

AGRICULTURE CODE

TITLE 6. PRODUCTION, PROCESSING, AND SALE OF ANIMAL PRODUCTS

SUBTITLE C. CONTROL OF ANIMAL DISEASES AND PESTS

CHAPTER 161. GENERAL DISEASE AND PEST CONTROL

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 161.001. DEFINITIONS. (a) In this chapter:

(1) "Animal" includes livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, and exotic fowl.

(2) "Commission" means the Texas Animal Health Commission.

(3) Repealed by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 604, Sec. 5.

(4) "Exotic livestock" means grass-eating or plant-eating, single-hooved or cloven-hooved mammals that are not indigenous to this state and are known as ungulates, including animals from the swine, horse, tapir, rhinoceros, elephant, deer, and antelope families.

(5) "Exotic fowl" means any avian species that is not indigenous to this state. The term includes ratites.

(b) References in Subchapter A, C, D, E, or H of this chapter to "livestock," "domestic animals," "domestic fowl," or other specifically named animals shall be construed to include all or part of the carcasses of those animals.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1393, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981. Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 637, Sec. 6, eff. Aug. 31, 1987; Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1989, 71st Leg., 1st C.S., ch. 35, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 203, Sec. 3, eff. Sept. 1, 1993; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1995; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 604, Sec. 5, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

The following section was amended by the 89th Legislature. Pending publication of the current statutes, see S.B. [503](#), 89th Legislature, Regular Session, for amendments affecting the following section.

Sec. 161.002. CARETAKER OF ANIMAL. (a) A person is subject

to this chapter as the caretaker of an animal and is presumed to control the animal if the person:

(1) is the owner or lessee of the pen, pasture, or other place in which the animal is located and has control of that place; or

(2) exercises care or control over the animal.

(b) This section does not limit the care and control of an animal to any person.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1393, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Sec. 161.003. DUTY OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT. (a) The commissioners court of each county shall cooperate with and assist the commission in protecting livestock, domestic animals, and domestic fowl from communicable diseases, regardless of whether a particular disease exists in the county.

(b) Each commissioners court may employ a veterinarian at the expense of the county. Any veterinarian employed is subject to approval by the commission.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1393, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Sec. 161.004. DISPOSAL OF DISEASED LIVESTOCK CARCASS.

(a) A person who is the owner or caretaker of livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl that die from a disease listed by the commission in rules adopted under Section [161.041](#), or who owns or controls the land on which the livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl die or on which the carcasses are found, shall dispose of the carcasses in the manner required by the commission under this section.

(b) The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality may not adopt a rule related to the disposal of livestock under this section unless the rule is developed in cooperation with and is approved by the Texas Animal Health Commission.

(c) The commission shall:

(1) determine the most effective methods of disposing of diseased carcasses, including methods other than burning or burial; and

(2) by rule prescribe the method or methods that a

person may use to dispose of a carcass as required by Subsection (a).

(d) The commission by rule may delegate its authority under this section to the executive director.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1394, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.
Amended by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1333, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. [2543](#)), Sec. 1, eff. January 1, 2008.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. [705](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2021.

Sec. 161.005. COMMISSION WRITTEN INSTRUMENTS. (a) The commission may authorize the executive director or another employee to sign written instruments on behalf of the commission. A written instrument, including a quarantine or written notice, signed under that authority has the same force and effect as if signed by the entire commission.

(b) Any written instrument issued by the commission is admissible as evidence in court if certified by the presiding officer or the executive director.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1394, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.
Amended by Acts 1983, 68th Leg., 1st C.S., p. 24, ch. 3, Sec. 17, eff. June 27, 1983; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 3, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 161.006. DOCUMENTS TO ACCOMPANY SHIPMENT. (a) If this chapter requires that a certificate or permit accompany animals or commodities moved in this state, the document must be:

(1) in the possession of the conductor of a train and attached to the waybill of the shipment, if the movement is by rail;
or

(2) in the possession of the person in charge of the animals or commodities, if the movement is made by any other means.

(b) This section does not apply to a certificate provided for by Section 161.088 of this code.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1394, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Sec. 161.007. EXPOSURE OR INFECTION CONSIDERED CONTINUING. If a veterinarian employed by the commission determines that a communicable disease exists among livestock, domestic animals, or domestic fowl or on certain premises or that livestock, domestic animals, or domestic fowl have been exposed to the agency of transmission of a communicable disease, the exposure or infection is considered to continue until the commission determines that the exposure or infection has been eradicated through methods prescribed by rule of the commission.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1394, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Sec. 161.008. STATE FUNDS REFORM ACT APPLICABLE. All money paid to the commission under this chapter is subject to Subchapter F, Chapter 404, Government Code.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 4, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 161.009. CONFIDENTIALITY OF BIOSECURITY AND OTHER SENSITIVE INFORMATION. (a) Except as provided by Subsections (b) and (c), information held by the commission is confidential and excepted from disclosure under Chapter 552, Government Code, if the information consists of or relates to a biosecurity plan, a secure food supply plan, an emergency preparedness plan, or biosecurity data that was voluntarily provided to the commission by an owner or caretaker of an animal.

(b) The commission may release information described by Subsection (a) to:

(1) the attorney general's office, for the purpose of law enforcement;

(2) the secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, for the purpose of animal health protection;

(3) the secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, for the purpose of homeland security;

(4) the Department of State Health Services, for the purpose of protecting the public health from zoonotic diseases;

(5) any person, if required by a court order;

(6) a federal, state, municipal, or county emergency management authority, for the purpose of management or response to natural or man-made disasters; or

(7) any person the executive director of the commission considers appropriate, if:

(A) the executive director determines that:

(i) livestock may be threatened by a disease, agent, or pest; and

(ii) the release of the information is related to actions the commission may take in performance of its powers and duties; or

(B) the executive director determines that the release of the information is necessary for emergency management purposes under Chapter 418, Government Code.

(c) The commission's release of confidential information under Subsection (b):

(1) does not affect the confidentiality of the information;

(2) is not an offense under Section 552.352, Government Code; and

(3) is not a voluntary disclosure for purposes of Section 552.007, Government Code.

Added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., R.S., Ch. 850 (H.B. 3257), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2023.

SUBCHAPTER B. TEXAS ANIMAL HEALTH COMMISSION

Sec. 161.021. COMPOSITION. (a) The commission is composed of 13 commissioners appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate, with the appropriate number from each of the following categories:

- (1) a practitioner of veterinary medicine;
- (2) a dairyman;
- (3) a cattle raiser;
- (4) a hog raiser;
- (5) a sheep or goat raiser;
- (6) a poultry raiser;

- (7) an individual involved in the equine industry;
- (8) an individual involved in the feedlot industry;
- (9) an individual involved in the livestock marketing industry;
- (10) three members of the general public; and
- (11) an individual involved in the exotic livestock or exotic fowl industry.

(b) In making appointments to the commission, the governor, to the extent practicable, shall give proportionate representation to the northern, eastern, southern, and western portions of the state.

(c) Appointments to the commission shall be made without regard to the race, color, disability, sex, religion, age, or national origin of the appointees.

(d) A person is not eligible for appointment as a public member of the commission if the person or the person's spouse:

(1) is registered, certified, or licensed by the commission;

(2) is employed by or participates in the management of a business entity or other organization regulated by the commission or receiving money from the commission;

(3) owns or controls, directly or indirectly, more than a 10 percent interest in a business entity or other organization regulated by or receiving money from the commission; or

(4) uses or receives a substantial amount of tangible goods, services, or money from the commission, other than compensation or reimbursement authorized by law for commission membership, attendance, or expenses.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1394, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981. Amended by Acts 1983, 68th Leg., 1st C.S., p. 14, ch. 3, Sec. 1, eff. June 27, 1983; Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 3, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 699, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1993; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 5, eff. Sept. 1, 1995; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1170, Sec. 2.01, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. [2543](#)), Sec. 2, eff.

September 1, 2007.

Sec. 161.022. TERM. Commissioners serve for staggered terms of six years, with the terms of four or five members expiring every other year.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1395, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981. Amended by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 699, Sec. 2, eff. Aug. 30, 1993; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1170, Sec. 2.02, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Sec. 161.023. MANDATORY TRAINING PROGRAM FOR COMMISSIONERS. (a) A person who is appointed to and qualifies for office as a member of the commission may not vote, deliberate, or be counted as a member in attendance at a meeting of the commission until the person completes a training program that complies with this section.

(b) The training program must provide the person with information regarding:

- (1) the law governing commission operations;
- (2) the programs, functions, rules, and budget of the commission;
- (3) the scope of and limitations on the rulemaking authority of the commission;
- (4) the results of the most recent formal audit of the commission;
- (5) the requirements of:
 - (A) laws relating to open meetings, public information, administrative procedure, and disclosing conflicts of interest; and
 - (B) other laws applicable to members of a state policy-making body in performing their duties; and
- (6) any applicable ethics policies adopted by the commission or the Texas Ethics Commission.

(c) A person appointed to the commission is entitled to reimbursement, as provided by the General Appropriations Act, for the travel expenses incurred in attending the training program, regardless of whether attendance at the program occurs before or

after the person qualifies for the office.

(d) The executive director of the commission shall create a training manual that includes the information required by Subsection (b). The executive director shall distribute a copy of the training manual annually to each member of the commission. Each member of the commission shall sign and submit to the executive director a statement acknowledging that the member received and has reviewed the training manual.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 6, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. [2543](#)), Sec. 3, eff. September 1, 2007.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. [705](#)), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2021.

Sec. 161.024. PRESIDING OFFICER. The governor shall designate a member of the commission as the presiding officer of the commission to serve in that capacity at the pleasure of the governor.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1395, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 7, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 161.025. VACANCIES. The governor shall fill vacancies by appointment for the unexpired term.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1395, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Sec. 161.026. EXPENSES AND PER DIEM. Each commissioner is entitled to reasonable travel expenses incurred in performing official duties and to the per diem set in the General Appropriations Act for members of state boards and commissions.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1395, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 4, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 548, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1993.

Sec. 161.027. SUNSET PROVISION. The Texas Animal Health Commission is subject to Chapter [325](#), Government Code (Texas Sunset

Act). Unless continued in existence as provided by that chapter, the commission is abolished September 1, 2035.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1395, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981. Amended by Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 479, Sec. 188, eff. Sept. 1, 1985; Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 729, Sec. 9, eff. Sept. 1, 1985; Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 5, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., 1st C.S., ch. 17, Sec. 2.02, eff. Nov. 12, 1991; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 8, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. [2543](#)), Sec. 4, eff. September 1, 2007.

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1232 (S.B. [652](#)), Sec. 5.01, eff. June 17, 2011.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. [705](#)), Sec. 3, eff. September 1, 2021.

Acts 2023, 88th Leg., R.S., Ch. 941 (S.B. [1659](#)), Sec. 3.03, eff. June 18, 2023.

Sec. 161.028. RESTRICTIONS ON COMMISSION APPOINTMENT, MEMBERSHIP, AND EMPLOYMENT. (a) In this section, "Texas trade association" means a cooperative and voluntarily joined statewide association of business or professional competitors in this state designed to assist its members and its industry or profession in dealing with mutual business or professional problems and in promoting their common interest. The term does not include an association formed to benefit or promote a particular breed of livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl.

(b) A person may not be a member of the commission and may not be a commission employee in a "bona fide executive, administrative, or professional capacity," as that phrase is used for purposes of establishing an exemption to the overtime provisions of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. Section 201 et seq.), if:

(1) the person is an officer, employee, or paid consultant of a Texas trade association in the field of livestock production, exotic livestock production, domestic fowl production, or exotic fowl production; or

(2) the person's spouse is an officer, manager, or paid consultant of a Texas trade association in the field of livestock production, exotic livestock production, domestic fowl production, or exotic fowl production.

(c) A person may not serve as a member of the commission or act as the general counsel to the commission or the agency if the person is required to register as a lobbyist under Chapter 305, Government Code, because of the person's activities for compensation on behalf of a profession related to the operation of the commission.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 6, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. 2543), Sec. 6, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 161.029. REMOVAL OF COMMISSION MEMBERS. (a) It is a ground for removal from the commission if a member:

(1) does not have at the time of taking office the qualifications required by Section 161.021;

(2) does not maintain during service on the commission the qualifications required by Section 161.021;

(3) is ineligible for membership under Section 161.021(d) or 161.028;

(4) cannot, because of illness or disability, discharge the member's duties for a substantial part of the member's term; or

(5) is absent from more than half of the regularly scheduled commission meetings that the member is eligible to attend during a calendar year without an excuse approved by a majority vote of the commission.

(b) The validity of an action of the commission is not affected by the fact that it is taken when a ground for removal of a commission member exists.

(c) If the executive director has knowledge that a potential ground for removal exists, the executive director shall notify the presiding officer of the commission of the potential ground. The presiding officer shall then notify the governor and the attorney

general that a potential ground for removal exists. If the potential ground for removal involves the presiding officer, the executive director shall notify the next highest officer of the commission, who shall notify the governor and the attorney general that a potential ground for removal exists.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 386, Sec. 7, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.

Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 9, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. [2543](#)), Sec. 7, eff. September 1, 2007.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. [705](#)), Sec. 4, eff. September 1, 2021.

Sec. 161.030. SEPARATION OF AUTHORITY. The commission shall develop and implement policies that clearly separate the policy-making responsibilities of the commission and the management responsibilities of the executive director and the staff of the commission.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 8, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.

Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 10, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 161.0305. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR; QUALIFICATIONS. The executive director must hold a degree in veterinary medicine.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 665, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Sec. 161.031. PERSONNEL. (a) The executive director or the executive director's designee shall develop an intraagency career ladder program that addresses opportunities for mobility and advancement for employees within the commission. The program shall require intraagency posting of all positions concurrently with any public posting.

(b) The executive director or the executive director's designee shall develop a system of annual performance evaluations that are based on documented employee performance. All merit pay for commission employees must be based on the system established

under this subsection.

(c) The commission shall provide to its members and employees, as often as necessary, information regarding their qualifications for office or employment under this chapter and their responsibilities under applicable laws relating to standards of conduct for state officers or employees.

(d) The executive director or the executive director's designee shall prepare and maintain a written policy statement to assure implementation of a program of equal employment opportunity under which all personnel transactions are made without regard to race, color, disability, sex, religion, age, or national origin. The policy statement must include:

(1) personnel policies, including policies relating to recruitment, evaluation, selection, appointment, training, and promotion of personnel that are in compliance with the requirements of Chapter 21, Labor Code;

(2) a comprehensive analysis of the commission work force that meets federal and state guidelines;

(3) procedures by which a determination can be made about the extent of underuse in the commission work force of all persons for whom federal or state guidelines encourage a more equitable balance; and

(4) reasonable methods to appropriately address those areas of underuse.

(e) A policy statement prepared under Subsection (d) of this section must cover an annual period, be updated annually and reviewed by the Texas Commission on Human Rights for compliance with Subsection (d)(1) of this section, and be filed with the governor's office.

(f) The governor's office shall deliver a biennial report to the legislature based on the information received under Subsection (e) of this section. The report may be made separately or as a part of other biennial reports made to the legislature.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 9, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.
Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 11, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 161.0311. ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS AND GRANTS. (a) The commission may solicit and accept gifts, grants, and donations for the purposes of this chapter.

(b) The commission shall report to the legislature by December 31 of each year the source and amount of each gift, grant, and donation received under this section.

Added by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 410, Sec. 1, eff. May 28, 2001.

Sec. 161.033. PUBLIC INTEREST INFORMATION AND COMPLAINTS.

(a) The commission shall maintain a system to promptly and efficiently act on complaints filed with the commission. The commission shall maintain information about parties to the complaint, the subject matter of the complaint, a summary of the results of the review or investigation of the complaint, and its disposition.

(b) The commission shall make information available describing its procedures for complaint investigation and resolution.

(c) The commission shall periodically notify the complaint parties of the status of the complaint until final disposition unless the notice would jeopardize an investigation.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 11, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.

Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 13, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. [2543](#)), Sec. 8, eff. September 1, 2007.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. [705](#)), Sec. 5, eff. September 1, 2021.

Sec. 161.0335. TECHNOLOGY POLICY. The commission shall implement a policy requiring the commission to use appropriate technological solutions to improve the commission's ability to perform its functions. The policy must ensure that the public is able to interact with the commission on the Internet.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. [2543](#)), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 161.0336. INFORMATION RELATING TO COMPLAINT PROCEDURES. The commission shall:

(1) post information about its complaint procedures on the home page of the Internet website maintained by the commission;

(2) post specific information on how to file a complaint, what types of information to provide with the complaint, and a description of the complaint process; and

(3) explain on that website what types of complaints the commission has authority to resolve, distinguishing those from complaints that the commission does not have authority to resolve.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. [2543](#)), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 161.034. PUBLIC MEETINGS. (a) The commission is subject to the open meetings law, Chapter [551](#), Government Code.

(b) The commission shall develop and implement policies that provide the public with a reasonable opportunity to appear before the commission and to speak on any issue under the jurisdiction of the commission.

(c) Each meeting of the commission must be held in a location that provides adequate access to members of the public.

(d) The commission shall post audio archives of its meetings on the commission's Internet website.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 12, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.
Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 14, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. [2543](#)), Sec. 9(a), eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 161.035. ADVISORY COMMITTEES. (a) The commission by rule may establish advisory committees to make recommendations to the commission on programs, rules, and policies administered by the commission.

(b) In establishing an advisory committee under this section, the commission shall adopt rules, including rules

regarding:

- (1) the purpose, role, responsibility, goals, and duration of the committee;
- (2) the size of and quorum requirement for the committee;
- (3) qualifications for committee membership;
- (4) appointment procedures for members;
- (5) terms of service for members;
- (6) training requirements for members;
- (7) policies to avoid conflicts of interest by members;
- (8) a periodic review process to evaluate the continuing need for the committee; and
- (9) policies to ensure the committee does not violate any provision of Chapter 551, Government Code, applicable to the commission or the committee.

(c) Repealed by Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. 705), Sec. 37, eff. September 1, 2021.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 15, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. 705), Sec. 6, eff. September 1, 2021.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. 705), Sec. 37, eff. September 1, 2021.

Sec. 161.036. PROGRAM AND FACILITY ACCESSIBILITY. The commission shall comply with federal and state laws related to program and facility accessibility. The executive director shall also prepare and maintain a written plan that describes how a person who does not speak English can be provided reasonable access to the commission's programs and services.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 15, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 161.037. PERIODIC REVIEW OF AGENCY FUNCTIONS. (a) The commission shall periodically review services provided by the commission, including laboratory services, that also are provided in the private sector in order to determine the most cost-effective

method for delivering the services.

(b) Repealed by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 24 (S.B. 706), Sec. 7(1), eff. September 1, 2017.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 15, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 24 (S.B. 706), Sec. 7(1), eff. September 1, 2017.

Sec. 161.0375. PERIODIC REVIEW OF COMPLIANCE INFORMATION.

(a) The commission shall analyze, on a statewide and regional basis, violations of this subtitle. The commission shall consider:

- (1) violation types and disposition;
- (2) persons who are repeat offenders; and
- (3) persons who commit the most serious offenses.

(b) The commission shall use the analysis under Subsection (a) to compare enforcement practices across each region and determine:

- (1) training needs;
- (2) gaps in enforcement authority; and
- (3) effective enforcement activities.

(c) The commission shall conduct the analysis under Subsection (a) on a periodic basis to ensure that the information reflects current enforcement practices.

(d) The commission shall timely enter and share compliance and enforcement information on a statewide and regional basis.

Added by Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. 705), Sec. 7, eff. September 1, 2021.

Sec. 161.038. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE ACT APPLICABLE. The commission is subject to the administrative procedure law, Chapter 2001, Government Code.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 15, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 161.039. COMPLIANCE POLICY AND INTERNAL OPERATING PROCEDURES. (a) The commission by rule shall adopt agencywide compliance policies and internal operating procedures and convey

those policies and procedures to all officers and employees of the commission.

(b) The commission by rule shall adopt clearly defined and uniform procedures addressing compliance with this chapter and commission rules. The compliance procedures shall include the commission's process for:

(1) receiving and consistently responding to complaints from the public and officers and employees of the commission;

(2) checking for previous violations whenever a complaint is filed;

(3) involving a supervisor in the approval of key compliance decisions; and

(4) regularly updating complainants on the status of their complaints.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. [2543](#)), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 161.040. RULEMAKING AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURES.

(a) The commission shall develop and implement a policy to encourage the use of:

(1) negotiated rulemaking procedures under Chapter [2008](#), Government Code, for the adoption of commission rules; and

(2) appropriate alternative dispute resolution procedures under Chapter [2009](#), Government Code, to assist in the resolution of internal and external disputes under the commission's jurisdiction.

(b) The commission's procedures relating to alternative dispute resolution must conform, to the extent possible, to any model guidelines issued by the State Office of Administrative Hearings for the use of alternative dispute resolution by state agencies.

(c) The commission shall designate a trained person to:

(1) coordinate the implementation of the policy adopted under Subsection (a);

(2) serve as a resource for any training needed to implement the procedures for negotiated rulemaking or alternative

dispute resolution; and

(3) collect data concerning the effectiveness of those procedures, as implemented by the commission.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. [2543](#)), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2007.

SUBCHAPTER C. GENERAL POWERS AND DUTIES OF COMMISSION

Sec. 161.041. DISEASE CONTROL.

(a) The commission shall protect all livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, and exotic fowl from diseases the commission determines require control or eradication. The commission shall adopt and periodically update rules listing the diseases that require control or eradication by the commission. Section [2001.0045](#), Government Code, does not apply to rules adopted under this subsection.

(b) The commission may act to eradicate or control any disease or agent of transmission for any disease that affects livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl, regardless of whether the disease is communicable, even if the agent of transmission is an animal species that is not subject to the jurisdiction of the commission. The commission may adopt any rules necessary to carry out the purposes of this subsection, including rules concerning testing, movement, inspection, and treatment.

(c) A person commits an offense if the person knowingly fails to handle, in accordance with rules adopted by the commission, livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl:

(1) infected with a disease listed by the commission by rule under Subsection (a);

(2) exposed, as defined by commission rule, to a disease listed by the commission by rule under Subsection (a) if the commission has notified the person that the animal was exposed to the disease; or

(3) subject to a testing requirement due to a risk of exposure, as defined by commission rule, to a specific disease if

the commission has notified the person of the testing requirement.

(d) A person commits an offense if the person knowingly fails to identify or refuses to permit an agent of the commission to identify, in accordance with rules adopted by the commission, livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl infected with a disease listed by the commission by rule under Subsection (a).

(e) An offense under Subsection (c) or (d) of this section is a Class C misdemeanor unless it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has been previously convicted under this section, in which event the offense is a Class B misdemeanor.

(f) In complying with this section, the commission may not infringe on or supersede the authority of any other agency of this state, including the authority of the Parks and Wildlife Department relating to wildlife. If a conflict of authority occurs, the commission shall assume responsibility for disease control efforts, but work collaboratively with the other agency to enable each agency to effectively carry out its responsibilities.

(g) The commission's authority to control or eradicate an agent of transmission that is an animal species that is not subject to the jurisdiction of the commission is limited to instances when a disease that threatens livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl has been confirmed or is suspected to exist in that species and the commission determines that a serious threat to livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl exists.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1395, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981. Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 13, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1989, 71st Leg., 1st C.S., ch. 35, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 548, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1993.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. [2543](#)), Sec. 11, eff. September 1, 2007.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 77 (S.B. [970](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2015.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. [705](#)), Sec. 8, eff. September 1, 2021.

Sec. 161.0411. DOMESTIC AND EXOTIC FOWL REGISTRATION. (a) A seller, distributor, or transporter of live domestic or exotic fowl in this state shall register with the commission under this section. The commission may exempt from registration a person participating in a disease surveillance program recognized by the commission.

(b) A person may apply for a certificate of registration or a renewal of a certificate of registration under this section by submitting an application and an annual fee prescribed by the commission. A person must complete an application for a certificate of registration that includes a list of each location at which the person conducts the sale, distribution, or transportation of domestic or exotic fowl.

(c) The commission shall adopt rules to administer this section, including rules relating to the testing, identification, transportation, inspection, sanitation, and disinfection of domestic and exotic fowl.

(d) The commission shall prescribe and collect an annual fee for registration as a seller, distributor, or transporter of domestic or exotic fowl in this state.

(e) The commission may set fees under this section in amounts that do not exceed the amounts necessary to enable the commission to recover the costs of administering this section.

(f) A person commits an offense if the person knowingly violates this section or fails to comply with an order or rule adopted under this section.

(g) An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor unless it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has been previously convicted under this section, in which event the offense is a Class B misdemeanor.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1109, Sec. 1, eff. June 20, 2003.

Sec. 161.0412. REGULATION AND REGISTRATION OF FERAL SWINE HOLDING FACILITIES. (a) The commission may, for disease control purposes, require the registration of feral swine holding facilities.

(b) To prevent the spread of disease, the commission may

require a person to register with the commission if the person confines feral swine in a holding facility for slaughter, sale, exhibition, hunting, or any other purpose specified by commission rule.

(c) Rules adopted under this section shall include registration requirements, provisions for the issuance, revocation, and renewal of a registration, disease testing, inspections, recordkeeping, construction standards, location limitations, and provisions relating to the treatment of swine in and movement of swine to or from a feral swine holding facility.

(d) Rules authorized by this section may be adopted only for disease-control purposes.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. [2543](#)), Sec. 12, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 161.0415. DISPOSAL OF DISEASED OR EXPOSED LIVESTOCK OR FOWL. (a) The commission by order may require the slaughter of livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl, under the direction of the commission, or the sale of livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl for immediate slaughter at a public slaughtering establishment maintaining federal or state inspection if the livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl is exposed to or infected with a disease other than bluetongue or vesicular stomatitis that:

(1) is recognized by the United States Department of Agriculture as:

(A) a foreign animal disease; or

(B) a reportable animal disease;

(2) is the subject of a cooperative eradication program with the United States Department of Agriculture;

(3) is an animal disease reportable to the World Organisation for Animal Health; or

(4) is the subject of a state of emergency, as declared by the governor.

(b) The commission by order may require the slaughter and disposal of livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl exposed to or infected with a disease not listed in Subsection (a) if the commission determines that action to be necessary for the

protection of animal health in this state. The commission shall immediately deliver a copy of an order issued under this subsection to the appropriate legislative oversight committees.

(c) A person may appeal an order of the commission under this section as provided by Chapter 2001, Government Code.

(d) The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality may not adopt a rule related to the disposal of livestock under this section unless the rule is developed in cooperation with and is approved by the Texas Animal Health Commission.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 764, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Amended by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1333, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 149 (H.B. 1521), Sec. 1, eff. May 24, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 149 (H.B. 1521), Sec. 2, eff. May 24, 2013.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. 705), Sec. 9, eff. September 1, 2021.

Sec. 161.0416. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT. (a) The commission may prepare and plan for, respond to, and aid in the recovery from disaster events that may affect livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl, including disease outbreaks, hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, wildfires, and acts of terrorism.

(b) The commission may assist with local emergency management planning. This subsection may not be construed to affect the commission's responsibility under any other law, including Chapter 418, Government Code, or any responsibility delegated to the commission by an emergency management authority of this state.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. 2543), Sec. 12, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 161.0417. AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL FOR DISEASE CONTROL.

(a) A person, including a veterinarian, must be authorized by the commission in order to engage in an activity that is part of a state

or federal disease control or eradication program for animals.

(b) The commission shall adopt rules for the authorization of a person described by Subsection (a).

(c) The commission may, after reasonable notice, suspend or revoke a person's authorization under Subsection (a) if the commission determines that the person has substantially failed to comply with this chapter or rules adopted under this chapter.

(d) A person is entitled to a hearing before the commission or a hearing examiner appointed by the commission before the commission may revoke the person's authorization under Subsection (a). The commission shall make all final decisions to suspend or revoke an authorization.

(e) This section does not affect the requirement for a license or an exemption under Chapter 801, Occupations Code, to practice veterinary medicine.

Added by Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1090 (H.B. 3569), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2013.

Sec. 161.042. SALE AND DISTRIBUTION OF VETERINARY BIOLOGICS. The commission may control the sale and distribution of all veterinary biologics except rabies vaccine. Rabies vaccine shall be sold, distributed, dispensed, and administered in compliance with Chapter 826, Health and Safety Code and the rules adopted thereunder by the Texas Board of Health.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1396, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981. Amended by Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 2605, ch. 693, Sec. 25, eff. Jan. 1, 1982; Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 723, Sec. 3, eff. Sept. 1, 1985; Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 14, Sec. 284(73), eff. Sept. 1, 1991.

Sec. 161.043. REGULATION OF EXHIBITIONS. The commission may regulate the entry of livestock, domestic animals, and domestic fowl into exhibitions, shows, and fairs and may require treatment or certification of those animals as reasonably necessary to protect against communicable diseases.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1396, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Sec. 161.044. REGULATION OF LIVESTOCK MOVEMENT FROM STOCKYARDS OR RAILWAY SHIPPING PENS. The commission may regulate the movement of livestock out of stockyards or railway shipping pens and require treatment or certification of those animals as reasonably necessary to protect against communicable diseases. Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1396, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Sec. 161.0445. REGULATION OF EXPORT-IMPORT PROCESSING FACILITIES. (a) In this section, "export-import facility" means a public or private livestock export-import processing facility that is a land border port in this state with the capacity to receive and hold livestock and livestock products for transportation in international trade. The term includes a department facility authorized by Subchapter B, Chapter 146.

(b) The owner or person in charge of an export-import facility shall notify the commission not later than 24 hours after an animal received or held at the facility is refused export out of this state or entry into another country.

(c) The commission may require that an animal held at an export-import facility be tested or treated for a disease or pest if an authorized commission employee considers the test or treatment necessary. The commission may require the testing or treatment be performed before the animal is removed from the export-import facility. This state is not liable for the amount of any fee charged for the testing or treatment.

(d) The commission may, for disease or pest control purposes, adopt rules necessary to implement, administer, and enforce this section. The rules may include reporting and recordkeeping requirements and provisions governing the movement, inspection, testing, or treatment of animals.

(e) A person commits an offense if the person knowingly moves an animal in violation of a rule adopted under this section.

(f) An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor, except that the offense is a Class B misdemeanor if it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has been previously convicted under this section.

Added by Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 329 (H.B. 1958), Sec. 1,

eff. June 7, 2021.

Sec. 161.045. EMPLOYEES; CHIEF VETERINARIAN. The commission may employ personnel as necessary in the administration of this chapter or other duties of the commission, including a chief veterinarian, a first assistant veterinarian, other veterinarians, and clerical personnel.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1396, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Sec. 161.046. RULES. The commission may adopt rules as necessary for the administration and enforcement of this chapter.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1396, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 14, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.

Sec. 161.047. ENTRY POWER. (a) A commissioner or a veterinarian or inspector employed by the commission may enter public or private property for the exercise of an authority or performance of a duty under this chapter.

(b) If the commissioner, veterinarian, or inspector under Subsection (a) of this section desires to be accompanied by a peace officer, he or she shall apply for a search warrant to a magistrate of the county in which the property is located. The magistrate shall issue the search warrant on a showing of probable cause by oath or affirmation. The search warrant shall describe the place to be entered in a reasonable manner that will enable the owner or caretaker of the property to identify the property described, but the warrant is not required to describe the property by field notes or by metes and bounds.

(c) A search warrant issued under this section authorizes the person to whom it is issued to be accompanied by a peace officer and by as many assistants as the person considers necessary.

(d) A search warrant issued under this section permits entry and reentry for the purposes of this section for 30 days after the day on which it is issued. After that period, additional search warrants may be issued as often as necessary.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1396, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Sec. 161.048. INSPECTION OF SHIPMENT OF ANIMALS OR ANIMAL PRODUCTS. (a) An agent of the commission is entitled to stop and inspect a shipment of animals or animal products being transported in this state in order to:

(1) determine if the shipment is in compliance with the laws and rules administered by the commission affecting the shipment;

(2) determine if the shipment originated from a quarantined area or herd; or

(3) determine if the shipment presents a danger to the public health or livestock industry through insect infestation or through a communicable or noncommunicable disease.

(b) The commission may detain a shipment of animals or animal products that is being transported in violation of law or a rule of the commission. The commission may require that the shipment be unloaded at the nearest available loading facility.

(c) The commission may not inspect a railroad train at any point other than a terminal.

(d) The commission may post signs on public highways and use signaling devices, including red lights, in conjunction with signs, if necessary to effectively signal and stop vehicles for inspection.

(d-1) The commission may enter into an agreement with a corporation or other private entity to provide goods or services for the establishment and operation of checkpoints or the performance of inspections under this section.

(e) In this section, "animal product" includes hides; bones; hoofs; horns; viscera; parts of animal bodies; litter, straw, or hay used for bedding; and any other substance capable of carrying insects or a disease that may endanger the livestock industry.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1397, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.
Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 16, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1337 (S.B. 9), Sec. 4, eff. June 18,

2005.

Sec. 161.049. DEALER RECORDS. (a) In this section, "dealer" means a person engaged in the business of buying or selling animals in commerce:

- (1) on the person's own account;
- (2) as an employee or agent of the vendor, the purchaser, or both; or
- (3) on a commission basis.

(b) A "dealer" as defined by Subsection (a) of this section does not include a person who buys or sells animals as part of the person's bona fide breeding, feeding, dairy, or stocker operations but does include livestock markets and commission merchants.

(c) The commission may require a livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl dealer to maintain records of all livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl bought and sold by the dealer.

(d) The commission may inspect and copy the records of a livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl dealer that relate to the buying and selling of those animals.

(e) The commission by rule shall adopt the form and content of the records maintained by a dealer under Subsection (c) of this section.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 15, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.
Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 17, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 161.050. INJUNCTION. The commission is entitled to appropriate injunctive relief to prevent or abate a violation of a statute administered or enforced by the commission or a rule adopted or order issued by the commission under such a statute. On request of the commission, the attorney general shall file suit for the injunctive relief. Venue is in Travis County.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 16, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.
Amended by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 548, Sec. 3, eff. Sept. 1, 1993.

Sec. 161.051. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON ENFORCEMENT OF COMMISSION POWERS. (a) The commission and the Department of Public Safety by rule shall adopt a joint memorandum of understanding that includes provisions under which Department of Public Safety officers are to check for health papers and permits when a livestock vehicle is stopped for other reasons in the regular course of the officers' duties. The memorandum shall require:

(1) commission staff to provide information to Department of Public Safety officers regarding health papers and permits;

(2) Department of Public Safety officers to report potential problems to the commission;

(3) commission staff to investigate possible violations reported by Department of Public Safety officers;

(4) Department of Public Safety officers to provide assistance when requested by the commission; and

(5) commission personnel to notify the Department of Public Safety, when appropriate, of the location of commission roadblocks or special or night operations.

(b) The commission and the Department of Public Safety shall review and update the memorandum not later than the last month of each state fiscal year.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 17, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.

Sec. 161.052. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON COOPERATION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES. (a) The commission and the commissioners court of a county by rule may adopt a joint memorandum of understanding that includes provisions under which the sheriff of that county or the sheriff's deputies are to check for health papers and permits when a livestock vehicle is stopped for other reasons in the regular course of the sheriff's or the deputies' duties. The memorandum shall require:

(1) commission staff to provide information to the sheriff and the deputies regarding health papers and permits;

(2) the sheriff and the deputies to report potential problems to the commission;

(3) commission staff to investigate possible

violations reported by the sheriff or the deputies;

(4) the sheriff or deputies to provide assistance when requested by the commission; and

(5) commission personnel to notify the sheriff, when appropriate, of commission roadblocks located in the county or special or night operations planned for the county.

(b) The commission and each commissioners court with which the commission adopted a memorandum of understanding shall review and update the memorandum not later than the last month of each state fiscal year.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 18, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.

Sec. 161.0525. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON COOPERATION WITH OTHER STATES. The commission by rule, subject to approval by the governor, may adopt a joint memorandum of understanding with another state that includes provisions under which the commission and the other state may provide assistance to each other in the case of an animal disease outbreak.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 764, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Sec. 161.053. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS. The commission may enter into a cooperative agreement with the department to use for animal health purposes livestock export pens controlled by the department.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 18, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 161.054. REGULATION OF MOVEMENT OF ANIMALS; EXCEPTION.

(a) As a control measure, the commission by rule may regulate the movement of animals, including feral swine. The commission may restrict the intrastate movement of animals, including feral swine, even though the movement of the animals is unrestricted in interstate or international commerce. The commission may require testing, vaccination, or another epidemiologically sound procedure before or after animals are moved.

(b) The commission by rule may prohibit or regulate the movement of animals, including feral swine, into a quarantined herd, premise, or area.

(c) The commission may not adopt a rule that prohibits a person from moving animals, including feral swine, owned by that person within unquarantined contiguous lands owned or controlled by that person.

(d) On application of the owner of an animal, including a feral swine, a restriction on the movement of the animal imposed under this chapter may be modified by order of the executive director of the commission if the owner demonstrates that the restriction will result in unusual hardship for the owner. In considering an application under this section, the executive director may consider the effect of prolonged drought, inadequacy of pasturage or unusual feed supply resulting from disaster or other unforeseeable circumstances, or economic hardship.

(e) In connection with the regulation of the movement of feral swine, the commission by rule may require disease testing before movement of a feral swine from one location to another, and establish the conditions under which feral swine may be transported.

(f) The commission's authority to regulate the movement of feral swine may not interfere with the authority of the Parks and Wildlife Department to regulate the hunting or trapping of feral swine.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 31, Sec. 1, eff. April 27, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. [2543](#)), Sec. 13, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 161.0541. ELK DISEASE SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM. (a) The commission by rule may establish a disease surveillance program for elk.

(b) Rules adopted under this section must:

(1) require each person who moves elk in this state to have elk tested for chronic wasting disease or other diseases as determined by the commission;

(2) be designed to protect the health of the elk population in this state; and

(3) include provisions for testing, identification,

transportation, and inspection under the disease surveillance program.

(c) A person commits an offense if the person knowingly violates a rule adopted by the commission under this section.

(d) An offense under Subsection (c) is a Class C misdemeanor unless it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has previously been convicted of an offense under that subsection, in which event the offense is a Class B misdemeanor.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 948 (H.B. 3330), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2009.

Sec. 161.0542. NOTICE OF WILDLIFE DISEASE OUTBREAK.

(a) Notwithstanding any law restricting the disclosure of information by the commission and subject to Subsection (b), if the commission becomes aware of a wildlife disease outbreak on a property, the commission shall provide notice of the location and nature of the outbreak to:

- (1) each owner of adjacent property; and
- (2) the Parks and Wildlife Department.

(b) Subsection (a) applies only to a disease that the commission has designated as reportable.

Added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., R.S., Ch. 247 (S.B. 811), Sec. 1, eff. May 27, 2023.

Sec. 161.0545. MOVEMENT OF ANIMAL PRODUCTS. The commission may adopt rules that require the certification of persons who transport or dispose of inedible animal products, including carcasses, body parts, and waste material. The commission by rule may provide terms and conditions for the issuance, renewal, and revocation of a certification under this section.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 764, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Sec. 161.055. SLAUGHTER PLANT COLLECTION. (a) The commission may require slaughter plants to collect and submit blood samples and other diagnostic specimens for testing for disease.

(b) The commission by rule shall determine the method of collecting, submitting, and testing of blood samples and other

diagnostic specimens.

(c) The owner or operator of a slaughter plant commits an offense if the slaughter plant fails to comply with this section or a rule adopted under this section. An offense under this subsection is a Class C misdemeanor unless it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has been previously convicted under this section, in which event the offense is a Class B misdemeanor.

Added by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 273, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

Sec. 161.056. ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM. (a) In order to provide for disease control and enhance the ability to trace disease-infected animals or animals that have been exposed to disease, the commission may develop and implement an animal identification program that is no more stringent than a federal animal disease traceability or other federal animal identification program.

(b) Repealed by Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 181, Sec. 2, eff. May 25, 2013.

(c) The commission may adopt rules to require the use of official identification as part of the animal identification program under Subsection (a) for animal disease control or animal emergency management.

(d) The commission may by a two-thirds vote adopt rules to provide for an animal identification program more stringent than a program allowed by Subsection (a) only for control of a specific animal disease or for animal emergency management.

(e) Information collected by the commission under this section is exempt from the public disclosure requirements of Chapter 552, Government Code. The commission may provide information to another person, including a governmental entity, without altering the confidential status of the information. The commission may release information to:

(1) a person who owns or controls animals and seeks information regarding those animals, if the person requests the information in writing;

(2) the attorney general's office, for the purpose of law enforcement;

(3) the secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, for the purpose of animal health protection;

(4) the secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, for the purpose of homeland security;

(5) the Department of State Health Services, for the purpose of protecting the public health from zoonotic diseases;

(6) any person, under an order of a court of competent jurisdiction;

(7) a state, municipal, or county emergency management authority, for the purpose of management or response to natural or man-made disasters; or

(8) any person the executive director of the commission considers appropriate, if the executive director determines that:

(A) livestock may be threatened by a disease, agent, or pest; and

(B) the release of the information is related to actions the commission may take under this section.

(f) Notwithstanding Subsection (e), the commission shall release information collected under this section if the release is necessary for emergency management purposes under Chapter 418, Government Code. The release of information under this subsection does not alter the confidential status of the information.

(g) Repealed by Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 181, Sec. 2, eff. May 25, 2013.

(h) Repealed by Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 181, Sec. 2, eff. May 25, 2013.

(i) The commission may adopt rules necessary to implement and enforce this section.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 18, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.
Renumbered from Agriculture Code Sec. 161.054 by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 165, Sec. 31.01(2), eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 203 (H.B. 1361), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2005.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 181 (H.B. 2311), Sec. 1, eff. May 25, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 181 (H.B. [2311](#)), Sec. 2, eff. May 25, 2013.

Sec. 161.057. CLASSIFICATION OF AREAS. (a) The commission by rule may prescribe criteria for classifying areas in the state for disease control. The criteria must be based on sound epidemiological principles. The commission may prescribe different control measures and procedures for areas with different classifications.

(b) The commission by rule may designate as a particular classification an area consisting of one or more counties.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 31, Sec. 1, eff. April 27, 1995.
Renumbered from Sec. 161.053 by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 62, Sec. 19.01(2), eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Sec. 161.058. COMPENSATION OF LIVESTOCK OR FOWL OWNER. (a) The commission may pay an indemnity to the owner of livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl exposed to or infected with a disease if the commission considers it necessary to eradicate the disease and to dispose of the exposed or diseased livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl. The commission shall provide the owner with information regarding available state or federal indemnity funds.

(b) The commission may adopt rules for the implementation of this section, including rules governing:

- (1) eligibility for compensation;
- (2) amounts of compensation; and
- (3) limits and restrictions on compensation.

(c) The commission may spend funds appropriated for the purpose of this section only for direct payment to owners of exposed or infected livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 764, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.
Amended by:

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 149 (H.B. [1521](#)), Sec. 3, eff. May 24, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 149 (H.B. [1521](#)), Sec. 4, eff. May 24, 2013.

Sec. 161.059. QUALITY ASSURANCE ASSISTANCE. On request of an organization representing producers of a commodity in an industry regulated by the commission, the commission may assist in the development, support, and oversight of a food safety or quality assurance program, including the provision of testing services. Added by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 410, Sec. 2, eff. May 28, 2001.

Sec. 161.060. AUTHORITY TO SET AND COLLECT FEES. (a) The commission may charge a fee, as provided by commission rule, for an inspection made by the commission.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 200, Sec. 5(a), eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1288 (H.B. [1992](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 161.0601. CERTIFICATES OF VETERINARY INSPECTION. (a) The commission by rule may provide for the issuance, including electronically, of a certificate of veterinary inspection by a veterinarian to a person transporting livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl.

(b) The commission by rule shall set and charge a fee for each certificate of veterinary inspection provided to a veterinarian under this section.

Added by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 205 (H.B. [1363](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2005.

Amended by:

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1090 (H.B. [3569](#)), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2013.

Sec. 161.0602. PERSONS OR LABORATORIES PERFORMING EQUINE INFECTIOUS ANEMIA TESTS. (a) The commission shall adopt rules that require a person or laboratory to be approved by the commission if the person or laboratory performs an official equine infectious anemia test.

(b) Rules adopted under this section must include:

(1) approval requirements;

- (2) provisions governing the issuance, renewal, and revocation of an approval;
- (3) inspection requirements;
- (4) recordkeeping requirements;
- (5) equine infectious anemia testing methods approved by the commission; and
- (6) proficiency standards.

Added by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1264 (H.B. [3738](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2015.

Sec. 161.0603. LABORATORY TESTING. (a) The Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory is the state's regulatory animal health laboratory.

(b) This section does not prevent the commission from:

- (1) using a laboratory other than the Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory for a test as needed; or
- (2) collecting specimens and performing field tests to diagnose animal diseases.

(c) The commission and the Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory shall enter into a memorandum of understanding to:

- (1) establish the laboratory services to be performed by the Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory;
- (2) provide reporting requirements for the Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory on all test requests received from the commission; and
- (3) set fees associated with laboratory services performed for the commission in amounts sufficient to recover the costs of those services.

(d) The commission and the Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory shall annually review the memorandum of understanding under Subsection (c).

Added by Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. [705](#)), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2021.

SUBCHAPTER D. QUARANTINES

Sec. 161.061. ESTABLISHMENT. (a) The commission may establish a quarantine against all or the portion of a state, territory, or country in which a disease listed in rules adopted under Section 161.041 exists.

(b) A quarantine established under Subsection (a) may extend to any affected area, including a county, district, pasture, lot, ranch, farm, field, range, thoroughfare, building, stable, or stockyard pen.

(c) The commission may establish a quarantine to prohibit or regulate the movement of:

(1) any article or animal that the commission designates to be a carrier of a disease listed in rules adopted under Section 161.041 or a potential carrier of one of those diseases, if movement is not otherwise regulated or prohibited; and

(2) an animal into an affected area, including a county district, pasture, lot, ranch, farm, field, range, thoroughfare, building, stable, or stockyard pen.

(d) The commission by rule may delegate its authority to establish a quarantine under this section to the executive director, who shall promptly notify the members of the commission when a quarantine is established.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1397, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 31, Sec. 2, eff. April 27, 1995; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 19, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. 705), Sec. 11, eff. September 1, 2021.

Sec. 161.0615. STATEWIDE OR WIDESPREAD QUARANTINE. (a) The commission may quarantine livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl in all or any part of this state as a means of immediately restricting the movement of animals potentially infected with disease and shall clearly describe the territory included in a quarantine area.

(b) The commission by rule may delegate its authority to quarantine livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl under this section to the executive director, who shall

promptly notify the members of the commission of the quarantine.

(c) The commission by rule shall prescribe the manner in which notice of a statewide or widespread quarantine under this section is to be published.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. 2543), Sec. 15, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 161.062. PUBLICATION OF NOTICE. (a) Except as provided by Section 161.0615, the commission shall give notice of a quarantine against another state, territory, or country by publishing notice in a newspaper published in Texas. The quarantine takes effect on the date of publication. The commission shall pay the expense of publication out of any appropriation made for office and stationery expenses of the commission.

(b) The commission shall give notice of a quarantine established within this state by publishing notice in a newspaper published in the county in which the quarantine is established, by posting notice at the courthouse door of that county, or by delivering a written notice to the owner or caretaker of the animals or places to be quarantined. The commission may pay the expense of publication or posting out of any appropriation made for the office and stationery expenses of the commission or out of any appropriation made for the control or eradication of communicable diseases of livestock. The commissioners court of a county in which a quarantine is established may pay the expenses of publication or posting out of any available funds of the county.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1398, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. 2543), Sec. 14, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 161.063. CONTENTS OF NOTICE. (a) A quarantine notice must state the requirements and restrictions under which animals may be permitted to enter this state or to be moved from a quarantined area within this state. If the seriousness of the disease is sufficient to warrant prohibiting the movement of animals, the notice must state that the movement is prohibited. The

quarantine notice must state the class of persons authorized by the commission to issue certificates or permits permitting movement.

(b) A quarantine notice must state the cause for which the quarantine is established, whether for infection or for exposure.

(c) A quarantine notice must describe the area or premises quarantined in a reasonable manner that enables a person to identify the area or premises, but is not required to describe the area or premises by metes and bounds.

(d) If the quarantine regulates or prohibits the movement of a carrier or potential carrier of a disease, the commission may prescribe any exceptions, terms, conditions, or provisions that the commission considers necessary or desirable to promote the objectives of this chapter or to minimize the economic impact of the quarantine without endangering those objectives or the health and safety of the public. Any exceptions, terms, conditions, or provisions prescribed under this subsection must be stated in the quarantine notice.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1398, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Sec. 161.064. EFFECT OF QUARANTINE. A quarantine that is established for any location has the effect of quarantining all livestock, domestic animals, or domestic fowl of the kind mentioned in the quarantine notice that are on or enter that location during the existence of the quarantine, regardless of who owns or controls the livestock, domestic animals, or domestic fowl.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1398, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Sec. 161.065. MOVEMENT FROM QUARANTINED AREA; MOVEMENT OF QUARANTINED ANIMALS. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b) of this section, a person, in violation of a quarantine, may not:

(1) move livestock, domestic animals, or domestic fowl in this state from any quarantined place in or outside this state;

(2) move quarantined livestock, domestic animals, or domestic fowl from the place in which they are quarantined; or

(3) move commodities or animals designated as disease carriers or potential disease carriers in this state from a quarantined place in or outside this state.

(b) The commission may provide for a written certificate or written permit authorizing the movement of commodities or animals from quarantined places or the movement of quarantined commodities or animals. The certificate or permit must be issued by a veterinarian or other person authorized by the commission to issue a certificate or permit. Each certificate or permit must be issued in conformity with the requirements stated in the quarantine notice.

(c) If the commission finds animals that have been moved in violation of a quarantine established under this chapter or in violation of any other livestock sanitary law, the commission shall quarantine the animals until they have been properly treated, vaccinated, tested, or disposed of in accordance with the rules of the commission.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1398, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Amended by:

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. [705](#)), Sec. 12, eff. September 1, 2021.

SUBCHAPTER E. REGULATION OF IMPORTATION OF ANIMALS

Sec. 161.081. IMPORTATION OF ANIMALS. (a) The commission by rule may regulate the movement, including movement by a railroad company or other common carrier, of livestock, exotic livestock, domestic animals, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl into this state from another state, territory, or country.

(b) The commission by rule may provide the method for inspecting and testing animals before and after entry into this state.

(c) The commission by rule may provide for the issuance and form of health certificates and entry permits. The rules may include standards for determining which veterinarians of this state, other states, and departments of the federal government are authorized to issue the certificates or permits.

(d) Repealed by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 205, Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2005.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1399, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Amended by Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 239, Sec. 68, eff. Sept. 1, 1985; Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 19, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 20, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 205 (H.B. [1363](#)), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2005.

SUBCHAPTER F. VETERINARIAN REPORTS OF DISEASED ANIMALS

Sec. 161.101. DUTY TO REPORT.

(a) A veterinarian, a veterinary diagnostic laboratory, or a person having care, custody, or control of an animal shall report to the commission the existence of diseases listed in rules adopted by the commission among livestock, exotic livestock, bison, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl within 24 hours after diagnosis of the disease. The commission shall adopt and periodically update rules listing the diseases that the commission determines require reporting under this section. Section [2001.0045](#), Government Code, does not apply to rules adopted under this subsection.

(b) In addition to reporting required by Subsection (a), the commission may adopt rules that require a veterinarian, a veterinary diagnostic laboratory, or a person having care, custody, or control of an animal to report the existence of a disease other than bluetongue in an animal to the commission within 24 hours after diagnosis if the disease:

(1) is recognized by the United States Department of Agriculture as:

(A) a foreign animal disease; or

(B) a reportable animal disease;

(2) is the subject of a cooperative eradication program with the United States Department of Agriculture;

(3) is an animal disease reportable to the World Organisation for Animal Health; or

(4) is the subject of a state of emergency, as declared by the governor.

(c) The commission may adopt rules that require a veterinarian, a veterinary diagnostic laboratory, or a person

having care, custody, or control of an animal to report a disease not covered by Subsection (a) or (b) if the commission determines that action to be necessary for the protection of animal health in this state. The commission shall immediately deliver a copy of a rule adopted under this subsection to the appropriate legislative oversight committees.

(d) The commission may not adopt, amend, or repeal a rule under this section unless the commission holds a public hearing on the proposed action following public notice of the hearing.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1401, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981. Amended by Acts 1983, 68th Leg., 1st C.S., p. 27, ch. 3, Sec. 23, eff. June 27, 1983; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 21, eff. Sept. 1, 1995; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 764, Sec. 2, eff. Jan. 1, 2000; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 510, Sec. 1, eff. June 11, 2001; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1312, Sec. 9, eff. June 21, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 198 (H.B. [4006](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2009.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. [705](#)), Sec. 13, eff. September 1, 2021.

Sec. 161.102. SUBMISSION OF SPECIMEN OF ANTHRAX VICTIM. Immediately after pronouncing that an animal has died from anthrax, as evidenced by a clinical or postmortem examination, a veterinarian shall prepare and submit to the commission or a laboratory approved by the commission:

- (1) a suitable specimen from the animal;
- (2) the name and address of the owner or caretaker of the animal; and
- (3) the location of the premises on which the animal died.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1402, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Sec. 161.103. NOTICE OF REQUIRED METHOD OF DISPOSAL. A veterinarian who knows or suspects that livestock or domestic fowl have died from anthrax or ornithosis shall inform the owner or caretaker of the animal to dispose of each carcass by fire in

accordance with Section [161.004](#) of this code.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1402, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

SUBCHAPTER G. REGULATION OF LIVESTOCK MARKETS

Sec. 161.111. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "livestock market" means a stockyard, sales pavilion, or sales ring where livestock, exotic livestock, or exotic fowl are assembled or concentrated at regular or irregular intervals for sale, trade, barter, or exchange.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1402, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 22, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 161.112. RULES. (a) Following notice and public hearing, the commission shall adopt rules relating to the movement of livestock, exotic livestock, and exotic fowl from livestock markets and shall require tests, immunization, or treatment as necessary to protect against the spread of communicable diseases.

(b) Following notice and public hearing, the commission may adopt rules requiring permits for moving exotic livestock and exotic fowl from livestock markets as necessary to protect against the spread of communicable diseases.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1402, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 23, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. [705](#)), Sec. 14, eff. September 1, 2021.

Sec. 161.113. TESTING, TREATMENT, OR VACCINATION OF LIVESTOCK. (a) The commission shall adopt rules for testing, treatment, or vaccination under this subchapter. The state may not be required to pay the cost of fees charged for the testing, treatment, or vaccination.

(b) If the commission requires the dipping of livestock under this subchapter, the livestock shall be treated in a manner

prescribed by rule of the commission.

(c) The commission may require the owner or operator of a livestock market to furnish adequate equipment or facilities or have access to essential equipment or facilities within the immediate vicinity of the livestock market.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1402, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Amended by Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 995, ch. 235, art. 1, Sec. 6, eff. Sept. 1, 1983.

Amended by:

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. [705](#)), Sec. 15, eff. September 1, 2021.

Sec. 161.114. INSPECTION OF LIVESTOCK. An authorized inspector may examine livestock consigned to and delivered on the premises of a livestock market before the livestock are offered for sale. If the inspector considers it necessary, the inspector may have an animal tested or vaccinated. Any testing or vaccination must occur before the animal is removed from the livestock market.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1403, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 204 (H.B. [1362](#)), Sec. 1, eff. May 27, 2005.

Sec. 161.115. ENTRY POWER. An agent of the commission is entitled to enter any livestock market for the exercise of authority or performance of a duty under this subchapter.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1403, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Sec. 161.116. SALE OR DELIVERY OF DISEASED CATTLE. (a) In this action, "diseased" means affected by actinobacillosis, actinomycosis, carcinoma, mastitis, or any other disease that renders the carcass of an animal potentially dangerous for human consumption and has been so designated by rule of the commission.

(b) Except as provided by Subsection (c) of this section, a person may not sell diseased cattle unless:

(1) the cattle are sold through a livestock market where visual examination of livestock is made by an agent of the

commission or by the United States Department of Agriculture; or

(2) the cattle are sold by a recognized slaughtering establishment maintaining federal, state, or state-approved veterinary postmortem inspection.

(c) The original owner of diseased cattle may sell the cattle in violation of Subsection (b) of this section if the cattle are sold and delivered on the premises of the original owner, but the purchaser shall comply with the requirements of this section.

(d) A person may not release diseased cattle from a livestock market unless the cattle are:

(1) consigned directly to a federally approved terminal market or to a slaughtering establishment maintaining federal, state, or state-approved veterinary postmortem inspection; and

(2) accompanied by a certificate or permit issued by a representative of the commission or the United States Department of Agriculture naming the terminal market or slaughtering establishment.

(e) This section does not prevent the original owner of diseased cattle, or an agent of the owner, from voiding the sale of the cattle if the owner is not satisfied with the top bid price, but the owner shall obtain a certificate or permit under Subsection (d) of this section and shall deliver the cattle to the place specified on the certificate or permit. A person is not liable for a violation of this subsection unless the agent of the commission shows the person a list of approved establishments to which the cattle may be consigned and allows the person to select an establishment from that list.

(f) A person may not deliver or divert diseased cattle consigned under a certificate or permit issued under Subsection (d) of this section to a place other than the terminal market or slaughtering establishment named in the certificate or permit. The cattle must be delivered to the terminal market or slaughtering establishment not later than the fifth day following the day on which the certificate or permit is issued.

(g) A person may not release diseased cattle from a terminal market or slaughtering establishment to which the cattle have been

consigned under a certificate or permit issued under Subsection (d) of this section except on authority of the commission.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1403, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

SUBCHAPTER H. REMEDIES AND PENALTIES

Sec. 161.131. INJUNCTION. (a) Any citizen of this state may sue for an injunction to enforce a provision or restrain a violation of this chapter other than Section 161.048, Subchapter F, or Subchapter G.

(b) A court may hear and dispose of a suit under this section in term or in vacation. A court shall direct that reasonable notice be given to a defendant in a suit for a mandatory injunction.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1404, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Sec. 161.132. CIVIL SUIT AGAINST NONRESIDENT VIOLATOR. (a) If a person who commits an offense under Section 161.135, 161.136, 161.137, 161.138, 161.141, or 161.143 of this code is not a resident of this state, is a foreign corporation not permitted to do business in this state, or is absent from this state at the time the offense is committed, the county attorney of the county in which the violation occurs shall sue that person for collection of the fine provided for the offense. In addition, the county attorney shall seek to attach that person's property in this state and, after final judgment, have the attached property sold under execution for the purpose of paying the fine and costs of suit.

(b) A suit under this section shall be brought in the name of the State of Texas and the court may not require a cost or attachment bond.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1404, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Sec. 161.133. VIOLATION BY CORPORATION. If a corporation, including a railroad company or a common carrier, violates a provision of this chapter other than Section 161.048, Subchapter F, or Subchapter G, the county attorney of the county in which the offense occurs shall file and prosecute a civil suit against the corporation on behalf of the state.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1404, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Sec. 161.134. PROOF OF TREATMENT OR VACCINATION. In the trial of any case involving the compliance of an owner or caretaker with a provision of this chapter requiring the treatment or vaccination of livestock, a person may not attempt to prove that the action was taken by a person other than an authorized representative of the commission.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1404, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Amended by:

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (S.B. 705), Sec. 16, eff. September 1, 2021.

Sec. 161.135. IMPROPER DISPOSAL OF DISEASED CARCASS. (a) A person required to dispose of a diseased carcass in accordance with Section 161.004 of this code commits an offense if the person fails to dispose of the carcass in accordance with that section.

(b) An offense under this section is a Class B misdemeanor for each animal carcass improperly disposed of.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1404, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981.

Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 20, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.

Sec. 161.136. ENTRY OF ANIMALS IN EXHIBITION WITHOUT CERTIFICATE. (a) A person commits an offense if, without a certificate required by rule of the commission under Section 161.043 of this code, the person:

(1) enters livestock, exotic livestock, domestic animals, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl into an exhibition, show, or fair; or

(2) brings livestock, exotic livestock, domestic animals, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl on the grounds of an exhibition, show, or fair for the purpose of entering.

(b) A person commits an offense if, as owner or person in charge of the exhibition, show, or fair, the person permits entry under Subsection (a) of this section.

(c) An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor

unless it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has been previously convicted under this section, in which event the offense is a Class B misdemeanor.

(d) Each entry of an animal without a certificate in an exhibition, show, or fair constitutes a separate offense.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1404, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981. Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 21, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 548, Sec. 4, eff. Sept. 1, 1993; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 24, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 161.137. MOVEMENT OF ANIMALS FROM STOCKYARD OR RAILWAY SHIPPING PEN WITHOUT CERTIFICATE. (a) A person commits an offense if the person:

(1) removes livestock from a stockyard or railway shipping pen without a certificate required by rule of the commission under Section [161.044](#) of this code; or

(2) as owner or person in charge of the stockyard or pen, permits the removal of livestock under Subdivision (1) of this section.

(b) An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor for each head of livestock moved as prohibited by Subsection (a) of this section unless it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has been previously convicted under this section, in which event the offense is a Class B misdemeanor.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1405, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981. Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 22, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 548, Sec. 5, eff. Sept. 1, 1993.

Sec. 161.1375. MOVEMENT OF FERAL SWINE. (a) A person commits an offense if the person recklessly:

(1) moves feral swine in a manner that is not in compliance with rules adopted by the commission under Section [161.0412](#) or [161.054](#); or

(2) as the owner or person in charge of a holding facility in which a feral swine is held, permits another to remove feral swine from the holding facility in a manner that is not in compliance with those rules.

(b) An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor for each feral hog that is moved or permitted to be removed unless it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has been previously convicted under this section, in which event the offense is a Class B misdemeanor.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. [2543](#)), Sec. 16, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 161.138. REFUSAL TO PERMIT ENTRANCE. (a) A person commits an offense if the person refuses to permit a representative of the commission to enter property or premises of which the person is the owner, tenant, or caretaker for the purpose of carrying out a provision of this chapter.

(b) An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor unless it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has been previously convicted under this section, in which event the offense is a Class B misdemeanor.

(c) A person commits a separate offense for each day of refusal under Subsection (a) of this section.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1405, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981. Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 23, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 548, Sec. 6, eff. Sept. 1, 1993.

Sec. 161.139. REFUSAL TO PERMIT INSPECTION OF SHIPMENT.

(a) A person commits an offense if the person:

(1) refuses to permit inspection of animals under Section [161.048](#) of this code; or

(2) fails to stop a truck, trailer, wagon, or automobile suspected of carrying animals or animal products if requested or signaled to do so by an agent of the commission.

(b) An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor unless it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has been previously convicted under this section, in which event the offense is a Class B misdemeanor.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1405, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981. Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 24, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 548, Sec. 7, eff. Sept. 1, 1993;

Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 25, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 161.140. REFUSAL TO PERMIT EXAMINATION OF ANIMAL OR CARCASS. (a) A person commits an offense if the person:

(1) refuses to allow the commission or an agent of the commission to examine an animal or all or part of an animal carcass that is owned by or possessed by the person and that the commission or agent has reason to believe is affected by a communicable disease; or

(2) hinders or obstructs the commission or its agent in an examination under Subdivision (1) of this subsection.

(b) An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor unless it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has been previously convicted under this section, in which event the offense is a Class B misdemeanor.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1405, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981. Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 25, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 548, Sec. 8, eff. Sept. 1, 1993; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 26, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 161.1405. REFUSAL TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO ANIMAL. (a) A person who is the owner or caretaker of livestock, exotic livestock, fowl, or exotic fowl commits an offense if the person knowingly refuses to gather the animals for testing, identification, inspection, or another procedure required by commission rule.

(b) An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor unless it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has been previously convicted under this section, in which event the offense is a Class B misdemeanor.

(c) A person commits a separate offense on each day of refusal under Subsection (a) of this section.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 31, Sec. 3, eff. April 27, 1995.

Sec. 161.141. MOVEMENT IN VIOLATION OF QUARANTINE. (a) A person commits an offense if the person violates Section [161.065](#)(a)(1) or (a)(2) of this code or, as owner or caretaker of

the livestock, exotic livestock, domestic animals, domestic fowl, or exotic fowl, the person permits movement in violation of Section 161.065(a)(1) or (a)(2) of this code. Except as provided by Subsection (c) or (d) of this section, an offense under this subsection is a Class C misdemeanor for each animal moved in violation of the quarantine unless it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has been previously convicted under this section, in which event the offense is a Class B misdemeanor.

(b) A person commits an offense if the person violates Section 161.065(a)(3) of this code or, as owner or caretaker of the commodities or animals, the person permits movement in violation of Section 161.065(a)(3) of this code. Except as provided by Subsection (c) or (d) of this section, an offense under this subsection is a Class C misdemeanor for each animal or shipment of commodities moved in violation of the quarantine unless it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has been previously convicted under this section, in which event the offense is a Class B misdemeanor.

(c) An offense under Subsection (a) or (b) of this section for violating a quarantine established in relation to foot-and-mouth disease is a Class A misdemeanor.

(d) A second or subsequent offense under Subsection (c) is a felony punishable by:

(1) imprisonment in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice for not less than two years nor more than five years; and

(2) a fine of not more than \$10,000.

(e) A person commits a separate offense for each county into which livestock, domestic animals, domestic fowl, disease carriers, or potential disease carriers are moved within six months following the original movement in violation of Section 161.065 of this code.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1406, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981. Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 26, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 548, Sec. 9, eff. Sept. 1, 1993; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 27, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 87 (S.B. 1969), Sec. 25.006,

eff. September 1, 2009.

Sec. 161.142. SALE OR MOVEMENT OF ANIMAL WITH GLANDERS. (a) A person commits an offense if the person:

(1) wilfully fails or refuses to place in secure confinement apart from all other livestock an animal of the horse or ass species that is diseased with glanders and is owned by that person or subject to that person's control;

(2) sells, trades, or offers to sell or trade an animal of the horse or ass species that the person knows or suspects to be diseased with glanders;

(3) drives, leads, or rides along or across a public highway an animal that the person knows is diseased with glanders; or

(4) permits an animal that the person knows is diseased with glanders to run at large on the open range.

(b) An offense under this section is a Class B misdemeanor.

(c), (d) Deleted by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 27, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1406, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981. Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 27, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.

Sec. 161.143. IMPORTATION OF ANIMALS. (a) A person, including a railroad company or other common carrier, commits an offense if the person knowingly moves an animal into this state in violation of a rule of the commission adopted under Section [161.081](#) of this code.

(b) An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor unless it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has been previously convicted under this section, in which event the offense is a Class B misdemeanor.

(c) A person commits a separate offense for each animal moved in violation of a rule of the commission.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1407, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981. Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 28, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 548, Sec. 10, eff. Sept. 1, 1993.

Sec. 161.145. VETERINARIAN FAILURE TO REPORT DISEASED ANIMALS. (a) A person commits an offense if, as a veterinarian, the person wilfully fails or refuses to comply with a provision of Subchapter F of this chapter or with a rule adopted under that subchapter.

(b) An offense under this section is a Class B misdemeanor. Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1407, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981. Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 29, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 764, Sec. 3, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Sec. 161.146. COMPLIANCE WITH LIVESTOCK MARKET REGULATION. (a) A person commits an offense if the person, as owner or operator of a livestock market, fails or refuses to furnish adequate facilities in accordance with Section 161.113(c) of this code or fails or refuses to permit an agent of the commission to enter the market, exercise an authority, or perform a duty under Subchapter G of this chapter. A person commits a separate offense for each day of failure or refusal.

(b) A person commits an offense if the person removes livestock from a livestock market without a certificate required by rule of the commission adopted under Subchapter G of this chapter.

(c) A person commits an offense if the person violates any provision of Subchapter G of this chapter or a rule adopted under that subchapter. A person commits a separate offense for each day on which the person violates a provision of the subchapter or a rule.

(d) A person commits an offense if the person violates a provision of Section 161.116 of this code. A person commits a separate offense for each animal sold, released, diverted, or delivered in violation of that section.

(e) An offense under Subsection (a), (c), or (d) of this section is a Class B misdemeanor. An offense under Subsection (b) of this section is a Class B misdemeanor for each animal removed from the livestock market.

Acts 1981, 67th Leg., p. 1407, ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1981. Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 30, eff. Sept. 1,

1989.

Sec. 161.147. FAILURE TO MAINTAIN DEALER RECORDS. (a) A person commits an offense if the person fails to maintain or permit the inspection of a record required under Section 161.049 of this code.

(b) An offense under this section is a Class B misdemeanor. Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 836, Sec. 31, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.

Sec. 161.148. ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTY. (a) The commission may impose an administrative penalty on a person who violates this subtitle or a rule or order adopted under this subtitle.

(b) The penalty for a violation may be in an amount not to exceed \$5,000. Each day a violation continues or occurs is a separate violation for purposes of imposing a penalty. The amount of the penalty shall not be based on a per head basis.

(c) The amount of the penalty shall be based on:

(1) the seriousness of the violation, including the nature, circumstances, extent, and gravity of any prohibited acts, and the hazard or potential hazard created to the health, safety, or economic welfare of the public;

(2) the economic harm to property or the environment caused by the violation;

(3) the history of previous violations;

(4) the amount necessary to deter future violations;

(5) efforts to correct the violation; and

(6) any other matter that justice may require.

(d) An executive director who determines that a violation has occurred may issue to the commission a report that states the facts on which the determination is based and the director's recommendation on the imposition of a penalty, including a recommendation on the amount of the penalty.

(e) Within 14 days after the date the report is issued, the executive director shall give written notice of the report to the person. The notice may be given by certified mail. The notice must include a brief summary of the alleged violation and a statement of the amount of the recommended penalty and must inform the person

that the person has a right to a hearing on the occurrence of the violation, the amount of the penalty, or both the occurrence of the violation and the amount of the penalty.

(f) Within 20 days after the date the person receives the notice, the person in writing may accept the determination and recommended penalty of the executive director or may make a written request for a hearing on the occurrence of the violation, the amount of the penalty, or both the occurrence of the violation and the amount of the penalty.

(g) If the person accepts the determination and recommended penalty of the executive director, the commission by order shall approve the determination and impose the recommended penalty.

(h) If the person requests a hearing or fails to respond timely to the notice, the executive director shall set a hearing and give notice of the hearing to the person. The hearing shall be held by an administrative law judge of the State Office of Administrative Hearings. The administrative law judge shall make findings of fact and conclusions of law and promptly issue to the commission a proposal for a decision about the occurrence of the violation and the amount of a proposed penalty. Based on the findings of fact, conclusions of law, and proposal for a decision, the commission by order may find that a violation has occurred and impose a penalty or may find that no violation occurred.

(i) The notice of the commission's order given to the person under Chapter [2001](#), Government Code, must include a statement of the right of the person to judicial review of the order.

(j) Within 30 days after the date the commission's order becomes final as provided by Section [2001.144](#), Government Code, the person shall:

(1) pay the amount of the penalty;

(2) pay the amount of the penalty and file a petition for judicial review contesting the occurrence of the violation, the amount of the penalty, or both the occurrence of the violation and the amount of the penalty; or

(3) without paying the amount of the penalty, file a petition for judicial review contesting the occurrence of the violation, the amount of the penalty, or both the occurrence of the

violation and the amount of the penalty.

(k) Within the 30-day period, a person who acts under Subsection (j)(3) of this section may:

(1) stay enforcement of the penalty by:

(A) paying the amount of the penalty to the court for placement in an escrow account; or

(B) giving to the court a supersedeas bond that is approved by the court for the amount of the penalty and that is effective until all judicial review of the board's order is final; or

(2) request the court to stay enforcement of the penalty by:

(A) filing with the court a sworn affidavit of the person stating that the person is financially unable to pay the amount of the penalty and is financially unable to give the supersedeas bond; and

(B) giving a copy of the affidavit to the executive director by certified mail.

(1) An executive director who receives a copy of an affidavit under Subsection (k)(2) of this section may file with the court, within five days after the date the copy is received, a contest to the affidavit. The court shall hold a hearing on the facts alleged in the affidavit as soon as practicable and shall stay the enforcement of the penalty on finding that the alleged facts are true. The person who files an affidavit has the burden of proving that the person is financially unable to pay the amount of the penalty and to give a supersedeas bond.

(m) If the person does not pay the amount of the penalty and the enforcement of the penalty is not stayed, the executive director may refer the matter to the attorney general for collection of the amount of the penalty.

(n) Judicial review of the order of the commission:

(1) is instituted by filing a petition as provided by Subchapter G, Chapter 2001, Government Code; and

(2) is under the substantial evidence rule.

(o) If the court sustains the occurrence of the violation, the court may uphold or reduce the amount of the penalty and order

the person to pay the full or reduced amount of the penalty. If the court does not sustain the occurrence of the violation, the court shall order that no penalty is owed.

(p) When the judgment of the court becomes final, the court shall proceed under this subsection. If the person paid the amount of the penalty and if that amount is reduced or is not upheld by the court, the court shall order that the appropriate amount plus accrued interest be remitted to the person. The rate of the interest is the rate charged on loans to depository institutions by the New York Federal Reserve Bank, and the interest shall be paid for the period beginning on the date the penalty was paid and ending on the date the penalty is remitted. If the person gave a supersedeas bond and if the amount of the penalty is not upheld by the court, the court shall order the release of the bond. If the person gave a supersedeas bond and if the amount of the penalty is reduced, the court shall order the release of the bond after the person pays the amount.

(q) A penalty collected under this section shall be remitted to the comptroller for deposit in the general revenue fund.

(r) All proceedings under this section are subject to Chapter [2001](#), Government Code.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 28, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 213 (H.B. [3856](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2021.

Sec. 161.149. TEST FOR EQUINE INFECTIOUS ANEMIA. (a) In this section, "equine animal" includes horses, mules, asses, ponies, and other members of the horse family, but does not include zebras.

(b) A person commits an offense if the person transfers ownership of an equine animal eight months of age or older that has not tested negative for equine infectious anemia during the 12 months preceding the date of the transfer unless the equine animal:

(1) is a nursing foal that is transferred with its dam and the dam has tested negative for equine infectious anemia during the 12 months preceding the date of the transfer; or

(2) is sold to slaughter to be tested for equine infectious anemia at a slaughter establishment.

(c) An offense under Subsection (b) is a Class C misdemeanor unless it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has been previously convicted under this section, in which event the offense is a Class B misdemeanor.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 263, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Sec. 161.150. FAILURE TO REGISTER FERAL SWINE HOLDING FACILITIES; HOLDING OF FERAL SWINE. (a) A person commits an offense if the person recklessly:

(1) maintains a feral swine holding facility that is not registered under Section [161.0412](#); or

(2) as the owner or person in charge of a holding facility that is not registered under Section [161.0412](#), holds or permits another to hold a feral swine in the holding facility.

(b) Each feral swine held or permitted to be held in violation of Subsection (a)(2) constitutes a separate offense.

(c) An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor unless it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has been previously convicted under this section, in which event the offense is a Class B misdemeanor.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1242 (H.B. [2543](#)), Sec. 16, eff. September 1, 2007.