

# ADOPTED RULES

Adopted rules include new rules, amendments to existing rules, and repeals of existing rules. A rule adopted by a state agency takes effect 20 days after the date on which it is filed with the Secretary of State unless a later date is required by statute or specified in the rule (Government Code, §2001.036). If a rule is adopted without change to the text of the proposed rule, then the *Texas Register* does not republish the rule text here. If a rule is adopted with change to the text of the proposed rule, then the final rule text is included here. The final rule text will appear in the Texas Administrative Code on the effective date.

## TITLE 16. ECONOMIC REGULATION

### PART 4. TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATION

#### CHAPTER 61. COMBATIVE SPORTS

##### 16 TAC §61.43, §61.109

The Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation (Commission) adopts amendments to existing rules at 16 Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Chapter 61, §61.43, regarding the Combative Sports program, without changes to the proposed text as published in the April 18, 2025, issue of the *Texas Register* (50 TexReg 2469). This rule will not be republished.

The Commission also adopts a new rule at 16 TAC, Chapter 61, §61.109, regarding the Combative Sports program, with changes to the proposed text as published in the April 18, 2025, issue of the *Texas Register* (50 TexReg 2469). This rule will be republished.

#### EXPLANATION OF AND JUSTIFICATION FOR THE RULES

The rules under 16 TAC, Chapter 61, implement Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 2052, Combative Sports.

The adopted rules add regulations for the combative sport discipline of bare-knuckle boxing. The adopted rules outline and describe parameters and conditions under which contestants are evaluated and approved and by which bare-knuckle boxing contests will be officiated, judged, and decided. The adopted rules identify prohibited actions that could result in disciplinary measures being taken against the contestant by the referee and Department. Finally, the adopted rules allow for the use of instant replay technology in defined circumstances to confirm a contest decision. The adopted rules are necessary to regulate the discipline of bare-knuckle boxing in Texas.

The adopted rules also correct a typographical error in the concentration of adrenaline approved for use in a contestant's corner.

#### SECTION-BY-SECTION SUMMARY

The adopted rules amend §61.43(i)(1), correcting a typographical error in the concentration of adrenaline approved for use during a contest.

The adopted rules add §61.109(a), stating that all rules apply to bare-knuckle boxing except §§61.106(c) - (f), 61.107, 61.108, and 61.110 - 61.112. If there is any conflict between §61.109 and other rule language, §61.109 controls.

The adopted rules add §61.109(b), stating that amateur contestants are not allowed to participate in bare-knuckle boxing contests.

The adopted rules add §61.109(c), identifying the maximum number of rounds and minutes of competition for both males and females. Technical changes were made to the proposed rules as published. As presented to the Advisory Board, the collective pronoun "their" was replaced by the phrase "his or her." The adopted rules include this non-substantive, technical change.

The adopted rules add §61.109(d), describing how the hands of contestants shall be wrapped and identifying prohibited actions during the wrapping of contestants' hands.

The adopted rules add §61.109(e), describing how contestants may dress for a contest and identifying what protective gear must be worn. Contestants' hair must be secured in a manner that does not affect either contestant. Technical changes were made to the proposed rules as published. As presented to the Advisory Board, the collective pronoun "their" was replaced by the phrase "his or her." As presented to the Commission, the plural term "contestants" was also changed to the singular term "contestant" for agreement. The adopted rules include these non-substantive, technical changes.

The adopted rules add §61.109(f), stating that contests will be scored by three judges on a ten-point "must" system.

The adopted rules add §61.109(g), defining the possible outcomes of a contest and describing the specific decisions that will be declared in certain circumstances.

The adopted rules add §61.109(h), describing the technique that is permitted in this combative sport discipline. Technical changes were made to the proposed rules as published. As presented to the Advisory Board, the collective pronoun "their" was replaced with "the contestant's." The adopted rules include this non-substantive, technical change.

The adopted rules add §61.109(i), listing illegal actions which can lead to negative consequences both in the contest and after administrative action by the Department.

The adopted rules add §61.109(j), instituting the use of instant replay technology for this discipline, how it can be used, in what circumstances it may be used, and what decisions can result from its use.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Department drafted and distributed the proposed rules to persons internal and external to the agency. The proposed rules were published in the April 18, 2025, issue of the *Texas Register* (50 TexReg 2469). The public comment period closed on May 19, 2025. The Department did not receive any comments from interested parties on the proposed rules.

#### ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMISSION ACTION

The Combative Sports Advisory Board met on May 1, 2025, to discuss the proposed rules and the public comments that had been received as of the date of the meeting, of which there were none. The proposed rules presented to the Advisory Board included changes to the proposed rules as published. Non-substantive, technical changes were made to §61.109(c)(2), §61.109(e)(4), and §61.109(h), and these changes are explained in the Section-by-Section Summary. The Advisory Board recommended that the Commission adopt the proposed rules as presented during the meeting.

At its meeting on May 20, 2025, the Commission adopted the proposed rules as published, with changes to §61.109(c)(2), §61.109(e)(4), and §61.109(h) and with an additional non-substantive, technical change to §61.109(e)(4). The additional change is explained in the Section-by-Section Summary.

#### STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The adopted rules are adopted under Texas Occupations Code, Chapters 51 and 2052, which authorize the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation, the Department's governing body, to adopt rules as necessary to implement these chapters and any other law establishing a program regulated by the Department.

The statutory provisions affected by the adopted rules are those set forth in Texas Occupations Code, Chapters 51 and 2052. No other statutes, articles, or codes are affected by the proposed rules.

#### §61.109. Bare-Knuckle Boxing.

(a) All rules in this chapter apply to the combative sport of bare-knuckle boxing except §§61.106(c) - (f), 61.107, 61.108, and 61.110 - 61.112. If any language in this section conflicts with another rule in this chapter, this section prevails.

(b) Amateur contestants prohibited. Amateur contestants may not participate in bare-knuckle boxing contests.

(c) Contest and round parameters. Bare-knuckle boxing contests shall be limited to six rounds and 18 minutes of competition. Contestants shall be provided a one-minute rest period between each non-final round, which does not count towards the 18-minute limit.

(1) Contests between males shall have rounds of no more than three minutes. Contests between females shall have rounds of no more than two minutes.

(2) Contests featuring a contestant making his or her professional debut shall be restricted to four two-minute rounds.

(d) Hand wraps. Hand wraps for contestants shall include the wrist and are restricted to 12 yards of soft gauze bandage per hand, no more than two inches in width, held in place by no more than 10 yards of surgical tape, no more than one inch in width. Surgical tape may not be applied within one inch of the knuckles. The use of any liquid or material on the tape is prohibited.

(1) No tape or gauze is allowed on or between the contestant's fingers, with the exception of the thumb.

(A) The thumb of a contestant may include a single wrap of tape when the wrist is being wrapped.

(B) Wrapping of the wrist shall not extend more than three inches past the wrist juncture.

(2) Hand wraps shall be applied in the dressing room in the presence of a department representative.

(3) Other than the contestant's hands, there must 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.

(e) Contestant dress and appearance. Contestants must wear protective gear as deemed necessary by the department. All contestants must appear in appropriate dress.

(1) Male contestants must not wear any form of clothing on their upper body. Male contestants must also wear appropriate groin protection.

(2) Female contestants must wear an appropriate sports bra and may wear a short-sleeved or sleeveless form-fitting rash guard. Breast protectors are optional. Loose-fitting tops are prohibited.

(3) All contestants must wear appropriate shorts, boxing or wrestling shoes, and a fitted mouthpiece approved by the department.

(4) When deemed necessary by the referee, a contestant with long hair must secure his or her hair in a manner that does not hinder vision or interfere with either contestant's ability to compete fairly.

(5) A contestant may use soft neoprene-type sleeves to cover only the knees. Approved sleeves may not have padding, Velcro, plastic, metal, ties, or any other material considered unsafe or that may create an unfair advantage.

(f) Scoring. All contests shall be evaluated and scored by three judges. Contests will be scored using the ten-point must system to determine the winner.

(g) Decisions.

(1) Contestants may prevail by technical knockout, knock-out, disqualification, or a judges' decision.

(2) The timekeeper shall not ring the bell during the referee's count, and the referee must continue the count until the contestant rises or is counted out. Once the referee ends the count and determines the contestant is fit to continue, the timekeeper may ring the bell to signal the end of the round.

(3) A contest shall be declared a no contest if stopped due to an injury caused by an accidental foul before the end of:

(A) Two completed rounds of a scheduled three-round contest;

(B) Two completed rounds of a scheduled four-round contest;

(C) Three completed rounds of a scheduled five-round contest; or

(D) Three completed rounds of a scheduled six-round contest.

(4) If, after completion of the round specified in subsection (g)(3)(A) - (D), a contest is stopped due to a contestant being injured by an unintentional foul, or due to the worsening of an injury caused by a previous unintentional foul, all completed and partial rounds will be scored. The contestant ahead on points shall be declared the winner by technical decision.

(5) If, after completion of the round specified in subsection (g)(3)(A) - (D), a contest is stopped due to a contestant being injured by an intentional foul, or due to the worsening of an injury caused by a previous intentional foul, all completed and partial rounds will be scored, and:

(A) The injured contestant will win by technical decision if ahead on points; or

(B) The contest will result in a technical draw if the injured contestant is behind on points.

(6) If the contestant injures themselves while attempting to foul their opponent intentionally, the referee will not take any action in their favor, and this injury shall be considered the same as an injury produced by a fair blow. If the referee determines that a contestant has acted in an unsportsmanlike manner, the referee may stop the contest and disqualify the contestant.

(7) A draw shall be called if each official votes differently or any two vote a draw.

(h) Legal technique. The only fighting technique permitted is that of a bare-knuckle strike with a clenched fist. Contestants may fight in the clinch and make any legal strike while holding the contestant's opponent by the back of the neck or head in a downward position to any legal strike zone.

(i) Prohibited actions. The following tactics are fouls and are forbidden. Using these tactics may result in a warning, loss of points as determined by the referee, disqualification, forfeiture, and an administrative penalty, sanction, or both.

- (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 contestants.
- (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 clinching, 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) Spinning back fists.

(25) Hammer-fists.

(26) 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 contestant, impedes fair and competitive play, or is unsportsmanlike.

(j) Instant replay. Instant replay may be used if the promoter and department have agreed in writing before the event, and the promoter provides all necessary instant replay equipment. The use of instant replay shall be limited to the following:

(1) Only the referee may determine if the use of instant replay is appropriate.

(2) Before the decision is announced, the referee may use instant replay to conclusively determine whether a foul caused or contributed to the conclusion of the contest.

(3) The review process is authorized and can be conducted by any individual designated by the department.

(4) Based on the instant replay review, the referee shall make the final call with respect to the contest that could result in one of the following decisions:

(A) Winner of the contest by stoppage;

(B) No contest or no decision determination;

(C) Disqualification;

(D) Technical decision; or

(E) Technical draw.

The agency certifies that legal counsel has reviewed the adoption and found it to be a valid exercise of the agency's legal authority.

Filed with the Office of the Secretary of State on May 29, 2025.

TRD-202501886

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Effective date: June 19, 2025

Proposal publication date: April 18, 2025

For further information, please call: (512) 463-7750

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**TITLE 19. EDUCATION**

**PART 2. TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY**

**CHAPTER 74. CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS**

**SUBCHAPTER B. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

**19 TAC §74.12, §74.13**

The State Board of Education (SBOE) adopts amendments to §74.12 and §74.13, concerning graduation requirements.

The amendments are adopted without changes to the proposed text as published in the February 28, 2025 issue of the *Texas Register* (50 TexReg 1078) and will not be republished. The amendments reflect changes to a career and technical education (CTE) course to align with recently adopted CTE Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and update cross references.

**REASONED JUSTIFICATION:** At the April 2024 SBOE meeting, the SBOE approved for second reading and final adoption TEKS for a set of CTE courses in agriculture; aviation maintenance; and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) with an effective date of August 1, 2025. The adopted amendments update the list of courses that can satisfy a science graduation requirement to reflect a CTE course that was retitled Physics for Engineering (formerly titled Principles of Technology) as a result of the 2024 CTE TEKS review.

The adopted amendments also update cross references to certain subchapters that are being reorganized.

The SBOE approved the amendments for first reading and filing authorization at its January 31, 2025 meeting and for second reading and final adoption at its April 11, 2025 meeting.

In accordance with Texas Education Code, §7.102(f), the SBOE approved the amendments for adoption by a vote of two-thirds of its members to specify an effective date earlier than the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year. The earlier effective date will allow districts of innovation that begin school prior to the statutorily required start date to implement the proposed rulemaking when they begin their school year. The effective date is August 1, 2025.

**SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AND RESPONSES:** The public comment period on the proposal began February 28, 2025, and ended at 5:00 p.m. on March 31, 2025. The SBOE also provided an opportunity for registered oral and written comments at its April 2025 meeting in accordance with the SBOE board operating policies and procedures. No public comments were received.

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY.** The amendments are adopted under Texas Education Code (TEC), §7.102(c)(4), which requires the State Board of Education (SBOE) to establish curriculum and graduation requirements; TEC, §28.025(a), which requires the SBOE to determine by rule the curriculum requirements for the foundation high school program that are consistent with the required curriculum and requires the SBOE to designate specific courses that are required for the foundation high school program; TEC, §28.025(b-2)(2), which requires the SBOE to allow a student by rule to comply with the curriculum requirements for the third and fourth mathematics credits under TEC, §28.025(b-1)(2), or the third and fourth science credits under TEC, §28.025(b-1)(3), by successfully completing a career and technical education course designated by the SBOE as containing substantially similar and rigorous content; and TEC, §28.025(c-1), which requires the SBOE to adopt rules regarding earning an endorsement.

**CROSS REFERENCE TO STATUTE.** The amendments implement Texas Education Code, §7.102(c)(4) and §28.025(a), (b-2)(2), and (c-1).

The agency certifies that legal counsel has reviewed the adoption and found it to be a valid exercise of the agency's legal authority.

Filed with the Office of the Secretary of State on May 27, 2025.

TRD-202501856

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Effective date: August 1, 2025

Proposal publication date: February 28, 2025

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