

STATE OF MAINE

—
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-ONE

—
S.P. 222 - L.D. 535

**An Act To Provide for the Well-being of Companion Animals upon the
Dissolution of Marriages**

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 19-A MRSA §953, sub-§10 is enacted to read:

10. Companion animals. In the disposition of property pursuant to subsection 1, the court, with respect to a companion animal, shall award ownership of the companion animal to only one party after considering all relevant factors, including, but not limited to:

A. The well-being and basic daily needs of the companion animal;

B. The amount of time each party has spent with the companion animal during the marriage tending to the companion animal's nutritional, grooming, physical and medical needs;

C. The ability of a party to continue to own, support and provide adequate care for the companion animal;

D. The emotional attachment of a party to the companion animal;

E. The emotional attachment of any child in the household to the companion animal and the benefit to the child of the companion animal's remaining in the primary residence of the child;

F. Any domestic violence between the parties or in the household of the parties; and

G. Any history of animal abuse or other unsafe conditions for the companion animal.

For the purposes of this subsection, "companion animal" means an animal kept primarily for companionship rather than as a working animal, service animal or farm animal kept for profit.