



August 12, 2020

Statement on Unarmed Combat Sports Events

Because of the current level of COVID-19 activity, the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) is not currently sanctioning unarmed combat sports events. Wisconsin has experienced a drastic rise in COVID-19 cases throughout the state. Currently, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) estimates the COVID-19 activity rate for disease spread is high in all but a few Wisconsin counties.

In response to the escalating disease activity, Governor Evers recently issued [Executive Order #82](#) to declare a Public Health Emergency. He also issued [Emergency Order 1](#), which requires face coverings. Governor Evers issued both orders to protect the health and safety of all Wisconsinites, and both will remain in effect until September 28, 2020.

When DSPS sanctions unarmed combat sports events, we, too, consider the health and safety of the various people who may attend or be involved. These events bring together—in close, indoor spaces—large numbers of spectators, competitors, promoters, venue and event staff, DSPS staff, and others. As the pandemic has evolved, we have learned more about the disease. We now know that COVID-19 is highly contagious, especially indoors with sustained close physical proximity. Given the nature of these events and the current COVID-19 circumstances, we have determined that the risk of exposure is too great not only for DSPS staff but also for all involved.

However, we are all eager to return to normal activities. We are working closely with DHS, local health departments, and others to develop a plan for allowing events to resume in a way that would minimize risks to the health and safety of all Wisconsinites and would not adversely impact or strain the limited resources of our health care system.