



TEXAS FOWL REGISTRATION PROGRAM

Many poultry diseases are highly contagious, and during an outbreak, threaten the state's commercial chicken and turkey industry, non-commercial flocks, companion birds, and fowl raised for exhibition. Following the confirmation of Exotic Newcastle Disease (END) in 2003 and the enactment of Texas Agriculture Code §161.0411, the TAHC developed a registration program for fowl sellers, distributors and transporters.

REGISTRATION

A seller, distributor, or transporter of live domestic or exotic fowl in this state must register with the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC). The registration requirements apply to the following groups:

1. A seller who sells:
 - domestic fowl or domestic and exotic fowl at a location, other than the premise of origin, or
 - domestic fowl or domestic and exotic fowl at a location where domestic fowl or domestic and exotic fowl are congregated, or
 - any fowl where it has been epidemiologically determined by the commission to be a high risk for disease.
2. A distributor of domestic fowl or domestic and exotic fowl.
3. A transporter of domestic fowl or domestic and exotic fowl.
4. Any person intending to operate as a seller, distributor, or transporter.
5. Any out-of-state seller, distributor, or transporter of live domestic or exotic fowl that transact business in Texas.

REGISTRATION EXCEPTIONS

Fowl registration is not required for the following:

- Sellers who ONLY sell birds from and on their premises of origin.
- Sellers, transporters or distributors who handle ONLY exotic fowl, such as parrots or parakeets. To remain exempt, the birds must not be commingled with or sold at the same venue as domestic fowl, such as chickens, ducks or turkeys.
- Fowl participating in one of the following disease surveillance programs recognized by the TAHC:
 1. The National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) with the "U.S. Pullorum-Typhoid Clean" ("PT") and U.S. Avian Influenza Clean" ("LPAI") programs.
 2. The Texas Poultry Federation Avian Influenza Monitoring Program.
- Fowl classified as baby poultry, at the time of receipt, from NPIP hatchery and accompanied by NPIP Form 9-3, or APHIS Form 17-6.
- An owner of a flea market, fowl market, or other sale location is not required to register unless the person is also a seller, distributor or transporter.

DEFINITIONS

- **Seller:** Any person who sells, trades, exchanges or barter domestic or exotic fowl.
- **Distributor:** Any person engaged in sales and/or movement of live domestic or exotic fowl between a production system and a live bird market or fowl market or acquires domestic or exotic fowl from multiple flocks or geographic areas for resale to another person.
- **Transporter:** A person that transports, for hire, domestic or exotic fowl from a producer premises to another premises, a live bird market, a fowl market or to another person.
- **Domestic fowl:** Any species of fowl domestically propagated and maintained for food, eggs, or agricultural exhibition and recreation. This includes, but is not limited to, chickens, turkeys, guineas, pea fowl, ducks, geese, quail, pheasant, pigeon, and chucksers.
- **Exotic fowl:** Any avian species that is not indigenous to Texas, and normally used for non-agricultural purposes. This includes, but is not limited to, parakeets, canaries, cockatiels, finches, dove, parrots, ostrich, rhea, emu, or other cage birds.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

RECORDKEEPING:

A key component for disease tracking or surveillance is good recordkeeping. Registrants must maintain, and make available to the TAHC, all records of domestic fowl, or exotic fowl bought, sold or exchanged for at least two years from the date of transaction.

Records must include the following:

- the buyer's and seller's name and address,
- county of origin,
- date of transaction,
- the number of fowl, and
- a description of fowl, including sex, age, color, breed and any individual identification.

BIOSECURITY:

- Registrants must maintain facilities where fowl are kept in clean and sanitary conditions. If there is excessive die off of fowl, the facility housing the fowl must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. Cleaning and disinfection must include removal of organic material, thoroughly washed with soap and water followed by disinfection with a disinfectant approved by the commission.
- Infection or exposure to any disease deemed reportable to the TAHC, under Title 4 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 45.2, must be reported immediately. To report a disease to the TAHC, call 1-800-550-8242.
- Fowl must be kept confined at sales until final disposition and removal from the sales site.

TESTING:

- All domestic fowl, except baby poultry, offered for sale or trade at a public location must originate from pullorum-typhoid (PT) clean flock or hatchery. The seller must provide proof of the source of poultry or hatching eggs offered for public sale.
- The owner or management of any market or public sale must prevent the sale, trade, or offer for sale of any poultry that is not properly qualified under the Texas Pullorum-Typhoid Program as prescribed by the Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory (TVMDL) and/or the National Poultry Improvement Plan.
- The TAHC may require additional testing, movement restrictions, or other requirements for poultry potentially exposed to or infected with disease.

ENTRY:

- Poultry entering Texas must be accompanied by a health certificate from the state of origin, an entry permit from TAHC, and meet TAHC's entry, PT and avian influenza requirements. For a summary of requirements, visit https://www.tahc.texas.gov/regs/EntryRequirements_Poultry.pdf.

HOW TO REGISTER

To register, applicants must complete and submit the TAHC fowl registration application form, https://www.tahc.texas.gov/animal_health/poultry/04-07_Poultry-FowlRegistration.pdf, to: TAHC, P.O. Box 12966, Austin TX 78711-2966. The application must be accompanied by the annual fee determined on the maximum total number of fowl owned or maintained during the previous 12 months.

Once the application is received, a TAHC inspector will contact the applicant to schedule an inspection. The application for the certificate of fowl registration is valid for 12 months from the date the permit is issued. Renewal applications must be completed and submitted 30 days prior to the expiration date. Any change in the name of a registrant or additions or deletions of operation locations must be promptly submitted to the TAHC in writing. The registrant must maintain proof of registration at each location where an activity that requires registration takes place.

INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT

The TAHC may inspect any premises or vehicle, domestic or exotic fowl, and review records to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Fowl Registration Program. Additionally, the TAHC may stop and inspect any shipment of fowl being transported in the state in order to determine if the shipment presents a danger to the public health or the Texas fowl industry. The TAHC may also establish additional quarantine or testing requirements or take any other permissible action to protect the health of Texas livestock and fowl.

Any person violating the regulatory or statutory requirements related to fowl registration will be subject to enforcement and penalties as are allowed under Chapter 161 of the Texas Agriculture Code, including administrative penalties up to \$5,000 per day, criminal prosecution, and/or injunctive relief.