

AN ACT

relating to inclusion of pets and other companion animals in protective orders; providing a penalty.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 85.021, Family Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 85.021. REQUIREMENTS OF ORDER APPLYING TO ANY PARTY.

In a protective order, the court may:

(1) prohibit a party from:

(A) removing a child who is a member of the family or household from:

(i) the possession of a person named in the order; or

(ii) the jurisdiction of the court; ~~or~~

(B) transferring, encumbering, or otherwise disposing of property, other than in the ordinary course of business, that is mutually owned or leased by the parties; or

(C) removing a pet, companion animal, or assistance animal, as defined by Section 121.002, Human Resources Code, from the possession of a person named in the order;

(2) grant exclusive possession of a residence to a party and, if appropriate, direct one or more parties to vacate the residence if the residence:

(A) is jointly owned or leased by the party

1 receiving exclusive possession and a party being denied possession;

2 (B) is owned or leased by the party retaining
3 possession; or

4 (C) is owned or leased by the party being denied
5 possession and that party has an obligation to support the party or
6 a child of the party granted possession of the residence;

7 (3) provide for the possession of and access to a child
8 of a party if the person receiving possession of or access to the
9 child is a parent of the child;

10 (4) require the payment of support for a party or for a
11 child of a party if the person required to make the payment has an
12 obligation to support the other party or the child; or

13 (5) award to a party the use and possession of
14 specified property that is community property or jointly owned or
15 leased property.

16 SECTION 2. Subsection (b), Section 85.022, Family Code, is
17 amended to read as follows:

18 (b) In a protective order, the court may prohibit the person
19 found to have committed family violence from:

20 (1) committing family violence;

21 (2) communicating:

22 (A) directly with a person protected by an order
23 or a member of the family or household of a person protected by an
24 order, in a threatening or harassing manner;

25 (B) a threat through any person to a person
26 protected by an order or a member of the family or household of a
27 person protected by an order; and

1 (C) if the court finds good cause, in any manner
2 with a person protected by an order or a member of the family or
3 household of a person protected by an order, except through the
4 party's attorney or a person appointed by the court;

5 (3) going to or near the residence or place of
6 employment or business of a person protected by an order or a member
7 of the family or household of a person protected by an order;

8 (4) going to or near the residence, child-care
9 facility, or school a child protected under the order normally
10 attends or in which the child normally resides;

11 (5) engaging in conduct directed specifically toward a
12 person who is a person protected by an order or a member of the
13 family or household of a person protected by an order, including
14 following the person, that is reasonably likely to harass, annoy,
15 alarm, abuse, torment, or embarrass the person; ~~and~~

16 (6) possessing a firearm, unless the person is a peace
17 officer, as defined by Section 1.07, Penal Code, actively engaged
18 in employment as a sworn, full-time paid employee of a state agency
19 or political subdivision; and

20 (7) harming, threatening, or interfering with the
21 care, custody, or control of a pet, companion animal, or assistance
22 animal, as defined by Section 121.002, Human Resources Code, that
23 is possessed by a person protected by an order or by a member of the
24 family or household of a person protected by an order.

25 SECTION 3. Subsection (a), Section 25.07, Penal Code, is
26 amended to read as follows:

27 (a) A person commits an offense if, in violation of a

1 condition of bond set in a family violence case and related to the
2 safety of the victim or the safety of the community, an order issued
3 under Article 17.292, Code of Criminal Procedure, an order issued
4 under Section 6.504, Family Code, Chapter 83, Family Code, if the
5 temporary ex parte order has been served on the person, or Chapter
6 85, Family Code, or an order issued by another jurisdiction as
7 provided by Chapter 88, Family Code, the person knowingly or
8 intentionally:

9 (1) commits family violence or an act in furtherance
10 of an offense under Section 22.011, 22.021, or 42.072;

11 (2) communicates:

12 (A) directly with a protected individual or a
13 member of the family or household in a threatening or harassing
14 manner;

15 (B) a threat through any person to a protected
16 individual or a member of the family or household; or

17 (C) in any manner with the protected individual
18 or a member of the family or household except through the person's
19 attorney or a person appointed by the court, if the violation is of
20 an order described by this subsection and the order prohibits any
21 communication with a protected individual or a member of the family
22 or household;

23 (3) goes to or near any of the following places as
24 specifically described in the order or condition of bond:

25 (A) the residence or place of employment or
26 business of a protected individual or a member of the family or
27 household; or

1 (B) any child care facility, residence, or school
2 where a child protected by the order or condition of bond normally
3 resides or attends; [~~or~~]

4 (4) possesses a firearm; or

5 (5) harms, threatens, or interferes with the care,
6 custody, or control of a pet, companion animal, or assistance
7 animal that is possessed by a person protected by the order.

8 SECTION 4. Subsection (b), Section 25.07, Penal Code, is
9 amended by adding Subdivision (3) to read as follows:

10 (3) "Assistance animal" has the meaning assigned by
11 Section 121.002, Human Resources Code.

12 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2011.

S.B. No. 279

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 279 passed the Senate on March 24, 2011, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 279 passed the House on May 12, 2011, by the following vote: Yeas 133, Nays 11, two present not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

Approved:

Date

Governor