

October 24, 2011

**APPROVED TRAINING AND REQUIRED TESTING FOR AMATEUR OR PROFESSIONAL MIXED MARTIAL ARTS (MMA) JUDGES AND REFEREES**

**ISSUE.**

What does the State Athletic Commissioner (Commissioner) require for an individual to become licensed as an MMA judge or referee?

**CONCLUSION.**

To apply for a license to act as a judge or referee for an amateur or professional MMA contest, you must complete a judge or referee training program and submit an application subject to approval by the Commissioner.

**DEFINITIONS.**

**Association of Boxing Commissions (ABC).** The ABC is a nonprofit organization consisting of state and tribal commissions from the U.S., Canada, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, which have been charged with the authority and responsibility to regulate MMA contests, as well as other combative sports competitions.

**Judge.** A judge is a licensed individual who scores each round of an MMA contest, match, or exhibition.

**Mixed Martial Arts (MMA).** MMA means competition involving the use (subject to any applicable limitations set forth in the Unified Rules) of a combination of techniques from different disciplines of the martial arts including, but not limited to, grappling, kicking, and striking.

**Referee.** A referee is a licensed individual who directs and controls an MMA contest, match, or exhibition, and who may stop the contest, match, or exhibition whenever he or she deems advisable due to: the physical condition of contestants; if one contestant is clearly outclassed by his or her opponent; or for any other sufficient reason.

**Unified Rules.** Unified rules are the rules adopted and recognized by the ABC for amateur and professional MMA contests.

**ANALYSIS.**

[Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-8,129](#) grants the Commissioner sole direction, management, control, and jurisdiction over professional and amateur MMA matches and exhibitions held within Nebraska.

[Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-8,139](#) grants the Commissioner the authority to issue rules and regulations for the administration and enforcement of the applicable statutory sections as he or she deems necessary. This includes establishing written criteria used to grant and revoke licenses, setting license fees, and establishing qualification requirements for judges and referees.

The training program required to be completed by a judge or referee applicant may be developed by the Commissioner, or you may submit with your application, a Certificate of Completion of a judge or referee training program completed in another jurisdiction by a regulatory body or organization that offers training certified by the ABC. You must obtain a passing grade on a written examination administered by the Commissioner that is: designed to test your knowledge of mixed martial arts in general; the Unified Rules for MMA as ratified by the ABC; and Nebraska rules and regulations pertaining to MMA contests. The training program will also include the successful completion of a trial judge or referee program, administered and supervised by the Commissioner or his or her designated representative. The trial program will consist of the following:

- a. Observing an MMA event;
- b. Shadowing a licensed judge or referee at an MMA event; and
- c. Scoring or officiating on a trial basis as a judge or referee during an MMA event, under the supervision of the Commissioner or his or her representative.

You are responsible for any costs associated with your training and testing for a license as an MMA judge or referee.

APPROVED:



James M. Haynes  
Acting Athletic Commissioner

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