



Sex Eligibility Policy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document sets out World Boxing's policy on boxer eligibility for participation in its competitions, in accordance with the current World Boxing Rule Book.

This policy is designed to deliver a level playing field for men and women which ensures the safety of all participants, based on their sex as a key determinant in delivering competitive fairness and protecting the health and welfare of boxers.

As part of this policy, World Boxing will operate two categories as determined by sex: a men's category and a women's category. To be eligible for the men's category, a competitor must be male at birth. To be eligible for the women's category, a competitor must be female at birth.

To ensure this policy is implemented, World Boxing will introduce mandatory sex testing to determine the eligibility of female and male athletes that want to take part in its competitions. It means that all athletes over the age of 18 that want to participate in a World Boxing owned or sanctioned competition will need to undergo a, once-in-a-lifetime, PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test or a functional medical equivalent genetic test to determine their sex at birth and their eligibility to compete.

This policy will come into force on 20 August 2025. Details of how it will be implemented are contained within this document.

1. Purpose:

As the International Federation (IF) within the Olympic Movement governing the sport of boxing at world level, World Boxing is tasked with establishing, applying and enforcing the eligibility rules concerning the sport of boxing.

In doing this, World Boxing respects the dignity of all individuals and strives to provide opportunities for all athletes to participate in and excel at the sport through fair and meaningful competition conditions. For reasons of health, safety, and fairness, its policy on eligibility to participate is determined by the categories of sex, age, and weight. This eligibility policy is designed to ensure fair competition by requiring that all athletes



compete in a manner consistent with their natural biological attributes and thereby uphold the ethical principles of sport and the integrity of athletic performance as the credibility of competitive sport relies on a level playing field, where no athlete has an unfair advantage over the rest.

Competitive fairness is an essential goal of World Boxing's eligibility policy and has determined that sex, age, and weight are the critical considerations in the pursuit of this and delivering a fair and level playing field for all male and female athletes.

World Boxing has also determined that in the sport of boxing, an equally important fundamental goal for this eligibility policy is athlete safety. In combat sports like boxing, participants throw punches to the scoring area of the head and upper body, with the intent of accumulating points, the referee stopping the contest or by delivering a knockout. Boxing therefore creates a unique safety challenge, both acutely and chronically, for neurological injury, which can result in serious injury. These risks are real, which is why it is so important that World Boxing's policy on eligibility endeavors to provide a level playing field that ensures fairness, competitiveness and above all, safety for all boxers.

- 1.1** This policy will commence on 20 August 2025 and replaces all other sex eligibility rules

2. Definitions:

- 2.1** For the purpose of this policy the word "sex" (or "biological sex") denotes natural biological differences between females and males. Human development is organized around the production of large and small gametes (ova and sperm).
- 2.2** Sex is defined by the body system supporting these gametes and can be accurately identified by genetics, chromosomes, sex organs, and endogenous hormonal profiles.
- 2.3** The word "female"¹ means of or denoting the sex intended to produce ova. For the purposes of sex eligibility in boxing, a boxer shall be confirmed as female by the presence of XX chromosomes, or the absence of Y

¹ Includes commonly used terms such as girl and women



chromosome genetic material (i.e. SRY gene), or a difference of sex development where male androgenization does not occur (absolute androgen insensitivity).

- 2.4** The word “male²” means of or denoting the sex intended to produce sperm. For the purposes of sex eligibility in boxing, boxers shall be confirmed as male by the presence of Y chromosome genetic material (i.e. SRY gene) or with a difference of sex development where male androgenization occurs.

3. Eligibility Determination:

- 3.1** World Boxing will operate two categories as determined by sex: a men’s category and a women’s category. To be eligible for the men’s category, a competitor must be male at birth. To be eligible for the women’s category, a competitor must be female at birth.
- 3.2** All issues relating to the eligibility of an athlete under this policy will be determined by World Boxing following consultation, as necessary, with one or more scientific and medical experts appointed by the World Boxing Secretary General in consultation with World Boxing’s Medical and Anti-Doping Committee. It is crucial that the experts can assess whether a given athlete meets the sex eligibility criteria. World Boxing may require the athlete to provide further information and documents and/or to submit to one or more medical examinations.
- 3.3** All costs associated with these assessments will be borne by the boxer’s National Federation. In the event of an athlete’s challenge to a determination of their sex by their National Federation and/or World Boxing, the World Boxing Sex Categories procedures will apply.

4. Certification:

- 4.1** For international-level competitions owned or sanctioned by World Boxing, all athletes over the age of 18 years of age, must have their sex certified in accordance with World Boxing’s policy to be eligible for World

² Includes commonly used terms such as boys and men.



Boxing competitions. Failure to do so, or provision of a false certification, will render the athlete ineligible and subject the athlete (and potentially the athlete's National Federation) to sanctions.

4.1.1 World Boxing member federations must confirm their athletes' certifications of sex when registering their athletes to compete in World Boxing sanctioned competitions.

4.1.2 The certification of an athlete's sex must be determined by testing and for competitions owned or sanctioned by World Boxing, all athletes over the age of 18 that want to participate will need to undergo a, once-in-a-lifetime, PCR (polymerase chain reaction) or a functional medical equivalent genetic test to determine their sex at birth and certify their eligibility to compete.

4.1.3 World Boxing reserves the right/duty to do genetic sex screening on new or existing athlete samples to confirm certification.

4.1.4 National Federations are required to verify the sex certification of each member athlete. A false certification of sex provided by an athlete's National Federation shall result in sanctions to the National Federation, which may include up to a loss of eligibility of athletes of the federation to compete in World Boxing owned or sanctioned events and events administered by World Boxing, including, This is not limited to, multi-sport games, Olympic Qualifying events, and Olympic Games. World Boxing may also impose monetary sanctions and other sanctions for a false certification.

4.1.5 It is not necessary for a certification to be proven to have been submitted with knowledge of its falsity for a National Federation to be sanctioned; however, the degree of culpability of the National Federation in submitting a false certification may be considered in determining the severity of the sanction by World Boxing.

4.1.6 In the event the athlete's sex certification is challenged by the athlete's National Federation or by World Boxing, the athlete shall



be ineligible to compete until the dispute is resolved through the judicial process.

- 4.1.7** False (i.e. medically inaccurate) certification of sex shall result in a four-year period of ineligibility for the athlete unless the athlete proves that the athlete was without significant fault or negligence or was without fault or negligence. In either of these cases, the athlete shall be ineligible for competition for a two- year period from the date on which the athlete accepts the sanction or the falsity of the certification.

5. Testing and Procedure:

- 5.1** All athletes over the age of 18 that want to participate in a World Boxing Owned or sanctioned competition will need to undergo a PCR (polymerase chain reaction) or a functional medical equivalent genetic test to determine their sex at birth and their eligibility to compete. The PCR test is a laboratory technique used to detect specific genetic material, in this case the SRY gene, which reveals the presence of the Y chromosome, which is an indicator of biological sex. The test can be conducted by nasal/mouth swab, saliva or blood. Athletes are required to submit to testing of their cheek cells, blood, urine, and/or saliva at the request of the athlete's National Federation or World Boxing for purposes of sex verification, regardless of whether the athlete's sex certification has been formally contested. Such testing may include no-advance-notice testing.

- 5.1.1** National Federations will be responsible for testing and will be required to confirm the sex of their athletes when entering them into World Boxing competitions by providing a certification of their chromosomal sex, as determined by a PCR test or a functional medical equivalent genetic test.

- 5.1.2** Athletes that are deemed to be male at birth, as evidenced by the presence of the Y chromosome genetic material (the SRY gene) or with a difference of sexual development (DSD) where male androgenization occurs, will be eligible to compete in the male category.



- 5.1.3** Athletes that are deemed to be female at birth, as evidenced by the presence of XX chromosomes or the absence of Y chromosome genetic material (the SRY gene), or with a DSD where male androgenization does not occur, will be eligible to compete in the female category.
- 5.1.4** Where Y chromosome genetic material (i.e. SRY gene) is detected with suspicion of chromosomal abnormalities or an undetected difference of sexual development (DSD), a boxer's initial screens will be immediately referred to clinical specialists for genetic screening, hormonal profiles, anatomical examination, or other evaluation of endocrine profiles or markers by medical specialists to secure a diagnosis.
- 5.1.5** Medical records will be delivered to World Boxing medical experts for evaluation of eligibility following a decision-making process informed by the absence of male androgenization for the female category.
- 5.1.6** World Boxing's medical expert(s), with a full medical report, in accordance with the definition of female and male as stated in the eligibility policy, will make a final determination of athlete eligibility.
- 5.1.7** Sex certification and sex verification records shall not be considered confidential and shall not be considered medical records for the sole purpose of eligibility certification. An athlete must consent in writing that sex certification and verification records will not be considered confidential in order to compete in any competition recognized, sanctioned, conducted, or authorized by World Boxing or a World Boxing member National Federation.
- 5.1.8** World Boxing is committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of its athletes by providing access to appropriate services, while fully respecting their privacy rights in a manner that does not affect eligibility.



6. Transgender Policy:

- 6.1** World Boxing recognizes that athletes who identify as transgender may wish to compete in Boxing in a classification consistent with their gender identity. World Boxing respects the dignity of all individuals, including athletes who identify as transgender. World Boxing also wishes the sport of Boxing to be as inclusive as possible, and to encourage and provide a clear path to participation in the sport for all. World Boxing has determined that to ensure safety, competitive fairness, and equal treatment for all athletes, it is essential that strict sex based categories determined by sex at birth be maintained and enforced.
- 6.2** Boxers who identify as transgender are welcome to compete in the category of their birth sex in the sport of Olympic-style boxing under the same conditions applicable to all athletes in that sex, age, and weight category. All transgender boxers are responsible for complying with all World Boxing policies, rules, and all applicable Anti-Doping rules.

7. Implementation:

- 7.1** This policy has been approved by the Executive Board of World Boxing; it will commence on 20 August 2025 and replaces all other sex eligibility rules.
- 7.2** The first competition where this policy will apply is the World Boxing Championships in Liverpool, 4-14 September 2025.
- 7.3** World Boxing recognises that the issues of safety and sporting integrity in relation to eligibility are most pronounced in the female category, so the implementation of testing will be prioritised in this area and means that every female boxer that is entered into the 2025 World Boxing Championships will have to produce certified test result of their chromosomal sex, as determined by a PCR test or a functional medical equivalent genetic test. Female athletes that cannot provide certified test results of their sex will not be eligible to participate in the competition.
- 7.4** National Federations are encouraged to begin the process of testing for men, however the need to provide a certified test result will not be a



condition of entry at the World Boxing Championships 2025. Testing will be applied for boxers in the male category at all World Boxing competitions from 1 January 2026.

- 7.5** For purposes of absolute clarity and the avoidance of doubt, this means that from 1 January 2026, all athletes over the age of 18 that want to participate in a World Boxing owned or sanctioned competition will need to undergo a, once-in-a-lifetime, PCR (polymerase chain reaction) or a functional medical equivalent genetic test to determine their sex at birth and their eligibility to compete. Any athlete that is not able to provide certified test results of their sex will not be eligible to participate in any World Boxing competition.

³ This policy is subject to World Boxing's [Sport Integrity Process 2025](#)

Policy version and revision information

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