

**BOXING, MARTIAL ARTS and PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING ADVISORY  
Board Meeting  
Regulatory Review AGENDA  
May 25, 2023  
10:00 a.m. – 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Training Room  
Department of Professional & Occupational Regulation  
9960 Mayland Drive  
Richmond, Virginia 23233**

1. Call to Order
2. Emergency Evacuation Procedures
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Public Comment Period\*
5. Updates
  - Smoker
  - Weight Spread Difference (Dr. Lee and Dr. Hardy)
6. Regulatory Review
  - Mixed Martial Arts
    - Unified Rules of Mixed Martial Arts
  - Wrestling
7. Other Business
8. Conflict of Interest Forms / Travel Vouchers
9. Adjourn

**NEXT MEETING TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR: TBD**

\*Five minute public comment, per person, with the exception of any open disciplinary or application files.

Persons desiring to participate in the meeting and requiring special accommodations or interpretative services should contact the Department at (804) 367-8519 at least ten days prior to the meeting so that suitable arrangements can be made for an appropriate accommodation. The Department fully complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- **Call to Order**
- **Emergency Evacuation**

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Materials contained in this agenda are proposed topics for discussion  
And are not to be construed as regulation or official board position

➤ **Public Comment**

➤ **Updates**

- **Smoker**

- **Weight Spread Difference**

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COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA BOXING, MARTIAL ARTS AND  
PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING ADVISORY BOARD



**MIXED MARTIAL ARTS AND  
SIMILAR CONTESTS**

Last Updated - DRAFT

STATUTES

Title 54.1, Chapter 8.1



Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation

9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 400  
Richmond, Virginia 23233  
(804) 367-8500  
[www.dpor.virginia.gov](http://www.dpor.virginia.gov)

**NOTICE  
SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGES**

These regulations are effective?????, and replaced all previous versions of the regulations. As a regulant of the Board, you are responsible for following all regulations and therefore you should read and become familiar with all regulations printed in this booklet. These regulations should be thoroughly reviewed. Following is a brief summary of the regulations to assist you in your review.

- To conform to Chapter 756 of the 2016 Acts of Assembly, the amendments exempt amateur boxing from requirements of the chapter and revise the requirements for sanctioning organizations to receive authorization from the director of the agency to oversee amateur martial arts events.

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## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This booklet contains the information you will need to obtain your license. The law that governs your profession is found in the *Code of Virginia*, 1950, as amended, in Title 54.1, Chapter 8.1. That law permits the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation to issue regulations that tell you more about what is expected of you in your profession. This booklet contains a copy of the law and regulations that you will need to know and obey to obtain and keep your license. **BE SURE YOU READ AND UNDERSTAND THE STANDARDS OF PRACTICE AND CONDUCT. YOUR FAILURE TO OBEY THESE STANDARDS COULD RESULT IN A MONETARY PENALTY OR THE LOSS OF YOUR LICENSE.**

It is the goal of the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation to provide you with the information you need to comply with the law and regulations. If you have a question and cannot find the answer to it in this booklet, please write to:

Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation  
9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 400  
Richmond, Virginia 23233

or call the Agency at (804) 367-8500.

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## **PART I.**

### **SCOPE.**

#### **18VAC120-42-10. Scope.**

This chapter contains procedures and requirements for the licensure of individuals and businesses to engage in the conduct of professional martial arts events as provided for in Chapter 8.1 (§54.1-828 et seq.) of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia.

The director of the department is empowered to (i) promulgate this chapter, (ii) issue licenses, (iii) investigate to determine compliance with this chapter, and (iv) take disciplinary action, in accordance with the Virginia Administrative Process Act, against those who fail to comply with this chapter. Furthermore, to the extent applicable, this chapter shall be construed in accordance with and governed by Virginia's Administrative Process Act. The director is also empowered to contract with a vendor to perform certain tasks on the director's behalf. These tasks include examining and recommending licensure, investigating and ensuring that events are conducted in compliance with statutes and regulations, performing clerical duties, collecting fees, maintaining records, developing proposed regulations, and recommending enforcement actions.

#### *Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 15, Issue 21, eff. August 5, 1999; amended, Virginia Register Volume 19, Issue 23, eff. August 27, 2003; Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007; Volume 31, Issue 26, eff. October 1, 2015, Volume 32, Issue 25, eff. September 7, 2016.*

#### **18VAC120-42-15. Applicability.**

Event licensing and conduct standards for martial arts are set forth in 18VAC120-42-50, and 18VAC120-42-110 through 18VAC120-42-130.

#### *Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007; Volume 25, Issue 15, eff. May 14, 2009, Volume 32, Issue 25, eff. September 7, 2016.*

## PART II.

### GENERAL PROVISIONS.

#### 18VAC120-42-20. Definitions.

A. Section 54.1-828 of the Code of Virginia provides definitions of the following terms:

Cable television system

Contractor

Department

Director

Event

Manager

Martial artist

Martial arts or mixed martial arts

Matchmaker

Person

Promote

Promoter

Regulant

Trainer, second, or cut man

B. The following words and terms when used in this chapter shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Assistant event inspector" means the individual assigned to assist the event inspector.

"Martial artist registry" means any entity certified for the purposes of maintaining records and identification of martial artists.

"Business" means any sole proprietorship, general partnership, limited partnership, Limited Liability Company, association, corporation, or other business entity.

"Charity event" means an event where all or a portion of the proceeds are donated to a charitable organization that is tax-exempt under §501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

"Contest," "bout," or "match" means the portion of an event wherein specific individuals (two contestants engage in which ends when a decision is reached.

"Event," as defined in §54.1-828 of the Code of Virginia, begins when a promoter takes possession or control of a facility or area as specified in the contract between the promoter and the facility and lasts until the promoter releases control of the facility or area. One event shall not exceed one 24-hour period.

"Event inspector" means the event official assigned to be in overall charge of the conduct of an event to assure compliance with this chapter.

"Event license" means a method of regulation whereby any promoter arranging or conducting a martial arts event is required to obtain a prior authorization from the department.

"Event officials" means those individuals assigned to carry out the duties of an event inspector, assistant event inspector, inspector, referee, timekeeper, judge, or ringside physician as established by this chapter.

"Inspector" means the event official assigned to assist the event inspector as provided for in this chapter.

"Judge" means the event official assigned to score a martial arts bout as provided for in this chapter.

"Licensed event" means an event that has been issued a license from the department in accordance with this chapter.

"Rabbit punch" means a blow delivered by a contestant against his opponent that strikes the back of the opponent's neck or head with a chopping motion or punch.

"Referee" means the event official assigned to a bout to assure the proper conduct of the bout and the safety of the contestants to assure the safety of the spectators as provided for in this chapter.

"Responsible management" means the following individuals:

1. The sole proprietor of a sole proprietorship;
2. The partners of a general partnership;
3. The general partners of a limited partnership;
4. The officers of a corporation;
5. The managers of a limited liability company; or
6. The officers and directors of an association.

"Ringside physician" means the event official assigned to assure the medical health and safety of each contestant as provided for in this chapter, and (i) must be licensed by the Virginia Board of Medicine to practice medicine or osteopathic medicine, and (ii) hold a current certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

"Timekeeper" means the event official assigned to time each round and the interval between rounds, and to count knockdowns as provided for in this chapter.

#### *Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 15, Issue 21, eff. August 5, 1999; amended, Virginia Register Volume 19, Issue 23, eff. August 27, 2003; Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007, Volume 32, Issue 25, eff. September 7, 2016.*

**18VAC120-41-30. License expiration.**

- A. Except as set out in subsection B of this section, each license, other than an event license or a limited contestant shall expire on December 31 of the year in which the license was issued, except that licenses issued during the last 45 days of any calendar year shall expire on December 31 of the following calendar year.
- B. Each license to conduct a martial arts event issued to a licensed promoter shall be valid only for the duration of the event described in the application for licensure. Each limited license issued to a contestant shall be valid only for the duration of one specifically identified event or two specifically identified events held on consecutive days at the same location.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 15, Issue 21, eff. August 5, 1999; amended, Virginia Register Volume 19, Issue 23, eff. August 27, 2003; Volume 22, Issue 11, eff. April 23, 2006, Volume 32, Issue 25, eff. September 7, 2016.*

**18VAC120-42-40. Fees.**

- A. Each applicant shall submit the following fee along with the application for licensure:

Martial artist	\$40
Martial artist-limited	\$30
Manager	\$50
Promoter	\$500
Trainer, second, and cut man	\$40
Matchmaker	\$50
Additional administrative fee for applications received after noon the day before weigh-ins	\$35

- B. Each application for a mixed martial arts event license shall be accompanied by the following fee:
  - 1. Scheduled events of 42 rounds or fewer, with no more than one nontitle 10-round or 12-round bout \$1,500.
  - 2. Scheduled events exceeding 42 rounds, with more than one nontitle 10-round or 12-round bout or any event with a title bout \$2,000.
- C. All fees are nonrefundable.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 15, Issue 21, eff. August 5, 1999; amended, Virginia*

*Register Volume 19, Issue 23, eff. August 27, 2003; Volume 21, Issue 20, eff. August 1, 2005; Volume 22, Issue 11, eff. April 23, 2006, Volume 32, Issue 25, eff. September 7, 2016.*

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 15, Issue 21, eff. August 5, 1999; amended, Virginia Register Volume 19, Issue 23, eff. August 27, 2003; repealed, Virginia Register Volume 24, Issue 3, eff. December 29, 2007.*

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### PART III.

#### LICENSING STANDARDS.

##### 18VAC120-42-50. General application requirements.

- A. Applicants shall apply on forms supplied by the department or its contractor.
- B. Applicants shall be at least 18 years of age.
- C. The individual applicant or business, and every member of the responsible management of the business, shall disclose the following information:
  - 1. Any guilty finding by the department, or by a court of any competent jurisdiction, of any material misrepresentation while engaged in martial arts or other athletic activities, or any conviction, guilty plea, or finding of guilty, regardless of adjudication or deferred adjudication, of any felony or misdemeanor;
  - 2. Any disciplinary action taken by the department or another jurisdiction in connection with the applicant's participation in or promotion of professional athletic bouts or activities including, but not limited to, monetary penalty, fine, suspension, revocation, or surrender of a license in connection with a disciplinary action; and
  - 3. Any current or previously held licenses issued by this Commonwealth or any other jurisdiction.

Any plea of nolo contendere shall be considered a conviction for the purposes of this subsection. A certified copy of a final order, decree, or case decision by a court or regulatory agency with the lawful authority to issue such order, decree, or case decision shall be admissible as prima facie evidence of such conviction or discipline. Subject to the provisions of §54.1-204 of the Code of Virginia, the department may deny an application for a license if, in its judgment, the actions disclosed in subdivisions 1 and 2 of this subsection would render the applicant unfit or unsuited to engage in athletic activities.

- D. Each individual applicant, business, and responsible management of the business, shall disclose a physical address. A post office box shall not be accepted in lieu of a physical address.
- E. The fees established by 18VAC120-42-40. A. shall accompany the application and shall not be refunded.
- F. The receipt of an application and the deposit of fees does not indicate approval of licensure by the department.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 15, Issue 21, eff. August 5, 1999; amended, Virginia Register Volume 19, Issue 23, eff. August 27, 2003, Volume 32, Issue 25, eff. September 7, 2016.*

**18VAC120-42-60. Additional requirements for a contestant.**

Each applicant for a license as a contestant shall submit a completed application as described in 18VAC120-42-50 and shall:

- A. Have a satisfactory record of professional martial arts, or, in the case of applicants who have participated in fewer than five professional martial arts bouts, evidence of competency in the elements of offense and defense. Such evidence may take the form of signed statements from individuals who have provided training to the applicant or records of the applicant's conduct in amateur as well as professional martial arts competitions and shall be sufficient to satisfy the department that the applicant has the ability to compete.
- B. Submit the following certification:

“I understand as a professional contestant I should be aware that this sport includes many health and safety risks, in particular the risk of brain injury. As such I will take the necessary medical exams that detect brain injury. If I need further information about these exams I will ask my doctor or staff of the department.”
- C. Submit a complete professional record or, if amateur just turning professional, an amateur record, an amateur passbook or a letter from the applicant's trainer certifying the applicant's martial arts experience, skill level, physical condition, and current training program.
- D. Submit a certification from a physician licensed by a medical board in the United States or its territories to practice medicine or osteopathic medicine within the past six months certifying that the applicant is in good physical health and that the physician has not observed any abnormalities or deficiencies that would prevent the applicant from participation in a martial arts event or endanger the applicant, the public, officials, or other licensees participating in the event.
- E. Dilated ophthalmological exam not to be more than one year old.
- F. Submit negative lab work results within 180 days preceding an event for the following:
  - 1. Antibodies to the human immunodeficiency virus;
  - 2. Hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg); and
  - 3. Antibodies to virus hepatitis C.

A contestant who fails to provide the department with the required negative lab work results shall not be permitted to compete in the event.

The department may require additional medical tests to determine the fitness of a contestant upon receipt of reliable information of a preexisting condition that may present a danger to the contestant.

**18VAC120-42-70. Additional requirements for manager.**

Each applicant for a license as a manager shall submit a completed application as described 18VAC120-42-50 and a statement that the applicant possesses knowledge of this chapter. The department shall approve and issue all licenses in accordance with the standards established by the federal Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 USC §6301 et seq.), as amended.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 15, Issue 21, eff. August 5, 1999; amended, Virginia Register Volume 19, Issue 23, eff. August 27, 2003; Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007.*

**18VAC120-42-80. Additional requirements for matchmaker.**

Each applicant shall submit a completed application as described in 18VAC120-42-50 which includes a statement that the applicant does not employ and does not otherwise have a financial interest in or commercial connection with any contestant, manager, trainer, or second, except that which may be necessary to arrange a contestant's participation in a specific event. The department shall approve and issue all licenses in accordance with the standards established by the federal Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 USC §6301 et seq.), as amended.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 15, Issue 21, eff. August 5, 1999; amended, Virginia Register Volume 19, Issue 23, eff. August 27, 2003; Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007, Volume 32, Issue 25, eff. September 7, 2016.*

**18VAC120-42-90. Additional requirements for promoter.**

Each applicant for a license as a promoter shall submit a completed application as described in 18VAC120-42-50, which includes a statement that the applicant possesses knowledge of this chapter, and the following certification:

“I understand that I am not entitled to compensation in connection with a martial arts match, including gate fees, until I provide the department with a copy of any agreement in writing to which I and any contestant participating in the match are parties; a statement made under penalty of perjury that there are no other agreements; a statement of fees, charges, and expenses that will be assessed by or through me on the contestant, including any portion of the contestant's purse that I receive and training expenses; all payments, gifts, or benefits I am providing to any sanctioning organization affiliated with the event; and any reduction in the contestant's purse contract to a previous agreement between myself and the contestant.”

Further, I understand that I am not entitled to compensation in connection with a martial artist



match until I provide the contestant I promote with the amounts of any compensation or consideration that I have contracted to receive from such match; all fees, charges, and expenses that will be assessed by or through me on the contestant pertaining to the event, including any portion of the contestant's purse that I will receive and training expenses; and any reduction in a contestant's purse contract to a previous agreement between myself and the contestant.”

The department shall approve and issue all licenses in accordance with the standards established by the federal Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 USC §6301 et seq.), as amended.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 15, Issue 21, eff. August 5, 1999; amended, Virginia Register Volume 19, Issue 23, eff. August 27, 2003; Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007, Volume 32, Issue 25, eff. September 7, 2016.*

**18VAC120-42-100. Additional requirements for trainer, second, or cut man.**

Each applicant shall submit a completed application as described in 18VAC120-42-50 and evidence of knowledge of:

1. This chapter;
2. The treatment of injuries;
3. Physical conditioning, health care, nutrition, training, first aid, and the effects of alcohol as it relates to martial arts; and
4. The bandaging of a contestant's hand.

The required evidence may take the form of the applicant's official record from a state regulatory agency, signed statements from current or former contestants who have worked directly with the applicant, or other documentary evidence that establishes that the applicant is competent. The department shall approve and issue all licenses in accordance with the standards established by the federal Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 USC §6301 et seq.), as amended.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 15, Issue 21, eff. August 5, 1999; amended, Virginia Register Volume 19, Issue 23, eff. August 27, 2003; Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007, Volume 32, Issue 25, eff. September 7, 2016.*

**PART IV.**

**LICENSING STANDARDS FOR MARTIAL ARTS AND  
ANY SIMILAR CONTESTS.**

**18VAC120-42-110. Application for an event license to conduct a martial arts event or similar contest.**

- A. At least 30 days before the date of any event in the Commonwealth, the licensed promoter shall submit an application for a license to conduct an event to the department or its contractor. The application shall be on forms provided by the department and shall include:
1. The date, location, and time of the event for which a license is sought. The department will consider the size and configuration of the location and may deny approval of the event license for safety reasons;
  2. Evidence of a surety bond filed with the department or its contractor conditioned on the payment of gate fees and penalties imposed by Chapter 8.1 (§54.1-828 et seq.) of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia and on the fulfillment of contracts made with contestants. The bond shall be in form and substance satisfactory to the department and in an amount equal to the sum of (i) the total gate fee required by this chapter and §54.1-833 A of the Code of Virginia if all seats were to be sold and (ii) the total amount due to all contestants for their appearance in the event. The bond shall not exceed \$100,000 and shall be executed by a surety authorized to do business in the Commonwealth;
  3. Acknowledgment that the licensed promoter will provide a copy of the contract between the promoter and each licensed contestant;
  4. A statement that the licensed promoter has read and understands this chapter and will conduct the event in full compliance with same; and
  5. Verification of status as a charity event as defined in this chapter.
- B. At least 14 days prior to the event, the additional documentation shall be submitted to the department by the licensed promoter:
1. The card of bouts to be exhibited, including the name of each contestant, the contestant's federal identification number, and the number of rounds each is scheduled to compete. The card may be modified until close of business two business days prior to the event weigh-ins by providing the required documents for the additions to and notice of the deletions from the card which accompanied the application;
  2. Verification of all scheduled contestant's bout records from the Association of Boxing Commissions approved database;
  3. Evidence that all contestants scheduled to compete are covered by a health insurance policy

that covers medical expenses for injuries incurred during the event, has a minimum of coverage of \$50,000 and an accidental death insurance benefit coverage in a minimum amount of \$50,000, and meets all requirements specified in 15 USC § 6304;

C. No later than noon the day before weigh-ins, the licensed promoter shall provide:

1. A copy of the signed contract between the promoter and each licensed contestant;
2. A copy of each contract for the sale of rights to distribute in any manner such event by any video, telephonic, or other communication method involving the control of electrons or other charge carriers;

D. In no case shall the licensed promoter for an event license announce or advertise, either directly or indirectly, the event to the public until the department has approved the event application and issued the event license.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007.*

**18 VAC 120-42-120. Equipment to be provided by promoters.**

The promoter shall assure that each event shall have the following;

- A. A fight ring that will be in the shape of a square, a hexagon, or an octagon. A square ring shall not be less than 18 feet square inside the ropes and shall not exceed 20 feet square inside the ropes. A hexagon or octagon ring shall not be less than 18 feet (from any side to the opposite side) inside the ropes and shall not exceed 32 feet (from any side to the opposite side) inside the ropes.

The ring floor shall be padded with ensolite one inch thick or another similar closed-cell foam. The padded ring floor must extend at least 18 inches beyond the ring ropes and over the edge of the platform with a top covering of canvas or similar material tightly stretched and laced to the ring platform. Material that tends to gather in lumps or ridges or material with a slick covering shall not be used.

The ring platform shall not be more than five feet above the floor of the building and shall have suitable steps for both contestants to use in their corners and the ringside physician to use in a neutral corner.

Ring posts shall be of metal, not more than three inches in diameter, extending from the floor of the building to a height of 58 inches above the ring floor. The ring posts shall be at least 18 inches away from the ring ropes.

There shall be four ring ropes, no more than one inch in diameter, evenly spaced, with the bottom ring rope not less than 18 inches above the ring floor and the top ring rope not more than 52 inches above the ring floor. The bottom ring rope must be padded with a padding of

closed cell padding of not less than 1/2 inch (it is recommended that all ring roped be padded of the same thickness and material). Ropes are to be connected with soft rope ties six feet apart. All ring ropes are to be tight and approved.

All corners must be padded with standard approved pads. All turnbuckles are to be covered with a standard protective padding.

A ring stool and bucket shall be provided for each contestant's corner.

The ring shall be under sufficient light that covers the entire ring equally. No lights shall shine into the face of the contestants or ringside judges, lights may only shine downward and not shine at any angle directly into the fighting area that may blind the contestants or judges.

The promoter shall provide a ringside restrictive barrier between the first row of ringside seats and the event official's area that will prevent the crowd from confronting either the contestants or event officials, and will ensure that the contestants remain free from obstructions or distractions. The ringside barrier must be a minimum of eight feet from the outside edge of the ring.

- B. Locker rooms adequate in number and equipment to reasonably facilitate the contestant's activities before and after the bout. Separate locker rooms shall be provided when both male and female contestants are scheduled to compete. Locker rooms shall have restroom facilities easily available.
- C. A fully equipped ambulance with appropriately trained emergency personnel at the site of any event for the entire duration of the event and any additional personnel or equipment required by 15 USC §6304.
- D. Gloves of the proper weight that are set by weight classification by rule 18VAC10-120-42-118. Gloves must have laces to secure proper fit. Gloves must have an attached thumb to the body of the glove. Gloves must be clean, free of cuts, with no displacement or lumping of padding material. Gloves used in world title bouts shall be new and taken from the package just prior to issuing to the contestants. Gloves shall be inspected by the event inspector or his contractor before each bout and those found defective shall be replaced before the bout. A solution of 10% household bleach and water shall be used for cleansing of all gloves prior to and after each bout.
- E. A sealed over-the-counter pregnancy test kit, approved by the Food and Drug Administration, for each female contestant that will be given to the event inspector or his contractor.
- F. A clear plastic water bottle, a bucket containing ice, surgeon's adhesive tape, and surgical gauze for each contestant.
- G. Drug testing, or any other testing, as required by the department at the promoter's expense.

- H. A solution, of one part bleach and nine parts water for disinfecting blood on the ring canvas or ropes, shall be available ringside for use by promoter's staff stationed ringside to clean the ring canvas and ropes as needed.
- I. The promoter shall provide each corner with biohazardous material bags and after the event shall discard all regulated medical waste in the proper manner in accordance with the *Regulated Medical Waste Management Regulations* (9VAC20-120) issued by the Virginia Waste Management Board and available from the Department of Environmental Quality.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007; Volume 25, Issue 15, eff. May 14, 2009, Volume 32, Issue 25, eff. September 7, 2016.*

**18VAC120-42-130. Equipment to be provided by each contestant.**

Each contestant shall provide the following equipment:

- A. Trunks for contestants or two pair of shorts, one being tight fitting or long pants if required and tight upper body covering for female contestants;
- B. Approved groin protector for male contestants and an abdominal guard (recommended) and a padded sports bra for female contestants;
- C. A mouth piece properly fitted to each contestant's mouth;

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007.*

**18VAC120-42-140. Equipment to be provided by seconds.**

Each second shall provide the following equipment for use at the event:

- A. A solution approved by the Association of Boxing Commissions to stop hemorrhaging as required in 18VAC-42-117.-E
- B. Scissors; and
- C. One extra mouthpiece.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007.*

**18VAC120-42-150. Prohibited Ring Attire.**

- A. Wearing jewelry during all bouts.
- B. Wearing of facial or body cosmetics.
- C. Loose hair. Hair must be secured with soft and non-abrasive materials.

**18VAC120-42-160. Bout approval; request for reconsideration.**

- A. The department or its contractor shall obtain information from the promoter on each contestant from the official martial arts registry and examine that information, for records, experience, and consecutive losses. Contestants with 10 or more consecutive losses must obtain a special exception before being placed on the bout card. The results of the pre-bout physical, and any other pertinent information available including the severity index, will be used to determine, to the extent possible, that both contestants are substantially equal in skills and ability and are medically fit to compete. No bout shall take place without approval of the event inspector and the ringside physician assigned to the event by the department or its contractor.
- B. Each contestant must possess a current federal identification number as required in 15USC §6305.
- C. No contestant shall participate in a bout who has:
  - 1. Been knocked out in the 60 days immediately preceding the date of the bout;
  - 2. Been technically knocked out in the 30 days preceding the date of the bout;
  - 3. Been a contestant in a kick boxing, or martial arts event of more than six rounds during the 15 days preceding the date of the bout or six or fewer rounds during the seven days preceding the date of the bout;
  - 4. Suffered a cerebral hemorrhage;
  - 5. Suffered a serious head injury or other serious physical injury. The department or its contractor may require an additional, specific medical examination to determine the contestant's suitability.
  - 6. Blindness in one eye or whose vision in one eye is so poor that a physician recommends the contestant not participate in the bout. A contestant who is totally unsighted (uncorrected vision worse than 20/400) in one or both eyes shall be prohibited from competing; or
  - 7. Been denied a license or approval to bout by another jurisdiction for medical reasons.
- D. No contestant shall participant in a bout while under medical or administrative suspension

from a commission of another jurisdiction of the United States due to:

1. A recent knockout or series of consecutive losses;
  2. An injury, requirement for a medical procedure, or physician denial of eligibility to compete;
  3. Failure of a test for drugs or controlled substances; or
  4. The use of false aliases or falsifying, or attempting to falsify, official identification cards or documents.
- E. A contestant who is suspended by a commission of another jurisdiction of the United States may be allowed to compete if:
1. The contestant was suspended for a knockout, technical knockout, series of consecutive losses, an injury, a requirement of a medical procedure, or physician denial of certification and the time interval for knockouts and technical knockouts in subsection C of this section has been met and further proof of sufficiently improved medical or physical condition has been furnished;
  2. The contestant was suspended for the failure of a drug test or the use of false aliases or falsifying, or attempting to falsify, official identification cards or documents and that a suspension was not, or is no longer, merited by the facts;
  3. The contestant was suspended for any reason other than those mentioned in subdivisions 1 and 2 of this subsection and the department or the department's contractor notifies the suspending commission in writing and consults with the designated official of the suspending commission prior to the grant of approval for such contestant to participate in a boxing bout; or
  4. The contestant was suspended for any reason other than those mentioned in subdivisions 1 and 2 of this subsection and the contestant's appeal to the Association of Boxing Commissions results in a determination that the suspension was without sufficient grounds, was for an improper purpose, or was not related to the health and safety of the contestant or the purposes of the federal Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 USC §6301 et seq.).
- F. Any promoter or contestant may request reconsideration by the department of the executive director's decision by immediately providing in writing additional information or contradictory evidence concerning the contestant's skill, ability, or medical fitness.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007, Volume 32, Issue 25, eff. September 7, 2016.*

**18VAC120-42-170. Promoter to provide copy of contract with contestants at weigh-in; penalty for noncompliance; contents of contract.**

- A. The promoter shall provide a copy of his contract with each contestant scheduled to compete in the event to the event inspector at the time of the weigh-in as required in 18VAC120-42-110
- B. Failure to provide a copy of the contract for a contestant at the weigh-in shall result in the contestant's disqualification to compete in the event.
- C. Each contract shall contain the name of the promoter, the name of the contestant, the amount of compensation to be paid to the contestant by the promoter, the date, time and location of the event, weigh-in, and pre-bout physical and shall comply with the minimum provisions contained in the most current model contract developed by the Association of Boxing Commissions and contained in the federal Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 USC§6301 et seq.).

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007.*

**18VAC120-42-180. Event conduct standards for kick boxing and other similar contests.**

- A. Wrapping of each contestant's hands shall not exceed more than one winding of surgeon's adhesive tape around the wrist,
  - 1. Not over 1-1/2 inches wide, placed directly on the hand to protect the part of the hand near the wrist:
    - a. The tape may cover the hand but not extend within 3/4 inch of the knuckles when the hand is clenched to make a fist.
    - b. Soft surgical gauze, not over 2 inches wide, held in place by not more than six feet of surgeon's adhesive tape for each hand shall be used.
    - c. Up to one 10-yard roll of gauze may be used to complete the wrappings for each hand.
    - d. Strips of tape may be used between the fingers to hold down the graze, not to cover the knuckles.
    - e. Gauze shall be adjusted in the locker room in the presence of the event inspector or his contractor.
    - f. Before putting on gloves, the contestant shall present his wrapped hands for inspection by the event inspector or his designee.



- B. Any contestant who has signed a contract to compete on a promoter's program shall be subject to be called by the department to appear at any time to be weighed or to be examined by a physician designated by the department when the department has reason to believe the contestant may not be qualified or may not be medically sound to participate in the bout.
- C. Each contestant who signs a contract to compete in a promoter's event shall appear at a time and place designated by the department or its contractor to be weighed on department-approved scales in the presence of each other and a representative designated by the department. Contestants shall have all weights removed from their bodies before the weigh-in but may wear shorts in the case of males, and shorts and shirts in the case of females.
- D. In accordance with 15 USC §6304, each contestant shall be examined immediately before the bout by a ringside physician assigned to the event who certifies in writing on a form provided by the department whether the contestant is physically fit to safely compete. The original health certificate will be submitted to the event inspector or his designee. In addition, each female contestant shall take a pregnancy test in the presence of a female inspector, using the pregnancy test required by 18VAC120-42-110. The inspector will give the results to the physician and the results will be noted on the physical form. If the physician's certification fails to certify that the contestant is physically fit to safely compete, the contestant shall not participate in the bout, and shall immediately be placed on suspension on the registry approved by the Association of Boxing Commissions. All contestants shall submit to a post-bout physical by the ringside physician or the department or its contractor.
- E. Discretionary use of petroleum jelly is permitted on the face, arms or any other part of the body. In the case of a cut, the following topical solutions approved by the Association of Boxing Commissions is permitted:
1. A solution of adrenaline 1/1000
  2. Avetine
  3. Thrombin
- All other solutions are prohibited.
- F. Headgear is not permitted.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007.*

**18VAC120-42-190. Weight classes, weigh-ins and pre-bout meeting.**

- A. Male and Female Weight classes are as follows:

<b>Weight Class</b>	<b>Weight in Lbs.</b>	<b>Weight in KG</b>	<b>Max Weight Spread</b>	<b>Glove sizes</b>
Atom weight	112 & below	50.9 & below	3 lbs. - 1.36kg	8 oz.
Flyweight	112.1 - 117	50.95 - 53.18	3 lbs. - 1.36 kg	8 oz.
Bantamweight	117.1 - 122	53.22 - 55.45	4 lbs. - 1.8 kg	8 oz.
Featherweight	122.1 - 127	55.50 - 57.72	4 lbs. - 1.8 kg	8 oz.
Lightweight	127.1 - 132	57.77 - 60	4 lbs. - 1.8 kg	8 oz.
Super Lightweight	132.1 - 137	60.04 - 62.27	5 lbs. - 2.3 kg	8 oz.
Light Welterweight	137.1 - 142	62.31 - 64.51	5 lbs. - 2.3 kg	10 oz.
Welterweight	142.1 - 147	64.59 - 66.8	7 lbs. - 3.2 kg	10 oz.
Super Welterweight	147.1 - 153	66.9 - 69.5	7 lbs. - 3.2 kg	10 oz.
Light Middleweight	153.1 - 159	69.6 - 72.3	7 lbs. - 3.2 kg	10 oz.
Middleweight	159.1 - 165	72.4 - 75	7 lbs. - 3.2 kg	10 oz.
Super Middleweight	165.1 - 172	75.1 - 78.2	7 lbs. - 3.2 kg	10 oz.
Light Heavyweight	172.1 - 179	78.3 - 81.4	7 lbs. - 3.2 kg	10 oz.
Light Cruiserweight	179.1 - 186	81.5 - 84.5	7 lbs. - 3.2 kg	10 oz.
Cruiserweight	186.1 - 195	84.6 - 88.6	10 lbs. - ?? kg	10 oz.
Heavyweight	195.1 - 215	88.7 - 97.7	20 lbs. - 9.1 kg	10 oz.
Super Heavyweight	215.1 and up	97.8 and up	No limit	10 oz.

- B. No contestant may engage in a bout without the approval of the department or its contractor if the difference in weight between the contestants exceeds the allowance in subsection A of this section.
- C. If one of the two contestants in a bout is above or below the weights shown in subsection A of this section, both contestants shall wear the gloves of the higher weight.
- D. When weigh-ins occur within 24 hours, but not less than 12 hours prior to the event's scheduled start time, the contestant shall not exceed the weight specified in his contract with the promoter. If a contestant exceeds the weight specified in the contract he shall not compete unless he:
1. Loses the weight exceeded in the contract at least 12 hours prior to the event's scheduled start time;
  2. Loses all but two pounds of the weight exceeded in the contract at least 12 hours prior to the event's scheduled start time and loses the final two pounds at least six hours prior to the event's scheduled start: or
  3. Renegotiates the contract and provides a copy to the department or its contractor.
- E. Contestants who weigh-in 24 hours prior to the scheduled event shall be required to re-weigh two hours prior to the event's scheduled start time and will not be permitted to exceed the weight specified in the contract by more than 10 pounds.

- F. When weigh-ins occur less than 12 hours prior to an event's scheduled start time, the contestant shall not exceed the weight specified in the contract. If a contestant weighs more than two pounds over the weight specified in the contract, he shall not compete unless he:
  - 1. Loses up to two pounds at least six hours prior to the event's scheduled start time; or
  - 2. Renegotiates his contract and provides a copy to the department or its contractor.
- G. All contestants and their second must be present at the official weigh-in. The time, date, and location of the weigh-in will be approved by the department. Contestants will be allowed to witness their opponent's weigh-in. All contestants and their seconds must be present at the pre-bout meeting. Any second who does not attend the pre-bout meeting will not be permitted in the corner of their contestant.
- H. The promoter is responsible for ensuring that all contestants and all seconds are present at the pre-bout meeting. All contestants and chief seconds will report to the event location and their locker rooms at the specified time on the night of the event. Once the contestant reports to the event facility and to the locker room he will be disqualified if he leaves the locker room before time for the bout or leaves the facility before the end of the bout.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007, Volume 32, Issue 25, eff. September 7, 2016.*

**18VAC120-42-200. Access to contestant's locker rooms.**

- A. On the day of the bout, only the following individuals are allowed in the locker room of a contestant:
  - 1. The contestant's licensed manager;
  - 2. The contestant's licensed trainers, seconds, or cut men;
  - 3. The promoter or the promoter's representatives.
  - 4. Any representative of the department or its contractor in the conduct of his official duties; and
  - 5. Any representative of a law-enforcement agency while discharging his official duties.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007.*

**18VAC120-42-210. Pre-bout instructions**

- A. The contestant and all of his seconds shall meet in the locker room with the referee at which time the referee shall:

1. Ascertain the name of each contestant and his chief second, and shall hold the chief second responsible for the conduct of the other seconds during the progress of the bout.
2. Explain violations of second rules; further violation shall result in disqualifications and/or disciplinary action.
3. Identify the belt/hip line and clarify that the equipment shall not extend above this imaginary line.
4. Explain what will occur when the warning sounds indicating that the end of the round is near, and when the horn sounds the end of the round.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007.*

**18VAC120-42-220. Number and conduct of seconds or cornermen.**

- A. Before a bout begins, the chief second and other seconds shall be identified for the officials. The chief second shall present the contestant, ready to compete, when the event inspector calls the contestants to the ring and shall present the contestant, ready to box, when the referee calls the contestants to the center of the ring for final instructions.
- B. No contestant may have more than three seconds or cornermen, except in a world title bout, the department or its designee may authorize up to five seconds. The chief second must appear at the official weigh-in and pre-bout meeting at the time and place designated by the department or its contractor.
- C. All seconds must keep their shoulders below the ring floor level during the bout. Seconds are prohibited from standing up or leaning on the edge of the ring, mat or floor or slapping the ring, mat or floor while the bout is in progress, or touching the ring ropes until the bell sounds to end the round. Seconds must keep coaching volume down while the bout is in progress and are prohibited from negatively interfering with the officials in any physical or verbal way.
- D. Only one second may be inside of the ring ropes between rounds and shall not enter the ring until the horn signals the end of the round. During the rest period, the second may coach his contestant; treat cuts, abrasions or swelling; and provide water, ice, approved sport drinks, or other cooling-down techniques. Seconds shall not enter the ring to assist or move a contestant who has been knocked down or injured until instructed to do so by the ringside physician.
- E. Any excessive or undue spraying or throwing of water on any contestant by a second between rounds is prohibited. Seconds are responsible for wiping up any fluids in their corners between rounds.
- F. Seconds shall not enter the ring until the horn signals the end of the round. Seconds shall leave the ring at the sound of the timekeeper's warning that 10 seconds remain before the

start of the next round, removing all buckets, stools and other equipment promptly.

- G. Seconds shall not use alcoholic beverages, stimulants, or other substances not approved by the department or its contractor during any contest.
- H. Throwing in the towel is not permitted by any second. If a second enters the ring during the round, the contestant shall be disqualified by the referee. The referee is the only person who can stop the bout.
- I. Seconds are not permitted to use any electronic recording equipment during the bout.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007.*

**18VAC120-42-230. Scoring of contest, decisions and announcements of decisions.**

- A. Each contest shall be scored by the judges assigned by the department or its contractor. At the end of each round, the score and the score cards shall be presented to the event inspector or his designee who shall examine the score cards. At the end of the bout, the winner shall be the contestant who receives the highest score of the majority of the judges. The bout is a draw if neither contestant scores so as to obtain a majority.
- B. When the event inspector or his designee has examined the score cards and checked them for accuracy, he will inform the ring announcer of the decision.
- C. The department shall not change a decision rendered at the end of any bout unless:
  - 1. It is determined that there has been wrongful or illegal collusion affecting the results of the bout;
  - 2. An error is found in the compilation of the score cards that shows that the decision favored the wrong contestant; or
  - 3. The department determines through investigation there was a violation of this chapter that adversely impacted on the fairness of the bout or decision.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007.*

**18VAC120-42-240. Promoter to allow access to event and facilities.**

- A. The department may assign one or more representatives to each event to evaluate the contractor's performance or to assure compliance with Chapter 8.1 (§54.1-828 et seq.) of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia and this chapter.
- B. All event officials and representatives of the department assigned to an event, whether to

monitor the contractor's performance or for any other authorized purpose, shall be granted immediate access by the promoter and the promoter's representatives to the licensed event and to any area or portion of the event facilities.

- C. The promoter is responsible for security of the locker room area and shall not permit access except as specified in 18VAC120-42-119.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007.*

**18VAC120-42-250. Full Contact Kick Boxing rules.**

- A. All legal kicks and punches must be above the waist of each contestant.
  - 1. Close fist or back fists are legal;
- B. Leg sweeps, boot to boot, to the inside and outside of the opponent's foot (not above the ankle) are permitted.
- C. Foot pads are required and are to be supplied by each contestant. Foot pads must be secured to the foot with elastic strap and medical athletic tape and must cover both toes and heel. Laces must not be exposed.
- D. Shin pads must be made of a soft material (dipped foam or cotton) and secured to the shin with elastic straps and medical athletic tape.
- E. It is only permitted to kick (roundhouse or using the top of your foot) a martial artist's legs out (shin, instep).
- F. Non-Title bouts shall consist of three two minutes rounds, with one (1) minute rest in between rounds. Title bouts shall consist of five two minute rounds, with one (1) minute rest in between rounds.
- G. Fouls:
  - 1. Kicks to the legs;
  - 2. Knee strikes;
  - 3. Elbow strikes;
  - 4. Clinch and neck wrestling;
  - 5. Stepping on a fallen opponent. Twisting and pulling an opponent over the side of your body (and then landing on top);

6. Illegal trip; it is not permitted to position your foot next to the opponent and twist them over your stationary foot. You must clear the leg of the opponent or it is an illegal trip. A contestant can spin or pull another over the inside or outside of the leg and dump him on the floor, however the leg being used to manipulate the dump to the ground cannot stay in that position as the opponent goes to the floor. If the opponent arises immediately it is not counted as a knockdown.
  7. It is not permitted to grab a contestant in the clinch and then sweep the opponents legs out using the back of one's own leg or calf;
  8. Lifting: It is not permitted to lift a contestant off of the ground in any way to throw them;
  9. Plowing;
  - 10 Intentionally falling on top of a contestant to either strike with their knee or to intentionally hurt their opponent;
- H. Counting by referee during knockdowns and knockouts;
1. If an accidental foul occurs the contestant has up to five minutes to recoup from the accidental foul.
  2. If the fighter is not able to continue after the foul and the accidental foul happens before the half point of the contest it will be a technical draw.
  3. If the foul occurs after the half way point of an accidental foul the judges will score the bout as a finished bout and the person with the highest score win by technical decision.
  4. If the referee calls an intentional foul against a contestant, that contestant cannot win.
    - a. If the foul is called before the half way point of the bout and the fouled contestant is unable to continue, the bout ends in a technical draw.
    - b. If the bout has reached the half way of the fight the judges will score the unfinished rounds and if the fouled contestant is ahead on the score cards the fouled contestant will win by a technical decision.
    - c. If the contestant who committed the foul is ahead on the score cards it will scored as a technical draw.
  5. Scoring of contest, decisions and announcements of decisions; the 10 point must system shall be used for all contests. Point deductions are to taken off by the Event Inspector or their designee after taking the judges scores from their cards.

Weight classes for men and women;

Weight Class	Weight	Weight difference	Size gloves
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Atom weight	112 and below	3 lbs.	8 oz.
Flyweight	112.1 – 117	3 lbs.	8 oz.
Bantamweight	117.1 - 122	4 lbs.	8 oz.
Featherweight	122.1 - 127	4 lbs.	8 oz.
Lightweight	127.1 - 132	4 lbs.	8 oz.
Super Lightweight	132.1 - 137	5 lbs.	8 oz.
Light Welterweight	137.1 - 142	5 lbs.	10 oz.
Welterweight	142.1 - 147	7 lbs.	10 oz.
Super Welterweight	147.1 - 153	7 lbs.	10 oz.
Light Middleweight	153.1 - 159	7 lbs.	10 oz.
Middleweight	159.1 - 165	7 lbs.	10 oz.
Super Middleweight	165.1 - 172	7 lbs.	10 oz.
Light Heavyweight	172.1 - 179	7 lbs.	10 oz.
Light Cruiserweight	179.1 - 186	7 lbs.	10 oz.
Cruiserweight	186.1 - 195	10 lbs.	10 oz.
Heavyweight	195.1 - 215	20 lbs.	10 oz.
Super Heavyweight	215 and up	No Limit	10 oz.

I. Clothing and equipment for full contact events;

1. Male contestants - trucks (no pockets), or kicking pants, or gee;
2. Female contestants shall wear a pair of shorts without pockets, or kicking pants or gee; with shorts or kicking pants. Female contestants must wear a tight fitting shirt and/or a sports bra;
3. Both contestants are required to wear the same thing;
4. Male contestants must wear a groin cup;
5. Protective mouthpiece;
6. Foot pads; secured by an elastic strap and medical athletic tape covering toes and heel (laces cannot be exposed)
7. Shin, instep, elbow and knee supports are permitted; shin pads must be made of a soft material secured by elastic strips and/or medical athletic tape;
8. Oil on face;

J. Bandaging of each contestant's hands shall not exceed one roll of surgeon's adhesive tape, not over 1-1/2 inches wide, placed directly on the hand to protect the part of the hand near the wrist.

1. The tape may cover the hand but not extend within 3/4 inch of the knuckles when the hand is clenched to make a fist.
2. Soft surgical bandage, not over two inches wide, held in place by not more than six feet of



surgeon's adhesive tape for each hand shall be used.

3. Up to one 10-yard roll of bandage may be used to complete the wrappings for each hand.
4. Strips of tape may be used between the fingers to hold down the bandages, not to cover the knuckles.
5. Bandages shall be adjusted in the locker room in the presence of the event inspector or his designee.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007.*

**18VAC120-42-260. Muay Thai (Thai boxing) rules.**

A. Pre-bout rituals

1. The referee will order the bout to start only after the contestants have completed their pre-bout rituals, in accordance with Thai traditions. The Referee should instruct the seconds/corner men to remove any ceremonial garb when their contestant returns to his corner after he/she has performed the pre-bout ritual.
2. Commissions may wish to notify the contestants of a time limit on their pre-bout rituals. (for example, three minutes maximum)

B. Groin protection

1. Commissions should mandate and require that Muay Thai contestants, at any level, wear a groin protector.

C. Weight classes: male and female weight classes are as follows:

<b>Weight Class</b>	<b>Weight in Lbs.</b>	<b>Max Weight Spread</b>	<b>Glove sizes</b>
Mini Flyweight	Over 100- 105	3 lbs.	8 oz.
Light Flyweight	Over 105 - 108	3 lbs.	8 oz.
Flyweight	Over 108 - 112	3 lbs.	8 oz.
Super Flyweight	Over 112 - 115	3 lbs.	8 oz.
Bantamweight	Over 115 - 118	3 lbs.	8 oz.
Super Bantamweight	Over 118 - 122	4 lbs.	8 oz.
Featherweight	Over 122 - 126	4 lbs.	8 oz.
Super Featherweight	Over 126 - 130	4 lbs.	8 oz.
Lightweight	Over 130 - 135	5 lbs.	8 oz.
Super Lightweight	Over 135 - 140	5 lbs.	8 oz.

Welterweight	Over 140 - 147	7 lbs.	8 oz.
Super Welterweight	Over 147 - 154	7 lbs.	10 oz.
Middleweight	Over 154 - 160	7 lbs.	10 oz.
Super Middleweight	Over 160 - 168	7 lbs.	10 oz.
Light Heavyweight	Over 168 - 175	7 lbs.	10 oz.
Cruiserweight	Over 175 - 200	12 lbs.	10 oz.
Heavyweight	Over 200 - 225	No limit	10 oz.
Super-Heavyweight	Over 225 and up	No limit	10 oz.

#### D. Hand wraps

1. All contestants shall be required to gauze and tape their hands prior to all contests. In all weight classes, the bandages on each contestant's hand shall be restricted to soft gauze cloth not more than 20 yards in length not more than two inches in width, held in place by not more than 10 feet of surgeon's tape, not more than two inches in width, for each hand.
2. The tape may cross the back of the hand twice, but may not extend within three-fourths of an inch of the knuckles when the hand is clenched to make a fist.
3. Strips of tape may be used between the fingers to hold down the bandages.
4. The bandages shall be evenly distributed across the hand. It is absolutely prohibited to "top – up" on the knuckles.
5. Bandages and tape shall be placed on the contestant's hands in the dressing room in the presence of the inspector and, if warranted, in the presence of the manager or chief second of his or her opponent.
6. Substances other than surgeon's tape and gauze shall not be utilized.
7. Pre wraps should not be used.

#### E. Length of round and number of rounds.

1. Rounds shall be 5 minutes in length and there can be up to 5 rounds.
2. Men and Women can compete in the same number of rounds.

#### F. Gloves

1. Shall be supplied by the promoter and approved by the commission.
2. No contestant shall supply their own gloves for participation.

3. Gloves must weigh a minimum of eight ounces or above weight class of 160 lbs. and above must wear 10 ounce gloves. With commission approval, six ounce gloves may be permitted for weight classes up to, and including featherweight.
4. Gloves must not be squeezed, kneaded or crushed to change the original shape.
5. The gloves used in the competitions must have the leather portion not heavier than one-half of the glove's total weight and the glove's inner pads must weigh at least one-half of the glove's total weight.
6. Gloves must only be placed on the contestant in the presence of an Inspector.
7. New replacement gloves must be kept at ringside.
8. All gloves must have the distal portion of the thumb attached to the body of the glove so as to minimize the possibility of injury to an opponent's eye.
9. Gloves should be wiped off by referee after knockdown, slip or fall before the fallen contestant may resume competing, the referee shall wipe the gloves with a damp towel or the referee's shirt.

#### G. Downward pointed elbow strikes

1. Ceiling to floor or 12 to 6 elbow strikes should be prohibited.

#### H. Double knockout situations

1. The referee shall stop a contest or exhibition of unarmed combat at any stage if the referee determines that both unarmed contestants are in such a condition that to continue might subject the unarmed contestant to serious injury. If a contest or exhibition is stopped pursuant to this subsection, the decision shall be deemed to be a technical draw.
2. Scoring
  - a. Muay Thai suggests that techniques should be strong and delivered with power to score.
  - b. Judges should not only make an assessment of the actions of the contestant delivering the blow.
  - c. They must also assess the effect of the technique on the opponent.
3. These assessments include stopping an opponent's advance, unbalancing the opponent, slowing the opponent's own offense, and causing the opponent to show pain.
4. The winner in Muay Thai is the stronger contestant over the entire contest length. This means that the contestant needs to maintain physical and mental equilibrium as well as demonstrating

their superiority in technique. Landing a strike, in and of itself, does not always mean that it is a scoring strike.

5. The 10 point must system, as utilized in boxing, is the preferred scoring method at this time.
6. The 10 point must system is defined as follows:
  - a. All bouts will be evaluated and scored by three judges.
  - b. The 10-Point Must System will be the standard system of scoring a bout.
  - c. Under the 10-Point Must Scoring System, 10 points must be awarded to the winner of the round and nine points or less must be awarded to the loser, except for an even round, which is scored (10-10).
  - d. Effective striking is judged by determining the number of legal strikes landed by a contestant and the significance of such legal strikes.
  - e. Fight area control is judged by determining who is dictating the pace, location and position of the bout.
  - f. Effective aggressiveness means moving forward and landing a legal strike.
  - g. Effective defense means avoiding being struck while countering with offensive attacks.
7. The following objective scoring criteria shall be utilized by the judges when scoring a round;
  - a. A round is to be scored as a 10-10 Round when both contestants appear to be fighting evenly and neither contestant shows dominance in a round;
  - b. A round is to be scored as a 10-9 Round when a contestant wins by a close but clear margin, landing the greater number of effective legal strikes and other maneuvers;
  - c. A round is to be scored as a 10-8 Round when a contestant wins a round by a wide margin and damages his opponent
  - d. A round is to be scored as a 10-7 Round when a contestant totally and completely dominates in a round and damages his contestant.
8. Techniques which have a visible impact on the contestant should be weighed most heavily.
  - a. Consider the effectiveness of the strike, its strength, and target and how much it causes technique and not a kick or strike from another form of martial art.
  - b. The technique should have a visible effect on an opponent. If a technique strikes the opponent's arms or shin, then generally the technique doesn't score. However, there are

exceptions. For example, if a kick makes contact with a contestant's arm and physically moves the person being kicked or causes them to lose balance, solely due to the kick's power, that kick would score; although not as highly as a kick that had the same effect but cleanly made contact with the body.

- c. The most scored techniques are those that have the greatest effect on the contestant. It is not the number or variety of techniques delivered but their effectiveness that is important in determining the winner of a bout. For example, it is possible for one competitor to use one type of technique exclusively and win if the use of that technique results in that competitor delivering more, effective techniques than their contestant (one competitor may win by only kneeling their contestant.)

#### M. Scoring of incomplete rounds

1. There should be scoring of an incomplete round.
2. If the referee penalizes either contestant, then the appropriate points shall be deducted when the scorekeeper calculates the final score for the partial round.

#### N. Bout results

##### 1. Knockout:

- a. When a contestant is unable to regain his/her feet prior to the count of ten.
- b. When any contestant falls out of the ring, the referee shall count immediately.
  - i. If the count reaches 20, the fallen contestant cannot come up on the ring he/she will lose by K.O.
  - ii. If the fallen contestant can come up on the ring before counting up to 20, he/she can continue the bout.

##### 2. Technical knockout

- a. When the referee orders the bout stopped because it is determined that one contestant is not fit to continue.
- b. When a contestant cannot answer the bell for the upcoming round or is so badly cut that it is too dangerous to continue.

##### 3. Submission:

When one contestant notifies the referee that he/she no longer wishes to continue.

4. Unanimous decision:

All three judges score in favor of one contestant.

5. Majority decision:

Two judges score in favor of one contestant and one Judge has is a draw.

6. Split decision:

Two judges score in favor of one contestant, while one judge scores in favor of the other.

7. Disqualification:

Due to an intentional fouls or fouls, a referee may disqualify a contestant.

8. Technical draw:

In case of an intentional violation which causes injury and the bout is continued but is later stopped because of the initial foul, the referee should stop the Bout and give a TKO draw

- a. If the scores are equal or,
- b. If the fouled contestant is behind on the cards.

9. Technical decision:

- a. In case of an intentional violation which causes injury and the bout is continued but is later stopped because of the initial foul, the referee should declare a victory for the fouled contestant if he/she is ahead on the cards.

10. If a bout cannot continue due to an unintentional foul but enough rounds have been completed, the referee shall declare a victory for the contestant ahead on the score cards.

11. No contest:

In case of an unintentional violation which causes injury so serious that the bout cannot be continued but less than enough rounds have been completed.

12. Draw:

When the score cards result in a three way tie.

13. Majority draw:

When two judges score the bout a draw and one judge has declared the winner

O. Fouls-The following are fouls and will result in penalties if committed:

1. Head butting
2. Strikes to the groin- hits to the groin area/lower abdomen just below the navel called ‘neeb’ is permitted and is classic technique.
3. Direct attacks to the knee- it is considered unsporting in Muay Thai to side kick a contestant to the front of the knee
4. Strikes to the back of the head
5. Strikes to the spine
6. Strikes to the throat
7. Striking a contestant while he/she is down
8. Striking a contestant while he/she is under the referee’s care
9. Shoving, throwing or wrestling an opponent except when pushing in a legal clinch
10. Striking when the referee has called a break
11. Striking after the bell has sounded
12. Holding the ropes or using the ropes as a weapon, for example pushing a contestant's face across the ropes in an attempt to cut them.
13. Timidity or intentionally avoiding contact
14. The use of abusive language or abusive gesture
15. Causing intentional delays in the action, such as repeatedly spitting out the mouth piece
16. Eye gouging
17. Hair pulling
18. Biting or spitting
19. Holding the contestant’s shorts
20. Interference from a contestant’s seconds

21. Tripping or sweeping an contestant-

Using trips and sweeps; it is legal to kick a contestant off their feet. A kick is considered to be an action that uses the top of the foot and/or front of the shin. It is possible to hook the foot and kick as long as the top of the foot and/or shin, and not the side of the foot, make contact with the contestant's leg.

22. Hip throws, shoulder or leg throws

23. Grasping the contestant's lower back while also forcing a contestant's spine to hyperextend.

24. Intentionally falling on a down contestant, pressing elbow or knee upon him/her

25. Wrestling, back or arm locks or any similar judo or wrestling hold

26. Attempting to 'pile-drive' an contestant's head into the canvas

27. Catching a contestant's kick and pushing a contestant for more than three steps without attempting to deliver an attacking technique. (i.e. permissible to catch your contestant's kick, hold your contestant's leg, and take up to three steps)

28. After kicking with his kicking leg being caught, the contestant pretends to throw himself down on ring floor. It is considered taking advantage over his opponent

29. Fouls are subject to the discretion of the referee. Fouls may result in a warning, a point deduction of one to two points or disqualification. The referee will base his decision on the severity of the foul and the intent of the fouling contestant.

P. The referee may consider:

1. A contestant who violates the rules intentionally but does not put the contestant at a disadvantage or injure him/her shall be given one warning or be assessed a one point deduction.

2. A contestant who violates the rules intentionally and puts the contestant at a disadvantage or makes him/her unable to continue the bout shall be disqualified and lose the bout.

3. In case of an unintentional violation, the referee shall give no more than two warnings before assessing a point deduction.

Q. Fouls further explained:

1. Direct (side style kicks) kicks to the front of a contestant's legs are illegal.

2. Hip throws:



- a. Over the hip throws such as in Japanese arts like Judo, Jujitsu, Karate, Sambo, or San Shou are illegal.
  - b. A contestant is not allowed to use the hip or shoulder to throw a contestant in any kind of Judo throw or reap.
  - c. A contestant is not allowed to step across or in front of an contestant's leg with his/her own leg and bring the contestant over his/her hip.
  - d. Taking a contestant around the waist with both arms and twisting him/her off balance so the contestant will fall is legal.
    - i. contestant is not allowed to twist and pull a contestant over the side of his/her body and then land on top.
3. It is an intentional foul when a contestant plans, with the sole intention of falling on top of his/her opponent, to either strike with the knee or to intentionally hurt the opponent while down, by contriving to make it look like an accident.
4. Stepping on a fallen opponent is illegal.
5. Illegal trips:
- a. If a contestant positions a foot next to the opponent and twists him/her over the leg, it is an illegal trip unless the leg is cleared as the opponent falls.
  - b. If a contestant spins or pulls the contestant over the inside or outside of the leg and dumps him/her on the ground, it is an illegal trip when the leg being used to manipulate and dump the contestant stays in that position as he/she goes down.
  - c. If the leg is set and stays in that position, it is an illegal throw or trip.
  - d. The leg must clear immediately after the opponent is pulled or tripped over the knee. Clear means that the leg must be moved out of the way before the contestant hits the canvas by skipping the leg or slightly jumping to the side, as long as it is moved from the original position. Taking out an opponent footing is legal only if the tripping leg is withdrawn from contact as he/she falls to the ground.
6. Neck wrestling:
- a. If in a clinch with arms around each other's shoulder, such as to deliver or defend from an elbow strike, twisting the opponent using the upper body in such a way that he/she will fall to the ground is allowed.
  - b. By using neck and shoulder manipulation, it is legal for a contestant to spin and

throw/dump an opponent to the canvas without using any part of his/her body as a barrier.

7. Sweeping:

- a. A contestant is allowed to roundhouse kick the opponent's supporting leg with the top of his/her own foot or shin, taking out the opponent's footing, but karate style sweeps with the foot's instep is illegal.
- b. It is illegal to take out the opponent's footing in the clinch by sweeping the back of his/her supporting leg with the back of contestant's own leg or calf.

8. Lifting:

- a. It is illegal in any way to lift an opponent's off the ground and throw him/her on the canvas.
- b. If a contestant clinches the opponent's around the waist and lifts the opponent's off the ground, twisting and throwing the opponent's around to the side and onto the canvas in a suplex.

R. Scoring the foul to be performed by the scorekeeper.

1. Fouls may result in a point being deducted by the official scorekeeper from the offending mixed martial artist's score. The scorekeeper, not the judges, will be responsible for calculating the true score after factoring in the point deduction.
2. Only a referee can assess a foul. If the referee does not call the foul, judges shall not make that assessment on their own and cannot factor such into their scoring calculations.
3. Foul procedures
  - a. The referee shall:
    - i. call time;
    - ii. Check the fouled contestant's condition and safety; and
    - iii. Assess the foul to the offending contestant, deduct points, and notify each corner's seconds, judges and the official scorekeeper.
    - iv. When the round is over, the referee shall assess the foul and notify both corners' seconds, the judges and the official scorekeeper.
    - v. The referee may terminate a bout based on the severity of a foul. For such a flagrant foul, a contestant shall lose by disqualification.

4. Time considerations for fouls.

a. Contestant who is not fouled by a low blow:

- i. If a contest is stopped because of an accidental foul, the referee shall determine whether the unarmed contestant who has been fouled can continue or not.
- ii. If the unarmed contestant chance of winning has not been seriously jeopardized as a result of the foul and if the foul did not involve a concussive impact to the head of the unarmed contestant who has been fouled, the referee may order the contest or exhibition continued after a recuperative interval of not more than 5 minutes.
- iii. Immediately after separating the unarmed contestants, the referee shall inform the Commission's representative of his determination that the foul was accidental.

b. If a contestant is fouled by blow that the referee deems illegal

- i. The referee should stop the action and call for time.
- ii. The referee may take the injured contestant to the ringside doctor and have the ringside doctor examine the contestant as to their ability to continue on in the contest.
- iii. The ringside doctor has up to 5 minutes to make their determination. If the ringside doctor determines that the contestant can continue in the contest, the referee shall as soon as practical restart the bout.

c. However, unlike the low blow foul rule, the contestant does not have up to 5 minutes of time to use at their discretion.

d. If deemed not fit to continue by the referee or ringside physician, the referee must immediately call a halt to the bout.

- i. If the contestant is deemed not fit to continue by the referee or ringside physician but
- ii. Some of the five minute foul time is still remaining, the contestant cannot avail himself of the remaining time.

e. If the referee stops the contest and employs the use of the ringside doctor, the ringside physician's examinations shall not exceed five minutes. If five minutes is exceeded, the bout cannot be re-started and the contest must end.

5. Fouls: intentional.

a. If the referee determines that a contest or exhibition may not continue because of an injury caused by an intentional foul, the unarmed contestant who

committed the intentional foul loses by disqualification.

- b. If the referee determines that a contest or exhibition may continue despite an injury caused by an intentional foul, the referee shall immediately inform the Commission's representative and the judges and shall deduct two points from the score of the unarmed contestant who committed the intentional foul.
- c. If an injury caused by an intentional foul results in the contest being stopped in a later round:
  - i. The injured unarmed contestant wins by technical decision, if he is ahead on the scorecards; or
  - ii. The contest or exhibition must be declared a technical draw, if the injured unarmed contestant is behind or even on the scorecards.
- d. If an unarmed contestant injures himself while attempting to foul his opponent, the referee shall not take any action in his favor and the injury must be treated the same as an injury produced by a fair blow.

6. Fouls: Accidental.

- a. If a contest or exhibition is stopped because of an accidental foul, the referee shall determine whether the unarmed contestant who has been fouled can continue or not.
- b. If the unarmed contestant's chance of winning has not been seriously jeopardized as a result of a foul and if the foul did not involve a concussive impact to the head of the unarmed contestant who was fouled, the referee may order the contest or exhibition continued after a reasonable interval.
- c. Before the contest or exhibition begins again, the referee shall inform the Commission's representative of his determination that the foul was accidental.

7. If the referee determines that the contest or exhibition may not continue because of an injury suffered as the result of an accidental foul.

- a. The contest or exhibition must be declared a no decision if the foul occurs during the first three rounds of a contest or exhibition that is scheduled for six rounds or less or the first four rounds of a contest or exhibition that is scheduled for more than six rounds.

8. If an injury inflicted by an accidental foul later becomes aggravated by fair blows and the referee orders the contest or exhibition stopped because of the injury, the outcome must be determined by scoring the completed rounds and the round during which the referee stops the contest.

S. Protective equipment:

1. All male contestants must wear groin protection.
2. Women must wear breast protection and rash guards for shirts.
3. All contestants must wear an approved mouth guard.

T. Appearance:

1. Shirts and rash guards are not permitted. (Males only)
2. Shoes are not permitted.
3. No head bands during the contest.
4. No jewelry or body piercing.
5. Hair must be trimmed or tied back. No hair lotions, creams or sprays.
6. Beards are subject to trimming.
7. Thai shorts are to be worn by the contestants, as opposed to other types of shorts or long pants.
8. Knee or ankle braces are not permitted.

U. Seconds:

1. Only one of the seconds may be inside the ring ropes during a period of rest. Any excessive or undue spraying or throwing of water on an unarmed contestant by a second during a period of rest is prohibited.

V. One-sided contest or exhibition; risk of serious injury.

1. The referee may stop a contest or exhibition at any stage if the referee determines that the contest or exhibition is too one-sided or if either unarmed contestant is in such a condition that to continue might subject the unarmed combatant to serious injury.
2. The referee shall stop a contest or exhibition of unarmed combat at any stage if the referee determines that both unarmed contestants are in such a condition that to continue might subject the unarmed contestant to serious injury.
3. If a contest or exhibition is stopped pursuant to this subsection, the decision shall be deemed to be a technical draw.

W. Procedure for counting; knockdown; knockout; technical draw.

1. When an unarmed contestant is knocked down, the referee shall order the opponent to retire to the farthest neutral corner of the ring, by pointing to the corner, and shall immediately begin the count over the unarmed contestant who is down.
  - a. The referee shall audibly announce the passing of the seconds, accompanying count with motions of his arm, with the downward motion indicating the end of each second.
2. The timekeeper, by effective signaling, shall give the referee the correct 1-second interval for his count.
  - a. The referee's count is the official count. Once the referee picks up the count from the timekeeper, the timekeeper shall cease counting.
  - b. No unarmed contestant who is knocked down may be allowed to resume competing until the referee has finished counting to eight.
  - c. The unarmed contestant may take the count either on the floor or standing.
3. If the contestant fails to stay in the farthest corner, the referee shall cease counting until he has returned to his corner and shall then go on with the count from the point at which it was interrupted.
  - a. If the unarmed contestant who is down arises before the count of 10, the referee may step between the unarmed contestants long enough to assure himself that the unarmed contestant who has just arisen is in condition to continue.
  - b. If so assured, he shall, without loss of time, order both unarmed contestant to go on with the contest or exhibition.
  - c. During the intervention by the referee, the striking of a blow by either unarmed contestant may be ruled a foul.
  - d. When an unarmed contestant is knocked out, the referee shall perform a full 10-second count unless, in the judgment of the referee, the safety of the unarmed contestant would be jeopardized by such a count. If the unarmed contestant who is knocked down is still down when the referee calls the count of 10, the referee shall wave both arms to indicate that he has been knocked out.
4. If both unarmed contestant go down at the same time, the count must be continued as long as one is still down. If both unarmed contestants remain down until the count of 10, the contest or exhibition must be stopped and the decision is a technical draw.
5. If an unarmed contestant is down and the referee is in the course of counting at the end of a period of unarmed combat, the bell indicating the end of the period of unarmed combat must

not be sounded, but the bell must be sounded as soon as the downed unarmed contestant regains his feet.

6. When an unarmed contestant has been knocked down before the normal termination of a period of unarmed combat and the period of unarmed combat terminates before he has arisen from the floor of the ring, the referee's count must be continued. If the unarmed contestant who is down fails to arise before the count of 10, he is considered to have lost the contest or exhibition by a knockout in the round containing the period of unarmed combat that was just concluded.
7. If a legal blow struck in the final seconds of a period of unarmed combat causes an unarmed contestant to go down after the bell has sounded, that knockdown must be regarded as having occurred during the period of unarmed combat just ended and the appropriate count must continue.

X. Procedure when unarmed contestant has fallen through or been knocked through ropes.

1. An unarmed contestant who has been knocked or has fallen through the ropes and over the edge of the ring platform during a contest:
  - a. May be helped back by anyone except his seconds or manager; and
  - b. Will be given 20 seconds to return to the ring.
2. An unarmed contestant who has been knocked or has fallen on the ring platform outside the ropes, but not over the edge of the ring platform:
  - a. May not be helped back by anyone, including, without limitation, his seconds or manager; and
  - b. Will be given 10 seconds to regain his feet and get back into the ring.
3. If the seconds or manager of the unarmed contestant who has been knocked or has fallen pursuant to subsections 1 and 2 helps the unarmed combatant back into the ring, such help may be cause for disqualification.
4. When one unarmed contestant has fallen through the ropes, the other unarmed contestant shall retire to the farthest corner and stay there until ordered to continue the contest or exhibition by the referee.
5. An unarmed contestant who deliberately wrestles or throws an opponent from the ring, or who hits him when he is partly out of the ring and is prevented by the ropes from assuming a position of defense, may be penalized.

Y. An unarmed contestant shall be deemed to be down when:

1. Any part of his body other than his feet is on the floor; or He is hanging over the ropes without the ability to protect himself and he cannot fall to the floor.
2. A referee may count an unarmed contestant out if the unarmed contestant is on the floor or is being held up by the ropes.

**18VAC120-42-270. Mixed martial arts rules.**

1. Each round shall consist of five (5) minute duration with a one (1) minute rest period between rounds.
  - a. No contests shall exceed five (5) rounds and/or twenty-five (25) minutes.
  - b. Bouts may consist of one (1), two (2), three (3), four (4), or five (5) rounds, with a five (5) minute duration.
  - c. No contestant shall exceed competing more than five (5) rounds and/or twenty-five (25) minutes of fighting in a twenty-four (24) hour period.
2. The referee is the sole arbiter of a bout and is the only individual authorized to stop a contest. This shall not preclude a video or other review of a decision under the procedure of the applicable regulatory authority if a protest is filed claiming a clear rule violation.
  - a. The authority of a referee begins when the inspector(s) exit the cage/ring and does not end until the inspector(s) re-enter the cage/ring, upon conclusion of the bout.
3. Instant replay may be used to review a "Bout Ending Sequence" and shall only be used after a bout has been officially stopped. Once instant replay has been used to review a bout ending sequence, the bout shall not be resumed.
4. All contestants are required to wear a mouthpiece during competition. The round cannot begin without the mouthpiece. If the mouthpiece is dislodged during competition, the referee will call time and have the mouthpiece replaced at the first opportune moment, without interfering with the immediate action. Points may be deducted by the referee if he/she feels the mouthpiece is being purposefully spit out.
5. If an Mixed Martial Arts bout is being conducted in a ring and a contestant is knocked out of the ring, the contestant must return to the ring unassisted by spectators or his/her seconds. If assisted by anyone, the contestant may lose points or be disqualified with such a decision being within the sole discretion of the referee. Once knocked from the ring, the competitor will have five (5) minutes to return to fighting surface, similar to an accidental foul, but shall be examined by the ringside physician before returning to action.
6. The reapplication of petroleum jelly or another similar substance, to the face, may be allowed between rounds and shall only be applied by a licensed cutman or licensed cornerman.



7. In instances where the bout has to be concluded due to unforeseen, non-combat related issues, the bout may go to the scorecards if one-half the scheduled rounds, plus one second (1/2 +1) have been completed.
  - a. If the non-combat stoppage occurs prior to the 1/2 +1 mark, the bout is to be scored a “No Contest”
8. Hand Wraps.
  - a. A maximum of one roll (no more than 2” wide by 15 yards in length) of white, soft, cloth gauze is permitted per hand. The gauze may not exceed the wrist of the contestant glove. The exposed thumb is an option to be protected.
  - b. A maximum of one roll (no more than 1.25” wide by 10’ in length) of white athletic tape is permitted per hand. The tape may not exceed the wrist of the competitor’s gloves. Tape may be placed through the fingers but may not cover the knuckles. The exposed thumb is an option to be protected.
  - c. A single layer of elastic or flex-type tape is allowed to be applied over the completed wrap.
  - d. Approved tape/gauze of all brands may be allowed.
9. Joint/Body Coverings.
  - a. Other than the contestant’s hands, there will be no taping, covering, or protective gear, of any kind, on the upper body. This includes, but is not limited to: joint sleeves, padding, or any form of brace/body tape.
  - b. A contestant may use a soft neoprene type sleeve to cover only the knee and/or ankle joints. Approved sleeves may not have: padding, Velcro, plastic, metal, ties, or any other material considered to be unsafe or that may create an unfair advantage. Tape, gauze, or any materials other than the approved sleeves are not permitted.
10. Cage/Ring Attire:
  - a. All mixed martial artists will be required to wear such protective gear as deemed necessary by the Commission.
  - b. Male contestants shall not wear any form of clothing on their upper body.
  - c. Male and female mixed martial artists shall wear the appropriate trunks, mouthpiece, and gloves. Male mixed martial artists shall also wear the appropriate groin protection.
  - d. Female mixed martial artists shall wear a short sleeved (above the elbow) or sleeveless form fitting rash guard and/or sports bra(s). No loose-fitting tops and/or breast protectors

shall be allowed. Female competitors will follow the same requirements for bottom covering as the male competitors, minus the requirement for groin protection.

- e. The hem of the trunks may not extend below the knee.
- f. Fighting shorts/trunks shall not have exposed Velcro, pockets, or zippers.
- g. Mixed martial artists in the same match, contest, or exhibition may wear different color trunks or be designated by glove taping and/or glove coloring to the corner they are assigned.
- h. Mixed martial artists shall not wear shoes in the cage or ring.
- i. When deemed necessary by the referee all mixed martial artists shall have their hair secured in a manner that does not interfere with the vision and safety of either contestant.
- j. No object can be worn to secure the contestant's hair which may cause injury.
- k. The wearing of jewelry will be strictly prohibited during all contests.
- l. Wearing body cosmetics shall be prohibited during all contests. Wearing facial cosmetics shall be at the discretion of the commission and/or referee.

#### 11. Video Monitors.

- a. The ABC supports the use of video monitors by judges in order to facilitate a proper evaluation of all the action in each round. The ABC also supports providing the ringside physician(s) with a monitor in order to improve their understanding of any medical issues that may occur during a bout towards the goal of being better prepared to address them in the most prompt and efficient manner. This would not be mandated and used only as technology and budget allows depending on the promotion/venue.

#### 12. Fouls:

- 1. Butting with the head;
  - a. The head may not be used as a striking instrument in any fashion. Any use of the head as a striking instrument whether head to head, head to body or otherwise is illegal.
- 2. Eye gouging of any kind;
  - a. Eye gouging by means of fingers, chin, or elbow is illegal. Legal strikes or punches that contact the contestant's eye socket are not eye gouging and shall be considered legal attacks.
- 3. Biting or spitting at an opponent;

- a. Biting in any form is illegal. A contestant must recognize that a referee may not be able to physically observe some actions, and must make the referee aware if they are being bit during an exhibition of unarmed combat.
4. Fish hooking;
    - a. Any attempt by a contestant to use their fingers in a manner that attacks their opponent's mouth, nose or ears, stretching the skin to that area will be considered "Fish hooking". Fish hooking generally is the placing of fingers into the mouth or your opponent and pulling your hands in opposing directions while holding onto the skin of your opponent.
  5. Hair pulling;
    - a. Pulling of the hair in any fashion is an illegal action. A contestant may not grab a hold of his opponent's hair to control their opponent in any way. If a contestant has long hair, they may not use their hair as a tool for holding or choking in any fashion.
  6. Spiking the opponent to the canvas onto the head or neck (pile-driving);
    - a. Any throw with an arc to its motion is to be considered a legal throw. It does not matter if the opponents head hits the canvas. A pile driver is considered to be any throw where you control your opponent's body placing their feet up in the air with their head straight down and then forcibly drives the opponents head into the canvas or flooring material. It should be noted when a contestant is placed into a submission hold by their opponent, if that contestant is capable of elevating their opponent they may bring that opponent down in any fashion they desire because they are not in control of their opponent's body. The contestant who is attempting the submission can either adjust their position, or let go of their hold before being slammed to the canvas.
  7. Strikes to the spine or the back of the head;
    - a. The back of the head starts at the crown of the head with a one (1) inch variance to either side, running down the centerline of the head to the occipital junction.
    - b. This area stretches out at the occipital junction (nape of the neck) to cover the entire width of the neck. It then travels down the spine with a one (1) inch variance from the spine's centerline, including the tailbone.
  8. Throat strikes of any kind and/or grabbing the trachea;
    - a. No directed throat strikes are allowed. A directed attack would include a contestant pulling his opponents head in a way to open the neck area for a striking attack. A contestant may not gouge their fingers or thumb into their opponent's neck or trachea in an attempt to submit their opponent. If during stand-up action of a bout a strike is thrown

and the strike lands in the throat area of the contestant, this shall be viewed as a clean and legal blow.

9. Fingers outstretched toward an opponent's face/eyes;

- a. In the standing position, a contestant that moves their arm(s) toward their opponent with an open hand, fingers pointing at the opponent's face/eyes, will be a foul. Referees are to prevent this dangerous behavior by communicating clearly to contestants. Contestants are directed to close their fists or point their fingers straight up in the air when reaching toward their opponent.

10. Downward pointing elbow strike (12 to 6);

- a. The use of a linear "straight up straight down" elbow strike is prohibited. Any variation of this straight up and down linear elbow strike makes the strike legal. Any arc, or any angle change from straight up to straight down makes the strike legal. Any variation of position does not alter the legality of the strike.

11. Groin attacks of any kind;

- a. Any attack to the groin area including, striking, grabbing, pinching or twisting is illegal. It should be clear that groin attacks are the same for men and women.

12. Kneeing and/or kicking the head of a grounded opponent;

- a. A grounded contestant is defined as: Any part of the body, other than a single hand and soles of the feet touching the fighting area. To be grounded requires one hand **OR BOTH? – ASK BRIAN** palm/fist down, and/or any other body part must be touching the fighting area floor. A single knee, arm, makes the contestant grounded without having to have any other body part in touch with the ring floor. At this time, kicks or knees to the head will not be allowed.

13. Stomping of a grounded contestant;

- a. Stomping is considered any type of striking action with the feet where the contestant lifts their leg up bending their leg at the knee and initiating a striking action with the bottom of their foot or heel
- b. Axe kicks are not stomping. Standing foot stops are not a foul. As such, this foul does not include stomping the feet of a standing contestant.

14. Holding opponent's gloves or shorts;

- a. contestant may not control their opponent's movement by holding onto their opponent's shorts or gloves. A contestant may hold onto or grab their opponent's hand as long as they

are not controlling the hand only by using the material of the glove, but by actually gripping the hand of the opponent. It is legal to hold onto your own gloves or shorts.

15. Holding or grabbing the fence or ropes with fingers or toes;

- a. A contestant may put their hands on the fence and push off of it at any time. A contestant may place their **HANDS OR (ASK BRIAN)** feet onto the cage and have their **FINGERS OR (ASK BRIAN)** toes go through the fencing material at any time. When a contestant's fingers or toes go through the cage and grab hold of the fence and start to control either their body position or their opponent's body position it now becomes an illegal action. A contestant may not grab the ropes or wrap their arms over or under the ring ropes at any time. The contestant may not purposely step through the ropes. If a contestant is caught holding the fence, cage or ring rope material the referee may issue a one-point deduction from the offending contestant's scorecard if the foul caused a substantial effect in the bout. If a point deduction for holding the fence occurs, and because of the infraction, the fouling contestant ends up in a superior position due to the foul, the contestants should be re-started by the referee, standing in a neutral position.

16. Small joint manipulation:

- a. Fingers and toes are small joints. Wrists, ankles, knees, shoulders and elbows are all large joints. Grabbing the majority of fingers/toes at once is allowed.

17. Throwing an opponent out of the ring or caged area;

- a. A contestant shall not throw their opponent out of the ring or cage.

18. Intentionally placing a finger into any orifice, or into any cut or laceration of your opponent;

- a. A contestant may not place their fingers into an open laceration in an attempt to enlarge the cut. A contestant may not place their fingers into an opponent's, nose, ears, mouth, or any body cavity.

19. Clawing, pinching, and twisting the flesh;

- a. Any attack that targets the contestant's skin by clawing at the skin or attempting to pull or twist the skin to apply pain is illegal.

20. Timidity (avoiding contact, or consistently dropping the mouthpiece, or faking an injury);

- a. Timidity is defined as any contestant who purposely avoids contact with his opponent, or runs away from the action of the bout. Timidity can also be called by the referee for any attempt by a contestant to receive time by falsely claiming a foul, injury, or purposely dropping or spitting out their mouthpiece or other action designed to stall or delay the action of the bout

21. Use of abusive language in the fighting area;
- a. The use of abusive language is not allowed during MMA competition. It is the sole responsibility of the referee to determine when language crosses over the line to abusive. It should be clear that contestants can talk during a match. The mere use of auditory language is not a violation of this rule. Examples of abusive language would be (racially motivated or derogatory language).
22. Flagrant disregard of the referee's instructions;
- a. A contestant must follow the instructions of the referee at all times. Any deviation or non-compliance may result in the contestant's **ASK BRIAN – POINTS BEING DEDUCTED FROM THEIR SCORE CARD OR** disqualification.
23. Unsportsmanlike conduct that causes an injury to opponent;
- a. Every athlete competing in the sport of MMA is expected to represent the sport in a positive light emphasizing sportsmanship and humility. Any athlete that disrespects the rules of the sport or attempts to inflict unnecessary harm on a competitor who has been either taken out of the competition by the referee or has tapped out of the competition shall be viewed as being unsportsmanlike.
24. Attacking an opponent after the bell has sounded the end of the period of unarmed combat;
- a. The end of a round is signified by the sound of the bell and the call of time by the referee. Once the referee has made the call of time, any offensive actions initiated by the contestant shall be considered after the bell and illegal.
25. Attacking an opponent on or during the break;
- a. A contestant shall not engage their opponent in any fashion during a time-out or break of action in competition.
26. Attacking an opponent who is under the care of the referee;
- a. Once the referee has called for a stop of the action to protect a contestant who has been incapacitated or is unable to continue to compete in the bout, contestants shall cease all offensive actions against their opponent.
27. Interference from a mixed martial artist's corner or seconds;
- a. Interference is defined as any action or activity aimed at disrupting the bout or causing an unfair advantage to be given to a corner's contestant. Corners are not allowed to distract the referee or influence the actions of the referee in any fashion.

### 13. Intentional Fouls

- a. If an intentional foul causes an injury, and the injury is severe enough to terminate the bout immediately, the contestant causing the injury shall lose by disqualification.
- b. If an intentional foul causes an injury and the bout is allowed to continue, the referee shall notify the authorities and deduct two (2) points from the contestant who caused the foul. Point deductions for intentional fouls will be mandatory.
- c. If an intentional foul causes a laceration and/or swelling and the bout is allowed to continue, and the injury results in the bout being stopped in any round after  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the scheduled rounds, plus one (1) second of the bout has been completed, by either another legal or illegal strike, the injured contestant will win by Technical decision if they are ahead on the score cards; and the bout will result in a technical draw if the injured contestant is behind or even on the score cards.
- d. If the contestant injures himself/herself while attempting to intentionally foul their opponent, the referee will not act in their favor, and this injury shall be the same as one produced by a fair blow.
- e. If the referee feels that a contestant has conducted themselves in an unsportsmanlike manner, they may stop the action of the bout to deduct points or stop the bout to disqualify the contestant.

### 14. Accidental fouls:

- a. If an accidental foul causes an injury severe enough for the referee to stop the bout, the bout will result in either a no contest or disqualification if stopped before  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the scheduled rounds, plus one (1) second of the bout has been completed.
- b. If an accidental foul causes an injury severe enough for the referee to stop the bout after  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the scheduled rounds, plus one (1) second of the bout has been completed, the bout will result in a technical decision awarded to the contestant who is ahead on the score cards at the time the bout is stopped.
  - i. Partial or incomplete rounds will be scored. If no action has occurred, the round should be scored as an even round. This is at the discretion of the judges.
- c. If a contestant, during the course of a round, visibly loses control of bodily function (vomit, urine, feces), the bout shall be stopped by the referee and the contestant shall lose the contest by a technical knockout (TKO) due to medical stoppage.
  - i. In the event a loss of bodily function occurs in the rest period between rounds, the ringside physician shall be called in to evaluate if the combatant can continue. If the combatant is not cleared by the ringside physician to continue, that combatant shall lose by a technical knockout (TKO) due to medical stoppage.

- ii. If fecal matter becomes apparent at any time, the contest shall be halted by the referee, and the offending combatant shall lose by a technical knockout (TKO) due to medical stoppage.

15. Foul procedures: If a foul is committed, the referee shall:

- a. Call Time;
- b. Check the fouled mixed martial artist's condition and safety; and
- c. Assess the foul for potential point(s) deductions and/or time considerations.
- d. During all time out procedures, there shall be no coaching of a contestant permitted.

16. Time consideration:

- a. If a foul to the groin occurs and the competitor is able to continue, the fouled contestant may have up to five (5) minutes to recover.
- b. Contestants injured severely enough by a foul to require medical consultation may be given up to five (5) minutes, at the referee's discretion, for evaluation by the ringside physician before a decision to continue is rendered.
- c. At no time may a referee call a timeout to evaluate the impact of a legal strike, other than when a laceration is present.

17. Cuts Generated by Foul:

- a. If the Referee adjudicating the bout identifies a laceration that has been caused by a foul, the referee, at their sole discretion, may stop time to allow the cutman to treat the bleeding. The cutman's treatment will occur at the cage door for a period not to exceed 30 seconds (marked from the opening of the cage door, monitored by the timekeeper). If there are no official cutmen, the contestant's licensed corner may treat the cut. No instruction or coaching of the contestant is allowed. This protocol may be used only once per incident, and only in the round during which the foul occurred.

18. Judging Criteria

- a. All bouts will be evaluated and scored by a minimum of three (3) judges.
- b. The 10 Point Must System will be the standard of scoring a bout.



- i. Under the 10-Point Must Scoring System, 10 points must be awarded to the winner of the round and nine points or less must be awarded to the loser, except for a rare even round, which is scored (10-10).
  - c. Judges shall evaluate Mixed Martial Arts techniques, such as effective striking/grappling (Plan A), effective aggressiveness (Plan B), and control of the fighting area (Plan C). Plans B and C are not taken into consideration unless Plan A is weighed as being even.
  - d. Evaluations shall be made in the specific order in which the techniques appear in (c) above, giving the most weight in scoring to effective striking/grappling, and effective aggressiveness, and control of the fighting area.
  - e. Effective striking is judged by determining the impact/effect of legal strikes landed by a contestant solely based on the results of such legal strikes. Effective grappling is assessed by the successful executions and impactful/effective result(s) coming from: takedown(s), submission attempt(s), achieving an advantageous position(s) and reversal(s).
  - f. Effective aggressiveness means aggressively making attempts to finish the bout.
  - g. Fighting area control is assessed by determining who is dictating the pace, place and position of the bout.
19. The following objective scoring criteria shall be utilized by the judges when scoring a round:
- a. A round is to be scored as a 10-10 Round when both contestants have competed for whatever duration of time in the round and there is no difference or advantage between either contestant;
  - b. A round is to be scored as a 10-9 Round when a contestant wins by a close margin where the winning contestant lands the better strikes or utilizes effective grappling during the round;
  - c. A round is to be scored as a 10-8 Round when a contestant wins the round by a large margin by impact, dominance, and duration of striking or grappling in a round.
    - i. A 10-8 round in MMA is where one contestant wins the round by a large margin. This is demonstrated by clearly meeting two of the three required criteria (Impact/Damage, Domination, and Duration). It is important to clarify, in the absence of Impact/Damage, static positional control alone is not considered Dominance.
    - ii. In the absence of Impact/Damage to be considered Dominant, there must be, singularly or in combination, the threat of some types of submissions, strikes, or an overwhelming pace which is measured by improved or aggressive positional changes that cause the losing contestant to consistently be in a defensive or reactive mode.

iii. Dominance, can be the outclassing of an opponent, demonstrated by the winning contestant offensively executing verifiable offensive movements, with little effective defense preventing them. Often the dominated contestant has limited ability to mount any notable offence in that round.

iv. A round is to be scored as a 10-7 Round when a contestant is completely dominated by impact, dominance, and duration of striking or grappling in a round.

20. Impact:

A judge shall assess if a contestant impacts their opponent significantly in the round, even though they may not have dominated the action. Impact includes visible evidence such as swelling and lacerations. Impact shall also be assessed when a contestant's actions, using striking and/or grappling, lead to a diminishing of their opponent's energy, confidence, abilities and spirit. All of these come as a direct result of impact. When a contestant is impacted by strikes, by lack of control and/or ability, this can create defining moments in the round and shall be assessed with great value.

21. Dominance:

As MMA is an offensive based sport, dominance of a round can be seen in striking when the losing contestant is forced to continually defend, with no counters or reaction taken when openings present themselves. Dominance in the grappling phase can be seen by contestants taking dominant positions in the bout and utilizing those positions to attempt bout ending submissions or attacks. Merely holding a dominant position(s) shall not be a primary factor in assessing dominance. What the contestant does with those positions is what must be assessed.

22. Duration:

Duration is defined by the time spent by one contestant effectively attacking, controlling, and impacting their opponent; while the opponent offers little to no offensive output. A judge shall assess duration by recognizing the relative time in a round when one contestant takes and maintains full control of the effective offense. This can be assessed both standing and grounded.

23. Scoring of Incomplete Rounds:

There should be scoring of incomplete rounds. If the referee penalizes either contestant, then the appropriate points shall be deducted when the scorekeeper calculates the final score for the partial round

24. Types of Decisions:

a. Submission by:

- i. Tap Out: When a contestant physically uses of their body to indicate that he or she no longer wishes to continue; or
  - ii. Verbal Tap Out: When a contestant verbally announces or voluntarily/involuntarily screams in pain or distress to the referee that they do not wish to continue;
  - iii. Technical Submission: When a legal submission act results in unconsciousness or broken/dislocated bone(s)/joint(s)
- b. Technical Knockout (TKO) by:
- i. Referee Stoppage: the referee stops the contest because the combatant is not intelligently defending himself/ herself
  - ii. Strikes
  - iii. Laceration
  - iv. Corner Stoppage
  - iv. Did Not Answer the Bell
- b. TKO due to Medical Stoppage;
- i. Laceration
  - ii. Doctor Stoppage
  - iii. Loss of control of bodily function.
- d. Knockout (KO) by:
- Referee Stoppage: the referee stops the contest because the combatant cannot intelligently defend their self
- a. Due to Strikes
  - b. Disqualification:
    - i. When an injury sustained during competition as a result of an intentional foul is severe enough to terminate the contest, multiple fouls have been assessed, and/or there is flagrant disregard for the rules and/or referee's commands.
  - c. No Contest:

- i. When a contestant is prematurely stopped due to accidental injury and a sufficient amount of time has not been completed to render a decision via the score cards.

d. Decisions:

- i. Unanimous Decision: When all three judges score the bout for the same contestant;
- ii. Split Decision: When two judges score the bout for one contestant and one judge scores for the opponent; or
- iii. Majority Decision: When two judges score the bout for the same contestant and one judge scores a draw;
- iv. Technical Decision: When a bout is prematurely stopped due to injury from an accidental foul and a contestant is leading on the score cards;

e. Draws:

- i. Unanimous Draw – When all three judges score the bout a draw;
- ii. Majority Draw – When two judges score the bout a draw; or
- iii. Split Draw – When all three judges score differently and the score total results in a draw;
- iv. Technical Draw - When an injury is sustained during competition as a result of an intentional foul and the bout is allowed to continue, then later the injury requires stoppage from either a legal or illegal strike to the affected area after ½ of the scheduled rounds, plus one (1) second has been completed, if the injured contestant is even or behind on the score cards at the time of stoppage, the decision is a Technical Draw.

25. Weight Classes:

Weight Class	Weight
Atomweight	up to and including 105 lbs.
Strawweight	over 105 to 115 lbs.
Flyweight	over 115 to 125 lbs.
Bantamweight	over 125 to 135 lbs.
Featherweight	over 135 to 145 lbs.
Lightweight	over 145 to 155 lbs.
Super Lightweight	over 155 to 165 lbs.
Welterweight	over 165 to 170 lbs.
Super welterweight	over 170 to 175 lbs.
Middle weight	over 175 to 185 lbs.
Super Middleweight	over 185 to 195 lbs.
Light Heavyweight	over 195 to 205 lbs.

Cruiserweight	over 205 to 225 lbs.
Heavyweight	over 225 to 265 lbs.
Super Heavyweight	over 265 lbs.

- a. Allowances within Division: there are no allowance restrictions if both combatants weigh-in within the same contracted division.
- b. Weight Miss or Catch Weight: If a person misses the contracted weight and the two competitors are in different weight classes, the heavier opponent shall not exceed five (5) lbs. of the lower weighing contestant.
- c. Contracted Catch Weight(s): there is no weight spread allowance between contracted catch weight contestants, so long as both competitors are below the contracted weight. Commissions may deny Catch Weight bouts if they see the weight differential as a large enough disparity to the safety of either of the contestants.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 15, Issue 21, eff. August 5, 1999; amended, Virginia Register Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007.*

**18VAC120-42-280 Glory Kickboxing Rules – ask Brian**

A. Legal Strikes/Techniques:

1. Closed fist or back fists.
2. Knees to head and body;
3. Clinching in order to immediately attack with a legal knee strike. If the knee attack or counter attack is continuous and productive the referee may allow it to continue for his estimation up to five seconds. Otherwise contestants should disengage the clinch and continue to bout;
4. Contestants are allowed to catch their opponent's leg and take one (1) step forward. After one (1) step, the contestant holding the leg must strike before taking a second step or let go. It is not permitted to hold an opponent's leg and charge him to the ropes. You can "dump" a person if you catch their leg and throw it back towards them causing them to fall backwards but must do so within 2 steps. You can also catch under their knee while they are doing a swing knee and topple them over backwards but must do so within 2 steps.

B. Required: Clothing and Equipment;

1. Protective groin cup
2. Protective mouthpiece properly fitted
3. Chest protection/sports bra (females only)

4. Rash guard or fitted top (females only)
  5. Shin, instep, elbow, and/or knee supports
  6. Oil on face
  7. Thai oil may be applied to legs only
5. Hand Wraps.
- a. A maximum of one roll (no more than 2” wide by 15 yards in length) of white, soft, cloth gauze is permitted per hand. The gauze may not exceed the wrist of the contestant glove. The exposed thumb is an option to be protected.
  - b. A maximum of one roll (no more than 1.25” wide by 10’ in length) of white athletic tape is permitted per hand. The tape may not exceed the wrist of the competitor’s gloves. Tape may be placed through the fingers but may not cover the knuckles. The exposed thumb is an option to be protected.
  - c. A single layer of elastic or flex-type tape is allowed to be applied over the completed wrap.
  - d. Approved tape/gauze of all brands may be allowed.

C. Forbidden:

1. Tape over knuckles
2. Oil or grease on any part of the competitor’s body (other than face & Thai oil on legs)
3. Apparel or equipment which includes metallic and/or hard plastic and/or edge or surface

D. Corner-men and Trainer: Please refer to 18VAC120-42-121. Number and conduct of seconds.

E. Weight Classes:

Weight Class	Weight	Weight Difference	Glove weight
Mini Flyweight	105 and down	3 lbs.	8 oz.
Light Flyweight	105.1 - 108	3 lbs.	8 oz.
Flyweight	108.1- 112	3 lbs.	8 oz.
Super Flyweight	112.1 - 115	3 lbs.	8 oz.
Bantamweight	115.1 - 118	3 lbs.	8 oz.
Super Bantamweight	118.1 - 122	5 lbs.	8 oz.
Featherweight	122.1 - 126	5 lbs.	8 oz.

Super Featherweight	126.1 - 130	7 lbs.	8 oz.
Lightweight	130.1 - 135	7 lbs.	8 oz.
Super Lightweight	135.1 - 140	7 lbs.	8 oz.
Welterweight	140.1 - 147	7 lbs.	8 oz.
Super Welterweight	147.1 - 154	7 lbs.	8 oz.
Middleweight	154.1 - 160	7 lbs.	8 oz.
Super Middleweight	160.1 - 168	7 lbs.	10 oz.
Light Heavyweight	168.1 - 175	9 lbs.	10 oz.
Cruiserweight	175.1 - 190	12 lbs.	10 oz.
Super Heavyweight	190.1 - 210	No limit	10 oz.
Heavyweight	210.1 - 230	No limit	10 oz.
Super Heavy Weight	230.1 and up	No. limit	10 oz.

G. Length and number of rounds:

1. Non-Title bouts shall consist of three, three minute rounds, with one (1) minute rest in between rounds. Title bouts shall consist of five three minute rounds, with one (1) minute rest in between rounds.

**18VAC120-42-290. Professional Kickboxing rules.**

1. Bouts may consist of a maximum of ten (10) rounds of three (3) minutes each in duration, with a minimum of one (1) minute rest period between each round.
2. The referee and/or the ringside physician are the only individuals authorized to stop the contest, as determined by the presiding commission. This rule shall not preclude a video or other review of a decision under the procedures of the applicable regulatory authority if a protest is filed claiming a clear rule violation.
3. All bouts are evaluated and scored by three (3) judges.
4. Scoring:
  - a. The 10 Point Must System will be the standard system of scoring a bout. Under the 10 Point Must Scoring System, 10 points must be awarded to the winner of the round.
  - b. The contestant who has lost the round may be awarded 9, 8, or 7 points.
  - c. If the round is determined to be an even round, a score of 10/10 may be awarded.
  - d. Partial or incomplete rounds will be scored. If no significant action has occurred, the round shall be scored as an even round. This is at the discretion of the judges.
5. Scoring Criteria: Bouts will be evaluated using the following prioritized criteria;

- a. Number of Knockdowns.
  - b. Cumulative effective Impact on the Opponent.
  - c. Number of Clean Scoring Strikes
  - d. Ring Generalship or Aggressiveness
6. In the event of a knockdown the referee shall send the standing contestant to a neutral corner and administer a Mandatory Eight (8) Count to the downed contestant.

A knockdown is defined as when a contestant touches the mat with anything other than the soles of their feet as the result of a legal, damaging strike - or is in a defenseless position grabbing the opponent, or hanging on or over the ropes. The referee will have sole discretion in determining a knock down versus a slip.

If a contestant goes down from what the referee indicates is a "slip" but fails to rise after the referee's repeated commands, the referee will initiate a count, and follow the procedures of a knockdown. If the contestant does not rise at the count of 10, it will be considered a TKO.

If a contestant injures him/herself and then fails to intelligently defend him/herself by turning their back on the opponent, the referee may, in the proper exercise of their discretion either treat the injury the same as one produced by a fair blow from the opponent and follow the procedures for a knockdown, or terminate the bout and declare the opponent winner by TKO.

7. The Three (3) Knockdown Rule is in effect only where a contestant has been knocked down 3 times in the same round by strikes/kicks to the head. In this event, this contestant shall be determined to have lost the bout by Technical knockout.
8. There is no Standing Eight (8) Count.
9. A contestant who has been knocked down cannot be saved by the bell in any round, including the final round.
10. All contestants are required to wear a mouthpiece during any contest. No round can begin without the mouthpieces in place. If any mouthpiece becomes dislodged during the contest, the referee shall call time and have the mouthpiece rinsed and put back in the contestant's mouth at the first opportune moment, without interfering with the action. The referee may deduct points if he/she feels the mouthpiece is being intentionally dislodged.
11. A contestant shall receive a 20 second count if the contestant is knocked out of the ring and onto the floor. The contestant shall NOT be assisted by anyone, including spectators



or his seconds. If the contestant is assisted, he may be deducted points, or disqualified, at the sole discretion of the referee. If the contestant falls or is thrown from the ring the referee shall "stop time", allow the contestant to return, seek the council of the ringside physician and/or penalize the other contestant if there was a fouling action, where appropriate.

12. Fouls:

- a. Head butts.
- b. Groin strikes.
- c. Thrusting or Linear kicks directed at the knee joint
- d. Striking the back of the head or the spine -defined as striking any of the area beginning at the back of the head starting at the crown of the head and running directly down the center of the head, spreading from ear to ear in the back of the head, running down the entire rear portion of the neck, and beginning again at the occipital junction and stopping at the top of the trapezius, and again from the trapezius muscle down the spine to the tailbone.
- e. Attacks to the throat.
- f. Striking a downed contestant (a contestant is considered "down" whenever they have any part of their body other than the soles of their feet touching the canvas).
- g. Failure to obey the referee's commands.
- h. Striking on a break.
- i. Striking after a bell.
- j. Holding or using the ropes while striking or clinching.
- k. Timidity: Repeatedly, intentionally avoiding engagement or contact with the opponent.
- l. Use of abusive language and/or gestures.
- m. Causing intentional delays in the action:  
For example, repeatedly spitting out the mouth piece, falling out of the ring to cause delay.
- n. Thumbing
- o. Holding the opponent's leg without executing a legal strike or while executing more than one striking technique. (A contestant may grab the opponent's kicking leg and

immediately execute one legal strike while taking one step, and then they must immediately release the leg.)

- p. Any effort to down a contestant by a method other than a legal strike or strikes; this includes, but is not limited to joint locks, submission attempts, sweeps, reaps, takedowns and throws.
- q. Biting.
- r. Spitting at the opponent.
- s. Striking with the elbow, arm, wrist, or other part of the glove that is not the padded part of the glove
- t. Holding, which is defined as repeatedly grabbing, grasping or tying up an opponent in order to prevent the opponent from striking. Clinching is allowed in order to immediately launch a credible knee attack. If in the referee's estimation the attack and/or counter knee attack is consistent and effective, he may allow it to continue for up to five seconds at which point he will separate the contestants. If within the five seconds the knee attack or counter-attack wanes or appears ineffective the referee will immediately separate the contestants.

13. Permissible Strikes:

- a. All boxing strikes to permissible target areas.
- b. Spinning backhands/fists to permissible target areas
- c. Knee strikes to permissible target areas
- d. All kicking strikes to permissible targets above the belt line
- e. All kicking strikes executed with the foot or shin directed to the legs (excluding linear or thrusting kicks directed to the knee joint.

14. Permissible target areas:

- a. front and sides of the head;
- b. front and sides of the torso above the belt;
- c. entire leg, except the knee joint by thrusting or linear kicks.

15. The winner of a match may be decided in the following ways:

- a. Points Decision: When both contestants finish the scheduled rounds, victory is

awarded by majority decision of the judging panel.

- b. **Knockout:** If a contestant is incapable of resuming the bout within the referee's ten-count due to legal strikes.
- c. **Technical Knockout:**
  - i. If the official determines a contestant shows no will to, or is incapable of resuming the bout due to a legal technique
  - ii. If the official determines the contestant can no longer intelligently defend him/herself
  - iii. If the contestant does not leave his corner to take part in the bout following the sounding of the bell.
  - iv. If the referee is of the opinion that one contestant is outmatched by the opponent and continuing the match would jeopardize the athlete's health and safety
  - v. If the bout is terminated for medical reasons due to injury resulting from a legal technique.
  - vi. Where an athlete's corner indicates to the official they no longer wish to continue the contest and "throws in the towel") If a contestant or his coach/corner man gives up the bout. The contestant or his coach/corner man will indicate this to the referee or the regulatory representative assigned to his corner (The corner "throws in the towel").

**D. Disqualification:**

- 1. The referee disqualifies the contestant for any reason including intentional, deliberate, flagrant or repeated fouling.
- 2. The referee disqualifies the contestant if anyone from their corner enters the ring during the bout or touches one of the contestants during the contest, other than during the rest period, or when permitted by the commission representative.

**E. Draw:**

- 1. If following the end of all rounds, at least two of the three judges do not pronounce one of the contestants a winner.
- 2. If both contestants go down at the same time and neither can resume the bout within the referee's ten-count.

**F. No Decision:**

1. If a contestant cannot continue as the result of an accidental foul and the bell has not yet sounded completing the second round of a three round bout, or completed the third round of a five round bout, or completed the fourth round of a bout scheduled for more than five rounds.
  2. If the referee decides both contestants must be disqualified
  3. Where the commission determines any other determination would result in a miscarriage of justice.
- G. A contestant who has been struck with a low blow is allowed up to five minutes to recover from the foul as long as in the referee and/or ringside doctor's opinion the contestant may continue on in the contest. If the contestant states that they can continue on before the five minutes of time have expired, the referee shall as soon as practical restart the bout. If the contestant goes over the five (5) minute time allotment, the bout cannot be restarted, and the contest must come to an end with the outcome determined by the round and time in which the bout was stopped.
- H. Injuries Sustained by Intentional Fouls:
1. If an intentional foul causes an injury, which is severe enough to terminate the bout immediately, the contestant causing the foul shall lose by disqualification.
  2. If the referee determines that a contest may continue despite an injury caused by an intentional foul, the referee shall immediately inform the Commission's representative and the judges and the judges shall deduct the points as determined by the referee and/or the commission's representative
  3. If an injury caused by an intentional foul results in the contest being stopped later in the bout, or in a later round:
    - i. If the injured contestant is ahead on the scorecards, he shall be declared the winner by a technical decision, or
    - ii. If the injured contestant is behind or even on the scorecards, the contest shall be declared a technical draw.
  4. If a contestant injures himself while attempting to foul his opponent, but is able to continue fighting, the referee shall take no action and treat the injury as if produced by a fair blow. If the referee determined contestant who injured him/herself is unable to continue, that contestant will lose by the technical knockout/knockout
- I. Injuries Sustained By Unintentional Fouls:
1. If an unintentional foul causes an injury, which is severe enough to terminate the bout immediately, the contest shall result in a no decision, if a bout has not

completed the rounds necessary to score a technical decision.

2. If an unintentional foul causes an injury severe enough to terminate the bout once the bout is considered official, the bout shall be awarded to the contestant ahead on the scorecards, including incomplete rounds, by way of a technical decision

A bout is considered "official" if completing the second round of a three round bout, or completed the third round of a five round bout, or completed the fourth round of a bout scheduled for more than five rounds.

If the injury from the unintentional foul is not severe enough to immediately stop the bout but later becomes aggravated and causes the bout to be stopped, the bout shall be awarded to the contestant ahead on the scorecards, including incomplete rounds, by way of a technical decision if the bout has been official. Otherwise the bout will result in a no decision,

3. If a contestant injures themselves while attempting to intentionally foul their opponent:
  - i. and is able to continue fighting, the referee will not take any action;
  - ii. If the referee feels that a contestant has conducted themselves in an unsportsmanlike manner, the referee may stop the bout and disqualify the contestant.
  - iii. If the offending contestant fails to intelligently defend him/herself by turning their back on the opponent, the referee may, in the proper exercise of their discretion either treat the injury the same as one produced by a fair blow from the opponent and follow the procedures for a knockdown, or terminate the bout and declare the opponent winner by TKO.
- J. 8 oz. and 10 oz. boxing gloves are the industry standard for professional kickboxing. All issues pertaining to mandatory and optional equipment will be determined by the presiding commission.
- K. Male contestants must not wear clothing or other attire on their upper bodies. Female contestants must wear short sleeved (above the elbow) form fitting tops or a sports bra.
- L. No contestant may leave the ring before the end of the bout. Should the contestant fail to resume the bout following the end of the rest period, the referee shall begin counting as though there were a knock-down. At the conclusion of the count, the opponent shall be awarded the bout by way of technical knockout.

**18VAC120-42-300. Rules for other contests.**

Rules for aikido, karate, judo, taekwondo or similar contests shall be the mixed martial arts rules set forth in 18VAC120-442-110 or other rules submitted with the event application, approved by the department, and agreed to by all licensees participating in the event.

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007.*

DRAFT AGENDA

Materials contained in this agenda are proposed topics for discussion  
And are not to be construed as regulation or official board position

**PART V.**

**STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND PERFORMANCE.**

**18VAC120-42-310. Grounds for disciplinary action by the department.**

- A. The department shall have the authority to discipline a licensee through a fine, license suspension, or license revocation for the same reason it may deny licensure or renewal, and for the following reasons, as may be appropriate:
1. Violating or inducing another person to violate any provisions of the federal Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 USC §6301 et seq.), Chapters 1, 2, 3 or 8.1 of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia or of this chapter.
  2. Using misrepresentation or fraud to obtain or attempt to obtain a license or event license.
  3. Having a medical condition which makes participation in events a health hazard.
  4. Altering a license issued by the department.
  5. Having been convicted in any jurisdiction of any felony or of any misdemeanor involving lying, cheating or stealing, or of any misdemeanor for acts carried out while engaged in boxing, wrestling, or other athletic activities. Any plea of nolo contendere shall be considered a conviction for the purposes of this subsection. A certified copy of a final order, decree or case decision by a court or regulatory agency with the lawful authority to issue such order, decree or case decision shall be admissible as prima facie evidence of such conviction or discipline.
  6. Having been the subject of disciplinary action taken by Virginia or another jurisdiction in connection with the participation in or promotion of professional athletic contests or activities, including but not limited to, monetary penalties, fines, suspension, revocation, or surrender of a license in connection with a disciplinary action.
  7. Failing or refusing to appear when directed by the department or its contractor for the purposes of weighing or conducting a medical examination.
  8. Failing to furnish a valid reason or a doctor's certificate to explain any failure to appear at an event in which an applicant or licensee agreed to participate by signing a contract.
  9. Using unsportsmanlike conduct or other inappropriate behavior inconsistent with generally accepted methods of competition.
  10. Failure to meet financial obligations that results in collection proceedings against the bond required by this chapter and §54.1-833 A of the Code of Virginia.

11. Use of profane or abusive language, during the event, including at the weigh-in and prebout meeting.
  12. Threatening or inflicting bodily harm upon an official or members of the audience during an event.
  13. Making allegations of illegal or improper conduct against officials that the licensee knows or should have known to be false.
  14. Use of any alcohol, controlled substances, or stimulants in any part of the body prior to or during an event or being found to be under the influence of alcohol, controlled substances or stimulants during an event.
  15. Failure to submit to a urinalysis or chemical test before or after an event upon request of the department or its contractor.
  16. Failure to fulfill contracts for participation in an event.
  17. Wearing facial cosmetics or jewelry of any kind, including any type of body piercing by any participants during a contest, except that wrestlers may wear cosmetics or jewelry unless the event official determines there is a safety risk.
  18. Failure by any participant to secure hair with soft, nonabrasive materials during a contest, when deemed appropriate by the department or its contractor.
  19. Allowing a license, certificate or registration to be used by another.
- B. The department shall conduct disciplinary procedures in accordance with the Administrative Process Act (§2.2-4000 et seq. of the Code of Virginia).

*Historical Notes*

*Derived from Virginia Register Volume 15, Issue 21, eff. August 5, 1999; amended, Virginia Register Volume 19, Issue 23, eff. August 27, 2003; Volume 23, Issue 24, eff. September 5, 2007.*

**18VAC120-42-320. Reporting the results of Martial Arts bouts.**

Not later than two business days after the conclusion of a mixed martial arts match, the department or its contractor shall report the results of such match and any related ineligibility to compete in martial arts bouts to each registry as required by the federal Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 USC §6301 et seq.), as amended.



**PART VII.  
GATE FEES.**

**18VAC120-42-330. Reporting, verification, and payment of gate fees.**

- A. No person, except for members of a local police department or rescue squad on duty covering the event, promoters, his representatives, contestants, and the department or designee may be admitted to the event without a ticket.
- B. Each ticket, except those for the working press and official photographers, shall have the price, name of the promoter, date, and place of the event printed plainly on it.
- C. No promoter shall sell a ticket at a price other than the price that appears on the ticket.
- D. No promoter shall change a ticket price or the place or date of the event without the approval of the department.
- E. Tickets of different prices shall be printed in different colors.
- F. Each ticket issued to the press shall be marked "press."
- G. A maximum of 2.0% of the tickets to an event may be complimentary.
- H. Each complimentary ticket shall be marked complimentary.
- I. Each ticket shall be separated from the stub when entering through the gate. No person shall occupy a seat without a stub.
- J. Each promoter shall furnish to the department, within 3 business days after the completion of each event, a written and verified report on the form provided by the department showing the number of tickets sold, unsold, and given away, the amount of the proceeds donated to a charitable organization that is tax exempt under §501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and the amount of gross proceeds thereof for such events originating in the Commonwealth. The report shall also include the total gross proceeds from the sale of rights to distribute in any manner such event by any video, telephonic, or other communication method involving the control of electrons or other charge carriers for such live events originating in the Commonwealth.
- K. The promoter shall pay the department, within the 3 business days following the event, a fee of (i) 5.0% of the first \$100,000 of its total gross receipts and (ii) 2.5% of the remainder of its total gross proceeds. These fees shall not be reduced for portions of an event containing amateur matches as set forth in 18VAC120-40-10.
- L. The department or its contractor may examine or cause to be audited the records and accounts of the promoter.

**Included in this booklet are relevant excerpts from the *Code of Virginia*. Please note that the Virginia General Assembly is responsible for creating and amending the *Code*, not the Director, Department, or the Advisory Board. The version contained herein contains all changes, if any, that have been made by the General Assembly through the 2016 session. It is your responsibility to stay informed of revisions to the regulations and the statutes governing your profession or occupation. Please consult the General Assembly or your local library for annual changes.**

**§ 54.1-828. Definitions.**

As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Amateur" means an individual who has never participated in a boxing, martial arts, or professional wrestling event for money, compensation, or reward other than a suitably inscribed memento.

"Boxer" means a person competing in the sport of boxing.

"Boxing" means the contact sport of attack or defense using fists.

"Cable television system" means any facility consisting of a set of closed transmission paths and associated equipment designed to provide video programming to multiple subscribers when subscriber interaction is required to select a specific video program for an access fee established by the cable television system for that specific video program.

"Contractor" means any person who has been recognized by the Director, through a contract pursuant to § 54.1-832, as an appropriate responsible party to provide services to assist the Commonwealth in complying with the provisions of this chapter.

"Department" means the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation or its successor.

"Director" means the Director of the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation.

"Event" means any boxing, martial arts, or professional wrestling show that includes one or more bouts, contests, or matches.

"Exhibition" means any occurrence in which boxers or martial artists show or display skills without striving to win.

"Manager" means any person who serves as a representative or agent of a boxer, martial artist, or professional wrestler to arrange for his participation in an event.

"Martial artist" means a person competing in the sport of martial arts.

"Martial arts" or "mixed martial arts" means any of several Asian arts of combat or self-defense, alone or in combination, including but not limited to aikido, karate, judo, muay thai, or taekwondo, usually practiced as sport and which may involve the use of striking weapons.

"Matchmaker" means any person who proposes, selects, arranges for, or in any manner procures specific individuals to be contestants in an event.

"Person" means a natural person, corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, firm, enterprise, franchise, association or any other entity.

"Professional" means a person who participates or has ever participated for money, compensation, or reward other than a suitably inscribed memento in any boxing, martial arts, or professional wrestling event.

"Professional wrestler" means any professional participating in professional wrestling.

"Professional wrestling" means an event in which contestants incorporate the sport of wrestling into choreographed performances.

"Promote" or "promotion" means to organize, arrange, publicize, or conduct an event or exhibition in the Commonwealth.

"Promoter" means any person who undertakes to promote an event or exhibition.

"Regulant" means any person required by this chapter to obtain a prior authorization from the Department.

"Sanctioning organization" means an entity approved by the Director pursuant to § [54.1-829.1](#).

"Trainer, " "second" or "cut man" means an individual who undertakes to assure the well-being of a boxer or martial artist by providing instruction or advice concerning techniques or strategies of boxing or martial arts, and who may work in the corner with a boxer or martial artist between the rounds of a match to assure his well-being and provide necessary equipment and advice concerning match participation.

"Wrestler" means any person competing or participating as an opponent in wrestling.

"Wrestling" means any of several styles of physical competition in which individuals attempt to subdue or unbalance an opponent, including Greco-Roman, freestyle, grappling, or submission, usually practiced as a sport.

1998, c. 895; 2005, c. 287; 2015, cc. 216, 264; 2016, c. 756.

**§ 54.1-829. Authorization from Director required; bond; physical examination; emergency medical services vehicles; physician; and health insurance.**

A. No person shall act as a promoter, matchmaker, trainer, boxer, martial artist, or professional wrestler in the Commonwealth without first having obtained authorization for such activity from the Department or sanctioning organization approved by the Director pursuant to § 54.1-829.1 and such authorization remains in full force and effect.

B. No authorization to act as a promoter shall be granted unless the applicant executes and files with the Department a bond, in such penalty as the Department shall determine through regulation, conditioned on the payment of the fees and penalties imposed by this chapter and for the fulfillment of contracts made with professional contestants in accordance with Department regulations. This subsection shall not apply to a promoter applying to conduct an amateur-only event under the authority of a sanctioning organization approved by the Director pursuant to § 54.1-829.1.

C. Each boxer and martial artist shall, and each professional wrestler may, be examined prior to entering the ring by a physician who has been licensed to practice medicine in the Commonwealth for at least five years. The physician shall be appointed by the Department or sanctioning organization and shall certify in writing that the contestant's physical condition is such that he is physically able to engage in the contest.

D. No event in which boxers or martial artists are contestants shall be conducted without the continuous presence at ringside of a physician who has been licensed to practice medicine in the Commonwealth for at least five years, and unless an emergency medical services vehicle is at the site of the event.

E. No boxer or martial artist shall participate in any event unless covered by a health insurance policy with minimum coverage in an amount determined by Department regulation.

1998, c. 895; 2007, c. 853; 2015, cc. 216, 264, 502, 503; 2016, c. 756.

**§ 54.1-829.1. Sanctioning organization; amateur martial arts events.**

A. No event in which amateur participants compete in martial arts shall be authorized in the Commonwealth unless the amateur event is conducted by a sanctioning organization approved by the Director. Only the results of amateur events conducted by a sanctioning organization in good standing and in compliance with this section shall be recognized for purposes of reporting bout results to a national database or official registry. Every sanctioning organization, insofar as practicable, shall observe and apply the unified rules adopted by the Association of Boxing Commissions. Notwithstanding any other provision of law or regulation, for purposes of amateur martial arts events, weight classes and bout rules governing round length, judging, and scoring shall conform with the Association of Boxing Commissions unified rules.

B. No amateur martial artist shall compete in an event who has:

1. Not attained the age of 18 years;
2. Been knocked out in the 60 days immediately preceding the date of the event;
3. Been technically knocked out in the 30 days preceding the date of the event;
4. Been a contestant in an event consisting of (i) more than six rounds during the 15 days preceding the date of the event or (ii) six or fewer rounds during the seven days preceding the event;
5. Suffered a cerebral hemorrhage or other serious physical injury;
6. Been found to be blind or vision impaired in one or both eyes;
7. Been denied a license or approval to compete by another jurisdiction for medical reasons;
8. Failed to provide negative test results, dated within 180 days preceding the date of the event, for the following: (i) antibodies to the human immunodeficiency virus; (ii) hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg); and (iii) antibodies to the hepatitis C virus; or
9. Failed to provide written certification from a licensed physician, dated within 180 days preceding the date of the event, attesting to the contestant's good physical health and absence of any preexisting conditions or observed abnormalities that would prevent participation in the event. The examination performed by the ringside physician at the event pursuant to clause (ii) of subdivision C 3 shall not satisfy this requirement.

C. For each amateur martial arts event, the sanctioning organization shall:

1. Review the records, experience, and consecutive losses for each amateur martial artist prior to each event to determine, to the extent possible, that contestants scheduled to compete are substantially equal in skills and ability;
2. Verify that each amateur martial artist scheduled to compete is covered by health insurance;
3. Appoint a physician licensed to practice medicine in the Commonwealth for at least five years to remain at ringside on a continuous basis. Duties of the ringside physician shall include (i) conducting a physical examination

of each referee immediately prior to the event to assure his fitness to act in such capacity, (ii) conducting a physical examination and taking a medical history of each amateur martial artist prior to the contestant's entering the ring and certifying the contestant's physical condition, (iii) signaling the referee immediately in the event that an injury is observed, (iv) rendering immediate medical aid to any amateur martial artist injured during an event, and (v) ensuring that all substances in the possession of seconds, trainers, or cut men are appropriate for use on amateur martial artists during the course of the event;

4. Assign a sufficient number of qualified officials, including locker room inspectors, judges, timekeepers, and referees, to protect the health and safety of amateur martial artists and the public. Duties of the referee shall include (i) providing prefight instructions to the contestants; (ii) ensuring that each amateur martial artist is wearing gloves supplied by the sanctioning organization or event promoter that are in new or good condition, weighing between four and six ounces; (iii) exercising supervision over the conduct of the bout and taking immediate corrective action when necessary; (iv) immediately stopping any bout when, in his judgment, one contestant is outclassed by the other, injured, or otherwise unable to continue safely; (v) striving to perform his duties in a manner that does not impede the fair participation of either contestant; (vi) consulting, when he deems appropriate, with the ringside physician on the advisability of stopping the bout if either contestant appears injured or unable to continue; (vii) counting for knockdowns and knockouts, determining fouls and stopping contests, and immediately stopping any bout if one or both contestants are not putting forth their best effort; and (viii) ensuring the health and well-being of the amateur martial artists to the greatest extent possible; and

5. Require a fully equipped emergency medical services vehicle with a currently trained ambulance crew at the site of every amateur event for its entire duration.

D. Any sanctioning organization seeking approval under this section shall make a written application on a form prescribed by the Director. The application shall be accompanied by a fee of \$500. The Director shall annually approve sanctioning organizations whose applications

satisfactorily demonstrate evidence of standards and operations in place that are at least as rigorous as and limited to those required by this section. Following an informal fact-finding proceeding conducted pursuant to § 2.2-4019, the Director may withdraw his approval of any sanctioning organization that has failed to comply with this section based on (i) the review of the annual report submitted by the sanctioning organization or (ii) review of a complaint received pursuant to subdivision A 8 of § 54.1-201 or § 54.1-307.1.

E. A sanctioning organization seeking approval from the Director shall provide documented evidence (i) of operation as a business for at least the immediately preceding three years; (ii) of at least five years of experience as a sanctioning organization representing at least two different promotions during such five-year period or that the principal officers have at least eight years of experience working as a referee or head official for an established sanctioning organization without adverse financial or disciplinary action in any jurisdiction; (iii) indicating that none of its officers, employees, or agents, directly or indirectly, has any pecuniary interest in, or holds any position with, any business associated with a promoter or otherwise operates for the sole benefit of a single promoter; and (iv) of assurance that events will be conducted in a fair and impartial manner with avoidance of any impropriety or appearance of impropriety.

F. Each approved sanctioning organization shall submit an annual report to the Director on or before February 1, with a summary of the events conducted for the preceding calendar year. The Director may address any operational or compliance issues with the sanctioning organization consistent with and in furtherance of the objectives of this section. The Director shall not intervene in the internal activities of a sanctioning organization except to the extent necessary to prevent or cure violations of this section or any statute governing the persons or activities regulated pursuant to this chapter.

G. The Commonwealth, the Director, the Department, and any employee or representative shall be indemnified and held harmless from any liability resulting from or caused by a sanctioning organization or persons conducting activities on behalf of such regulant.

2015, cc. 216, 264; 2016, c. 756.

**§ 54.1-830. Exemptions.**

The provisions of this chapter shall not apply to:

1. Amateur wrestling bouts;
2. Amateur exhibitions and the amateur participants therein;
3. Engagements involving amateur martial arts that are conducted by or held under the sponsorship of (i) any elementary or secondary school or public or private institution of higher education located in the Commonwealth, (ii) the Department of Corrections involving inmates of any state correctional institution, or (iii) the United States Olympic Committee; or
4. Amateur boxing.

1998, c. 895; 2015, cc. 216, 264; 2016, c. 756.

**§ 54.1-831. Powers and duties of the Department.**

The Department shall administer and enforce the provisions of this chapter. In addition to the powers and duties otherwise conferred by law, the Director shall have the powers and duties of a regulatory board as contained in §§ 54.1-201 and 54.1-202, and shall have the power and duty to:

1. Promulgate regulations in accordance with the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.) which implement the federal Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 U.S.C. § 6301 et seq.) and protect the public against incompetent, unqualified, unscrupulous or unfit persons engaging in the activities regulated by this chapter.

The regulations shall include requirements for (i) initial authorization and renewal of the authorization; (ii) authorization and conduct of events; (iii) standards of practice for persons arranging, promoting, conducting, supervising, and participating in events; (iv) grounds for disciplinary actions against regulants; (v) records to be kept and maintained by regulants; (vi) the manner in which fees are to be accounted for and submitted to the Department, provided, however, that no gate fee shall be required for amateur-only events conducted by a sanctioning organization approved by the Director pursuant to § 54.1-829.1; and (vii) minimum health coverage for injuries sustained in a boxing or martial arts match. The Department shall have direct oversight of professional events to assure the safety and well-being of boxers, martial artists, and professional wrestlers, except that those portions of an event containing amateur bouts shall be conducted under the oversight of a sanctioning organization. Sanctioning organizations shall have sole responsibility for direct oversight of amateur-only events in which martial artists compete.

2. Charge each applicant for authorization and for renewals of authorization a nonrefundable fee subject to the provisions of § 54.1-113 and subdivision A 4 of § 54.1-201. A sanctioning organization shall be subject to the application fee provisions of subsection C of § 54.1-829.1.

3. Conduct investigations to determine the suitability of applicants for authorization and to determine the regulant's compliance with applicable statutes and regulations.

4. Conduct investigations as to whether monopolies, combinations, or other circumstances exist to restrain matches or exhibitions of boxing, martial arts, or professional wrestling anywhere in the Commonwealth. The Attorney General may assist investigations at the request of the Department.

5. Exercise jurisdiction over all boxing, martial arts, and professional wrestling conducted within the Commonwealth by any person, except where otherwise exempted.

1998, c. 895; 2010, c. 764; 2012, c. 769; 2015, cc. 216, 264; 2016, c. 756.

**§ 54.1-834. Prohibited activities; penalties.**



A. No betting or wagering shall be permitted at an event or exhibition before, during, or after the event in the building where the event is held.

B. No person shall participate in a sham or fake boxing or martial arts contest. The Department shall have the authority to order, without a hearing, the person controlling the purse to hold the distribution to contestants, promoters, and trainers pending a public hearing by the Department. The Department shall, simultaneously with the issuance of such order to retain the share or purse, institute proceedings for a hearing to determine whether a sham or fake boxing or martial arts contest has occurred.

C. It shall be a Class 1 misdemeanor for any person to violate this section or any statute or regulation governing the persons or activities regulated pursuant to this chapter.

D. The third or any subsequent conviction for violating any provision of this section during a 36-month period shall constitute a Class 6 felony.

1998, c. 895; 2015, cc. 216, 264; 2016, c. 756.

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Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation

**9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 400  
Richmond, Virginia 23233**

PRE-SORT  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
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Permit No. 2005

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**NOTICE**

PLEASE REFER TO FIRST PAGE OF BOOKLET FOR NOTES ON IMPORTANT CHANGES.



# ASSOCIATION OF BOXING COMMISSIONS AND COMBATIVE SPORTS

## UNIFIED RULES OF MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

AS APPROVED APRIL 2001. AMENDED 2010. AMENDED AUGUST 3, 2016. AMENDED WITH PROCEDURES JULY 26, 2017. AMENDED WITH PROCEDURES AUGUST 1, 2018. AMENDED WITH PROCEDURE AUGUST 1, 2019. AMENDED WITH PROCEDURE JULY 26, 2022.

**Note: These are the Official Unified Rules of MMA. Any other form of these rules may not be called the "Unified Rules of MMA" and shall be referred to by the name of the commission sanctioning the/an event.**

1. Each round shall consist of a five (5) minute duration (professional), with a one (1) minute rest period between rounds.
  - a. No contests shall exceed five (5) rounds and/or twenty-five (25) minutes.
  - b. Bouts may consist of one (1), two (2), three (3), four (4), or five (5) rounds, with a five (5) minute duration.
  - c. No contestant shall exceed competing more than five (5) rounds and/or twenty-five (25) minutes of fighting in a twenty-four (24) hour period.
2. The referee is the sole arbiter of a bout and is the only individual authorized to stop a contest. This shall not preclude a video or other review of a decision under the procedure of the applicable regulatory authority if a protest is filed claiming a clear rule violation.
  - a. The authority of a referee begins when the inspector(s) exit the cage/ring and does not end until the inspector(s) re-enter the cage/ring, upon conclusion of the fight.
3. Instant replay may be used to review a "Fight Ending Sequence" and shall only be used after a fight has been officially stopped. Once instant replay has been used to review a fight ending sequence, the fight shall not be resumed.
4. All fighters are required to wear a mouthpiece during competition. The round cannot begin without the mouthpiece. If the mouthpiece is dislodged during competition, the referee will call time and have the mouthpiece replaced at the first opportune moment, without interfering with the immediate action. Points may be deducted by the referee if he/she feels the mouthpiece is being purposefully spit out.
5. If an MMA bout is being conducted in a ring and is a fighter is knocked out of the ring, the fighter must return to the ring unassisted by spectators or his/her seconds. If assisted by anyone, the fighter may lose points or be disqualified with such a decision being within the sole discretion of the referee. Once knocked from the ring, the competitor will have five (5) minutes to return to fighting surface, similar to an accidental foul, but shall be examined by the ringside physician before returning to action.
6. The reapplication of petroleum jelly or another similar substance, to the face, may be allowed between rounds and shall only be applied by an approved cutman or licensed cornerman.
- 7.. Hand Wraps.
  - a. A maximum of one roll (no more than 2" wide by 15 yards in length) of white, soft, cloth gauze is permitted per hand. The gauze may not exceed the wrist of the competitor's glove. The exposed thumb is an option to be protected.
  - b. A maximum of one roll (no more than 1.25" wide by 10' in length) of white athletic tape is permitted per hand. The tape may not exceed the wrist of the competitor's gloves. Tape may be placed through the fingers but may not cover the knuckles. The exposed thumb is an option to be protected.
  - c. A single layer of elastic or flex-type tape is allowed to be applied over the completed wrap.
  - d. Approved tape/gauze of all brands may be allowed.

8. Joint/Body Coverings.
  - a. Other than the competitor's hands (as previously listed), there will be no taping, covering or protective gear of any kind on the upper body. This includes but is not limited to: joint sleeves, padding, any form of brace or body gauze/tape.
  - b. A competitor may use soft neoprene type sleeves to cover only the knee or ankle joints. Approved sleeves may not have: padding, Velcro, plastic, metal, ties or any other material considered to be unsafe or that may create an unfair advantage. Tape and gauze or any materials other than the approved sleeves are not permitted on the lower body. The sleeves must be Black in color, with the exception of matching the athletes Commission assigned corner with sleeves being Red or Blue in color as appropriate.
9. Cage/Ring Attire.
  - a. All mixed martial artists will be required to wear such protective gear as deemed necessary by the Commission.
  - b. Male contestants shall not wear any form of clothing on their upper body.
  - c. Male and female mixed martial artists shall wear the appropriate trunks, mouthpiece, and gloves. Male mixed martial artists shall also wear the appropriate groin protection.
  - d. Female mixed martial artists shall wear a short sleeved (above the elbow) or sleeveless form fitting rash guard and/or sports bra(s). No loose-fitting tops and/or breast protectors shall be allowed. Female competitors will follow the same requirements for bottom covering as the male competitors, minus the requirement for groin protection.
  - e. The hem of the trunks may not extend below the knee.
  - f. Fighting shorts/trunks shall not have exposed Velcro, pockets, or zippers.
  - g. Mixed martial artists in the same match, contest, or exhibition may wear different color trunks or be designated by glove taping and/or glove coloring to the corner they are assigned.
  - h. Mixed martial artists shall not wear shoes in the cage or ring.
  - i. When deemed necessary by the referee all mixed martial artists shall have their hair secured in a manner that does not interfere with the vision and safety of either contestant.
    - i. No object can be worn to secure the contestant's hair which may cause injury to either contestant.
  - j. The wearing of jewelry will be strictly prohibited during all contests.
  - k. Wearing body cosmetics shall be prohibited during all contests. Wearing facial cosmetics shall be at the discretion of the commission and/or referee.

### **Fouls**

1. Butting with the head;
  - a. The head may not be used as a striking instrument in any fashion. Any use of the head as a striking instrument whether head to head, head to body or otherwise is illegal.
2. Eye gouging of any kind;
  - a. Eye gouging by means of fingers, chin, or elbow is illegal. Legal strikes or punches that contact the fighter's eye socket are not eye gouging and shall be considered legal attacks.
3. Biting or spitting at an opponent;
  - a. Biting in any form is illegal. A fighter must recognize that a referee may not be able to physically observe some actions and must make the referee aware if they are being bit during an exhibition of unarmed combat.
4. Fish Hooking;
  - a. Any attempt by a fighter to use their fingers in a manner that attacks their opponent's mouth, nose or ears, stretching the skin to that area will be considered "Fish hooking". Fish hooking generally is the placing of fingers into the mouth or your opponent and pulling your hands in opposing directions while holding onto the skin of your opponent.

5. Hair pulling;
  - a. Pulling of the hair in any fashion is an illegal action. A fighter may not grab a hold of his opponent's hair to control their opponent in any way. If a fighter has long hair, they may not use their hair as a tool for holding or choking in any fashion.
6. Spiking the opponent to the canvas onto the head or neck (pile-driving);
  - a. Any throw with an arc to its motion is to be considered a legal throw. It does not matter if the opponents head hits the canvas. A pile driver is considered to be any throw where you control your opponent's body placing their feet up in the air with their head straight down and then forcibly drives the opponents head into the canvas or flooring material. It should be noted when a fighter is placed into a submission hold by their opponent, if that fighter is capable of elevating their opponent, they may bring that opponent down in any fashion they desire because they are not in control of their opponent's body. The fighter who is attempting the submission can either adjust their position or let go of their hold before being slammed to the canvas.
7. Strikes to the spine or the back of the head;
  - a. The back of the head starts at the Crown of the head with a one (1) inch variance to either side, running down the back of the head to the occipital junction.
  - b. This area stretches out at the occipital junction (nape of the neck) to cover the entire width of the neck. It then travels down the spine with a one (1) inch variance from the spine's centerline, including the tailbone.
8. Throat strikes of any kind and/or grabbing the trachea;
  - a. No directed throat strikes are allowed. A directed attack would include a fighter pulling his opponents head in a way to open the neck area for a striking attack. A fighter may not gouge their fingers or thumb into their opponent's neck or trachea in an attempt to submit their opponent. If during stand-up action of a fight a strike is thrown and the strike lands in the throat area of the fighter, this shall be viewed as a clean and legal blow.
9. Fingers outstretched toward an opponent's face/eyes;
  - a. In the standing position, a fighter that moves their arm(s) toward their opponent with an open hand, fingers pointing at the opponent's face/eyes, will be a foul. Referees are to prevent this dangerous behavior by communicating clearly to fighters. Fighters are directed to close their fists or point their fingers straight up in the air when reaching toward their opponent.
10. Downward pointing elbow strike (12 to 6);
  - a. The use of a linear "straight up straight down" elbow strike is prohibited. Any variation of this straight up and down linear elbow strike makes the strike legal. Any arc, or any angle change from straight up to straight down makes the strike legal. Any variation of position does not alter the legality of the strike.
11. Groin attacks of any kind;
  - a. Any attack to the groin area including, striking, grabbing, pinching or twisting is illegal. It should be clear that groin attacks are the same for men and women.
12. Kneeing and/or Kicking the head of a grounded opponent;
  - a. A grounded fighter is defined as: Any part of the body, other sole of the feet touching the fighting area floor. To be grounded, the palm of one hand (a flat palm) must be down, and/or any other body part must be touching the fighting area floor. A single knee, arm, (not fingers) makes the fighter grounded without having to have any other body part in touch with the fighting area floor. At this time, kicks or knees to the head will not be allowed.
13. Stomping of a grounded fighter;
  - a. Stomping is considered any type of striking action with the feet where the fighter lifts their leg up bending their leg at the knee and initiating a striking action with the bottom of their foot or heel.
  - b. Axe kicks are not stomping. Standing foot stops are NOT a foul. As such, this foul does not include stomping the feet of a standing fighter.

14. Holding opponent's gloves or shorts;
  - a. A fighter may not control their opponent's movement by holding onto their opponent's shorts or gloves. A fighter may hold onto or grab their opponent's hand as long as they are not controlling the hand only by using the material of the glove, but by actually gripping the hand of the opponent. It is legal to hold onto your own gloves or shorts.
15. Holding or grabbing the fence or ropes with fingers or toes;
  - a. A fighter may put their hands on the fence and push off of it at any time. A fighter may place their feet onto the cage and have their toes go through the fencing material at any time. When a fighter's fingers or toes go through the cage and grab hold of the fence and start to control either their body position or their opponent's body position it now becomes an illegal action. A fighter may not grab the ropes or wrap their arms over or under the ring ropes at any time. The fighter may not purposely step through the ropes. If a fighter is caught holding the fence, cage or ring rope material the referee may issue a one-point deduction from the offending fighters scorecard if the foul caused a substantial effect in the fight. If a point deduction for holding the fence occurs, and because of the infraction, the fouling fighter ends up in a superior position due to the foul, the fighters should be re-started by the referee, standing in a neutral position.
16. Small joint manipulation;
  - a. Fingers and Toes are small joints. Wrists, Ankles, Knees, Shoulders and Elbows are all large joints. Grabbing the majority of fingers/toes at once is allowed.
17. Throwing an opponent out of the ring or caged area;
  - a. A fighter shall not throw their opponent out of the ring or cage.
18. Intentionally placing a finger into any orifice, or into any cut or laceration of your Opponent;
  - a. A fighter may not place their fingers into an open laceration in an attempt to enlarge the cut. A fighter may not place their fingers into an opponent's, nose, ears, mouth, or any body cavity.
19. Clawing, pinching, twisting the flesh;
  - a. Any attack that targets the fighter's skin by clawing at the skin or attempting to pull or twist the skin to apply pain is illegal.
20. Timidity (avoiding contact, or consistently dropping the mouthpiece, or faking an injury);
  - a. Timidity is defined as any fighter who purposely avoids contact with his opponent or runs away from the action of the fight. Timidity can also be called by the referee for any attempt by a fighter to receive time by falsely claiming a foul, injury, or purposely dropping or spitting out their mouthpiece or other action designed to stall or delay the action of the fight
21. Use of abusive language in the fighting area;
  - a. The use of abusive language is not allowed during MMA competition. It is the sole responsibility of the referee to determine when language crosses over the line to abusive. It should be clear that fighters can talk during a match. The mere use of auditory language is not a violation of this rule. Examples of abusive language would be (Racially motivated or Derogatory language).
22. Flagrant disregard of the referee's instructions;
  - a. A fighter MUST follow the instructions of the referee at all times. Any deviation or non-compliance may result in the fighter's disqualification.
23. Unsportsmanlike conduct that causes an injury to opponent;
  - a. Every athlete competing in the sport of MMA is expected to represent the sport in a positive light emphasizing sportsmanship and humility. Any athlete that disrespects the rules of the sport or attempts to inflict unnecessary harm on a competitor who has been either taken out of the competition by the referee or has tapped out of the competition shall be viewed as being unsportsmanlike.



24. Attacking an opponent after the bell has sounded the end of the period of unarmed combat;
  - a. The end of a round is signified by the sound of the bell and the call of time by the referee. Once the referee has made the call of time, any offensive actions initiated by the fighter shall be considered after the bell and illegal.
25. Attacking an opponent on or during the break;
  - a. A fighter shall not engage their opponent in any fashion during a time-out or break of action in competition.
26. Attacking an opponent who is under the care of the referee;
  - a. *Once the referee has called for a stop of the action to protect a fighter who has been incapacitated or is unable to continue to compete in the fight, fighters shall cease all offensive actions against their opponent.*
27. Interference from a mixed martial artist's corner or seconds;
  - a. Interference is defined as any action or activity aimed at disrupting the fight or causing an unfair advantage to be given to a corner's combatant. Corners are not allowed to distract the referee or influence the actions of the referee in any fashion.

#### **A. Intentional Fouls**

1. If an intentional foul causes an injury, and the injury is severe enough to terminate the bout immediately, the fighter causing the injury shall lose by disqualification.
2. If an intentional foul causes an injury and the bout is allowed to continue, the referee shall notify the authorities and deduct two (2) points from the fighter who caused the foul. Point deductions for intentional fouls will be mandatory.
3. If an intentional foul causes a laceration and/or swelling and the bout is allowed to continue, and the injury results in the fight being stopped in any round after  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the scheduled rounds, of the fight has been completed, by either another legal or illegal strike, the injured fighter will win by TECHNICAL DECISION if they are ahead on the score cards; and the bout will result in a TECHNICAL DRAW if the injured fighter is behind or even on the score cards.
4. If the fighter injures himself/herself while attempting to intentionally foul their opponent, the referee will not act in their favor, and this injury shall be the same as one produced by a fair blow.
5. If the referee feels that a fighter has conducted themselves in an unsportsmanlike manner, they may stop the action of the fight to deduct points or stop the bout to disqualify the fighter.

#### **B. Accidental Fouls**

1. If an accidental foul causes an injury severe enough for the referee to stop the bout, the bout will result in either a NO CONTEST or DISQUALIFICATION if stopped before:
  - A completed 2 rounds of a scheduled 3 round bout or
  - A completed 3 rounds of a scheduled 5 round bout
2. If an accidental foul causes an injury severe enough for the referee to stop the bout after
  - A completed 2 rounds of a scheduled 3 round bout or
  - A completed 3 rounds of a scheduled 5 round boutThe bout will result in a TECHNICAL DECISION awarded to the fighter who is ahead on the score cards at the time the bout is stopped. Partial or incomplete rounds will be scored. If no action has occurred, the round should be scored as an even round. This is at the discretion of the judges.
3. If a fighter, during the course of a round, visibly loses control of bodily function (vomit, urine, feces), the fight shall be stopped by the referee and the fighter shall lose the contest by a Technical Knockout (TKO) due to Medical Stoppage.
  - i. In the event a loss of bodily function occurs in the rest period between rounds, the ringside physician shall be called in to evaluate if the combatant can continue. If the combatant is not cleared by the ringside physician to continue, that combatant shall lose by a Technical Knockout (TKO) due to Medical Stoppage.

ii. If fecal matter becomes apparent at any time, the contest shall be halted by the referee, and the offending combatant shall lose by a Technical Knockout (TKO) due to Medical Stoppage

**C. Foul Procedures:** If a foul is committed, the referee shall:

1. Call Time;
2. Check the fouled mixed martial artist's condition and safety; and
3. Assess the foul for potential point(s) deductions and/or time considerations.
4. During all time out procedures, there shall be no coaching of a contestant permitted.

**D. Time Consideration:**

***Low Blow***

A fighter who has been stuck with a low blow is allowed up to five minutes to recover from the foul as long as in the ringside doctor's opinion the fighter may possibly continue on in the contest. If the fighter states that they can continue on before the five minutes of time have expired, the Referee shall as soon as practical restart the fight. If the fighter goes over the five minutes time allotment the fight cannot be restarted and the contest must come to an end with the outcome determined by the round and time in which the fight was stopped.

***Eye Poke***

A fighter who has received an eye poke as called by the referee is allowed up to five minutes to recover from the foul as long as the ringside doctors confirms the fighter may possibly continue in the contest once recovered. If the fighter states they can see and wish to continue, and confirmed by doctor, the referee shall as soon as practical restart the fight. If the fighter goes over the five-minute time allotment the fight cannot be restarted and the contest must come to an end with the outcome determined by the round and time in which the fight was stopped.

**A. Judging Criteria**

- a. All bouts will be evaluated and scored by a minimum of three (3) judges.
- b. The 10 Point Must System will be the standard of scoring about.
  - i. Under the 10-Point Must Scoring System, 10 points must be awarded to the winner of the round and nine points or less must be awarded to the loser, except for a rare even round, which is scored (10-10).
- c. Judges shall evaluate Mixed Martial Arts techniques, such as effective striking/grappling(Plan A), effective aggressiveness(Plan B),and control of the fighting area(Plan C).Plans B and C are not taken into consideration unless Plan A is weighed as being even.
- d. Evaluations shall be made in the specific order in which the techniques appear in (c)above ,giving the most weight in scoring to effective striking/grappling, and effective aggressiveness, and control of the fighting area.
- e. Effective striking is judged by determining the impact/effect of legal strikes landed by a contestant solely based on the results of such legal strikes. Effective grappling is assessed by the successful executions and impactful/effective result(s)coming from: takedown(s), submission attempt(s), achieving an advantageous position(s) and reversal(s).
- f. Effective aggressiveness means aggressively making attempts to finish the fight.
- g. Fighting area control is assessed by determining who is dictating the pace, place and position of the bout.

1. The following objective scoring criteria shall be utilized by the judges when scoring a round:
  - (i) A round is to be scored as a 10-10 Round when both contestants have competed for whatever duration of time in the round and there is no difference or advantage between either fighter;
  - (ii) A round is to be scored as a 10-9 Round when a contestant wins by a close margin; where the winning fighter lands the better strikes or utilizes effective grappling during the round;
  - (iii) A round is to be scored as a 10-8 Round when a contestant wins the round by a large margin by impact, dominance, and duration of striking or grappling in a round.
  - (iv) A round is to be scored as a 10-7 Round when a contestant is completely dominated by impact, dominance, and duration of striking or grappling in a round.

2. **Impact:** A judge shall assess if a fighter impacts their opponent significantly in the round, even though they may not have dominated the action. Impact includes visible evidence such as swelling and lacerations. Impact shall also be assessed when a fighter's actions, using striking and/or grappling, lead to a diminishing of their opponent's energy, confidence, abilities and spirit. All of these come as a direct result of impact. When a fighter is impacted by strikes, by lack of control and/or ability, this can create defining moments in the round and shall be assessed with great value.

3. **Dominance:** As MMA is an offensive based sport, dominance of a round can be seen in striking when the losing fighter is forced to continually defend, with no counters or reaction taken when openings present themselves. Dominance in the grappling phase can be seen by fighter staking dominant positions in the fight and utilizing those positions to attempt fight ending submissions or attacks. Merely holding a dominant position(s) shall not be a primary factor in assessing dominance. What the fighter does with those positions is what must be assessed. In the absence of dominance in the grappling phase, as set forth in paragraph 3 of the promulgated rules, to be considered dominate, there must be a singularly or in combination, some types of submission attempts, strikes, or an overwhelming pace which is measured by improved or aggressive positional changes that cause the losing fighter to consistently be in a defensive or reactive mode

4. **Duration:** Duration is defined by the time spent by one fighter effectively attacking, controlling, and impacting their opponent; while the opponent offers little to no offensive output. A judge shall assess duration by recognizing the relative time in a round when one fighter takes and maintains full control of the effective offense. This can be assessed both standing and grounded.

5. **Scoring of Incomplete Rounds:** There should be scoring of incomplete rounds. If the referee penalizes either contestant, then the appropriate points shall be deducted when the scorekeeper calculates the final score for the partial round

## **B. Types of Decisions**

### **a. Submission by:**

- i. Tap Out: When a contestant physically uses of their body to indicate that he or she no longer wishes to continue; or
- ii. Verbal Tap Out: When a contestant verbally announces or voluntarily/involuntarily screams in pain or distress to the referee that they do not wish to continue;
- iii. Technical Submission: When a legal submission act results in unconsciousness or broken/dislocated bone(s)/joint(s).

b. Technical Knockout (TKO) by:

i. Referee Stoppage: the referee stops the contest because the combatant IS NOT INTELLIGENTLY DEFENDING HIMSELF/HERSELF;

1. Strikes
2. Laceration
3. Corner Stoppage
4. Did Not Answer the Bell

ii. TKO due to Medical Stoppage;

1. Laceration
2. Doctor Stoppage
3. Loss of control of bodily function.

c. Knockout (KO) by:

i. Referee Stoppage: the referee stops the contest because the combatant CANNOT INTELLIGENTLY DEFEND HIMSELF/HERSELF.

1. Due to Strikes

d. Disqualification:

i. When an injury sustained during competition as a result of an intentional foul is severe enough to terminate the contest, multiple fouls have been assessed, and/or there is flagrant disregard for the rules and/or referee's commands.

e. No Contest:

i. When a contestant is prematurely stopped due to accidental injury and a sufficient amount of time has not been completed to render a decision via the score cards.

f. Decisions:

i. Unanimous Decision: When all three judges score the bout for the same contestant;

ii. Split Decision: When two judges score the bout for one contestant and one judge scores for the opponent; or

iii. Majority Decision: When two judges score the bout for the same contestant and one judge scores a draw;

iv. Technical Decision: When a bout is prematurely stopped due to injury from an accidental foul and a contestant is leading on the score cards;

g. Draws:

i. Unanimous Draw – When all three judges score the bout a draw;

ii. Majority Draw – When two judges score the bout a draw; or

iii. Split Draw – When all three judges score differently and the score total results in a draw;

iv. Technical Draw - When an injury is sustained during competition as a result of an intentional foul and the bout is allowed to continue, then later the injury requires stoppage from either a legal or illegal strike to the affected area after:

- A completed 2 rounds of a scheduled 3 round bout or
- A completed 3 rounds of a scheduled 5 round bout

If the injured contestant is even or behind on the score cards at the time of stoppage, the decision is a Technical Draw.

## Weight Classes

### Weight Class

Atomweight  
Straw Weight  
Flyweight  
Bantamweight  
Featherweight  
Lightweight  
Super Lightweight  
Welterweight  
Super Welterweight  
Middleweight  
Super Middleweight  
Light Heavyweight  
Cruiserweight  
Heavyweight  
Super Heavyweight

### Weight

up to and including 105 lbs.  
over 105 to 115 lbs.  
over 115 to 125 lbs.  
over 125 to 135 lbs.  
over 135 to 145 lbs.  
over 145 to 155 lbs.  
over 155 to 165 lbs.  
over 165 to 170 lbs.  
over 170 to 175 lbs.  
over 175 to 185 lbs.  
over 185 to 195 lbs.  
over 195 to 205 lbs.  
over 205 to 225 lbs.  
over 225 to 265 lbs.  
over 265 lbs.

*a. **Allowances within Division:** there are no allowance restrictions if both combatants weigh-in within the same contracted division.*

*b. **Weight Miss Catch Weight:** If a person misses the contracted weight and the two competitors are in different weight classes, the heavier opponent shall not exceed five (5) lbs. of the lower weighing fighter.*

*c. **Contracted Catch Weight(s):** there is no weight spread allowance between contracted catch weight fighters, so long as both competitors are below the contracted weight. Commissions may deny Catch Weight fights if they see the weight differential as a large enough disparity to the safety of either of the fighters.*

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COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA BOXING, MARTIAL ARTS AND  
PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING  
ADVISORY BOARD



**PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING  
REGULATIONS**

Last Updated - DRAFT

STATUTES  
Title 54.1, Chapter 8.1



Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation

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Richmond, Virginia 23233  
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[www.dpor.virginia.gov](http://www.dpor.virginia.gov)

**NOTICE  
SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGES**

These regulations are effective?????, and replaced all previous versions of the regulations. As a regulant of the Board, you are responsible for following all regulations and therefore you should read and become familiar with all regulations printed in this booklet. These regulations should be thoroughly reviewed. Following is a brief summary of the regulations to assist you in your review.

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

This booklet contains the information you will need to obtain your license. The law that governs your profession is found in the *Code of Virginia*, 1950, as amended, in Title 54.1, Chapter 8.1. That law permits the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation to issue regulations that tell you more about what is expected of you in your profession. This booklet contains a copy of the law and regulations that you will need to know and obey to obtain and keep your license. **BE SURE YOU READ AND UNDERSTAND THE STANDARDS OF PRACTICE AND CONDUCT. YOUR FAILURE TO OBEY THESE STANDARDS COULD RESULT IN A MONETARY PENALTY OR THE LOSS OF YOUR LICENSE.**

It is the goal of the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation to provide you with the information you need to comply with the law and regulations. If you have a question and cannot find the answer to it in this booklet, please write to:

Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation  
9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 400  
Richmond, Virginia 23233

or call the Agency at (804) 367-8500.

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## **PART I.**

### **SCOPE.**

#### **18VAC120-43-10. Scope.**

This chapter contains procedures and requirements for the licensure of individuals and businesses to engage in the conduct of professional wrestling events as provided for in Chapter 8.1 (§54.1-828 et seq.) of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia.

The director of the department is empowered to (i) promulgate this chapter, (ii) issue licenses, (iii) investigate to determine compliance with this chapter, and (iv) take disciplinary action, in accordance with the Virginia Administrative Process Act, against those who fail to comply with this chapter. Furthermore, to the extent applicable, this chapter shall be construed in accordance with and governed by Virginia's Administrative Process Act. The director is also empowered to contract with a vendor to perform certain tasks on the director's behalf. These tasks include examining and recommending licensure, investigating and ensuring that events are conducted in compliance with statutes and regulations, performing clerical duties, collecting fees, maintaining records, developing proposed regulations, and recommending enforcement actions.

#### **18VAC120-43-20. Applicability.**

Event licensing and conduct standards for wrestling are set forth in 18VAC120-43-100, and 18VAC120-43-110 through 18VAC120-43-130.

## PART II.

### GENERAL PROVISIONS.

#### 18VAC120-43-30. Definitions.

A. Section 54.1-828 of the Code of Virginia provides definitions of the following terms:

Cable television system

Contractor

Department

Director

Event

Manager

Matchmaker

Person

Promote

Promoter

Regulant

Trainer, second, or cut man

Wrestler

Wrestling

B. The following words and terms when used in this chapter shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Assistant event inspector" means the individual assigned to assist the event inspector.

"Business" means any sole proprietorship, general partnership, limited partnership, limited liability company, association, corporation, or other business entity.

"Charity event" means an event where all or a portion of the proceeds are donated to a charitable organization that is tax-exempt under §501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

"Bout" means the portion of an event wherein specific individuals (two contestants engage in wrestling which ends when a decision is reached.

"Event," as defined in §54.1-828 of the Code of Virginia, begins when a promoter takes possession or control of a facility or area as specified in the contract between the promoter and the facility and lasts until the promoter releases control of the facility or area. One event shall not exceed one 24-hour period.

"Event inspector" means the event official assigned to be in overall charge of the conduct of an event to assure compliance with this chapter.

"Event license" means a method of regulation whereby any promoter arranging or conducting a wrestling event is required to obtain a prior authorization from the department.

"Event officials" means those individuals assigned to carry out the duties of an event inspector, assistant event inspector, inspector, referee, timekeeper, judge, or ringside physician as established by this chapter.

"Inspector" means the event official assigned to assist the event inspector as provided for in this chapter.

"Licensed event" means an event that has been issued a license from the department in accordance with this chapter.

"Referee" means a licensed wrestler assigned to assure the proper conduct of the bout and the safety of the contestants to assure the safety of the spectators as provided for in this chapter.

"Responsible management" means the following individuals:

1. The sole proprietor of a sole proprietorship;
2. The partners of a general partnership;
3. The general partners of a limited partnership;
4. The officers of a corporation;
5. The managers of a limited liability company; or
6. The officers and directors of an association.

**18VAC120-43-40. License expiration.**

- A. Except as set out in subsection B of this section, each license, other than an event license or a limited contestant shall expire on December 31 of the year in which the license was issued, except that licenses issued during the last 45 days of any calendar year shall expire on December 31 of the following calendar year.
- B. Each license to conduct a wrestling event issued to a licensed promoter shall be valid only for the duration of the event described in the application for licensure. Each limited license issued to a contestant shall be valid only for the duration of one specifically identified event or two specifically identified events held on consecutive days at the same location.

**18VAC120-43-50. Fees.**

A. Each applicant shall submit the following fee along with the application for licensure:

Wrestler	\$40
Wrestler--limited	\$30
Manager	\$50
Promoter	\$500
Matchmaker	\$50
Event Fee	\$125

B. All fees are nonrefundable.

**PART III.**

**LICENSING STANDARDS.**

**18VAC120-43-60. General application requirements.**

A. Applicants shall apply on forms supplied by the department or its contractor.

B. Applicants shall be at least 18 years of age.

C. The individual applicant or business, and every member of the responsible management of the business, shall disclose the following information:

1. Any guilty finding by the department, or by a court of any competent jurisdiction, of any material misrepresentation while engaged in wrestling or other athletic activities, or any conviction, guilty plea, or finding of guilty, regardless of adjudication or deferred adjudication, of any felony or misdemeanor;
2. Any disciplinary action taken by the department or another jurisdiction in connection with the applicant's participation in or promotion of professional athletic bouts or activities including, but not limited to, monetary penalty, fine, suspension, revocation, or surrender of a license in connection with a disciplinary action; and
3. Any current or previously held licenses issued by this Commonwealth or any other jurisdiction.

Any plea of nolo contendere shall be considered a conviction for the purposes of this subsection. A certified copy of a final order, decree, or case decision by a court or regulatory agency with the lawful authority to issue such order, decree, or case decision shall be admissible as prima facie evidence of such conviction or discipline. Subject to the provisions of §54.1-204 of the Code of Virginia, the department may deny an application for a license if, in its judgment, the actions disclosed in subdivisions 1 and 2 of this subsection would render the applicant unfit or unsuited to engage in wrestling.

- D. Each individual applicant, business, and responsible management of the business, shall disclose a physical address. A post office box shall not be accepted in lieu of a physical address.
- E. The fees established by 18VAC120-43-50.A. shall accompany the application and shall not be refunded.
- F. The receipt of an application and the deposit of fees does not indicate approval of licensure by the department.

**18VAC120-43-70. Additional requirements for a contestant.**

Each applicant for a license as a contestant shall submit a completed application as described in 18VAC120-43-60 and shall:

- A. Submit the following certification:

I understand as a professional wrestler I should be aware that the activities of professional wrestling includes many health and safety risks. I will take the necessary medical exams to assure I am physically able to safely compete. I certify I have received the necessary training and/or have the necessary experience to safely participate in the activity of professional wrestling. I further certify that I am in good physical health, have no abnormalities or deficiencies that would prevent my participation in a wrestling event or endanger my health when engaging in a wrestling exhibition, and understand the health and safety risks involved in participation in a wrestling event.

- B. All contestants aged 38 or older shall submit a physical obtained within the last year from the date of application by a physician licensed by a medical board in the United States or its territories to practice medicine or osteopathic medicine, certifying that the contestant is in good physical health and that the physician has not observed any abnormalities or deficiencies that would prevent the contestant from participating in a wrestling event or endanger the contestant, the public, officials, or other contestants participating in the event.

The department may require additional medical tests to determine the fitness of a contestant upon receipt of information of a preexisting condition that may present a danger to the contestant.

**18VAC120-43-80. Entry requirements for contestants.**

- A. The department may deny the application for a license as a wrestler to any applicant who has suffered a serious head injury or other serious physical injury, and may, in any case, require an additional, specific medical examination to determine the applicant's suitability before approving the applicant for licensure as a wrestler.
- B. The department may deny the application for a license as a wrestler of any applicant who has been subject to the following actions by agencies in other jurisdictions that regulate wrestling:
  - 1. Denial or suspension of a license as a wrestler for reasons of medical safety when it has been determined by competent medical examination that participation in a wrestling event by the applicant may pose a risk to the applicant's health, or the health of opponents or;
  - 2. A violation of a law or regulation governing wrestling which is substantially the same as that found in Chapter 8.1 (§54.1-828 et seq.) of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia or in this chapter.

**18VAC120-43-90. Additional requirements for promoter.**

Each applicant for a license as a promoter shall submit a completed application as described in 18VAC120-43-70, which includes a statement that the applicant possesses knowledge of this chapter, and the following certification:

“I understand that I am not entitled to compensation in connection with a wrestling event, including gate fees, until I provide the department with a copy of any agreement in writing to which I and any contestant participating in the match are parties; a statement made under penalty of perjury that there are no other agreements; a statement of fees, charges, and expenses that will be assessed by or through me on the contestant.

**PART IV.**

**EVENT LICENSING AND CONDUCT STANDARDS FOR WRESTLING.**

**18VAC120-43-100. Application for a license to conduct a wrestling event.**

- A. At least 30 days before the date of any wrestling event in the Commonwealth, the licensed

promoter requesting to conduct the event shall deliver an application for a license to conduct a wrestling event to the department or its contractor. The application shall be on forms provided by the department and shall include:

1. The card of the wrestling event to be exhibited, including the name of each participant. The promoter may modify the card at any time up to the day of the event by providing the required documents for the additions to and the notice of the deletions from the card that accompanied the application;
  2. A certification by the promoter that all contestants are properly trained and competent to perform within the ring and ring area;
  3. The date, location, and time of the event for which a license is sought. The department will consider the size and configuration of the location and may deny approval of the event license for safety reasons;
  4. A statement certifying that all contestants scheduled to compete are covered by a health insurance policy that covers medical expenses for injuries incurred during the wrestling event. A waiver of liability will be accepted in lieu of a health insurance policy.
  5. Evidence of a surety bond filed with the department or its designee based on the payment of gate fees and penalties imposed by Chapter 8.1 (§54.1-828 et seq.) of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia and on the fulfillment of the contracts made with the participants. The bond shall be in form and substance satisfactory to the department and in an amount equal to the sum of (i) the total gate fee required by this chapter and §54.1-833 A of the Code of Virginia if all seats were to be sold and (ii) the total amount due to all participants for their appearance in the event. The bond shall not exceed \$100,000 and shall be executed by a surety authorized to do business in the Commonwealth;
  6. Acknowledgment that the promoter will provide a copy of the contract between the promoter and each of the contestants to the department or its designee upon request;
  7. A copy of each contract by the promoter for the sale of the rights to distribute in any manner such event by any video, telephonic, or other communication method involving the control of electrons or other charge carriers;
  8. A statement that the promoter has read and understands this chapter and will conduct the event in full compliance with same; and
  9. Verification of status as a charity event as defined in this chapter.
- B. In no case shall the promoter for an event license announce or advertise, either directly or indirectly, the event to the public until the department has approved the application and issued the event license.

**18VAC120-43-110. Equipment to be provided by wrestling promoters.**

The promoter shall assure that each event shall have the following:

1. The ring shall be in the shape of a square, hexagon, or an octagon. A square ring shall not be less than 16 feet square within the ropes and shall not exceed 20 feet square inside the ropes. A hexagon or octagon ring shall not be less than 16 feet (from any side to the opposite side) inside the ropes and shall not exceed 32 feet (from any side to the opposite side) inside the ropes. The ring floor shall be padded with ensolite, one inch thick, or another similar closed-cell foam. The padded ring floor must extend at least 18 inches beyond the ropes and over the edge of the platform with a top covering of canvas or other similar material tightly stretched and laced to the ring platform. Material that tends to gather in lumps or ridges shall not be used. The ring platform shall not be more than five feet above the floor of the building and shall have suitable steps for use of the contestants in their corners. Ring posts shall be of metal, not more than three inches in diameter, extending from the floor of the building to a height of 58 inches above the ring floor. The ring posts shall be at least 18 inches away from the ring ropes. There shall be three or four ring ropes, no more than one inch in diameter, evenly spaced, with the bottom ring rope not less than 18 inches above the ring floor and the top ring rope not more than 52 inches above the ring floor. All ring ropes are to be tight, and all corners must be padded with appropriate pads. All turnbuckles are to be covered with a protective padding. The ring shall have bright lights and light all four corners and middle of the ring equally. No lights shall shine into the face of the contestants, lights may only shine downward and not shine at any angle directly into the ring area that may blind the contestants. The promoter shall provide a ringside restrictive barrier between the first row of ringside seats that will prevent the crowd from confronting the contestants. The ringside barrier must be a minimum of six feet from the outside edge of the ring;
2. A bell or gong located at the ring no higher than the floor level of the ring. The bell or gong must produce a clear tone easily heard by the participants;
3. Locker rooms adequate in number and equipment to reasonably facilitate the wrestlers' activities before and after the show. Separate locker rooms shall be provided when both male and female contestants are scheduled to compete. Locker rooms shall have restroom facilities easily available;

**18VAC120-43-120. Wrestling event conduct standards.**

- A. Wrestling bouts shall be conducted inside the ring ropes or inside a securely barricaded area that prevents any direct contact between the contestants and the audience.
  1. A contestant shall not physically engage and/or include in the bout any spectator or third person not licensed by the department.
- B. Each bout shall be conducted under the supervision of a referee who shall be currently



licensed as a wrestler and who shall be responsible for the safety of the wrestlers and spectators.

- C. Neither the promoter nor referee shall permit physically dangerous conduct or tactics by any contestant.
- D. Wrestlers shall not intentionally cause a flow of blood or any other fluid during the course of the event.
  - 1. In the event a visible flow of blood or any other fluid from any contestant occurs during the bout, the referee shall immediately suspend the bout until medical treatment can be obtained. If the flow of blood or other fluid cannot be stopped, the bout involving that wrestler shall not continue.
  - 2. A solution, of one part bleach and nine parts water for disinfecting blood on the ring canvas or ropes, shall be available ringside for use by promoter or his representative to clean the ring canvas and ropes as needed.
- E. Promoters shall maintain peace, order and decency in the conduct of all contestants and spectators.
  - 1. Promoters must have, and maintain for review if requested, individual contracts on file for all their contestants.
  - 2. Promoters shall report to the department, on a form provided by the department, within 3 business days of the completion of the event, any fees paid to the contestants of that event.

**18VAC120-43-130. Promoter to allow access to event and facilities.**

- A. The department may assign one or more representatives to an event to assure compliance with Chapter 8.1 (§54.1-828 et seq.) of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia and this chapter.
- B. Representatives of the department or its designee assigned to observe an event, shall be granted immediate access by the promoter and the promoter's representatives to any area of the event facilities.
- C. The promoter is responsible for security of the locker room area and shall permit no person to enter the locker room area except for the promoter, his representatives, contestants, or any representatives of the department or its designee.

**PART V.**

## GATE FEES.

### 18VAC120-43-140. Reporting, verification, and payment of gate fees.

- A. No person, except for members of a local police department or rescue squad on duty covering the event, promoters, his representatives, contestants, and the department or designee may be admitted to the event without a ticket.
- B. Each ticket, except those for the working press and official photographers, shall have the price, name of the promoter, date, and place of the event printed plainly on it.
- C. No promoter shall sell a ticket at a price other than the price that appears on the ticket.
- D. No promoter shall change a ticket price or the place or date of the event without the approval of the department.
- E. Tickets of different prices shall be printed in different colors.
- F. Each ticket issued to the press shall be marked "press."
- G. A maximum of 2.0% of the tickets to an event may be complimentary.
- H. Each complimentary ticket shall be marked complimentary.
- I. Each ticket shall be separated from the stub when entering through the gate. No person shall occupy a seat without a stub.
- J. Each promoter shall furnish to the department, within 3 business days after the completion of each event, a written and verified report on the form provided by the department showing the number of tickets sold, unsold, and given away, the amount of the proceeds donated to a charitable organization that is tax exempt under §501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and the amount of gross proceeds thereof for such events originating in the Commonwealth. The report shall also include the total gross proceeds from the sale of rights to distribute in any manner such event by any video, telephonic, or other communication method involving the control of electrons or other charge carriers for such live events originating in the Commonwealth.
- K. The promoter shall pay the department, within the 3 business days following the event, a fee of (i) 5.0% of the first \$100,000 of its total gross receipts and (ii) 2.5% of the remainder of its total gross proceeds. These fees shall not be reduced for portions of an event containing amateur matches as set forth in 18VAC120-40-10.
- L. The department or its contractor may examine or cause to be audited the records and accounts of the promoter.

## PART VI.

### STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND PERFORMANCE.

#### 18VAC120-43-150. Grounds for disciplinary action by the department.

- A. The department shall have the authority to discipline a contestant through a fine, license suspension, or license revocation for the same reason it may deny licensure, for the following reasons, as may be appropriate:
1. Using misrepresentation or fraud to obtain or attempt to obtain a license or event license.
  2. Having a medical condition which makes participating in an event a health hazard.
  3. Altering a license issued by the department.
  4. Having been convicted in any jurisdiction of any felony or of any misdemeanor involving lying, cheating or stealing, or of any misdemeanor for acts carried out while engaged in boxing, wrestling, or other athletic activities. Any plea of nolo contendere shall be considered a conviction for the purposes of this subsection. A certified copy of a final order, decree or case decision by a court or regulatory agency with the lawful authority to issue such order, decree or case decision shall be admissible as prima facie evidence of such conviction or discipline.
  5. Having been the subject of disciplinary action taken by Virginia or another jurisdiction in connection with the participation in or promotion of professional athletic contests or activities, including but not limited to, monetary penalties, fines, suspension, revocation, or surrender of a license in connection with a disciplinary action.
  6. Using unsportsmanlike conduct or other inappropriate behavior inconsistent with generally accepted methods of competition.
  7. Failure to meet financial obligations that results in collection proceedings against the bond required by this chapter and §54.1-833 A of the Code of Virginia.
  8. Use of profane or abusive language, during the event.
  9. Threatening or inflicting bodily harm upon a member of the department or its designee, or members of the audience during an event.
  10. Use of any alcohol, controlled substances, or stimulants in any part of the body prior to or during an event or being found to be under the influence of alcohol, controlled substances or stimulants during an event.
  11. Failure to fulfill contracts for participation in an event.

12. Cosmetics and jewelry may be worn by wrestlers unless the department or its designee determines there is a safety risk.

13. Allowing a license, certificate or registration to be used by another.

B. The department shall conduct disciplinary procedures in accordance with the Administrative Process Act (§2.2-4000 et seq. of the Code of Virginia).

DRAFT AGENDA

Materials contained in this agenda are proposed topics for discussion  
And are not to be construed as regulation or official board position

**Included in this booklet are relevant excerpts from the *Code of Virginia*. Please note that the Virginia General Assembly is responsible for creating and amending the *Code*, not the Director, Department, or the Advisory Board. The version contained herein contains all changes, if any, that have been made by the General Assembly through the 2016 session. It is your responsibility to stay informed of revisions to the regulations and the statutes governing your profession or occupation. Please consult the General Assembly or your local library for annual changes.**

#### **§ 54.1-828. Definitions.**

As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Amateur" means an individual who has never participated in a boxing, martial arts, or professional wrestling event for money, compensation, or reward other than a suitably inscribed memento.

"Boxer" means a person competing in the sport of boxing.

"Boxing" means the contact sport of attack or defense using fists.

"Cable television system" means any facility consisting of a set of closed transmission paths and associated equipment designed to provide video programming to multiple subscribers when subscriber interaction is required to select a specific video program for an access fee established by the cable television system for that specific video program.

"Contractor" means any person who has been recognized by the Director, through a contract pursuant to § 54.1-832, as an appropriate responsible party to provide services to assist the Commonwealth in complying with the provisions of this chapter.

"Department" means the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation or its successor.

"Director" means the Director of the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation.

"Event" means any boxing, martial arts, or professional wrestling show that includes one or more bouts, contests, or matches.

"Exhibition" means any occurrence in which boxers or martial artists show or display skills without striving to win.

"Manager" means any person who serves as a representative or agent of a boxer, martial artist, or professional wrestler to arrange for his participation in an event.

"Martial artist" means a person competing in the sport of martial arts.

"Martial arts" or "mixed martial arts" means any of several Asian arts of combat or self-defense, alone or in combination, including but not limited to aikido, karate, judo, muay thai, or tae kwon do, usually practiced as sport and which may involve the use of striking weapons.

"Matchmaker" means any person who proposes, selects, arranges for, or in any manner procures specific individuals to be contestants in an event.

"Person" means a natural person, corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, firm, enterprise, franchise, association or any other entity.

"Professional" means a person who participates or has ever participated for money, compensation, or reward other than a suitably inscribed memento in any boxing, martial arts, or professional wrestling event.

"Professional wrestler" means any professional participating in professional wrestling.

"Professional wrestling" means an event in which contestants incorporate the sport of wrestling into choreographed performances.

"Promote" or "promotion" means to organize, arrange, publicize, or conduct an event or exhibition in the Commonwealth.

"Promoter" means any person who undertakes to promote an event or exhibition.

"Regulant" means any person required by this chapter to obtain a prior authorization from the Department.

"Sanctioning organization" means an entity approved by the Director pursuant to § 54.1-829.1.

"Trainer, " "second" or "cut man" means an individual who undertakes to assure the well-being of a boxer or martial artist by providing instruction or advice concerning techniques or strategies of boxing or martial arts, and who may work in the corner with a boxer or martial artist between the rounds of a match to assure his well-being and provide necessary equipment and advice concerning match participation.

"Wrestler" means any person competing or participating as an opponent in wrestling.

"Wrestling" means any of several styles of physical competition in which individuals attempt to subdue or unbalance an opponent, including Greco-Roman, freestyle, grappling, or submission, usually practiced as a sport.

1998, c. 895; 2005, c. 287; 2015, cc. 216, 264; 2016, c. 756.

**§ 54.1-829. Authorization from Director required; bond; physical examination; emergency medical services vehicles; physician; and health insurance.**

A. No person shall act as a promoter, matchmaker, trainer, boxer, martial artist, or professional wrestler in the Commonwealth without first having obtained authorization for such activity from the Department or sanctioning organization approved by the Director pursuant to § 54.1-829.1 and such authorization remains in full force and effect.

B. No authorization to act as a promoter shall be granted unless the applicant executes and files with the Department a bond, in such penalty as the Department shall determine through regulation, conditioned on the payment of the fees and penalties imposed by this chapter and for the fulfillment of contracts made with professional contestants in accordance with Department regulations. This subsection shall not apply to a promoter applying to conduct an amateur-only event under the authority of a sanctioning organization approved by the Director pursuant to § 54.1-829.1.

C. Each boxer and martial artist shall, and each professional wrestler may, be examined prior to entering the ring by a physician who has been licensed to practice medicine in the Commonwealth for at least five years. The physician shall be appointed by the Department or sanctioning organization and shall certify in writing that the contestant's physical condition is such that he is physically able to engage in the contest.

D. No event in which boxers or martial artists are contestants shall be conducted without the continuous presence at ringside of a physician who has been licensed to practice medicine in the Commonwealth for at least five years, and unless an emergency medical services vehicle is at the site of the event.

E. No boxer or martial artist shall participate in any event unless covered by a health insurance policy with minimum coverage in an amount determined by Department regulation.

1998, c. 895; 2007, c. 853; 2015, cc. 216, 264, 502, 503; 2016, c. 756.

**§ 54.1-829.1. Sanctioning organization; amateur martial arts events.**

A. No event in which amateur participants compete in martial arts shall be authorized in the Commonwealth unless the amateur event is conducted by a sanctioning organization approved by the Director. Only the results of amateur events conducted by a sanctioning organization in good

standing and in compliance with this section shall be recognized for purposes of reporting bout results to a national database or official registry. Every sanctioning organization, insofar as practicable, shall observe and apply the unified rules adopted by the Association of Boxing Commissions. Notwithstanding any other provision of law or regulation, for purposes of amateur martial arts events, weight classes and bout rules governing round length, judging, and scoring shall conform with the Association of Boxing Commissions unified rules.

B. No amateur martial artist shall compete in an event who has:

1. Not attained the age of 18 years;
2. Been knocked out in the 60 days immediately preceding the date of the event;
3. Been technically knocked out in the 30 days preceding the date of the event;
4. Been a contestant in an event consisting of (i) more than six rounds during the 15 days preceding the date of the event or (ii) six or fewer rounds during the seven days preceding the event;
5. Suffered a cerebral hemorrhage or other serious physical injury;
6. Been found to be blind or vision impaired in one or both eyes;
7. Been denied a license or approval to compete by another jurisdiction for medical reasons;
8. Failed to provide negative test results, dated within 180 days preceding the date of the event, for the following: (i) antibodies to the human immunodeficiency virus; (ii) hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg); and (iii) antibodies to the hepatitis C virus; or
9. Failed to provide written certification from a licensed physician, dated within 180 days preceding the date of the event, attesting to the contestant's good physical health and absence of any preexisting conditions or observed abnormalities that would prevent participation in the event. The examination performed by the ringside physician at the event pursuant to clause (ii) of subdivision C 3 shall not satisfy this requirement.

C. For each amateur martial arts event, the sanctioning organization shall:

1. Review the records, experience, and consecutive losses for each amateur martial artist prior to each event to determine, to the extent possible, that contestants scheduled to compete are substantially equal in skills and ability;
2. Verify that each amateur martial artist scheduled to compete is covered by health insurance;



3. Appoint a physician licensed to practice medicine in the Commonwealth for at least five years to remain at ringside on a continuous basis. Duties of the ringside physician shall include (i) conducting a physical examination of each referee immediately prior to the event to assure his fitness to act in such capacity, (ii) conducting a physical examination and taking a medical history of each amateur martial artist prior to the contestant's entering the ring and certifying the contestant's physical condition, (iii) signaling the referee immediately in the event that an injury is observed, (iv) rendering immediate medical aid to any amateur martial artist injured during an event, and (v) ensuring that all substances in the possession of seconds, trainers, or cut men are appropriate for use on amateur martial artists during the course of the event;

4. Assign a sufficient number of qualified officials, including locker room inspectors, judges, timekeepers, and referees, to protect the health and safety of amateur martial artists and the public. Duties of the referee shall include (i) providing preflight instructions to the contestants; (ii) ensuring that each amateur martial artist is wearing gloves supplied by the sanctioning organization or event promoter that are in new or good condition, weighing between four and six ounces; (iii) exercising supervision over the conduct of the bout and taking immediate corrective action when necessary; (iv) immediately stopping any bout when, in his judgment, one contestant is outclassed by the other, injured, or otherwise unable to continue safely; (v) striving to perform his duties in a manner that does not impede the fair participation of either contestant; (vi) consulting, when he deems appropriate, with the ringside physician on the advisability of stopping the bout if either contestant appears injured or unable to continue; (vii) counting for knockdowns and knockouts, determining fouls and stopping contests, and immediately stopping any bout if one or both contestants are not putting forth their best effort; and (viii) ensuring the health and well-being of the amateur martial artists to the greatest extent possible; and

5. Require a fully equipped emergency medical services vehicle with a currently trained ambulance crew at the site of every amateur event for its entire duration.

D. Any sanctioning organization seeking approval under this section shall make a written application on a form prescribed by the Director. The application shall be accompanied by a fee of \$500. The Director shall annually approve sanctioning organizations whose applications satisfactorily demonstrate evidence of standards and operations in place that are at least as rigorous as and limited to those required by this section. Following an informal fact-finding proceeding conducted pursuant to § 2.2-4019, the Director may withdraw his approval of any sanctioning organization that has failed to comply with this section based on (i) the review of the annual report submitted by the sanctioning organization or (ii) review of a complaint received pursuant to subdivision A 8 of § 54.1-201 or § 54.1-307.1.

E. A sanctioning organization seeking approval from the Director shall provide documented evidence (i) of operation as a business for at least the immediately preceding three years; (ii) of at least five years of experience as a sanctioning organization representing at least two different promotions during such five-year period or that the principal officers have at least eight years of experience working as a referee or head official for an established sanctioning organization without adverse financial or disciplinary action in any jurisdiction; (iii) indicating that none of its officers, employees, or agents, directly or indirectly, has any pecuniary interest in, or holds any position with, any business associated with a promoter or otherwise operates for the sole benefit of a single promoter; and (iv) of assurance that events will be conducted in a fair and impartial manner with avoidance of any impropriety or appearance of impropriety.

F. Each approved sanctioning organization shall submit an annual report to the Director on or before February 1, with a summary of the events conducted for the preceding calendar year. The Director may address any operational or compliance issues with the sanctioning organization consistent with and in furtherance of the objectives of this section. The Director shall not intervene in the internal activities of a sanctioning organization except to the extent necessary to prevent or cure violations of this section or any statute governing the persons or activities regulated pursuant to this chapter.

G. The Commonwealth, the Director, the Department, and any employee or representative shall be indemnified and held harmless from any liability resulting from or caused by a sanctioning organization or persons conducting activities on behalf of such regulant.

2015, cc. 216, 264; 2016, c. 756.

#### **§ 54.1-830. Exemptions.**

The provisions of this chapter shall not apply to:

1. Amateur wrestling bouts;
2. Amateur exhibitions and the amateur participants therein;
3. Engagements involving amateur martial arts that are conducted by or held under the sponsorship of (i) any elementary or secondary school or public or private institution of higher education located in the Commonwealth, (ii) the Department of Corrections involving inmates of any state correctional institution, or (iii) the United States Olympic Committee; or
4. Amateur boxing.

1998, c. 895; 2015, cc. 216, 264; 2016, c. 756.

**§ 54.1-831. Powers and duties of the Department.**

The Department shall administer and enforce the provisions of this chapter. In addition to the powers and duties otherwise conferred by law, the Director shall have the powers and duties of a regulatory board as contained in §§ 54.1-201 and 54.1-202, and shall have the power and duty to:

1. Promulgate regulations in accordance with the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.) which implement the federal Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 U.S.C. § 6301 et seq.) and protect the public against incompetent, unqualified, unscrupulous or unfit persons engaging in the activities regulated by this chapter.

The regulations shall include requirements for (i) initial authorization and renewal of the authorization; (ii) authorization and conduct of events; (iii) standards of practice for persons arranging, promoting, conducting, supervising, and participating in events; (iv) grounds for disciplinary actions against regulants; (v) records to be kept and maintained by regulants; (vi) the manner in which fees are to be accounted for and submitted to the Department, provided, however, that no gate fee shall be required for amateur-only events conducted by a sanctioning organization approved by the Director pursuant to § 54.1-829.1; and (vii) minimum health coverage for injuries sustained in a boxing or martial arts match. The Department shall have direct oversight of professional events to assure the safety and well-being of boxers, martial artists, and professional wrestlers, except that those portions of an event containing amateur bouts shall be conducted under the oversight of a sanctioning organization. Sanctioning organizations shall have sole responsibility for direct oversight of amateur-only events in which martial artists compete.

2. Charge each applicant for authorization and for renewals of authorization a nonrefundable fee subject to the provisions of § 54.1-113 and subdivision A 4 of § 54.1-201. A sanctioning organization shall be subject to the application fee provisions of subsection C of § 54.1-829.1.

3. Conduct investigations to determine the suitability of applicants for authorization and to determine the regulant's compliance with applicable statutes and regulations.

4. Conduct investigations as to whether monopolies, combinations, or other circumstances exist to restrain matches or exhibitions of boxing, martial arts, or professional wrestling anywhere in the Commonwealth. The Attorney General may assist investigations at the request of the Department.

5. Exercise jurisdiction over all boxing, martial arts, and professional wrestling conducted within the Commonwealth by any person, except where otherwise exempted.

1998, c. 895; 2010, c. 764; 2012, c. 769; 2015, cc. 216, 264; 2016, c. 756.

**§ 54.1-831.01. Boxing, Martial Arts, and Professional Wrestling Advisory Board.**

A. The Boxing, Martial Arts, and Professional Wrestling Advisory Board (the Board) is established as an advisory board, within the meaning of § 2.2-2100, in the executive branch of state government to advise the Director on matters relating to boxing, martial arts, and professional wrestling events in the Commonwealth.

B. The Board shall consist of seven members appointed by the Director as follows: one representative of the sport of boxing; one representative of the sport of professional wrestling; one representative of the sport of martial arts; one representative of either the sport of boxing, martial arts, or professional wrestling; one member who is a martial arts instructor who has obtained the rank of black belt or higher; and two citizen members. All members shall be residents of the Commonwealth. All appointments shall be for terms of four years, except that appointments to fill vacancies shall be for the unexpired terms. No person shall be eligible to serve for more than two successive full terms.

C. The Board shall elect its chairman and vice-chairman from among its members. The Board shall meet at least once each year to conduct its business and upon the call of the Director or chair of the Board. Four members shall constitute a quorum.

D. Members of the Board shall receive no compensation for their services, but shall be reimbursed for all reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the discharge of their duties as provided in § 2.2-2825.

E. Such staff support as is necessary for the conduct of the Board's business shall be furnished by the Department.

2007, c. 853; 2012, c. 522; 2015, cc. 216, 264.

**§ 54.1-831.1. Summary suspension of boxing license.**

When required in order to comply with applicable federal law, the Department may suspend the license of any person holding a license as a boxer on medical grounds or when there is substantial

danger to the public health or safety without a hearing or informal fact-finding conference. Institution of a proceeding for a hearing or conference shall be provided simultaneously with the summary suspension. The hearing or conference shall be scheduled within a reasonable time of the date of the summary suspension. The suspension shall remain in effect only so long as the medical grounds or danger to the public health or safety shall exist.

2002, c. 33.

**§ 54.1-832. Director authorized to contract for certain services; award of contract; authority when no contract is in effect.**

A. The Director may contract with a private person, firm, corporation or association to provide any or all of the following services on behalf of the Department: examining and recommending licensure, investigating and ensuring that events are conducted in compliance with statutes and regulations, performing clerical duties, collecting fees, maintaining records, developing proposed regulations in accordance with Article 2 (§ 2.2-4006 et seq.) of the Administrative Process Act, and recommending enforcement actions in accordance with Article 3 (§ 2.2-4018 et seq.) of the Administrative Process Act.

B. The Director shall procure any or all of such services in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Public Procurement Act (§ 2.2-4300 et seq.). Prior to the award of such contract, a proposer shall demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Director:

1. Personnel and financial resources necessary to carry out the provisions of the contract;
2. Adequate indemnification to protect the Commonwealth and its agencies and instrumentalities from all claims and losses incurred as a result of the contract;
3. Compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws;
4. Ability to develop, implement, and maintain the internal operations necessary to carry out the provisions of the contract; and
5. Ability to meet any other qualifications the Director deems appropriate in the procurement process.

C. Any contract awarded in accordance with this section shall not exceed a three-year term, but may be renewed annually upon the approval of the Director. The Director shall be the signatory to the contract on behalf of the Commonwealth.

D. Nothing herein is intended to deprive the contractor or the Commonwealth of the benefits of any law limiting exposure to liability or setting a limit on damages.

E. Nothing herein is intended to deprive the Director of his authority to carry out the requirements of this chapter when no contract is in effect.

1998, c. 895.

**§ 54.1-833. Reports; cable television systems; fee on receipts.**

A. Each promoter shall furnish to the Department, within twenty-four hours after the completion of each event, a written and verified report on the form provided by the Department showing the number of tickets sold, unsold and given away and the amount of gross proceeds thereof for such events originating in the Commonwealth, and its total gross receipts from the sale of rights to distribute in any manner such event by any video, telephonic or other communication method involving the control of electrons or other charge carriers for such live events originating in the Commonwealth. Within the twenty-four-hour period, the promoter shall pay to the Department a fee of (i) five percent of the first \$100,000 of its total gross receipts; and (ii) two and one-half percent of the remainder of its total gross receipts. Records of the promoter shall be subject to audit by the Department.

B. Each cable television system or other multichannel video programming service shall report to the Department in writing the name and address of each person from whom it obtains the rights to provide a live event originating in the Commonwealth.

C. The Department shall hold all license fees in a special fund of the state treasury subject to appropriation of the General Assembly. Payments from this fund shall be made to the contractors for their services on behalf of the Commonwealth. No payment shall exceed the balance of the fund. The Department shall draw from the fund to cover any expenses associated with the provisions of this chapter.

1998, c. 895; 2015, cc. 216, 264.

**§ 54.1-834. Prohibited activities; penalties.**

A. No betting or wagering shall be permitted at an event or exhibition before, during, or after the event in the building where the event is held.

B. No person shall participate in a sham or fake boxing or martial arts contest. The Department shall have the authority to order, without a hearing, the person controlling the purse to hold the distribution to contestants, promoters, and trainers pending a public hearing by the Department. The Department shall, simultaneously with the issuance of such order to retain the share or purse, institute proceedings for a hearing to determine whether a sham or fake boxing or martial arts contest has occurred.

C. It shall be a Class 1 misdemeanor for any person to violate this section or any statute or regulation governing the persons or activities regulated pursuant to this chapter.

D. The third or any subsequent conviction for violating any provision of this section during a 36-month period shall constitute a Class 6 felony.

1998, c. 895; 2015, cc. 216, 264; 2016, c. 756.

- **Other Business**
- **Conflict of Interest Forms /  
Travel Vouchers**
- **Adjourn**

DRAFT AGENDA

Materials contained in this agenda are proposed topics for discussion  
And are not to be construed as regulation or official board position