



# Sensory Impairment / Disability in Sport

## Scope:

This policy describes the process for determining in a fair manner, eligibility for disabled contestants to compete under the *Combat Sports Act 1987* (the Act). A disability is any continuing condition that restricts everyday activities. Disabilities can affect a person's capacity to communicate, interact with others, learn and get about independently. Disability is usually permanent but may be episodic.

Disability should not exclude someone from participation in appropriate sports and physical activity but may exclude them from participating in a combat sport due to the nature of the sport and the person's ability to adequately defend themselves.

## Definitions:

**Act** – means *Combat Sports Act 1987*

**Contest** – means a contest or exhibition of a combat sport, that is organised, arranged or promoted for profit or that is conducted for public entertainment or to which the public is invited.

**Contestant**: A person who participates in a contest, whether for reward or not.

**Regulations** means *Combat Sport Regulations 2004* (the Regulations).

## Legislative background:

*Disability Services Act 1993*. **Disability** means a disability:

- (a) which is attributable to an intellectual, psychiatric, cognitive, neurological, sensory or physical impairment or a combination of those impairments;
- (b) which is permanent or likely to be permanent;
- (c) which may or may not be of a chronic or episodic nature; and
- (d) which results in:
  - i. a substantially reduced capacity of the person for communication, social interaction, learning or mobility; and
  - ii. a need for continuing support services.

## Process:

Where a disability has been recognised and reported on the Certificate of Fitness, the Commission must be advised prior to the contest and a plan put into place.

## Application:

Where a person has a disability or sensory impairment, the Duty Commissioner, Referee at the time of the contest and Officials must be made aware of a Contestant's impairment and identify any processes that may need to be put in place to ensure the safety of that Contestant and those within the contest area.

A person with a physical disability i.e. amputee, amelia or meromelia must meet registration requirements and undertake a Certificate of Fitness and Serology testing as per the Act. This policy does not preclude a person with a physical disability from competing however Contestants will be assessed by the Commission on a case by case basis.



A person with hearing impairments is strictly forbidden to use any form of hearing aid(s)/amplification or external cochlear implants within the contest area.

A person who has a cognitive impairment, that in the doctor's opinion, affects their ability to make a decision to compete or their ability to adequately defend themselves or follow instructions within a contest area will not be permitted to compete.

A person who has visual impairments is strictly forbidden from using anything other than soft contact lenses. These cannot be replaced if lost or damaged during the contest. If a Contestant cannot continue, they must forfeit. The Referee and/or Medical Practitioner will stop the contest if there are concerns for the Contestant's safety.

**Additional Procedure Links:**

Commission Rules

Code of Conduct

Guidelines and Conditions of Registration

Contestant Preparation Standards and Guidelines