Texas

Overall Ranking: Middle Tier

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Texas Research Facility Protection Law</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Texas does not have a specific law designed to protect research facilities.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Texas Animal Cruelty Law</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TEX. PENAL CODE ANN. § 42.09 (2010). Cruelty To Livestock Animals.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(e) It is a defense to prosecution for an offense under this section that the actor was engaged in bona fide experimentation for scientific research.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TEX. PENAL CODE ANN. § 42.092 (2010). Cruelty To Nonlivestock Animals.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(d) It is a defense to prosecution under this section that:</td>
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  (1) the actor had a reasonable fear of bodily injury to the actor or to another person by a dangerous wild animal
as defined by Section 822.101, Health and Safety Code; or

(2) the actor was engaged in bona fide experimentation for scientific research.

**Texas Public Information Act**

**TEX. GOV. CODE ANN. § 552.021 (2010). Availability of Public Information.**

Public information is available to the public at a minimum during the normal business hours of the governmental body.

**TEX. GOV. CODE ANN. § 161.032 (2010). Records and Proceedings Confidential.**

(a) The records and proceedings of a medical committee are confidential and are not subject to court subpoena.

(b) Notwithstanding Section 551.002, Government Code, the following proceedings may be held in a closed meeting following the procedures prescribed by Subchapter E, Chapter 551, Government Code:

(1) a proceeding of a medical peer review committee, as defined by Section 151.002, Occupations Code, or medical committee; or

(2) a meeting of the governing body of a public hospital, hospital district, hospital authority, or health maintenance organization of a public hospital, hospital authority, hospital district, or state-owned teaching hospital at which the governing body receives records, information, or reports provided by a medical committee, medical peer review committee, or compliance officer.

(c) Records, information, or reports of a medical committee, medical peer review committee, or compliance officer and records, information, or reports provided by a medical committee, medical peer review committee, or compliance officer to the governing body of a public hospital, hospital district, or hospital authority are not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552, Government Code.

(d) The records and proceedings may be used by the committee and the committee members only in the exercise of proper committee functions.

(e) The records, information, and reports received or maintained by a compliance officer retain the protection provided by this section only if the records, information, or reports are received, created, or maintained in the exercise of a proper function of the compliance officer as provided by the Office of Inspector General of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

(f) This section and Subchapter A, Chapter 160, Occupations Code, do not apply to records made or maintained in the regular course of business by a hospital, health maintenance organization, medical organization, university medical
center or health science center, hospital district, hospital authority, or extended care facility.

Texas Harassment Law

**TEX. PENAL CODE ANN. § 42.07. Harassment.**

(a) A person commits an offense if, with intent to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, torment, or embarrass another, he:

(1) initiates communication by telephone, in writing, or by electronic communication and in the course of the communication makes a comment, request, suggestion, or proposal that is obscene;

(2) threatens, by telephone, in writing, or by electronic communication, in a manner reasonably likely to alarm the person receiving the threat, to inflict bodily injury on the person or to commit a felony against the person, a member of his family or household, or his property;

(3) conveys, in a manner reasonably likely to alarm the person receiving the report, a false report, which is known by the conveyor to be false, that another person has suffered death or serious bodily injury;

(4) causes the telephone of another to ring repeatedly or makes repeated telephone communications anonymously or in a manner reasonably likely to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, torment, embarrass, or offend another;

(5) makes a telephone call and intentionally fails to hang up or disengage the connection;

(6) knowingly permits a telephone under the person's control to be used by another to commit an offense under this section; or

(7) sends repeated electronic communications in a manner reasonably likely to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, torment, embarrass, or offend another.

(b) In this section:

(1) “Electronic communication” means a transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic, or photo-optical system. The term includes:

   (A) a communication initiated by electronic mail, instant message, network call, or facsimile machine; and

   (B) a communication made to a pager.

(2) “Family” and “household” have the meaning assigned by Chapter 71, Family Code.
“Obscene” means containing a patently offensive description of or a solicitation to commit an ultimate sex act, including sexual intercourse, masturbation, cunnilingus, fellatio, or anilingus, or a description of an excretory function.

An offense under this section is a Class B misdemeanor, except that the offense is a Class A misdemeanor if the actor has previously been convicted under this section.


**TEX. PENAL CODE ANN. § 33.07. Online Harassment**

(a) A person commits an offense if the person uses the name or persona of another person to create a web page on or to post one or more messages on a commercial social networking site:

(1) without obtaining the other person's consent; and

(2) with the intent to harm, defraud, intimidate, or threaten any person.

(b) A person commits an offense if the person sends an electronic mail, instant message, text message, or similar communication that references a name, domain address, phone number, or other item of identifying information belonging to any person:

(1) without obtaining the other person's consent;

(2) with the intent to cause a recipient of the communication to reasonably believe that the other person authorized or transmitted the communication; and

(3) with the intent to harm or defraud any person.

(c) An offense under Subsection (a) is a felony of the third degree. An offense under Subsection (b) is a Class A misdemeanor, except that the offense is a felony of the third degree if the actor commits the offense with the intent to solicit a response by emergency personnel.

(d) If conduct that constitutes an offense under this section also constitutes an offense under any other law, the actor may be prosecuted under this section, the other law, or both.

(e) It is a defense to prosecution under this section that the actor is any of the following entities or that the actor's conduct consisted solely of action taken as an employee of any of the following entities:

(1) a commercial social networking site;
(2) an Internet service provider;

(3) an interactive computer service, as defined by 47 U.S.C. Section 230;

(4) a telecommunications provider, as defined by Section 51.002, Utilities Code; or

(5) a video service provider or cable service provider, as defined by Section 66.002, Utilities Code.

(f) In this section:

(1) “Commercial social networking site” means any business, organization, or other similar entity operating a website that permits persons to become registered users for the purpose of establishing personal relationships with other users through direct or real-time communication with other users or the creation of web pages or profiles available to the public or to other users. The term does not include an electronic mail program or a message board program.

(2) “Identifying information” has the meaning assigned by Section 32.51.