

Association of Boxing Commission and Combative Sports Bare-Knuckle Fighting Unified Rules

These are the Official Unified Rules of Bare-Knuckle Fighting. Any other form of these rules may not be called the “Unified Rules of Bare-Knuckle Fighting” and shall not be referred to by the name of the commission sanctioning the/an event.

August 2026

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Introduction

The Association of Boxing Commissions and Combative Sports (ABC) has developed these Unified Rules for Bare-Knuckle Fighting. As outlined in this document, the Unified Rules serve as the recommended guidelines for Commissions to follow when Bare-Knuckle Fighting occurs in their jurisdiction.

Bare-Knuckle Fighting is not new; however, it has become mainstream in the United States over the past few years. The rules established under the Association of Boxing Commissions and Combative Sports (ABC) will not override Commissions' Statutory Regulations. Rather, State Commissions should adhere to these Unified Rules as closely as possible to maintain consistency in regulating the sport throughout the United States.

Association of Boxing Commission Bare-Knuckle Fighting Committee Members - 2025-26

1. Committee Members:

a. Voting members for rules.

Nick Meeker (Chairman, WY)

Edward Kunkle (PA)

Dr. Louis Durkin (MA)

Matt Woodruff (GA)

Tony Cummings (CO)

Dr. Don Muzzi (FL)

b. None voting members: N/A: Majority of votes, rules are adopted.

c. Technical Knowledge Expert:

i. Andrew Glenn

ii. Blake Grice

iii. Jack Reiss

iv. Dr. Louis Durkin

v. Dr. Don Muzzi

Association of Boxing Commission Bare-Knuckle Fighting Committee Members - 2024-25

1. Committee Members:

a. Voting members for rules.

Timothy Shipman (Chairman, FL)
Nick Meeker (WY)
Kerry Hatley (TX)
Dr. Louis Durkin (MA)
(FL) Juan Carlos Estrada (AZ)

Brian Dunn (Vice Chairman: NE)
Christopher Young (FL)
Danny Vella (AZ)
Dr. Don Muzzi
Saleem Hanif

b. None voting members: N/A: Majority of votes, rules are adopted.

c. Technical Knowledge Expert:

- i. Andrew Glenn
- ii. Christopher Young
- iii. Jack Reiss
- iv. Kerry Hatley
- v. Dr. Louis Durkin
- vi. Dr. Don Muzzi
- vii. Bryan Miner

d. Committee Guest Attendee:

- i. Edward Knuckle
- ii. Brendan Cholewa
- iii. Mike Vazquez
- iv. Greg Bloom

Association of Boxing Commission Bare-Knuckle Fighting Committee Members - 2023-24

1. Committee Members:

a. Voting members for rules.

Timothy Shipman (Chairman, FL)

Nick Meeker (WY)

Kerry Hatley (TX)

Dr. Louis Durkin (MA)

(FL) Juan Carlos Estrada (AZ)

Brian Dunn (Vice Chairman: NE)

Christopher Young (FL)

Danny Vella (AZ)

Dr. Don Muzzi

b. None voting members: N/A: Majority of votes, rules are adopted.

c. Technical Knowledge Expert:

i. Andrew Glenn

ii. Christopher Young

iii. Jack Reiss

iv. Kerry Hatley

v. Dr. Louis Durkin

vi. Dr. Don Muzzi

d. Association of Boxing Commission and Combative Sports Bare-Knuckle Referee/Judge Trainer (Sean Wheelock)

e. Guest Editor (Arizona Commission: Danielle Schelble)

Association of Boxing Commission Bare-Knuckle Fighting Committee Members - 2022-23

1. Committee Members (Identified by Name)

a. Voting members for rules.

Timothy Shipman (Chairman, FL)

Nick Meeker (WY)

Kerry Hatley (TX)

Dr. Louis Durkin (MA)

(FL) Dr. Don Muzzi (FL)

Brian Dunn (Vice Chairman: NE)

Scott Burt (Bare-Knuckle Boxing Hall of Fame)

Ezra Sam (MN)

Christopher Young

b. None voting members

Committee Participant: Three members from each Promotion Group (BKFC and BYB).

i. Chris Lytle (BKFC); Tom Sconzo (BKFC); Sean Wheelock

ii. Mike Vazquez (BYB); Greg Bloom (BYB); Mel Valenzuela

c. Technical Knowledge Expert:

i. Bobby Wombacher

ii. Andrew Glenn

iii. Sean Wheelock

iv. Mel Valenzuela

v. Bruce Baird

d. Guest Technical Advisor:

Erin Toughill (Women Attire)

Record of Change:

2025-26 (Rule Change - Update record)

Page	Subject	Update
10	Rest Period	Removed “non-final rounds” and replaced with “each round” to read: Bare-Knuckle Fighting Bouts shall not extend past a total of six rounds and a total of eighteen (18) minutes of competition with a one (1) minute rest period between each round.
11	Count	Removed “will” and replaced with “may” to read: When a Combatant is knocked down from a legal strike, the Referee shall signal the knockdown (by commanding “Down” and pointing to the canvas) and order the Opponent (“Standing Combatant”) to the farthest neutral ring designation, then the Referee may pick up the count from the Timekeeper.
14	Decisions	Added: Decision by Way of Scorecards – Unanimous decision, split decision, majority decision, draw
15	Foul Revision	Revised the following rule: “Any participant moving towards an opponent to strike, from a crouching position with their head below the opponent’s belt line.” to read: “Ducking his/her head below the opponent’s hip line”
15	Foul Add	Facewashing
15	Foul Add	Trapping
15	Foul Add	Slapping
15	Foul Add	Superman punches

2024-25 (Rule Change - Update record)

Page	Subject	Update
14	Foul Add	Any participant moving towards an opponent to strike, from a crouching position with their head below the opponent’s belt line.
16 - 17	Hand Wrap	Details for Hand Wrap and designated name of hand wraps

Record of Change:

2023-24 (Rule Change - Update record)

Page	Subject	Update
8	Count	The Referee should determine whether the Combatant is ready to continue by directing the Combatant to step forward and then step left and right to evaluate cognitive functions.
8	Referee Mechanics	Details for Referee concerning Mandatory Eight Count
8	Knockdown	The three (3) knockdown rule may be applied at the discretion of the Referee, with the permission of the Regulating Commission.
9 -10	Eye Poke	A Combatant that receives an eye poke may be given a cold compress to apply to their eye during the five-minute recovery period. The Ringside Physician is authorized to provide the injured Combatant with a cold compress, ice pack, or pad to which the Combatant may apply to their injured eye.
10	Striking a Downed Opponent	The Referee has the authority to disqualify a Combatant for attempting to commit a foul without prior warning.
10 - 11	Round Scores	In the event that more than 3 knockdowns occur in one round, the score should be reflective of the number of knockdowns that have occurred (e.g. a 10-5 score for a round where 4 knockdowns occurred, and so on).
13 - 14	Approved Attire / Appearance	Breast protectors are optional. Loose-fitting tops are prohibited
16	Code of Conduct	Association of Boxing Commission and Combative Sports Code of Ethics
Entire Document	Terminology	The term fighter and participant, change to “Combatant”
Entire Document	Document Structure	Edit of sentence and paragraph structure for improved readability.

Rules and Regulations of Bare-Knuckle Fighting

Duration of Rounds

Bare-Knuckle Fighting Bouts **shall not** extend past a total of six rounds and a total of eighteen (18) minutes of competition with a one (1) minute rest period between each round. The one-minute rest period does not count towards the 18 minute competition limit.

Promoters are authorized to mix bout cards and schedule bouts for either two or three-minute rounds. The Regulating Commission shall consider the following information when approving bouts:

- Combatant Records
- Prior Combative Sports Experience
- Skill level
- Physical Condition

Rounds are approved for two (2) or three (3) minutes: Example Max Time Allowed.

Rounds	1	2	3	4	5	6	Max
Minutes	3:00	3:00	3:00	3:00	3:00	3:00	18:00
Minutes	2:00	2:00	2:00	2:00	2:00	2:00	12:00
				Pro Debut	Standard	Title	

Combatants making their professional debut **shall not** participate in Bare-Knuckle Fighting Bout, unless they have sufficient combative experience as established by the Regulating Commission.

- **A Combatant making their professional debut shall be restricted to four (4) two (2) minute rounds.**
 - A Combatant making their professional debut is defined as a Combatant that has not previously participated in a professional combative sports contest but has experience participating in Amateur Boxing or Amateur Mixed Martial Arts. The Regulating Commission should adhere to their own statutory regulations/procedures with regard to allowing a Combatant to make their professional debut.
 - Professional Combatants with previous professional experience in Boxing, Mixed Martial Arts, or other Combative Sports **are not** considered to be making their professional debut and may participate in any number of rounds without restriction as approved by the Regulating Commission.
- Female Combatants shall be restricted to two (2) minute rounds.

Amateur Combatants are prohibited from participating in Bare-Knuckle Fighting Bouts.

Referee (Sole Arbiter)

The Referee is the Sole Arbiter of the assigned bout. As the Sole Arbiter of the bout, the Referee is the only individual authorized to stop the bout. In the event of a severe injury or cut to a Combatant, the Referee may seek medical advice from the Ringside Physician to determine if the Combatant should be allowed to continue.

In addition, the Referee is the only individual authorized to:

- Interpret rules and situations inside the ring.
- Determine whether a blow is legal or a foul, and whether a foul is intentional or unintentional.
- Declare that an unintentional injury has occurred and what round.
- Determine whether there has been a knockdown.
- The Referee, must demonstrate clear visual and verbal communication to the Combatant, ensuring that the judges and commission understand what is occurring.

No Referee or Promoter has the authority to override a Ringside Physician's recommendation to stop a bout. In other words, if a Ringside Physician recommends that a bout be stopped for medical reasons, the Referee must stop the bout.

Before the Bell to Start

The Referee shall conduct a final visual check of the Combatants to ensure that any unnecessary clothing, prohibited items, and/or body piercings have been removed before giving final instructions inside the ring. Under no circumstance shall a bout commence or continue without the Ringside Physician(s) present at the Ring/Cage side area at all times. The Ringside Physician(s) shall not leave Ring/Cage Side area until the bout has concluded.

Knockdowns

A knockdown occurs when any part of a Combatant's body touches the canvas other than the soles of their feet following a legal strike or when a Combatant is helplessly hanging on/over the ropes or against the cage, in a manner that would suggest that without support of the ropes or cage, the Combatant would fall to the canvas. The Referee is the only individual authorized to determine whether a knockdown or slip has occurred. If a Combatant falls to the ground for any reason other than a knockdown, the Referee shall stop the action, allow the Combatant to stand up and resume the bout with both Combatants' standing at the spot where the fall occurred. The three (3) knockdown rule may be applied at the discretion of the Referee, with the permission of the Regulating Commission.

Count (Referee Mechanics)

There is **No Standing Eight (8) Count**. When a Combatant is knocked down from a legal strike, the Referee shall signal the knockdown (by commanding "Down" and pointing to the canvas) and order the Opponent ("Standing Combatant") to the farthest neutral ring designation, then the Referee may pick up the count from the Timekeeper. The Referee must announce the count verbally and demonstrate with a finger count to the Downed Combatant at each second of the count (to ensure that the Downed Combatant can clearly see and hear the count). A **Mandatory Eight (8) Count** shall apply anytime a Knockdown occurs (i.e. the bout must not continue until the Referee has reached at least a count of 8).

- If the Standing Combatant leaves the neutral ring designation, the Referee should suspend the count and direct the Combatant to return to the neutral ring designation; once the Combatant returns to the neutral ring designation, the Referee shall resume the count from where it was suspended.
- If the Downed Combatant rises any time before the count of (10) is completed, the Referee, after giving a mandatory (8) count, should determine whether the Combatant is ready to continue by performing the "Referee Gait Test". This may be done by directing the Combatant to step forward and then step left and right to evaluate cognitive functions. In addition, the Referee may ask the Combatant a few questions such as, "Are you OK?", "Do you want to continue?"...
- If the Combatant passes the Referee Gait Test, the Referee may resume the bout.
- If the Combatant does not pass the Referee Gait Test (a general rule is if the Referee has any doubt, stop the bout), the Referee shall waive off the bout and the Combatant will lose by Technical Knockout (TKO).
- If the Combatant fails to rise by the time the Referee reaches the count of ten (10), the Referee shall waive off the bout and the Combatant will lose by Knockout (KO).

Fouls (Stop Point)

Intentional or unintentional fouls may occur in a bout. If a Combatant is unintentionally hit with a low blow or poked in the eye, they may have up to five (5) minutes to recover. At no time may the recovery period exceed five (5) minutes. A Combatant may be disqualified for a flagrant foul, at the sole discretion of the Referee. Fouls may result in points being deducted from the Combatant who committed the fouls, the Referee may also disqualify the offending Combatant with or without any prior warning(s) for fouls. The number of points deducted may vary depending on the severity of the foul, at the discretion of the Referee. The Referee must clearly indicate to the Judges that a foul has occurred and the number of points to be deducted from the offending Combatant. Judges may not penalize a Combatant for a foul without a prior declaration by the Referee that a foul has occurred.

Eye Poke

Eye pokes may be categorized as either intentional or unintentional, at the discretion of the Referee. A Combatant that receives an eye poke may have up to five (5) minutes to recover.

- (1) If the Referee determines the eye poke to be intentional, the Combatant causing the foul shall lose the bout by disqualification, regardless of round number or time:
- (2) Unintentional Eye Poke:
 - a) If an unintentional eye poke occurs multiple times during the bout, the following actions should occur:
 1. On the first offense, the Referee may or may not deduct a point.
 2. When a second offense occurs in the bout, the Referee may elect to either deduct two points (minimum) or to disqualify the offending Combatant.
 - b) The Combatant receiving an eye poke may be given up to five (5) minutes to recover. If the injured Combatant cannot recover from an eye poke by the five-minute mark, the Referee shall call the bout as follows:
 1. The bout shall be ruled a No Contest/No Decision when a majority of the bout has not concluded (i.e. half of the scheduled rounds plus one second (SR: 1/2+1 sec)).
 2. Once a majority of the bout has concluded (half of the scheduled rounds plus one second (SR:1/2+1 sec)), the decision shall go to the scorecards and be determined as follows:
 - i. If the injured Combatant is ahead on the scorecards at the time of the stoppage, the injured Combatant shall be declared the winner by Technical Decision.
 - ii. If the offending Combatant (the individual who committed the eye poke foul) is ahead on the scorecards at the time of the stoppage, the bout shall be declared a Technical Draw.
 - c) At no time shall the Combatant causing the injury of an eye poke be declared the winner of the bout.
 - d) A Combatant that receives an eye poke may be given a cold compress to apply to their eye during the five-minute recovery period. The Ringside Physician is authorized to provide the injured Combatant with a cold compress, ice pack, or pad to which the Combatant may apply to their injured eye.

A Ringside Physician must evaluate the injured Combatant at the end of the recovery period or once the injured Combatant signals that they are ready to resume competition.

Striking a Downed Combatant

A “downed Combatant” is when any part of a Combatant's body touches the mat other than the soles of their feet. A downed Combatant should be considered defenseless and unable to protect themselves. Therefore, striking a downed Combatant can result in a severe injury. As the sole arbiter, the Referee must immediately stop the offending Combatant from delivering the strikes and **call a “time-out.”** The Referee should take the following action:

- (1) Direct the offender to the farthest neutral ring designation.
- (2) Attend to the Combatant who received the illegal blow(s).
- (3) Bring the Ringside Physician into the ring to determine the Combatants' ability to continue.
- (4) Give the Combatant up to five minutes to recover. If the Combatant cannot recover by the five-minute mark, the Combatant that delivered the illegal blows shall lose by disqualification (regardless of round number).

The Referee has the authority to disqualify a Combatant for attempting to commit a foul without prior warning.

Instant Replay

Instant replay may be used if the Promotion and Commission have agreed prior to the event and the Promoter provides all necessary instant replay equipment. The use of instant replay shall be limited to the following criteria:

- Only the Referee may determine if the use of instant replay is appropriate.
- The Referee is the sole arbiter of the match and is explicitly permitted to utilize instant replay to conclusively determine whether a foul led to the “bout ending sequence” that concluded the bout before the decision is announced. The review process is authorized and can be conducted by any individual designated by the Regulating Commission.
- Based on the instant replay review, the Referee may make the final call with respect to the bout that could result in one of the following decisions: a winner of the bout by stoppage, a “no contest/no decision” determination, a disqualification, a technical decision, or technical draw.

Judges

All bouts will be evaluated and scored by three (3) judges. The bouts will be scored using the ten (10) point must system to determine the winner. The scorecards shall be collected from each judge between each round of the bout.

Scoring Criteria

Judges shall evaluate the bout based on effective striking (Priority #1), effective aggressiveness (Priority #2), and control of the fighting area (Priority #3). Effective aggressiveness and control of the fighting area are only taken into consideration if effective striking is weighed as being even. Effective striking is judged by determining the impact/effect of legal strikes landed by a Combatant solely based on the results of such legal strikes. Effective aggressiveness means aggressively making attempts to finish the bout. Fighting area control is assessed by determining who is dictating the bout's pace, place, and position.

Round Scores

10-9 Round – Combatant routinely won the round by a close or moderate margin.

10-8 Round – Combatant won the round by a highly decisive margin (without a knockdown). **10-8 Round** – Combatant won the round and scores one knockdown.

10-7 Round – Combatant won the round and scores two knockdowns. **10-6 Round** – Combatant won the round and scores three knockdowns.

10-10 Round – This is very rare and is not a score to be used as an excuse by a judge that cannot assess the differences in the round. It shall only be used to score an incomplete round where nothing occurred in the bout.

In the event that **more than 3 knockdowns** occur in one round, the score should be reflective of the number of knockdowns that have occurred (e.g. a 10-5 score for a round where 4 knockdowns occurred, and so on).

Decisions

The bell **will not** save a Combatant in any round (i.e. a Combatant is down when the duration of the round has expired). The Timekeeper shall not ring the bell during the Referee's count, and the Referee should continue the count until the Combatant rises or is counted out. Once the Referee ends the count, the Timekeeper may ring the bell to signal the end of the round.

Anytime a Combatant loses control of bodily functions and **Urines, Defecates, or Regurgitates**, the Referee will stop the bout, and the Combatant will lose by TKO.

The Combatants may win or lose a bout by the following decisions:

- **Technical Knockout**
- **Knockout**
- **Disqualification**
- **Decision by Way of Scorecards – Unanimous decision, split decision, majority decision, draw**
- **No Contest/No Decision:** A "No Contest/No Decision" shall be rendered for bouts that have not completed **half of the scheduled rounds plus one second (SR:1/2+1 sec)** when stopped by the Referee, including for an unintentional foul causing an injury that does not allow the injured Combatant to continue.
- The Regulating Commission shall promptly notify the Referee to stop the bout in situations that are beyond the control of the Officials or Combatants. Such situations include, but are not limited to, equipment malfunction, ring/cage problems, or incidents not caused by either Combatant. The Referee must immediately halt the bout to ensure the safety and fairness of the competition.
- **Technical Decision:** If the Referee, in their sole discretion, determines that **after half of the scheduled rounds plus one second (SR:1/2+1 sec)**, the bout must be stopped due to an unintentional foul that causes an injury severe enough to render the injured Combatant unfit to continue, then the bout shall go to the Judges' scorecards, including the partial round when the bout was stopped. The result shall be declared a "Technical Decision". The judges will not score an additional round if the bout is stopped during the one (1) minute rest period.

If the Referee, in their sole discretion, determines that an intentional foul causes an injury and the bout is allowed to continue; and the injury later results in the **bout being stopped after half of the scheduled rounds plus one second (SR:1/2+1 sec)**, the injured combatant shall win by **Technical Decision** if he or she is ahead on the scorecards at the time the bout is stopped. The bout shall result in a **Technical Draw** if the injured Combatant is behind or even on the scorecards.

If the Referee, in their sole discretion, determines that an intentional foul causes an injury, and the bout is **NOT** allowed to continue, the Referee may disqualify the Combatant who initiated the intentional foul.

If the Combatant injures themselves while attempting to foul their opponent intentionally, the Referee will not take any action in their favor, and this injury shall be the same as one produced by a fair blow. If the Referee feels that a Combatant has conducted himself in an unsportsmanlike manner, they may stop the bout and disqualify the Combatant.

Partial or incomplete rounds will be scored.

Legal Techniques

In Bare-Knuckle Fighting, the only legal technique permitted is Bare-Knuckle Hand Strikes with a clenched fist, which involves punching with bare fists between opponents. Standard face-to-face punches are allowed from the waist to the top of the head, including fighting in the clinch. Combatants in the clinch can hold their opponent by the back of the neck or head in a downward position and punch to any legal strike zone. It is important to note that punches to the back of the head and spine are illegal and can lead to disqualification.

Illegal Techniques, Strikes, and Punches

Illegal techniques, strikes, and punches in Bare-Knuckle Fighting are as follows but not limited to:

1. Hitting the opponent below the belt.
2. Hitting an opponent who is down or is getting up after being down.
3. Deliberately maintaining a clinch without other action.
4. Wrestling or kicking the opponent.
5. Putting a finger into any orifice of the opponent or into any cut or laceration on an opponent, including fish hooking.
6. Pulling the opponent's hair.
7. Manipulating the opponent's fingers
8. Striking an opponent who is helpless as the result of blows but is supported by the ropes and does not fall
9. Butting the opponent with the head, shoulder, knee, or elbow
10. Hitting the opponent with the elbow or forearm
11. Striking the opponent's body over the kidneys
12. Hitting the opponent on the back of the head or neck
13. Gouging the opponent's eye in any manner
14. Hitting during a break, which is signaled by the Referee's command or physical act to separate the Combatants.
15. Hitting the opponent after the bell has sounded, ending the round.
16. Using the ropes or cage to gain an advantage over the opponent.
17. Pushing the opponent around the fighting area or into the ropes/cage.
18. Timidity, excessive clenching, including intentionally spitting out the mouthpiece, running from an opponent, or other similar behavior.
19. Biting the opponent.
20. Headlocks
21. Throat punches or strikes directly toward the throat of an opponent.
22. Fingers outstretched toward an opponent's face or eyes.
23. Throws or takedowns.
24. Engaging in any other action not described in this subsection that is deemed an intentional foul by the Referee on the basis that the action poses a danger to the safety of either Combatant, impedes fair and competitive play, or is unsportsmanlike.
25. Spinning back fists.
26. Hammer-fists.
27. Ducking his/her head below the opponent's hip line
28. Facewashing.
29. Trapping.
30. Slapping.
31. Superman punches.

Weight Classes

Weight classes shall be approved by the Regulatory Commission.

Weight Division / Class	Pounds
Straw-Weight	100-107 lbs.
Fly -Weight	108-115 lbs.
Bantam- Weight	116 - 125lbs
Feather-Weight	126 -135 lbs.
Light- Weight	136-145 lbs.
Welter-Weight	146 -155 lbs.
Middle- Weight	156 -165 lbs.
Super Middle-Weight	166 - 175 lbs.
Light Heavy-Weight	176 - 185 lbs.
Middle Heavy- Weight	186 - 205 lbs.
Cruiser-Weight	206 - 225 lbs.
Heavy-Weight	226 - 265 lbs.
Super Heavy-Weight	266 + lbs.^ No Limit

Approved Attire/Appearance

All competitors must wear protective gear as deemed necessary by the Regulating Commission. Male Combatants shall not wear any form of clothing on their upper body. Male and female Combatants shall wear the appropriate shorts, shoes (boxing or wrestling shoes), and mouthpiece. Male Combatants shall also wear the appropriate groin protection. Female Combatants shall wear the appropriate sports bra and are permitted to wear a short-sleeved (above the elbow) or sleeveless form-fitting rash guard, **breast protectors are optional. Loose-fitting tops are prohibited.** Female Combatants will follow the exact requirements for bottom covering as male Combatants, minus the requirement for groin protection. When deemed necessary by the Referee, Combatants with long hair must secure their hair in a manner that does not interfere with either Combatants ability to compete fairly or hinder the other's vision. No hard material can be used to secure hair. No object can be worn to secure the Combatant's hair, which may cause injury to either Combatant. Inspectors shall ensure that the fingernails are clipped at a length so as not to cause injury to the opponent. **The wearing of jewelry is strictly prohibited during all bouts.**

No Combatant shall wear any products on their body or hair, including but not limited to spray hair dye, body dye/paint, hair gel, skin products, etc.; other than the allowable amount of skin lubricant determined by the Regulating Commission. A Combatant entering the ring or cage to participate with temporary hair or body dye will be rejected from competing.

Hand Wraps

Hand wraps shall include the wrist and are restricted to a maximum of fifteen (15) yards (13.72 m) of soft gauze bandage per hand and not more than two (2) inches (5.08 cm), in width held in place by not more than ten (10) yards (9.14 m) of surgical tape, no more than one (1) inch (2.54 cm) width. The surgical tape shall not be applied within one (1) inch (2.54 cm) of the knuckles.

- No tape or gauze will extend past any of the Combatant's knuckles when a clenched fist is made.
- No tape or gauze is allowed between or on the Combatant's fingers *(except for the thumb, as follows)*.

The thumb of a Combatant may include wraps of tape during wrist wrapping, provided the Combatant can still maintain a tight fist.

- No reinforced tape or gauze is allowed across the palm of the hand.
- No tape or gauze of any kind is allowed to be applied *directly across* the surface of the palm or to create padding/reinforcement on the palm.
- Wrapping of the wrist shall not extend more than three (3) inches (7.62 cm) past the wrist juncture.
- Minimum wrap required, 1 wrap of gauze / taping of the wrist is authorized.

The official Bare-Knuckle Hand Wrap will be called the "G" Wrap. The G Wrap is unique because it does not include tape or gauze in the palm area. This wrap style is credited to fighter and cut man Guillermo Perez. Medical studies suggest that the G Wrap is safe, as it provides support for fighters' wrists and hands while eliminating the use of tape and gauze across the palm of the hand. Eliminating the opportunity of participants to hold the opponents' hand in competition.

Hand Wrap Example and equipment:



Mouthpiece

All Combatants are required to wear a mouthpiece during competition.

Combatants must have two mouthpieces at the ring/cage side, if possible. If a mouthpiece is dislodged and lost during the bout, the Combatant with the lost mouthpiece will lose by disqualification (regardless of round or time). If a mouthpiece is dislodged from a legal blow, the Referee must not interfere with the flow of the bout and will call a **time-out** when there is a lull in the action. It is the discretion of the Referee to take the Combatant to the corner and allow the corner to rinse and replace the Combatant's mouthpiece.

This process must be discussed with the commission prior to the start of the event to eliminate any violations of the commission's statutory rules in the state where the event is occurring.

The round cannot begin without both Combatants wearing their mouthpiece. If the mouthpiece is dislodged during competition, the Referee will call "time" when there is a **lull** in the bout and have the mouthpiece replaced at the first opportune moment without interfering with the immediate action. The Referee may deduct points if they feel the mouthpiece is being purposefully spit out.

Joint/Body Coverings

Other than the Combatant'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 a brace, or body gauze/tape. A Combatant may use soft neoprene-type sleeves to cover only the knee(s) or elbow(s). Approved sleeves may not have: padding, Velcro, plastic, metal, ties, or any other material considered unsafe or that may create an unfair advantage. The Regulating Commission may impose stricter rules to comply with local Statutes.

Petroleum Jelly

Combatants shall not be permitted to have excessive petroleum jelly or another similar substance on any part of their body, as determined by the sole discretion of the Referee. Petroleum jelly or another similar substance shall be applied to the face prior to the bout by an approved cut-man or licensed cornerman. 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 cut-man or licensed cornerman. (As approved by the Commission or regulatory body).

Fighting Area

A Commission-approved ring or cage that promotes Combatant, Official, and Spectator safety will be used by promoters. All cages/rings must be inspected and pre-approved by the Commission before an event.

Prohibited Substances

All Combatants are prohibited from using any drugs, alcohol, or stimulants that could either impair or enhance their performance pursuant to the rules of the Regulating Commission. The consumption of any substance other than plain water or Commission- approved sports drinks is prohibited during the event. The Regulating Commission has final authority to decide prohibited substances under their jurisdiction.

Commission Considerations

It is mandatory to upload event results to BoxRec and Combat Registry without exception. Additionally, all medical and administrative suspensions must be included in the upload of bout results.

Combatant Federal Identification Cards for Combatants participating in Bare-Knuckle Events will be issued via BoxRec or as directed by the Association of Boxing Commissions.

Regulating Commission should allow for the facilitation of reliable and timely on-site laceration repair.

Bouts between professionals and amateurs are prohibited. Once a Combatant is considered a professional Combatant in one combat sport, they shall only compete as a professional Combatant in all other combat sports.

Any Combatant who engages in a bout that a Commission does not sanction will be subject to suspension for a minimum of thirty (30) days from the date of the Combatant's last non-sanctioned bout. Prior to being allowed to compete in a sanctioned bout, following a suspension for participating in a non-sanctioned bout, the Combatant is responsible for obtaining a written clearance from a Physician and must submit all new medicals to the Regulating Commission. A Regulating Commission may impose stricter punishments.

Association of Boxing Commission and Combative Sports (Code of Conduct)

No official shall in any manner hint directly or indirectly, solicit any promoter, manager, trainer, fighter, or to be appointed as a ring official in any fight.

No official shall hint directly or indirectly, solicit any Commission, Commissioners or member of ANY boxing organization to be appointed as a ring official in any fight.

No official shall accept any gift of significant monetary value from any promoter, manager, trainer, or fighter or solicit from any promoter, manager, trainer or fighter, anything of significant monetary value.

No official shall in any manner publicly criticize the performance of any other official. No official shall in any manner publicly criticize the performance of any combatant. No official shall in any manner publicly criticize the appointment of any other official.

No official shall represent or attempt to represent the Commission in any manner other than as an official.

After receiving an assignment work at an event as an official, no official shall prior to the fight have any contact, social or otherwise, with any promoter, manager, trainer or fighter involved in the title fight other than contacts made with the promoter or promoter's employees relating to travel and hotel accommodations, except when accompanied by a Commission member.

Also, an official shall not communicate with ANY form of media, including and not limited to social media, (*Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.*) prior to, during or after the event, without Commission approval.

No official shall engage in any conduct that will discredit the sport of unarmed combat.

Officials must never place wagers of any type on any event or sport involving boxing or combative sports. Officials should advise the local Commission if they are making bets on "other" sporting events.

In the event that an official is contacted by a representative of the local Commission to serve as a ring official for a fight assignment, and if that official has even the slightest reason to feel or believe that he or she cannot be totally fair and impartial to both fighters, the official shall decline the appointment.

At no time should an official ask a licensee or applicant for an autograph or photograph, or any other type of memorabilia, or engage in any other instance of "fandom" at or near any Commission event, including weigh-ins and press conferences.

An official, whether they are working or not, shall not ask any licensee, applicant, or venue for anything of value, including tickets, programs, meals, drinks, gloves, or banners.

No official that is appointed for a fight assignment can be seen in public places, gambling or drinking after 12:00 AM the night prior to the event.

ANY OFFICIAL VIOLATING THE TERMS AND PROVISIONS OF THIS CODE OF ETHICS SHALL BE SUBJECT TO REMOVAL FROM THE LIST OF CERTIFIED OFFICIALS AND WILL RECEIVE NO FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ASSIGNMENTS FROM THE ABC TO SERVE AS AN OFFICIAL. IF THE SAID OFFICIAL HAS BROKEN THE CODE OF ETHICS THAT SAID OFFICIAL WILL NOT BE USED.