

**HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE  
TITLE 10. HEALTH AND SAFETY OF ANIMALS  
CHAPTER 823. ANIMAL SHELTERS**

**Section 823.001. Definitions.**

In this chapter:

(1) "Animal shelter" means a facility that keeps or legally impounds stray, homeless, abandoned, or unwanted animals.

(2) Repealed by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1, Sec. 3.1639(120), eff. April 2, 2015.

(3) Repealed by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1, Sec. 3.1639(120), eff. April 2, 2015.

(4) "Department" means the Department of State Health Services.

Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 678, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1989. Amended by: Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1 (S.B. 219), Sec. 3.1603, eff. April 2, 2015. Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1 (S.B. 219), Sec. 3.1639(120), eff. April 2, 2015.

**Section 823.002. Exemption for Certain Counties, Clinics, and Facilities.**

This chapter does not apply to:

(1) a county having a population of less than 75,000;

(2) a veterinary medicine clinic; or

(3) a livestock commission facility.

Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 678, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1989. Amended by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 14, Sec. 280, eff. Sept. 1, 1991.

**Section 823.003. Standards for Animal Shelters; Criminal Penalty.**

(a) Each animal shelter operated in this state shall comply with the standards for:

(1) housing and sanitation as provided in Chapter 826 for quarantine and impoundment facilities; and

(2) animal control officer training adopted under Chapter 829.

(b) An animal shelter shall separate animals in its custody at all times by species, by sex (if known), and if the animals are not related to one another, by size.

(c) An animal shelter may not confine healthy animals with sick, injured, or diseased animals.

(d) Each person who operates an animal shelter shall employ a veterinarian at least once a year to inspect the shelter to determine whether it complies with the requirements of this chapter and Chapter 829. The veterinarian shall file copies of the veterinarian's report with the person operating the shelter and with the department on forms prescribed by the department.

(e) The executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission may require each person operating an animal shelter to keep records of the date and disposition of animals in its custody, to maintain the records on the business premises of the animal shelter, and to make the records available for inspection at reasonable times.

(f) A person commits an offense if the person substantially violates this section. An offense under this subsection is a Class C misdemeanor.

Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 678, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1989. Amended by: Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1331 (S.B. 1562), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2007. Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1 (S.B. 219), Sec. 3.1604, eff. April 2, 2015.

#### **Sec. 823.004. Microchip Scan Required.**

As soon as practicable after an animal is placed in the custody of an animal shelter or a releasing agency as defined by Section 828.001, including an animal rescue organization, the shelter, agency, or organization shall scan the animal to determine whether a microchip is implanted in the animal.

Added by Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 136 (H.B. 604), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2021.

#### **Section 823.005. Advisory Committee.**

(a) The governing body of a county or municipality in which an animal shelter is located shall appoint an advisory committee to assist in complying with the requirements of this chapter.

(b) The advisory committee must be composed of at least one licensed veterinarian, one county or municipal official, one person whose duties include the daily operation of an animal shelter, and one representative from an animal welfare organization.

(c) The advisory committee shall meet at least three times a year.

Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 678, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.

### **Section 823.007. Injunction.**

A court of competent jurisdiction may, on the petition of any person, prohibit by injunction the substantial violation of this chapter.

Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 678, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.

### **Section 823.008. Enforcement by County.**

(a) A county may enforce this chapter.

(b) This section does not authorize a county to establish standards for operating an animal shelter.

(c) A county may not enforce this chapter at an animal shelter operated by a municipality.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 924 (H.B. 3004), Sec. 1, eff. June 19, 2009.

### **Section 823.009. Civil Penalty.**

(a) A person may not cause, suffer, allow, or permit a violation of this chapter or a rule adopted under this chapter.

(b) A person who violates this chapter or a rule adopted under this chapter shall be assessed a civil penalty. A civil penalty under this chapter may not be less than \$100 or more than \$500 for each violation and for each day of a continuing violation. This subsection does not apply at an animal shelter operated by a municipality.

(c) If it appears that a person has violated, is violating, or is threatening to violate this chapter or a rule adopted under this chapter, the county or municipality in which the violation occurs may institute a civil suit in district court for:

(1) injunctive relief to restrain the person from continuing the violation or threat of violation;

(2) the assessment and recovery of the civil penalty; or

(3) both injunctive relief and the civil penalty.

(d) A bond is not required in an action brought under this section.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 924 (H.B. 3004), Sec. 1, eff. June 19, 2009.