increase inside a hot car happens in the first 10 minutes.
- Cracking a window has been proven to *not* slow down the heating process or decrease the car's maximum temperature.
- A child's body temperature rises 3 to 5 times faster than an adult.

Time is critical when rescuing an individual or animal trapped in a hot car. Kansas

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citizens are now empowered to intervene and potentially save a life without fear of legal repercussion.