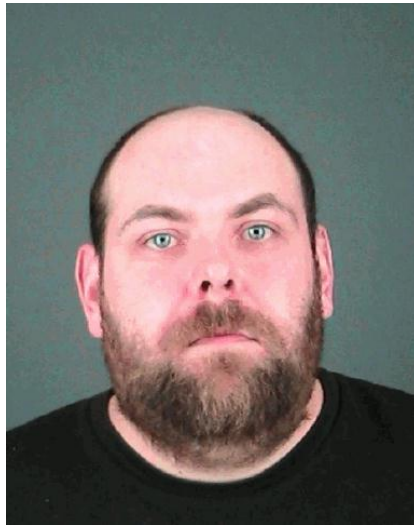




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Guilty Plea to Animal Cruelty Charges



ALBANY, NY – District Attorney P. David Soares announced today that **DERIC PETERSON**, 31, of Troy, pleaded guilty to violating (1) Count of Torturing or Injuring Animals by Failure to Provide Proper Sustenance, a misdemeanor under NYS Agriculture and Markets Law 353, before the Honorable Judge Kretser in Albany City Court yesterday for intentionally depriving and failing to provide proper sustenance to four dogs and nine cats.

On March 27, 2014, **PETERSON** will be sentenced to serve 60 days in Albany County Correctional Facility, in addition to entering into 3 years of probation. A primary condition of that probation term is that **PETERSON** not possess or reside with animals. **PETERSON** will also forfeit rights to any animals that were seized from the residence and will be ordered to pay

\$2,000 in restitution to the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society for housing and care of the surviving animals.

On June 19, 2014, members of the Albany Police Department responded to a residence on South Pine Street in the City of Albany, to find unfit and unsanitary living conditions deemed unsafe for human and domestic animal habitation. Police found four dogs and nine cats at the residence and transferred them to the Hudson Mohawk Humane Society for care. One of the animals was so badly malnourished that he had to be euthanized.

After an investigation, police were able to identify PETERSON as one of the persons responsible for care of the animals.

District Attorney David Soares commented, "Our primary objective is to hold offenders accountable. With animal cruelty charges we also aim to prevent the offender from engaging in animal abuse in the future. The plea in this case will assure that the offender takes responsibility for his actions and will be prevented from owning pets again. My office will continue to aggressively pursue animal abuse and neglect cases."

Brad Shear, Director of the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society said, "I appreciate the work of the District Attorney's office to seek jail time on this animal cruelty case, in addition with long term monitoring of this person who has been deemed unfit to own animals. Now that this defendant has pleaded guilty to the charge, the surviving animals will be available for adoption by next week. Please check with the staff of the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society if you are interested in adopting these animals."

The case against co-defendant RACHEL FASNACHT, 24, of Troy, remains open and pending at this time in Albany City Court.

Assistant District Attorney Jennifer McCanney of the Special Victims Unit is handling the prosecution of this case.

For more information please contact Cecilia Walsh at (518) 275-4710.

All parties are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty

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