

Article 68.

Regulation of Boxing.

§ 143-650: Repealed by Session Laws 2004-124, s. 18.2(a), effective July 1, 2004.

§ 143-651. Definitions.

The following definitions apply in this Article:

- (1) Amateur. – A person who is not receiving or competing for and has never received or competed for any purse or other article or thing of value for participating in a match.
- (2) Announcer. – Any person who engages in the act of announcing a match.
- (3) Boxer. – Any person who engages as a participant in a boxing match.
- (4) Boxing match. – A match where the participants engage in the use of full contact boxing techniques (using the fist only), and where the object of a match is to win by decision, knockout (KO), or technical knockout (TKO).
- (4a) Repealed by Session Laws 2019-203, s. 6, effective October 1, 2019.
- (4b) Commission. – The North Carolina Boxing and Combat Sports Commission.
- (5) Repealed by Session Laws 2004-124, s. 18.2(a), effective July 1, 2004.
- (6) Contest. – A match in which the participants strive to win.
- (7) Contestant. – Any person who engages as a participant in a boxing, kickboxing, or mixed martial arts match, or toughman event.
- (7a) Division or ALE Division. – The Alcohol Law Enforcement Division of the Department of Public Safety.
- (8) Exhibition. – A match where the participants display their skills and technique without necessarily striving to win.
- (9) Judge. – A person who has a vote in determining the winner of any match or contest.
- (10) Kickboxer. – Any person who engages as a participant in a kickboxing match.
- (11) Kickboxing match. – A match in which the participants engage in full contact martial arts fighting techniques using the hands and the feet, and where the object of the match is to win by decision, knockout (KO), or technical knockout (TKO).
- (12) Licensee. – Any person, club, corporation, organization, or association to whom a license has been issued pursuant to the provisions of this Article.
- (13) Manager. – Any person who controls or administers the affairs of any contestant, and who:
  - a. By contract, agreement, or other arrangement with any person undertakes or has undertaken to represent in any way the interest of the contestant in any professional contest in which the contestant is to participate and is entitled under that contract, agreement, or arrangement to receive monetary or other compensation for his or her services, without regard to the sources of the compensation. The term "manager" shall not be construed to mean any attorney licensed to practice in this State whose participation in the activities is restricted solely to representing the interests of a professional contestant as a client.

- b. Directs or controls the professional activities of any professional contestant.
  - c. Receives or is entitled to receive a percentage of the gross purse or gross income of any professional contest.
- (14) Match. – Any boxing, kickboxing, or mixed martial arts contest or exhibition, or toughman event, and includes any event, engagement, sparring or practice session, show or program where the public is admitted and in which there is intended to be physical contact, whether an exhibition or contest. This definition does not include training or practice sessions when no admission is charged.
  - (15) Matchmaker. – A person through whom matches are arranged for participants and who otherwise assists participants in procuring engagement dates.
  - (15a) Mixed martial artist. – Any person who engages as a participant in a mixed martial arts match.
  - (15b) Mixed martial arts. – A form of sporting martial arts that uses a variety of martial arts techniques to deliver blows with the hands, elbows, and any part of the leg below the hip, including the knee and foot, and also uses boxing, wrestling, and grappling techniques.
  - (16) Natural person. – An individual.
  - (17) Participant. – Any person who engages in a match or exhibition and performs as a boxer, kickboxer, or mixed martial artist.
  - (18) Person. – An individual, group of individuals, business, corporation, limited liability company, partnership, or any other individual or collective entity.
  - (19) Physician. – An individual licensed to practice medicine in this State.
  - (20) Professional. – Any person who is licensed as a contestant and receives compensation for participating in matches.
  - (21) Promoter. – Any person who produces, arranges, stages, holds, or gives any match in North Carolina involving a professional participant.
  - (22) Referee. – The official who shall enter and remain in the ring for the duration of a match and shall enforce the rules and maintain order in the ring.
  - (23) Ring official. – Any person who performs an official function for the duration of a match.
  - (23a) Sanctioned amateur. – A person who competes in a sanctioned amateur match.
  - (23b) Sanctioned amateur match. – Any match regulated by an amateur sports organization that has been recognized and approved by the Commission.
  - (24) Second. – Any person who will work or be present in the corner of a participant for the duration of a match.
  - (24a) Repealed by Session Laws 2014-100, s. 17.1(yyy), effective July 1, 2014.
  - (25) Timekeeper. – Any person who will operate the clock or watch for the duration of a match for the purpose of keeping the official time of the match.
  - (25a) Toughman contestant. – Any person who competes in a toughman event.
  - (25b) Toughman event. – An elimination program of matches in which (i) the contestants are not professional boxers, (ii) the finalist receives a purse or other article of value, (iii) the participants engage in the use of full contact boxing techniques, and (iv) the object of each match is to win by decision, knockout (KO), or technical knockout (TKO).

- (26) Repealed by Session Laws 2007-490, s. 1, effective August 30, 2007.
- (27) Unarmed combat. – A match consisting of any combination of boxing, kicking, wrestling, hitting, punching, or other combative contact techniques which may reasonably be expected to inflict injury to opponents. (1995, c. 499, s. 1; 1997-504, s. 1; 1998-23, s. 18; 1998-212, s. 19.11(g); 2004-124, ss. 18.2(a), (b), (e); 2006-264, s. 22(c); 2007-490, s. 1; 2011-145, ss. 19.1(g), (n); 2014-100, s. 17.1(yyy); 2019-203, ss. 6, 12(c); 2021-180, s. 19A.7(b).)

**§ 143-652: Repealed by Session Laws 2004-124, s. 18.2.(a), effective July 1, 2004.**

**§ 143-652.1. Regulation of boxing, kickboxing, mixed martial arts, and toughman events.**

(a) Regulation. – The Commission shall regulate live boxing, kickboxing, and mixed martial arts matches, whether professional, amateur, or sanctioned amateur, or toughman events, in which admission is charged for viewing, or the contestants compete for a purse or prize of value greater than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00). The Commission shall have the exclusive authority to approve and issue rules for the regulation of the conduct, promotion, and performances of live boxing, kickboxing, and mixed martial arts matches and exhibitions, whether professional, amateur, or sanctioned amateur, and toughman events in this State. The rules shall be issued pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes and may include, without limitation, the following subjects:

- (1) Requirements for issuance of licenses and permits required by this Article.
- (2) Regulation of ticket sales.
- (3) Physical requirements for contestants, including classification by weight and skill.
- (4) Supervision of matches and exhibitions by licensed physicians and referees.
- (5) Insurance and bonding requirements.
- (6) Compensation of participants and licensees.
- (7) Contracts and financial arrangements.
- (8) Prohibition of dishonest, unethical, and injurious practices.
- (9) Facilities.
- (10) Approval of sanctioning amateur sports organizations.
- (11) Procedures and requirements for compliance with the Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996.

(b) Enforcement. – Except as otherwise authorized under G.S. 143-652.2(f), the Executive Director of the Commission shall investigate and enforce violations of this Article through the ALE Division. The ALE Division shall assist the Executive Director in investigating and enforcing violations of this Article. (2004-124, s. 18.2(d); 2007-490, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g), (n); 2014-100, s. 17.1(xxx); 2019-203, ss. 7, 12(c); 2021-180, s. 19A.7(c).)

**§ 143-652.2. The North Carolina Boxing and Combat Sports Commission.**

(a) Creation. – The North Carolina Boxing and Combat Sports Commission is created for the purposes set forth in G.S. 143-652.1. The Commission shall be administratively located within the Department of Public Safety, but shall exercise its powers independently of the Secretary of Public Safety. The Commission shall consist of six voting members and two nonvoting advisory members. All the members shall be residents of North Carolina. The members shall be appointed as follows:

- (1) Two voting members shall be appointed by the Governor for an initial term of two years.
- (2) One voting member shall be appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate for an initial term of three years.
- (3) One voting member shall be appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the House of Representatives for an initial term of three years.
- (4) One voting member shall be appointed by the Secretary of Public Safety for an initial term of three years.
- (5) Repealed by Session Laws 2019-203, s. 12(c), effective October 1, 2019. For applicability date, see notes.
- (6) One voting member shall be appointed by the Governor for an initial term of three years, from nominations made by the Tribal Council of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee, which shall nominate three individuals for the position.
- (7) One nonvoting advisory member shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives for an initial term of one year, from nominations made by the North Carolina Medical Society, which shall nominate two licensed physicians for the position.
- (8) One nonvoting advisory member shall be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate for an initial term of one year, from nominations made by the North Carolina Medical Society, which shall nominate two licensed physicians for the position.

Appointments by the General Assembly pursuant to subdivisions (2) and (3) of this subsection shall be made in accordance with G.S. 120-121. The member appointed pursuant to subdivision (6) of this subsection may serve on the Commission only if an agreement exists and remains in effect between the Tribal Council of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee and the Commission authorizing the Commission to regulate professional boxing matches within the Cherokee Indian Reservation as provided by the Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996.

The two nonvoting advisory members appointed pursuant to subdivisions (7) and (8) of this subsection shall advise the Commission on matters concerning the health and physical condition of boxers and health issues relating to the conduct of exhibitions and boxing matches. They may prepare and submit to the Commission for its approval any rules that in their judgment will safeguard the physical welfare of all participants engaged in boxing.

Terms for all members of the Commission except for the initial appointments shall be for three years.

The Governor shall designate which member of the Commission is to serve as chair. A member appointed pursuant to subdivision (1) or (6) of this subsection shall serve at the Governor's pleasure. The other members of the Commission may be removed from office by the member's appointing authority for cause. Members of the Commission are subject to the conflicts of interest requirements of 15 U.S.C. § 6308 (contained in the Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996, as amended). Each member, before entering upon the duties of a member, shall take and subscribe an oath to perform the duties of the office faithfully, impartially, and justly to the best of the member's ability. A record of these oaths shall be filed in the Department of Public Safety.

(b) Vacancies. – Members shall serve until their successors are appointed and have been qualified. Vacancies for members appointed by the General Assembly shall be filled in accordance

with G.S. 120-122. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, any vacancy in the membership of the Commission shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. A vacancy in the membership of the Commission other than by expiration of term shall be filled for the unexpired term only.

(c) Meetings. – Meetings of the Commission shall be called by the chair or by any two members of the Commission, and meetings shall be held at least quarterly. Any three voting members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum at any meeting. Action may be taken and motions and resolutions adopted by the Commission at any meeting by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Commission present at a meeting at which a quorum exists.

(d) Repealed by Session Laws 2019-203, s. 12(c), effective October 1, 2019. For applicability date, see notes.

(e) Compensation. – None of the members of the Commission shall receive compensation for serving on the Commission. However, members of the Commission may be reimbursed for their expenses in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 138 of the General Statutes.

(f) Staff Assistance. – The Commission shall hire a person to serve as Executive Director of the Commission. If necessary, the Executive Director may train and contract with independent contractors for the purpose of regulating and monitoring events, issuing licenses, collecting fees, and enforcing rules of the Commission. The Executive Director may initiate and review criminal background checks on persons requesting to work as independent contractors for the Commission or persons applying to be licensed by the Commission. The Commission may also hire additional staff. The Executive Director is exempt from provisions of the North Carolina Human Resources Act as provided by G.S. 126-5. All other staff of the Commission are subject to the North Carolina Human Resources Act.

(g) Repealed by Session Laws 2019-203, s. 12(c), effective October 1, 2019. For applicability date, see notes. (2007-528, s. 1; 2008-187, s. 22; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g), (n); 2014-100, s. 17.1(xxx); 2019-203, ss. 8, 12(c); 2021-180, s. 19A.7(d).)

### **§ 143-653. Unauthorized matches prohibited.**

No person shall promote, conduct, or engage in an unarmed combat match, whether the participants are professional or amateur, except as authorized by this Article. This section shall not preclude professional wrestling. (1995, c. 499, s. 1; 1997-504, s. 3; 1998-23, s. 18; 1998-212, s. 19.11(g); 2007-490, s. 3; 2014-100, s. 17.1(xxx).)

### **§ 143-654. Licensing and permitting.**

(a) License and Permit Required. – Except for sanctioned amateur matches, it is unlawful for any person to act in this State as an announcer, contestant, judge, manager, matchmaker, promoter, referee, timekeeper, or second unless the person is licensed to do so under this Article. It is unlawful for a promoter to present a match in this State, other than a sanctioned amateur match, unless the promoter has a permit issued under this Article to do so. The Commission has the exclusive authority to issue, deny, suspend, or revoke any license or permit provided for in this Article.

(b) License. – All licenses issued under this Article shall be valid only during the calendar year in which they are issued, except contestant licenses shall be valid for one year from the date of issuance. A license for an announcer, contestant, judge, matchmaker, referee, timekeeper, or second shall be issued only to a natural person. A natural person shall not transfer or assign a license or change it into another name. A license for a manager or promoter may be issued to a

corporation or partnership; provided, however, that all officers or partners shall submit an application for individual licensure, and only those officers or partners who are licensed shall be entitled to negotiate or sign contracts. The addition of a new officer or partner during the license period shall necessitate the filing of an application for individual licensure by the new officer or partner.

An applicant for a license shall file with the Commission the appropriate nonrefundable fee and any forms, documents, medical examinations, or exhibits the Commission may require in order to properly administer this Article. The information requested shall include the date of birth and social security number of each applicant as well as any other personal data necessary to positively identify the applicant and may include the requirement of verification of any documents the Commission deems appropriate. A person may not participate under a fictitious or assumed name in any match unless the person has first registered the name with the Commission.

(c) Surety Bond. – An applicant for a promoter's license must submit, in addition to any other forms, documents, or exhibits requested by the Commission, a surety bond payable to the Commission for the benefit of any person injured or damaged by (i) the promoter's failure to comply with any provision of this Article or any rules adopted by the Commission or (ii) the promoter's failure to fulfill the obligations of any contract related to the holding of a match. The surety bond shall be issued in an amount to be no less than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000). The amount of the surety bond shall be negotiable upon the sole discretion of the Commission. All surety bonds shall be upon forms approved and supplied by the Commission.

(d) Permit. – A permit issued to a promoter under this Article is valid for a single match. An applicant for a permit shall file with the Commission the appropriate nonrefundable fee and any forms or documents the Commission may require. (1995, c. 499, s. 1; 1997-504, s. 4; 1998-23, s. 18; 1998-212, s. 19.11(c), (g); 1999-237, s. 20.3(b); 2004-124, s. 18.2(e); 2006-264, s. 22(a); 2007-490, s. 4; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g), (n); 2014-100, s. 17.1(xxx); 2019-203, ss. 9(b), 12(c).)

**§ 143-655. Fees; State Boxing Revenue Account.**

(a) License Fees. – The Commission shall collect the following license fees:

Announcer	\$75.00
Contestant	\$50.00
Judge	\$75.00
Manager	\$150.00
Matchmaker	\$300.00
Promoter	\$450.00
Referee	\$75.00
Timekeeper	\$75.00
Second	\$50.00

The annual license renewal fees shall not exceed the initial license fees.

(b) Permit Fees. – The Commission may establish a fee schedule for permits issued under this Article. The fees may vary depending on the seating capacity of the facility to be used to present a match. The fee may not exceed the following amounts:

Seating Capacity	Fee Amount
Less than 2,000	\$150.00
2,000 – 5,000	\$300.00

Over 5,000

\$450.00

(b1) Admission Fees. – The Commission shall collect a fee in the amount of two dollars (\$2.00) per spectator to attend events regulated in this Article.

(c) State Boxing Revenue Account. – There is created the State Boxing Revenue Account within the Department of Commerce. Monies collected pursuant to the provisions of this Article shall be credited to the Account and applied to the administration of the Article. (1995, c. 499, s. 1; 1998-212, s. 19.11(d); 2004-124, s. 18.2(e); 2006-264, s. 22(b); 2007-490, s. 5; 2009-451, s. 17.7(a), (b); 2011-145, s. 19.1(g), (n); 2014-100, s. 17.1(xxx); 2015-241, s. 16B.6(a); 2019-203, ss. 9(b), 12(c).)

#### **§ 143-656. Contracts and financial arrangements.**

Any contract between licensees and related to a match or exhibition held or to be held in this State must meet the requirements of administrative rules as set forth by the Commission. Any contract which does not satisfy the requirements of the administrative rules shall be void and unenforceable. All contracts shall be in writing. (1995, c. 499, s. 1; 1997-504, s. 5; 1998-23, s. 18; 1998-212, s. 19.11(g); 2004-124, s. 18.2(e); 2006-264, s. 22(a); 2007-490, s. 6; 2011-145, s. 19.1(n); 2014-100, s. 17.1(xxx); 2019-203, ss. 9(b), 12(c).)

#### **§ 143-657: Repealed by Session Laws 1997-504, s. 6.**

#### **§ 143-657.1. Sanctioned amateur matches.**

In addition to the other applicable provisions of this Article, a sanctioned amateur match shall be conducted pursuant to the rules of the sports organization sanctioning the match or exhibition. (1997-504, s. 7; 1998-23, s. 18; 1998-212, s. 19.11(g); 2007-490, s. 7; 2014-100, s. 17.1(xxx).)

#### **§ 143-658. Violations.**

(a) Civil Penalties. – The Commission may issue an order against a licensee or other person who willfully violates any provision of this Article, imposing a civil penalty of up to five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for a single violation or of up to twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) for multiple violations in a single proceeding or a series of related proceedings. No order under this subsection may be entered without giving the licensee or other person 15 days' prior notice and an opportunity for a contested case hearing conducted pursuant to Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes.

The clear proceeds of civil penalties imposed pursuant to this subsection shall be remitted to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in accordance with G.S. 115C-457.2.

(b) Criminal Penalties. – A willful violation of any provision of this Article shall constitute a Class 2 misdemeanor. The Commission may refer any available evidence concerning violations of this Article to the proper district attorney, who may, with or without such a reference, institute the appropriate criminal proceedings.

(c) Injunction. – Whenever it appears to the Commission that a person has engaged or is about to engage in an act or practice constituting a violation of any provision of this Article or any rule or order issued pursuant to this Article, the Commission may bring an action in any court of competent jurisdiction to enjoin those acts or practices and to enforce compliance with this Article or any rule or order issued pursuant to this Article.

(d) Repealed by Session Laws 1998-212, s. 19.11(e), effective July 1, 1998. (1995, c. 499, s. 1; 1997-504, s. 8; 1998-23, s. 18; 1998-212, s. 19.11(e), (g); 1998-215, s. 125; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g); 2014-100, s. 17.1(xxx); 2019-203, s. 12(c).)

**§ 143-659. Reserved for future codification purposes.**