

Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport

# ***Combative Sports Act, 2019***

Discussion Document

# About this Document

This document is part of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport's public discussion on the *Combative Sports Act, 2019*.

If proclaimed, the Act will change the law for amateur and professional combative sports in Ontario.

This document provides an overview of the Act and gives you an opportunity to provide feedback. Please review it and take the time to respond to a short online survey at:  
[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CSA\\_2019](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CSA_2019).

This is the first step in our discussion process. Your feedback is important, and we look forward to hearing from you by August 10, 2019.

# Key Terms in this Document

**Legislation:** Legislation is a law passed by the Legislature with the approval of the elected Members of Provincial Parliament. Legislation sets out rules that people or industry must follow. The word legislation and Act are often used in the same way.

**Regulation:** Gives more detail on how to follow the rules in legislation, and how those rules would be enforced. Regulations are approved after legislation is passed.

**Provincial Sport Organization:** A not-for-profit organization recognized by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport as the governing body of a particular amateur sport in Ontario.

**Office of the Athletics Commissioner:** Responsible for making sure rules for professional boxing, mixed martial arts and kickboxing contests under the current *Athletics Control Act*, are being followed.

# Why Do We Need a Combative Sports Act?

Under the *Criminal Code* of Canada, it is against the law to participate in any pre-arranged fight with fists, hands or feet, except in certain circumstances.

The *Criminal Code* allows provinces and territories to:

- determine the sports in which amateur contests may be held, and with whose permission; and
- allow professional boxing and mixed martial arts contests, with the permission of a body such as the Office of the Athletics Commissioner.

Currently, in Ontario, amateur combative sport contests can be held in eleven sports, with the permission of a Provincial Sport Organization (PSO).

Professional combative sport contests may be held with the permission of the Office of the Athletics Commissioner.

If the *Combative Sports Act, 2019* is proclaimed, it will improve safety for both amateur and professional combative sport athletes, and allow these sports to grow and contribute to positive economic outcomes across the province.

## Combative Sports with a recognized PSO

- Boxing
- Grappling
- Jiu Jitsu
- Judo
- Karate
- Kickboxing
- Muaythai
- Pankration
- Taekwondo
- Wrestling
- Wushu

# Scope of Legislation

If the *Combative Sports Act, 2019* is proclaimed, a person will have to be licenced to participate in a professional combative sport contest as an athlete, promoter, official (e.g. referee or judge), and other roles. Details about licence requirements and fees would be included in regulations.

Licenses would not be needed to participate in amateur combative sport contests.

Under the legislation, anyone who wants to hold a combative sport event would need to get an event permit.

Professional combative sport event permits would be for a single event, while amateur combative sport event permits would be available for single or multiple events.

The Act would allow amateur combative sport events to be held without an event permit in some circumstances. Details would be included in regulations.

# Role of the Commissioner and Advisory Council

The legislation would allow the Minister to appoint a Commissioner who could:

- issue or refuse to issue a licence or event permit;
- impose or change the conditions of a licence or event permit; and
- suspend or cancel a licence or event permit.

The legislation would allow people to ask for a hearing if they disagree with licencing and permitting decisions made by the Commissioner. However, the Commissioner would be able to suspend or cancel a licence or event permit without a hearing, if it is in the public interest, or in the interest of health and safety.

The legislation would also create the Ontario Combative Sport Advisory Council. The Council's role would be to provide the Minister with advice on proposed regulations, including the rules for combative sport contests.

Details on the roles of the Commissioner and the Advisory Council would be included in regulations.

# Compliance and Enforcement

If the Act is proclaimed, the Minister would be able to appoint inspectors who will make sure the rules set out in the Act and the regulations are being followed.

If the rules are not being followed, the Commissioner would be able to impose financial penalties up to a maximum of \$10,000; however the regulations may include a range of penalties. If a person disagrees with a financial penalty, they would have an opportunity to ask for a review of the Commissioner's decision.

In addition to financial penalties issued by the Commissioner, the Act would also allow for someone to be charged with an offence for more serious or repeated contraventions of the Act or its regulations.

If the Act is proclaimed, the maximum penalty for an offence would be:

- a fine of \$10,000 and/or imprisonment for up to two years for an individual; and
- a \$100,000 fine for an entity that is not an individual, such as a corporation.

# Thank You

Thank you for taking the time to read this discussion document.

You can provide your feedback by clicking one of the buttons below, by August 10, 2019.

1. Complete a short online survey

2. Submit written comments on the regulatory registry

If you would like to be contacted about future discussions on the *Combative Sports Act, 2019*, or have any questions, please contact ministry staff at [combative.sports@ontario.ca](mailto:combative.sports@ontario.ca).