

ARTICLE 20:81

ATHLETIC COMMISSION

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CHAPTER 20:81:01

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section

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**20:81:01:01. Definitions.** Terms defined in SDCL 42-12-7.1 have the same meaning when used in this article. In addition, terms in this article mean:

- (1) "Applicant," any person, club, corporation, association, or entity seeking registration, licensure, or renewal of a registration or license with the Commission;
- (2) "Amateur," a contestant who has not received any remuneration, directly or indirectly, in any bout he has participated in;
- (3) "Announcer," a person responsible for announcing the names of the officials, the contestants, the contestants' weight, and the decisions of the referee and judges during a contest;

(4) "Bout," one contest involving boxing, kickboxing, or mixed martial arts contestants;

(5) "Contest," a bout or group of bouts, competition, or exhibition, involving contestants competing in boxing, kickboxing, or mixed martial arts;

(6) "Contestant," any human being who enters the ring or fenced fighting area to compete against another human being during a boxing, kickboxing, or mixed martial arts bout;

(7) "Cut man," a second designated by the Commission to attend to contestants between rounds. A cut man may not be a manager, matchmaker or promoter for an event;

~~(7)~~ 8) "Designee," a representative of the Commission who attends boxing, kickboxing, or mixed martial arts events to ensure that all laws and Commission rules are adhered to;

~~(8)~~ 9) "Judge," a person serving as a member of a scoring panel for boxing, kickboxing, or mixed martial arts. The panel of judges is responsible for determining a decision in each bout;

~~(9)~~ 10) "Official," referees, judges, timekeepers, and physicians involved in a boxing, kickboxing, or mixed martial arts contest;

~~(10)~~ 11) "Physician," a person who is licensed as a doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathy and in good standing with the issuing licensing board;

~~(11)~~ 12) "Professional," a contestant who has received remuneration, either directly or indirectly, for any bout the contestant has participated in;

~~(12)~~ 13) "Purse," the financial guarantee or any other remuneration which a contestant receives for participating in a bout, including the contestant's share of any payment received for broadcasting, internet, television, or motion picture rights;

~~(13)~~ 14) "Referee," the person in charge of enforcing the rules during any contest;

~~(14)~~ 15) "Second," an individual who attends to a contestant between rounds;

(~~15~~ 16) "Timekeeper," a person responsible for keeping accurate time during any contest.

Source: 41 SDR 7, effective July 28, 2014.

General Authority: SDCL [42-12-10](#).

Law Implemented: SDCL [42-12-10](#).

**20:81:01:08. Financial interests and arrangements.** No promoter, either directly or indirectly, may have any financial interest in a contestant competing on premises owned or leased by the promoter, or in which such promoter is otherwise interested, except pursuant to the specific written authorization of the Commission.

The promoter or the promoter's designee shall pay all payments to the contestant immediately following the contest: or as approved by the Commission. A contestant may not be paid for services before the contest. If the Commission determines that a contestant did not fight an honest contest of the contestant's skill, the contestant may not be paid for such services.

Source: 41 SDR 7, effective July 28, 2014.

General Authority: SDCL [42-12-10](#).

Law Implemented: SDCL [42-12-10](#).

**20:81:01:10. Safety requirements -- Medical and other safeguards.** No contest may begin or continue without adequate safeguards to protect the health of the contestants competing. Adequate safeguards must include:

(1) The presence of emergency medical personnel at the site of the contest;

(2) The presence of at least one physician registered by the Commission at ringside at all times during the contest;

(3) The presence of an ambulance, dedicated solely to the contestants, at the site of the contest. The ambulance may be released in an emergency, only temporarily, and only with the approval of the ringside physician. The contest must be held in abeyance until the ambulance and the emergency personnel return to the site;

(4) The use of rubber or plastic gloves during the contest by all persons, including managers, seconds, physicians, cut men and referees, coming into contact with a contestant during the course of a contest, other than the contestant in the same bout;

(5) A stretcher must be kept under the ring or be available as part of the onsite ambulance equipment; and

(6) A portable resuscitator with oxygen must be kept under the ring or be available as part of the onsite ambulance equipment.

Smoking and alcoholic beverages are prohibited at ~~official~~ all ringside tables.

The placement of camera and media people ringside is allowed only in neutral corners. Such persons must have a pass to sit ringside and must be approved by the ~~promoter~~ Commission before they receive passes.

Source: 41 SDR 7, effective July 28, 2014; 42 SDR 101, effective January 7, 2016.

General Authority: SDCL [42-12-10\(1\)](#).

Law Implemented: SDCL [42-12-10\(1\)](#).

## LICENSES AND REGISTRATIONS

### Sections

- [20:81:03:03](#) Terms and condition of registration -- Mixed martial artists.
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**20:81:03:03. Terms and conditions of registration -- Mixed martial artists.** All mixed martial artists applying for registration with the commission are subject to the following terms and conditions:

- (1) All mixed martial artists participating in a bout or contest must be registered with the commission, unless specifically exempted;
- (2) The applicant must provide a complete record of competitions;
- (3) The applicant must provide acceptable photo identification;
- (4) The applicant must provide proof of a national mixed martial arts identification or make application for a national mixed martial arts identification at the time of application;
- (4 5) The applicant must disclose whether the applicant is, or has been, under suspension in any jurisdiction in the preceding twelve months;
- (5 6) The applicant must submit verification of a physical within ~~the previous twelve months~~ three hundred sixty-five days prior to a bout from a physician licensed as a doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathy, physician's assistant or nurse practitioner;

~~(6 7)~~ The applicant must submit verification of a dilated eye exam within ~~the previous twelve months~~ three hundred sixty-five days prior to a bout from a licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist;

~~(7 8)~~ The applicant must provide proof the applicant has been administered a test by a laboratory in the United States that possesses a certificate number under the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act (42 U.S.C. 263a) to detect the presence of HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and other blood borne pathogens as identified by the Commission, within ~~six months prior to the application~~ one hundred eighty days prior to a bout and that the results are negative;

~~(8 9)~~ The applicant must disclose any serious bodily injuries, any serious head injuries, any surgeries, a cerebral hemorrhage of any kind, and whether the applicant is taking any medications;

~~(9 10)~~ If the commission determines that a question exists as to the medical condition of an applicant, the commission may require the applicant to complete a physical by a physician approved by the commission. Upon completion of the physical, the physician shall submit the report of the results directly to the commission. The report must affirmatively state the physician's opinion as to the advisability of the applicant fighting. The physical performed must address the question raised about the applicant's health and include such testing as a prudent physician would perform to determine the health and fitness of an individual to engage in the sport of mixed martial arts. The results of all required examinations must be made a part of the applicant's permanent medical record maintained by the commission. The costs of all examinations required by this section shall be paid by the applicant; and

~~(10 11)~~ The applicant must demonstrate financial responsibility, experience, character, and general fitness of the applicant are such that the participation of such applicant are consistent with the public interest, convenience, or necessity and the safety of contestants and with the best interests of the sport, generally.

Failure to meet any of these terms or conditions may result in the denial of the application for registration.

A mixed martial artist registered with the commission has an ongoing obligation to meet the requirements of registration and is subject to disciplinary action for failing to maintain any of these requirements following registration. For the first infraction of any provisions of this rule, the commission may issue a verbal warning. Following a second violation of any provision of this rule, a written warning may be issued. Following a third infraction of any provision of this rule, the mixed martial artist may be suspended for up to six months. The commission may suspend any mixed martial artist for any period of time for any serious violation of this rule without warning.

Source: 41 SDR 7, effective July 28, 2014; 42 SDR 101, effective January 7, 2016.

General Authority: SDCL [42-12-10\(2\)](#).

Law Implemented: SDCL [42-12-10\(2\)](#).

**20:81:03:04. Terms and conditions of license -- Promoters.** All promoters are subject to the following terms and conditions:

(1) All persons, clubs, corporations, associations, or entities acting as a promoter of a boxing, kickboxing, or mixed martial arts bout or contest must be licensed by the commission;

(2) The applicant must demonstrate financial responsibility, experience, character, and general fitness of the applicant, including in the case of corporations, its officers and stakeholders, are such that the applicant will be consistent with the public interest, convenience, or necessity and the safety of contestants, and with the best interests of the sport, generally;

(3) If a promoter is acting as a matchmaker, the promoter is responsible for working with the commission, or its designee, while the contest is in progress and must be available at all times to the commission, or its designee;

(4) Any person, party, or organization acting as a promoter of a bout or contest must obtain approval of the commission at least thirty business days prior to the date of the competition or exhibition. The promoter shall request approval on a form prescribed by the commission;

(5) The promoter shall ensure that all events are conducted in a safe and orderly manner and is responsible for ensuring the maintenance of adequate public safety at all contests;

(6) The promoter shall comply with all applicable state, city, municipal, and county laws and regulations including, but not limited to, any applicable fire and health laws. The promoter shall also comply with any directives from any governing state, municipal, city, or county law enforcement or regulatory agency or entity. Failure to abide by the provisions of this rule or to ensure adequate public safety may result in cancellation of a contest, discipline against a promoter's license, and denial of future contest permits by the commission;

(7) The promoter shall provide all materials necessary to conduct the contest, ~~such as~~ including a ring, stools, water buckets, competition gloves, rubber gloves, gauze, and tape for

hand wraps. The promoter must provide adequate equipment for the number of bouts on the approved card. The promoter shall ensure that all the required equipment is in its place;

(8) The promoter shall register the approved event with the Association of Boxing Commissions;

~~(8 9) Prior to an approved contest,~~ Not less than seven days prior to the date of an approved event, the promoter must file with the ~~e~~Commission proof of adequate insurance for the protection of the contestants, officials, and the attending public in an amount of at least one million dollars;

~~(9 10) Prior to an approved contest,~~ Not less than seven days prior to the date of an approved event, the promoter must provide proof of health insurance for each contestant to provide coverage for any injuries sustained in the competition or exhibition. The minimum benefit shall be ten thousand dollars for health and ten thousand dollars in accidental death benefits. The promoter is responsible to pay any deductibles necessary, including the deductible of the contestant's primary insurance, if applicable;

~~(10 11) Not less than seven days prior to the date of an approved event,~~ the promoter shall submit a completed notification of contest form to the commission; at least five days before an approved event;

~~(11 12)~~ The promoter must submit any change or substitution in the announced or advertised programs for any main event bout at least forty-eight hours before the weigh-in time of the contest. Such change or substitution must be approved by the commission. Notices of such change or substitution must also be included in any public announcement or advertisement relating to the contest and must be conspicuously posted at all box offices on

the premises and announced from the ring before the opening contest. The promoter shall obtain prior approval from the commission for any change to the date or time of an approved contest;

~~(12~~ 13) If requested, the promoter must provide the Commission with a surety bond payable to the State of South Dakota in the amount of at least twenty thousand dollars or an irrevocable letter of credit in at least the same amount from a lending institution approved to do business in the United States to guarantee payment of all fees and state taxes. The irrevocable letter of credit may only be released upon written approval of the commission. An additional bond or irrevocable letter of credit may be required in the amount specified by the commission where it may be reasonably expected that the twenty thousand dollars bond or irrevocable letter of credit will not provide sufficient protection to the state. It is the duty of each promoter to maintain all required bonds on a current status. All surety bonds or irrevocable letters of credit must be valid until the promoter's license expiration date. The commission may require the bond to pay unpaid fees for officials and purses based on the amounts stated in bout contracts;

~~(13~~ 14) The promoter must provide proof of ability to pay the entire purse of the contest and all assigned officials at weigh-in;

~~(14~~ 15) The promoter shall submit ticket information along with a financial report to the commission on a form prescribed by the commission within thirty days of the contest, along with any contest fee due;

~~(15~~ 16) The promoter is responsible for making all financial arrangements with all event officials, except the Commission or its designee. The commission shall approve and assign all officials;

~~(16~~ 17) The promoter must file all contracts between the promoter and the contestants with the commission prior to the weigh-in. The commission, or its designee, shall review all contracts to ensure compliance with applicable laws and rules; and

~~(17~~ 18) Prior to an approved contest, the promoter shall provide the commission with a plan for security adequate to ensure the safety of the public, contestants and officials attending the event.

Failure to timely file any required report or form may result in the cancellation of an approved event and the denial of a future contest.

Failure to meet any of these terms or conditions may result in the denial of the application for licensure.

A promoter licensed by the commission has an ongoing obligation to meet the requirements of registration and is subject to disciplinary action for failing to maintain any of these requirements. The first infraction of any provisions of this rule, the commission may issue a verbal warning. Following a second violation of any provision of this rule, a written warning may be issued. Following a third infraction of any provision of this rule, the promoter may be suspended for up to six months. The commission may suspend any promoter for any period of time for any serious violation of this rule without warning.

The lack of timely payments to any contestant, official, or the commission is cause for revocation of a promoter's license, denial of the renewal of a license, or denial of approval for a future event.

Source: 41 SDR 7, effective July 28, 2014; 42 SDR 101, effective January 7, 2016.

General Authority: SDCL [42-12-10\(3\)](#).

Law Implemented: SDCL [42-12-10\(3\)](#).

**20:81:03:08. Terms and conditions of registration -- Judges.** All judges are subject to the following terms and conditions;

- (1) All judges designated by the commission must be registered with the commission;
- (2) An applicant for registration must demonstrate knowledge of boxing, kickboxing, or mixed martial arts and sufficient to judge a contest;
- (3) Each of the three judges must be seated midway between the ring posts and the ring, but not on the same side as another judge, and must have an unimpaired view of the ring;
- (4) Judges shall indicate the winner of each round on the scorecard provided by the commission by marking and signing the scorecard in ink. Judges must be discreet at all times. The judge should have no discussion with anyone except the commission, or its designee, during the contest;
- (5) A judge is prohibited from using alcoholic beverages twelve hours prior to the fight and until the judge's assigned duties are completed; and
- (6) If a judge becomes incapacitated and is unable to complete the entire contest, a timeout shall be called by the commission, or its designee, and the commission, or its designee,

shall immediately assign an alternate judge to assume the duties from the point at which the judge became incapacitated.

The commission is under no obligation to designate a registered judge to act as an official for a bout or contest.

A decision that is rendered by the judges at the termination of a contest may not be changed without a hearing before the commission, unless it is determined that the computation of the scorecards show a clerical or mathematical error giving the decision to the wrong contestant, in which case such clerical or mathematical error may be corrected by the judges ~~by~~ by informing the Commission of the error.

Source: 41 SDR 7, effective July 28, 2014; 42 SDR 101, effective January 7, 2016.

General Authority: SDCL [42-12-10\(1\)](#).

Law Implemented: SDCL [42-12-10\(1\)](#).

**20:81:03:09. Terms and conditions of registration -- Seconds.** All seconds are subject to the following terms and conditions:

(1) All persons acting as a second for a contestant must be registered with the Commission;

(2) A contestant may not have more than three seconds, unless the bout is a title bout, one of whom must be designated as the chief second. During a title bout, there may be up to four seconds;

(3) The chief second is responsible for the conduct of assistant seconds during the contest;

(4) A second is restricted to the corner and must not be touching the apron. A second may not enter the ring until the timekeeper has indicated the end of the round and shall leave the ring at the timekeeper's gong, at which time the platform should be cleared of all obstructions;

(5) During the rest period, one second must be allowed in the ring and the other seconds must be allowed on the apron; A cut man is considered a second when in the ring for a contestant;

(6) A chief second may indicate to the referee that the contestant cannot continue and the contest should be stopped. Verbal notification, hand signals, throwing the towel, or mounting of the ring by the chief second may be used to signal the contest should be stopped;

(7) A second may not administer alcoholic beverages, narcotics, or stimulants to a contestant, pour or spray excessive water on the body of the contestant, or place ice in the trunks or cup of a contestant during the contests;

(8) No second for a mixed martial arts competition may enter the ring with shoes; and

(9) A second shall stay off the ring floor or canvas while the bout is in progress, may not lean on the ring or cage, and may not engage in excessive banging or verbal outbursts.

Source: 41 SDR 7, effective July 28, 2014.

General Authority: 42-12-10.

Law Implemented: 42-12-10.

**20:81:03:10. Terms and conditions of registration -- Timekeepers.** All timekeepers are subject to the following terms and conditions:

(1) All persons acting as a timekeeper for a bout or contest must be registered with the Commission;

(2) The timekeeper must possess adequate timepieces, including a backup, to time the rounds, rest periods, and recuperation periods of a bout;

(3) The timekeeper shall indicate the beginning of each round with a ~~gong~~ signal. Ten seconds before the end of the round, the timekeeper shall warn the contestants with three loud strikes;

(4) Ten seconds before the end of the rest period, the timekeeper shall warn the contestants with three loud strikes;

(5) The timekeeper will only stop the time during a round when directed to do so by the referee, and the timekeeper will only resume time when directed to do so by the referee;

(6) If a contestant is down, the timekeeper will begin the count and relay it to the referee using hand gestures until the referee picks up the count. The referee has the sole discretion to waive off the knockdown;

(7) If the referee calls time to allow a fouled contestant to recuperate, the timekeeper shall start a separate count for the recuperation period; and

(8) If a bout terminates before the scheduled limit of rounds, the timekeeper shall inform the Commission, or its designee, of the exact duration of the bout.

Source: 41 SDR 7, effective July 28, 2014.

General Authority: 42-12-10.

Law Implemented: 42-12-10.

**20:81:03:11. Terms and conditions of registration -- Physicians.** All physicians are subject

to the following terms and conditions:

(1) All physicians acting as a physician for a bout or contest must be registered with the Commission;

(2) An applicant for registration shall be licensed as a doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathy and in good standing with the issuing licensing board;

(3) The physician shall examine each contestant at the official weigh-in. If the contestant is determined to be in acceptable physical condition, the physician shall certify this on a form prescribed by the Commission. The examination shall include the following:

- (a) Eyes;
- (b) Ears;
- (c) Mouth and jaw;
- (d) Skin;
- (e) Nose;
- (f) Heart;
- (g) Lungs;
- (h) Head;
- (i) Hands;
- (j) Abdomen;
- (k) Blood pressure; and
- (l) A pregnancy test if the contestant is female;

(4) If more than one physician is assigned to work the contest, the Commission shall appoint one as the head physician;

(5) The physician must be seated near the steps of the ring, or one in each corner if two are present. The physician shall remain there for the duration of the contest, unless a physician is needed in the ring;

(6) The physician may enter the ring at any time during the contest, at the request of the referee, and may recommend termination of any bout to the referee, if, in the physician's opinion, any contestant has received severe punishment or is in danger of serious physical injury;

(7) In the event of any serious physical injury, the physician shall immediately render any emergency treatment necessary, recommend further treatment or hospitalization, if required, and fully report the entire matter to the Commission within twenty-four hours, and if necessary subsequently follow up. The physician may also require the injured contestant and contestant's manager or second remain in the ring, or on the premises, or report to a hospital after the bout for such period of time as the physician deems advisable; and

(8) The physician shall examine each contestant after the bout. If the contestant is determined to be in acceptable physical condition, the physician shall certify this on a form prescribed by the Commission.

Source: 41 SDR 7, effective July 28, 2014.

General Authority: 42-12-10.

Law Implemented: 42-12-10.

CHAPTER 20:81:05

MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

Section

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**20:81:05:05. Weigh-ins.** The time and place of the official weigh-in for a contest must be approved by the commission. Unless otherwise arranged, the contestant must be weighed at least eight hours but not more than thirty hours before the contest. The contestants must be weighed in the presence of ~~the public, the opponent,~~ a representative of the commission, ~~and a representative of the promoter,~~ on scales approved by the commission. A representative of the commission shall conduct the weigh-in and shall inform all contestants of the process for the weigh-in.

Only those contestants who have been approved for the contest may be weighed during the official weigh-in.

A contestant who has contracted at a given weight class may not be permitted to compete if the contestant's weight exceeds that class unless the contract provides for the opposing contestant to agree to a weight differential. Under no circumstances may the weight differential exceed ten percent above the originally scheduled weight class-, except for a super heavyweight bout.

If any contestant fails to reach the weight limit determined in the applicable category, at the indicated date and time for the official weigh-in, and even if the opposing contestant does not agree with the weight differential, each contestant, or both, has two additional hours to make the prescribed weight, provided that weight loss ~~in excess of two pounds is not permitted for a contestant who weighs less than one hundred forty five pounds and weight loss in excess of three pounds is not permitted for a contestant who weighs over one hundred forty five pounds.~~ does not exceed five percent of the contracted weight for the contestant.

If the contestants fail to make weight after the two-hour period, the bout may be cancelled. Contestants over the contracted weight by more than five percent at the time of the weigh-in are subject to suspension by the Commission.

Source: 41 SDR 7, effective July 28, 2014; 42 SDR 101, effective January 7, 2016.

General Authority: 42-12-10(1).

Law Implemented: 42-12-10(1).

**20:81:05:06. Scales.** The scales to be used during the official weigh-in must be available to all contestants at least two hours before the official weigh-in at the place of the official

weigh-in. For a title fight, there must be two scales: one for the official weigh-in and one for the contestants' use. ~~For a title fight, the official scale must be certified and calibrated.~~

Source: 41 SDR 7, effective July 28, 2014; 42 SDR 101, effective January 7, 2016.

General Authority: 42-12-10(1).

Law Implemented: 42-12-10(1).

**20:81:05:07. Conduct of contests.** A mixed martial arts contest is subject to the following:

(1) A mixed martial arts contest may not be less than twenty rounds of mixed martial art competition on any one program of mixed martial arts;

(2) At each regulated contest, there must be in attendance a licensed referee who shall direct and control the contest; ~~and~~

(3) At each regulated contest, there must be in attendance three licensed judges who shall at the termination of each mixed martial arts bout render a decision; and;

(4) At each regulated contest, there must be in attendance a licensed timekeeper who shall keep the official time of each bout.

Source: 41 SDR 7, effective July 28, 2014.

General Authority: 42-12-10.

Law Implemented: 42-12-10.

**20:81:05:08. Appearance and attire.** In a mixed martial arts contest, each contestant must meet the following appearance and attire requirements:

(1) Each contestant must be clean and present a tidy appearance;

(2) Each contestant must have the person's fingernails and toenails cut and trimmed;

(3) The excessive use of grease or any other foreign substance may not be used on the face, hair, or body of the contestant. The referee or Commission designee shall cause any excessive grease or foreign substance to be removed. The Commission designee shall determine whether head and facial hair present any hazard to the safety of the contestant or opponent or will interfere with the supervision and conduct of the contest or exhibition. The contestant may not compete in the contest or exhibition unless the circumstances are corrected to the Commission designee's satisfaction;

(4) A contestant may not wear any jewelry or piercing accessories while participating in the contest;

(5) A male contestant may wear mixed martial arts shorts, kickboxing shorts, or lightweight elastic polyurethane fabric bike-shorts, any combination of the foregoing, or other clothing approved by the Commission. A female contestant may wear mixed martial arts shorts, kickboxing shorts, or lightweight elastic polyurethane fabric bike-shorts, or any combination of the foregoing, and a tight-fitting top, or other clothing approved by the Commission;

(6) A contestant must use a mouthpiece that has been individually fitted;

(7) All contestants shall secure their hair in a manner that does not interfere with the vision or safety of either contestant, including no products or ornaments;

(8) No contestants may use cosmetics, perfumes, colognes, or other fragrances; ~~and~~

(9) Male contestants shall wear groin protection-;

(10) A contestant may not wear any supports or wraps on an ankle; and

(11) A contestant may wear a neoprene or similar material wrap on a knee. Metal, plastic, or fiberglass support braces on a knee are prohibited. A wrap must be approved by the Commission.

Source: 41 SDR 7, effective July 28, 2014.

General Authority: 42-12-10.

Law Implemented: 42-12-10.

**20:81:05:10. Ring or fenced area requirements.** Mixed martial arts contests may be held in a ring or in a fenced area. A mixed martial arts contest may not be permitted in any ring or area unless such ring or area has been inspected and approved by the Commission or its designee.

(1) The following requirements apply to a ring used in a contest of mixed martial arts:

(a) A ring may not be less than sixteen feet or more than thirty-two feet square inside the ropes;

(b) The ring floor must extend at least eighteen inches beyond the ropes. The ring floor must be padded with Ensolite or similar closed-cell foam, with at least a one-inch layer of foam padding. Padding must extend beyond the ring ropes and over the edge of the platform, with a top covering of canvas duck or similar material tightly stretched and laced to the ring platform. Material that tends to gather in lumps or ridges may not be used;

(c) The ring may not be more than four feet above the floor and must have suitable steps for the use of contestants;

(d) Ring posts must be made of metal, not more than three inches in diameter, extending from the floor to a minimum height of fifty-eight inches above the ring floor, and must be properly padded in a manner approved by the Commission. Ring posts must be at least eighteen inches away from the ring ropes;

(e) There must be a minimum of five ring ropes, with ties at appropriate intervals, with a minimum of two ties per side, not less than one inch in diameter and wrapped in soft materials. The lowest ring rope must be twelve inches above the ring floor; ~~and~~

(f) There must not be any obstruction or object, including, without limitation, a triangular border, on any part of the ring floor; and

(g) There must be at least ten feet between the edge of the apron of the ring and the first row of ticketholders. This area around ring must be denoted with a barrier to provide access for the Commission and officials around the entire ring;

(2) The following requirements apply to a fenced area used in a contest of mixed martial arts:

(a) The fenced area must be circular or have at least four equal sides and must be no smaller than sixteen feet wide or larger than thirty-two feet wide;

(b) The floor of the fenced area must be padded with Ensolite or similar closed-cell foam, with at least a one-inch layer of foam padding. Padding must extend beyond the ring ropes and over the edge of the platform, with a top covering of canvas duck or similar material tightly stretched and laced to the ring platform. Material that tends to gather in lumps or ridges may not be used;

(c) The platform of the fenced area may not be more than four feet above the floor and must have suitable steps for the use of contestants;

(d) Fenceposts must be made of metal, not more than six inches in diameter, extending from the floor to between five and seven feet above the floor of the fenced area, and must be properly padded in a manner approved by the Commission;

(e) The fencing used to enclose the fenced area must be made of a material that will prevent a contestant from falling out of the fenced area or breaking through the fenced area onto the floor or onto spectators, including, without limitation, chain linked fence coated in vinyl;

(f) All metal portion of the fenced area must be covered and padded in a manner approved by the Commission and must not be abrasive to the contestants; ~~and~~

(g) The door to the ring must be aligned with the stairs used to enter the ring to allow for direct access by the ringside physician and any necessary medical equipment;

(~~g~~ h) There may not be any obstruction on any part of the fence surrounding the area in which the contestants are to be competing.

The ring must be assembled and available for inspection by the Commission at least two hours prior to the first scheduled bout.

Source: 41 SDR 7, effective July 28, 2014.

General Authority: 42-12-10.

Law Implemented: 42-12-10.

**20:81:05:11. Ringside equipment.** The promoter shall provide the following items which must be available for use as needed by the corner:

- (1) Two buckets;
- (2) Chairs and stools; ~~and~~
- (3) Rubber gloves;
- (4) Towels; and
- (5) Receptacles for soiled towels and trash.

Source: 41 SDR 7, effective July 28, 2014; 42 SDR 101, effective January 7, 2016.

General Authority: 42-12-10(1).

Law Implemented: 42-12-10(1).

**20:81:05:18. Results of contests.** A contest of mixed martial arts may end under the following results:

- (1) Submission by:
  - (a) Physical tap out, when a contestant physically indicates the contestant no long wants to continue; or
  - (b) Verbal tap out, when the contestant verbally indicated the contestant no longer wants to continue;
- (2) Technical knockout by the referee stopping the contest, which occurs when:
  - (a) The referee stops the bout because the contestant can no longer defend himself or herself;
  - (b) The ringside physician advised the referee to stop the bout; or

- (c) An injury as a result of a legal maneuver is severe enough to terminate the bout;
- (3) A decision via the scorecards, including:
  - (a) Unanimous decision in which all three judges score the bout for the same contestant;
  - (b) Split decision in which two of the three judges score the bout for one contestant and the other judge scores the bout for the other contestant;
  - (c) Majority decision in which two judges score the bout for the same contestant and one judge scores the bout a draw;
- (4) A draw, including:
  - (a) A unanimous draw in which all three judges score the bout a draw;
  - (b) A majority draw in which two judges score the bout a draw; or
  - (c) A split draw in which all three judges score the bout differently and the score total results in a draw;
- (5) A technical decision in which the bout is stopped prematurely due to an injury and a contestant is leading on the scorecards;
- (6) A technical draw in which an injury sustained during the bout as a result of an accidental foul causes the injured contestant to be unable to continue and the sufficient number of rounds has been completed with the results of the scorecards being a draw;
- (7) A disqualification in which an injury is sustained during the bout as a result of an intentional foul severe enough to terminate the bout;
- (8) A forfeit in which a contestant fails to begin the bout or prematurely ends the bout for reasons other than injury or indicating a tap out;

(9) A no contest in which a bout is prematurely stopped due to an accidental injury and a sufficient number of rounds have not been completed to render a decision via the scorecards;  
or

(10) A second stop in which the chief second indicates either physically or verbally that the contestant does not wish to continue.

The Commission may on its own initiative review or investigate any bout or contest to determine compliance with South Dakota law. If the Commission determines that the licensee failed to abide by SDCL chapter [42-12](#) or any rule promulgated pursuant thereto, the Commission may officially amend the results of the decision, which may include declaring a different contestant as the winner or loser of the bout or declaring the bout a no contest. If the Commission determines that an official acted in error or reached a decision that was not in accordance with SDCL chapter 42-12 or any rules promulgated thereto, the Commission may similarly amend the results of the decision if such error or decision affected, or could have reasonably affected, the outcome of the bout.

A contestant may request a review of a bout result by making such request, in writing, within five days of the bout to be reviewed. Such request must describe the result being challenged and the alleged error. The Commission may review or investigate the alleged error, as the Commission deems necessary. If the Commission determines there was an error in determining the contest result, the Commission may officially amend the result of the bout, which may include declaring a different contestant as the winner or loser of the bout or declaring the bout a no contest. If the Commission determines that an official acted in error or reached a decision that was not in accordance with SDCL chapter 42-12 or any rules

promulgated thereto, the Commission may similarly amend the results of the decision if such error or decision affected, or could have reasonably affected, the outcome of the bout.

Source: 41 SDR 7, effective July 28, 2014.

General Authority: 42-12-10.

Law Implemented: 42-12-10.

**20:81:05:19. Automatic suspensions following contest.** The Commission shall issue a suspension to each contestant following a bout. Such suspension shall be reported to a national mixed martial arts database. Mixed martial artists, ~~under any circumstance,~~ may not compete or appear in a contest for up to ninety days after being unable to defend themselves in a bout. Mixed martial artists knocked out in a bout may be suspended indefinitely, subject to medical clearance to compete.

~~Mixed martial artists, under any circumstance, may not compete or appear in a contest less than seven days after the completion of the contestant's last bout.~~

Source: 41 SDR 7, effective July 28, 2014.

General Authority: 42-12-10.

Law Implemented: 42-12-10.

**20:81:05:20. Association of Boxing Commissions and Combative Sports Unified Rules of Mixed Martial Arts.** Unless otherwise addressed in SDCL chapter 42-12 or ARSD Article 20:81, the Association of Boxing Commissions and Combative Sports Unified Rules of Mixed Martial Arts apply to all mixed martial arts bouts. The Commission has final decision-making authority concerning the enforcement, implementation, and interpretation of these rules.

General Authority: 42-12-10.

Law Implemented: 42-12-10.

Reference: Association of Boxing Commissions and Combative Sports Unified Mixed

Martial Arts Rules (Adopted July 30, 2009 revised August 2016)

[http://www.abcboxing.com/unified-rules/.](http://www.abcboxing.com/unified-rules/)