

Limitation: Certain information contained in a vaccination certification or a dog and cat registry relating to the identity of the animal’s owner is confidential. §§826.0211(a) and 826.0311(a). The certificate may not contain the owner’s social security number or driver’s license number. The unauthorized disclosure of the information is an offense punishable by a fine, confinement in jail, or both a fine and confinement. §§826.0211(c) and 826.0311(c).

WILD ANIMALS: DANGEROUS

Source law: Health and Safety Code, Chapter 822, Subchapter E.

Scope: The subchapter governs the regulation and registration of dangerous wild animals. The subchapter does not prevent a county from prohibiting or regulating the ownership, possession, confinement, or care of a dangerous wild animal in the county in accordance with Local Government Code §240.002. §822.116.

Definition: “Dangerous wild animal” means a lion, a tiger, an ocelot, a cougar, a leopard, a cheetah, a jaguar, a bobcat, a lynx, a serval, a caracal, a hyena, a bear, a coyote, a jackal, a baboon, a chimpanzee, an orangutan, a gorilla, or any hybrid of one of these animals. §822.101(4).

Exclusion: In a county west of the Pecos River that has a population of less than 25,000⁶, Subchapter E does not apply to a cougar, bobcat, or coyote in the possession or custody of a person that has trapped the animal as a part of a predator or depredation control activity. §822.102(a)(12).

Authority: The commissioners court of a county that does not prohibit the keeping of wild animals under Local Government Code §240.002 is required to adopt an order to implement and administer a certificate of registration program for dangerous wild animals. §822.103. The order must have been adopted no later than December 1, 2001. Tex. Att’y Gen. Op. No. JC-552 (2002).

Duty: The animal control office, or the sheriff if there is no animal control office, shall issue a certificate of registration to a person who is keeping a

⁶ Counties in the bracket include Brewster, Culberson, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, Pecos, Presidio, Reeves and Terrell.

dangerous wild animal in the county. §822.103. A person is not required to obtain a certificate of registration before June 1, 2002.

Fee: The animal control office or the sheriff may charge an annual fee not to exceed \$50 for each dangerous wild animal and a fee not to exceed \$500 for each person registering an animal. §822.103(c). The fees collected may only be used to administer and enforce Subchapter E. §822.103(c).

Offense: A person commits an offense if the person fails: to register a dangerous wild animal, to display the registration certificate, or to report an attack on a human or the escape of the animal. A person commits an offense if the person knowingly transfers ownership of a dangerous wild animal to a person who does not have a certificate of registration for that animal. An offense is a Class C misdemeanor. §822.113.

Penalty: A civil penalty may also be imposed by the county on a person who fails to obtain a certificate of registration. A penalty in the amount of at least \$200 and not more than \$2000 may be collected with respect to each dangerous wild animal and for each day a violation continues. §822.114.

WILD ANIMALS: KEEPING

Source law: Local Government Code Chapter 240, Subchapter A.

Scope: The subchapter governs county regulation of certain non-domestic animals.

Definition: “Wild animal” means a non-domestic animal that the commissioners court of a county determines is dangerous and in need of control in that county. §240.001.

Authority: The commissioners court by order may prohibit or regulate the keeping of a wild animal in the county.

Limitation: An order adopted by the commissioners court to prohibit or regulate the keeping of wild animals does not apply inside the limits of a municipality. §240.002(b).

Enforcement: The county’s attorney may file an action to enjoin a violation or a threatened violation of an order adopted under this subchapter. §240.004.

Penalty: A person commits an offense if the person violates an order adopted under Subchapter A, if the order defines the violation as an offense. §240.003(a). An offense under the subchapter is a Class C misdemeanor. §240.003(c).