



APNM Position Statement: Animals in Film

Animal Protection New Mexico (APNM) believes there is no place for the use of captive wild/exotic animals in films, except for in documentaries. And in the limited case of documentaries, APNM's position related to domestic animals (below) applies. For narrative films, only computer-generated imagery (CGI), stock footage, animation, or other approaches that do not involve real animals should be employed instead.

APNM believes it is acceptable to feature wild animals living in the wild in documentary or narrative films, but that it should be done in a way that never harasses or harms the animals in any way, and in a manner that minimally disturbs them. The presence of the filmmakers should not interfere with or cause stress that impacts the animals' natural behaviors.

APNM believes domesticated animals should be replaced with CGI and other alternatives whenever possible. However, if live domesticated animals are used in film, all of the following standards should be met:

- **Animals should be treated as actors on set, not props.**
- Filmmakers must not use or allow practices that produce pain, injury, or distress to the animals in the process of acquiring them for use, training them to perform, transporting them to performance venues, housing, and during production.
- Newly recruited animal actors should be adopted from rescues and shelters whenever possible, rather than purchased from breeders.
- Filmmakers must ensure the animal actors' basic physical, social, and psychological needs are appropriately met at all times (employing the "golden rule" as a standard).
- Filmmakers must ensure that the animal actors' caretakers are responsible for each animal's care for his/her entire life, and for treating the animals humanely both on and off set as living beings, not props. To that end, arrangements should be made for a permanent and safe home for animals when their usefulness as an animal performer has ended.
- Filmmakers (and audiences) must recognize that the "No Animals were Harmed..." American Humane Association certification demonstrates **a bare minimum of care but does not meet the high-level expectation of humane treatment by most audiences.**