

IOWA ATHLETIC COMMISSION

Promoter Responsibilities Manual

1. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The promoter shall: A. Ensure compliance with the rules of this chapter; B. Ensure that the referees are familiar with and enforce the rules; C. Be responsible for the conduct of all officials and participants; D. Answer to the commissioner for noncompliance; and E. Be available to the Commissioner throughout the event ...

The promoter is responsible for everything that happens at the event and the promoter or a fully-empowered designee shall be available to the Commission continuously throughout the course of the event.

All competitive events in the state of Iowa are now regulated and must be sanctioned.

With minor exceptions, Iowa has attempted to conform to the Unified Rules as expressed by the Association of Boxing Commissions (ABC). In cases where the Iowa Rules are silent on a subject, the ABC Guidelines are generally followed. Under IAC Rules and Policy, when a promoter seeks to hold an event, they have obligations that begin 60 days in advance. This Promoter Responsibility Manual outlines a promoter's obligations beginning 60 days in advance up through paying all outstanding taxes which can be as much as 20 days after the date of the event.

2. SIXTY DAYS IN ADVANCE

Event license 875—169.4(90A). A promoter shall hold a mixed martial arts match, professional boxing match, or wrestling match only if the commissioner of athletics (commissioner) has issued an applicable event license.

169.4(1) Application. At least seven days before the event, the promoter shall submit a completed application for a license on the form provided by the commissioner.

a. For a professional wrestling event, the application shall include each of the following:

- (1) The promoter's name, address, telephone number and other contact information as requested by the commissioner;
- (2) The event date, venue name, and venue address;
- (3) A nonrefundable \$100 event license fee applicable to events held on or after May 1, 2014; and
- (4) The promoter's signature.

b. For any other covered event, the application shall contain all of the following information:

- (1) The date, time, type, and location of the event;
- (2) The promoter's name, address, and contact information;
- (3) One-half of the required event license fee set forth in subrule 169.4(2);

- (4) The name, address, weight, gender, and opponent of each contestant;
- (5) A copy of the medical license of the ringside physician;
- (6) The date, time, and location for the weighing of the contestants;
- (7) The name, contact information, and role of each proposed official;
- (8) Copies of the contracts with the contestants, the emergency medical services company, and the security Company;
- (9) The name and contact information for the certified law enforcement officer who will attend the event;
- (10) The date, time, and location of the ringside physician's examination of the contestants;
- (11) Certificates of insurance as required by sub-rules 169.5(17) and 169.5(18);
- (12) A bond in the sum of \$5,000, payable to the State of Iowa, conditioned upon the payment of the tax and penalties imposed by Iowa Code chapter 90A, unless the promoter has a current valid bond on file with the division;
- (13) The name and telephone number of the person designated to clean between rounds; and
- (14) Other relevant information requested by the commissioner on the form.

169.4(2) Event license fees applicable to events held on or after May 1, 2014. For events held on or after May 1, 2014, the nonrefundable event license fee shall be \$100 for a professional wrestling event and \$450 for all other covered events. A professional wrestling promoter shall submit the event license fee with the event license application at least 7 days prior to the event. For all other covered events, the promoter shall submit one-half of the event license fee with the advance notice of the event at least 60 days prior to the event, and one-half of the event license fee with the event license application at least 7 days prior to the event.

169.4(3) Issuance. The decision to issue an event license is solely within the discretion of the commissioner. The following factors will be considered by the commissioner when deciding whether to issue an event license:

- a. Date the promoter filed advance notice of event.
- b. The promoter's prior compliance with Iowa Code chapter 90A and applicable rules.
- c. Applications for conflicting events.
- d. Ability of the commissioner to provide staff.
- e. The promoter's history of canceling events.
- f. Anticipated tax revenue.
- g. Completeness of application package.
- h. Whether the event is indoors or outdoors.

169.4(4) Revocation. When the commissioner finds that failure to provide adequate security to maintain public safety imperatively requires emergency action, the commissioner may immediately suspend the event license, pending license revocation procedures pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 17A.

Promoters should keep their dates flexible until they have received confirmation of the sanctioning of their event.

3. THIRTY DAYS IN ADVANCE

Once the event is approved, the promoter is required to send in additional information 30 days out.

- a. **Advance Notice of Event Form 177.2(7).** Thirty days in advance of event, the promoter must provide notice of the location, date and time of the event, as well as the proposed officials, security and emergency services. This is done by filing a Notice of Event and

Approved Officials Form. Ideally, this form would be emailed to Pam Conner, but it can be faxed if necessary.

- b. **Officials must be appointed for IAC approval.** The promoter must provide the names and contact information of the following officials: physician, weigh-in official, 2 referees, 3 judges and timekeeper. The Advance Notice of Event and Approved Officials Form includes the approved officials. The IAC shall review the proposed officials and either approve or disapprove the choices. The officials approved should be the same officials who appear at the event unless the permission is granted to change the officials prior to the event.
- c. **Ringside Physician.** The physician must be a licensed practicing physician approved by the Commissioner. The IAC prefers physicians with experience in competitive combat sports and he or she must be an M.D. or a D.O., licensed to practice in Iowa or granted special permission. When the Notice of Event and Approved Officials Form is turned in, a copy of the physician's license should be attached. Once the physician is approved, the Commission shall send a letter to the physician which outlines the physician's responsibilities to the Commission. The IAC shall not sanction physicians who lack competency for this type of event.
- d. **Weigh-In Official 177.5(12).** The weigh-in must be conducted by an unbiased Weigh-In Official appointed by the promoter and approved by the Commissioner. It is recommended that the physician, a referee or a judge serve as the Weigh-In Official. It is not recommended for the promoter or matchmaker to serve as the official for a number of reasons. A promoter may request the IAC to perform the weigh-in for \$200 plus expenses based upon the availability. If a promoter desires the IAC to perform the weigh-in, he or she must indicate the same thirty days in advance. The IAC shall attend weigh-ins and oversee the process at its discretion. The promoter shall be held strictly responsible for any violations of the weigh-in processes.
- e. **Two Referees 177.4(2).** The promoter must retain the services of two qualified, unbiased and un-conflicted referees. The Commission prefers trained, professional referees as opposed to celebrity referees, buddies of the promoter, or moonlighting fighters. The referees are in charge of enforcing all of the rules. The referees shall follow the direction of the Commission and help where needed and they may be called upon to assist with checking hand-wraps and observing the taping of gloves. The referees shall ensure that the cage door is secured before any round of any fight begins and shall further ensure that only authorized persons enter the cage at any given time.
- f. **Three Judges.** The promoter must retain the services of three qualified, unbiased and un-conflicted judges. The Commission prefers professional judges as opposed to celebrity judges, buddies of the promoter, or moonlighting fighters. Judges should not drink alcohol or use other drugs immediately prior to or during the event.
- g. **Timekeeper 177.4(3).** The timekeeper shall keep an exact record of time for the IAC and officials. The timekeeper must be qualified, unbiased and un-conflicted. The timekeeper should give no signal or advantage to any contestant.
- h. **Emergency Medical Services 177.2(10).** An ambulance service must be continuously available at the event authorized at the EMT-B, EMT-I, EMT-P or paramedic specialist level.

An “ambulance service” is defined as having a certified EMT or paramedic and an ambulance capable of transport in an emergency. The ambulance service must have appropriate equipment available to deal with the possible injuries which might arise. When the Notice of Event Form is sent in 30 days in advance, it should be accompanied by a letter from the ambulance service which indicates (1) the name of the service, (2) the appropriate equipment which will be present at the event, and (3) the level of certification of the EMT/paramedic along with their certification number. Promoters may check the following site to find emergency personnel or to check if the EMT is certified at the EMT-B, EMT-I, EMT-P or paramedic level: <http://idph.state.ia.us/ems/> and click on “service list.” The ambulance service must be present continuously at the event.

- i. **Security 177.2(6).** The promoter must have a security service contracted as well as at least one public law enforcement officer.
- j. **Notice of Date.** If a promoter holds a date, they should ensure that the event is carried through. Promoters shall be held responsible for failing to carry through with a planned date. It is highly recommended that promoters not hold dates that they do not intend to carry through.
- k. **Variances.** The following types of events are generally disallowed. A waiver of rules or variance can be requested and shall be considered on a case by case basis.
 - i. **Outdoor Events.** Outdoor events **shall not** be sanctioned without prior approval. If a promoter is planning an outdoor event they must indicate the same on the Notice form and attach a letter requesting specific approval for the outdoor show. The letter should indicate that the promoter will have a cage with a canvass matt and the promoter must either have a tent over the cage, or a backup plan in case of inclement weather. A promoter should not assume that their outdoor show will be approved and should discuss this with the IAC when planning the event. If an outdoor show is approved, it may be shut down due to inclement weather or any factor which affects the condition of the cage or the fighters.
 - ii. **Tournaments.** Under Iowa rules, a fighter cannot fight twice in a five day period. This rule is interpreted to include elimination tournaments where a contestant may be required to fight more than one time during the course of an event. A waiver may be requested in the form of a letter which spells out the request.
 - iii. **Mixed Events.** Generally, unsanctioned amateur boxing or kickboxing shall not be allowed in a cage and therefore, generally, a mixed martial arts event shall not be sanctioned if the intent is to include unsanctioned amateur boxing or kickboxing in conjunction with the event. If a waiver is sought on this subject, it shall include a letter from a legitimate amateur sanctioning body which intends to oversee the amateur contests. USA Boxing is the only approved amateur boxing sanctioning body.

iv. Length of Event and Number of Fights. An event should generally last no more than 3.5 hours. Consequently, each fight card should have more than 13 fights without prior approval.

- i. Form of Variance Request.** Any request for variance should set forth in a written letter to the Commissioner. The letter should include the following details or sections: (1) the rule or policy for which a variance is sought; (2) the actual variance or outcome sought; (3) the reason the variance is needed. It should be attached to the Notice of Event form.

4. SEVEN DAYS IN ADVANCE

- a. Bond Iowa Code 90A.2 (3).** Seven days in advance of the event, the promoter must provide a bond pursuant to Iowa Code 90A.2 (3). The IAC recommends obtaining a bond earlier than 7 days in advance as sometimes delays can occur. If the bond is not in 7 days in advance, the event shall be canceled and no license granted.
- b. Insurance 169.5 (17)** Obtain from a company authorized to do business in the state of Iowa \$10,000 of health insurance coverage on each contestant to provide for medical, surgical and hospital care for injuries sustained and illnesses contracted during the event. If there is a deductible, it shall not exceed \$1,500. If the contestant pays for covered care, the insurance proceeds shall be paid to the contestant or the contestant's beneficiaries as reimbursement for payment. In the event of a claim, payment of the deductible shall be the sole responsibility of the promoter.
- c. Life Insurance 169.5 (18)** Obtain from a company authorized to do business in the state of Iowa no less than \$10,000 of life insurance coverage on each contestant to cover death caused by injuries sustained or illnesses contracted during the event.
- d. Final Changes to Approved Officials Form.** The promoter should make any changes to the Approved Officials Form, no later than 7 days in advance of the event and include any revised form with the license application. Significant deviations, such as a change in the ringside physician or referee should be discussed with the IAC.
- e. Fight Card/Contracts 177.2(9).** The promoter must turn in the fight card 7 days in advance which shall include the following information about each fighter: name, date of birth, Federal ID (if they have a license), pro or amateur status, and weight class. This fight card should be filled out as completely as possible. In addition, the fight card should indicate the number and length of rounds. Failure to turn in a fight card seven days in advance may result in the failure to obtain an event license. It is the responsibility of the promoter to know if any fighter is suspended or under the age of 18. Once the fight card is set, the promoter must obtain special permission from the IAC to change the card; substitutions may be allowed on a good cause basis. The closer it gets to weigh-in, the better the reason must be for substitution. The promoter shall certify that it has contracted with the fighters on the fight card, although the actual contract is not required until fight night.

- f. **Fair, Competitive Fights 177.2(7).** Only fair, competitive fights shall be sanctioned. Professionals should not be matched against amateurs. The promoter is responsible for checking for fair matches and explaining any matches which may raise questions.
- g. **Proof of Age.** No person under 18 shall compete in any MMA event. All fighters should be prepared to show date of birth identification, such as a driver's license or birth certificate, at the weigh-in or on the night of the event. A promoter who places any underage fighter on a fight card shall be held strictly responsible.
- h. **Registration of Event.** Promoters shall register their event with the ABC. Failure to do so shall result in the fights not being sanctioned under the ABC guidelines. This is important in part because Iowa does not currently license fighters. The only way to ensure that all fighters end up in the ABC database is to pre-register the event. It is also the only way for the promoter to ensure that fighters are not suspended. The cost for this is \$100. This is the web site you go to in order to pre-register.
<http://abc.mixedmartialarts.com/?fa=login.RequestCreds>
 It is critical that when the promoter enters the matches, they are entered accurately. The promoter shall double-check to ensure that the names are spelled correctly and the correct date of birth is included.

5. WEIGH-IN AND PHYSICAL EXAMINATION (WITHIN 24 HOURS OF EVENT)

- a. **Weigh-In Rules 177.5(12).** The promoter must designate a Weigh-In Official who is qualified, unbiased and un-conflicted. The official shall record the exact weights of the fighters on the fight card designated by the Commission. This information shall include the fighter's name, weight class, pro or amateur status, as well as the date and time of the weigh-in. Fighters shall be weighed in on the same date and in the presence of one another. Fighters who do not make their contractual weight are in violation of their contract as well as the professionalism standards of the IAC. No fighter can be required to fight an opponent who does not make their contractual weight. There shall not be a weight difference of greater than 20 pounds in any case, except heavyweights. The IAC may choose to conduct the weigh-in at its discretion at the promoter's cost or observe the weigh-in at any time. Fighters who are late for or do not attend the weigh-in may be sanctioned in the discretion of the Commissioner, including being disallowed from fighting.
- b. **Physical Examination 177.5(3).** The physician shall perform a rigorous physical examination and disallow any fighter who is not in excellent health from fighting. The promoter should have copies of the physical form for the physician so that physicals may begin on time. Failure to timely attend the physical pursuant to the contract, may result in sanctions.

6. FIGHTER INFORMATION MEETING

- a. **Fighter Information Meeting.** It is mandatory for the promoter, referees and all fighters and chief seconds to attend the fighter information meeting. The promoter or designee shall take roll call and explain the event procedures and rules. Failure to attend or timely

attend the fighter information meeting may result in sanctions by the IAC. The promoter must provide a reasonable environment for the fighter meeting. Some venues are not suited for good fighter meetings because they are too noisy or do not have space for such a meeting. It is the promoter's responsibility to plan for this and to ensure a suitable space for the fighter meeting. Venues which have been proven inadequate shall be disallowed.

- b. **Fighter Contracts.** The promoter must use the IAC contract. The promoter must certify that he has contracts with each of the fighters on the fight card seven days in advance. On the night of the event, the promoter must turn over copies of all contracts to the Iowa Athletic Commission. Any and all additional terms of any contract must be attached to the contract or they shall not be enforced. Contracts must be filled out completely for both pros and amateurs. If the fighter or promoter does not comply with the contract, the Commission may take administrative action against either party following investigation. Fighters must certify that they are not suspended in any jurisdiction. The contract includes a listing of the approved officials at the time the contract is signed so all parties know the officials and have an opportunity to voice concerns about any alleged bias.
- c. **Blood Work 169.5(16)** Submit to the ringside physician no later than at the time of the physicals test results showing that each contestant scheduled for the event tested negative for the human immunodeficiency, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C viruses within the one-year period prior to the event. The contestant shall not participate and the physician shall notify the promoter that the contestant is prohibited from participating for medical reasons if any of the following occurs:
 - a. The promoter does not produce timely proof of testing;
 - b. The test results are positive;
 - c. The laboratory is not properly certified in accordance with the federal Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act;
 - d. The test was performed more than 12 months prior to the event; or
 - e. The test results are otherwise deficient.

7. EVENT

- a. **Cage Requirements See 177.3(1).**
- b. **Promoter Provides Gloves 177.2(5).** The promoter is required to supply uniform gloves to the fighters. It is an IAC rule and it is required by ABC. The promoter must ensure that there are enough gloves to avoid delays in the action and set up a gloving procedure to ensure the fighters receive their gloves in a timely fashion.
- c. **Referee Enforces Rules 177.4(2).** The referee must inspect the fighters to ensure that their gloves are signed by the Commission and ensure that they have personal protective equipment and no foreign substances on their body (other than small amounts of Vaseline on their face). Fighters should not put Vaseline on their body until they reach the cage at which time the referee will put it on them or observe their second apply it. See Rule 177.6(1).
- d. **Water Only in Corners.** Liquids other than water shall not be used in the corners once the fight begins.
- e. **Grooming.** Fingernails and toenails must be trimmed. Fighters must be reasonably groomed.

- f. **Professional Attire.** Fighters must have personal protective equipment (i.e. cup and mouth piece) and professional attire. No piercings or padding of any kind. Neoprene sleeve are allowed on knees ankles and elbows. Men may not wear shirts of any kind. Swim trunks or other non-professional equipment should be avoided.
- g. **Clean Up 177.2(11).** The promoter shall provide and maintain a container with a solution of ten parts water and one part bleach to clean blood between rounds or fights. The promoter shall designate at least one person other than the referee to be in charge of cleaning.
- h. **Professional Behavior 177.4(10).** Fighters, seconds and officials shall behave in a professional manner or suffer sanctions.
- i. **Locker Rooms.** The promoter is required to provide a suitable “locker room” space for changing and warming up. Only officials, fighters and their corner people are allowed in the locker room area. Families, girlfriends, children and friends are not allowed in order to maintain a professional environment.
- j. **Fouls 177.6(3). See Appendix A.**
- k. **Amateur Rules.** The ABC Amateur rules are: (1) 3 minute rounds, (2) no elbow or forearm strikes, (3) no knee strikes to head, and (4) dropping or slamming opponent to head at *any* time.
- l. **Injury 177.6(7).** If the referee believes a fighter to be injured, the referee should call timeout, stop the fight and summon the physician. If the injury was the result of a foul, the referee shall offer the fighter up to five minutes to recover. Only the referee may stop the fight. The referee, of course, is expected to listen to the advice of the ringside physician.
- m. **Forfeit of Purse.** A fighter who does not perform in good faith may be required to forfeit his/her purse at the discretion of the IAC.

8. POST-EVENT

- a. **Taxes Iowa Code 90A.9.** Five percent of the net receipts must be paid to Commission. The value of complimentary tickets in excess of five percent of the tickets sold shall be included in the gross admission receipts.
- b. **Enter Results on mixedmartialarts.com .** The Commission will confirm results once entered by the promoter.

APPENDIX A – FOULS

- 1) Butting with the head.
- 2) Eye gouging of any kind.
- 3) Biting.
- 4) Hair pulling.
- 5) Fishhooking.
- 6) Groin attacks of any kind.
- 7) Putting a finger into any orifice, cut, or laceration on an opponent.
- 8) Small joint manipulation.
- 9) Striking to the spine or behind the ears. (Iowa does not follow the unified rules or the Mohawk rule. Iowa follows the “headphones” rule).**
- 10) Striking using the point of the elbow. (Iowa does follow the unified rules that only 12 to 6 floor to ceiling elbows are violations).**
- 11) Throat strikes of any kind, including, without limitation, grabbing the trachea.
- 12) Clawing, pinching or twisting the flesh.
- 13) Grabbing the clavicle.
- 14) Kicking the head of a grounded opponent.
- 15) Kneeing the head of a grounded opponent.
- 16) Stomping a grounded opponent.
- 17) Striking the kidney.
- 18) Dropping or slamming an opponent on an opponent’s head or neck. (Iowa follows the unified rules, including with regard to submission holds. Other than submission holds, no contestant shall attempt to drop or slam an opponent on the head or neck).**
- 19) Throwing an opponent out of the cage or fenced area.
- 20) Holding the shorts or gloves of an opponent.
- 21) Spitting at an opponent.
- 22) Engaging in any unsportsmanlike conduct that causes an injury to an opponent.
- 23) Holding the ropes of the fence.
- 24) Using abusive language in the cage or fenced area.
- 25) Attacking an opponent during a break.
- 26) Attacking an opponent who is under the care of the referee.
- 27) Attacking an opponent after the bell has sounded the end of the round.
- 28) Flagrantly disregarding the instructions of the referee.
- 29) Timidity, including, without limitation, avoiding contact with an opponent, intentionally or consistently dropping the mouthpiece or faking an injury.
- 30) Interference by a second.
- 31) Threatening or intentionally striking or injuring any person other than the contestant’s opponent.

The ABC Amateur rules are: (1) 3 minute rounds, (2) no elbow or forearm strikes, (3) no knee strikes to head, and (4) dropping or slamming opponent to head at *any* time.