

**VICTORIAN AMATEUR BOXING
LEAGUE INCORPORATED**

**CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT
POLICY**



Non-fight periods

Contestants must comply with all non-fight periods imposed by a medical practitioner or the VABL.

Any non-fight period imposed by the VABL will supersede any shorter non-fight period imposed by a medical practitioner.

A non-fight period will begin from the day after the date of the relevant competition unless otherwise specified.

The applicable non-fight periods are set out in the table below titled Non-Fight Periods and Return To Contest Requirements.

For the purposes of calculating a non-fight period following a knockout, technical knockout or concussion, 'successive' means a knockout, technical knockout or concussion (or any combination of each) occurring within 12 months of any preceding knockout, technical knockout or concussion.

The VABL may suspend a contestant's registration when the VABL considers this to be in the interests of the contestant's health or safety.

Contestants must comply with any direction given by a medical practitioner or the VABL to obtain a medical clearance or undertake medical testing.

Concussed contestants

The ringside doctor's finding that a contestant is concussed is final. Any reference to a 'concussed contestant' in these rules includes contestants who are found to be concussed by the ringside doctor.

A concussed contestant must follow the concussion management guidelines set out below or as otherwise prescribed, in writing, by a health care professional who has experience in treating brain injuries (e.g. ringside doctor or concussion specialist).

Where a concussed contestant is required to obtain a medical clearance before the contestant's next contest, the medical clearance shall be completed in accordance with any guidelines or direction made by the VABL.

Non-fight periods and return to contest requirements

Outcomes	Concussion status	Applicable to	Minimum non-fight period	Medical review after contest	Concussion management guidelines	Medical clearance	Successive KO, TKO &/or concussion
KO	Concussed	Loser	60 days in total 30 days for recovery 30 days for preparation	As directed by the Board or ringside doctor.	Observe concussion management guidelines	Need for medical clearance at ringside doctor's discretion	90 then 120 days
TKO	Concussed (as diagnosed by ringside doctor or other medical practitioner)	Loser	60 days in total 30 days for recovery 30 days for preparation	As directed by the Board or ringside doctor.	Observe concussion management guidelines	Need for medical clearance at ringside doctor's discretion	90 then 120 days
TKO	Not concussed (as diagnosed by ringside doctor)	Loser	30 days	As directed by the Board or ringside doctor.	Observe concussion management guidelines	Need for medical clearance at ringside doctor's discretion	60 then 90 days
Concussed	Concussed (as diagnosed by ringside doctor or other medical practitioner)	Winner / loser / draw	60 days in total 30 days for recovery 30 days for preparation	As directed by the Board or ringside doctor.	Observe concussion management guidelines	Need for medical clearance at ringside doctor's discretion	90 then 120 days
Heavy punishment, lacerations, fractures and other injuries where there is no concussion	Not concussed	Winner / loser / draw	15 days or at ringside doctor's discretion	As directed by the Board or ringside doctor.		Need for medical clearance at ringside doctor's discretion	
Not concussed	Not concussed	Winner / loser / draw	15 days				
Four knockouts, technical knockouts or concussions (or any combination of each) in 12 months			12 month suspension or as otherwise agreed by the Board				
Four consecutive knockouts, technical knockouts or concussions (or any combination of each)			12 month suspension or as otherwise agreed by the Board				

Concussion management guidelines

Concussed contestants must:

- not drink alcohol while symptoms persist, particularly not after a contest;

- get as much rest as possible (physical and cognitive) – avoid physically demanding activities (e.g. training, heavy physical work) or those that require a lot of thinking or concentration (e.g. computer work or video games) while symptoms persist;

- not return to sparring until medical clearance has been obtained from a medical practitioner;

- immediately attend a hospital emergency department if the following symptoms are experienced:

 - repeated vomiting

 - increasing and persistent headache

 - loss of consciousness

 - inability to stay awake during times when usually awake

 - confusion

 - restlessness

 - agitation

 - convulsions

 - seizures

 - difficulty walking

 - difficulty balancing

 - weakness or numbness

 - blurring or difficulty with vision

 - slurred speech

- see a health care professional who has experience in treating brain injuries (e.g. ringside doctor or other concussion specialist) if symptoms persist for more than 10 days; and

- observe the Return To Fight Strategy set out below or as otherwise prescribed by a health care professional who has experience in treating brain injuries (e.g. ringside doctor or concussion specialist).

Return to fight strategy¹

Stage 1: Initial period

An initial period of **24/48 hours** of both relative **physical and cognitive rest** is recommended before beginning Phase 1 of this graduated strategy.

There should be at least **48 hours (or longer) for each step of the progression**. If any symptoms worsen during exercise, contestants should go back to the previous step.

Stage	Activity type	Description
1.	Return to symptom limited activity	Daily activities that do not provoke symptoms

Stage 2: Return to general fitness

A fighter may only advance to this stage once concussion symptoms have resolved. It is recommended that Stage 2 not be commenced for **at least one week**.

Stage	Activity type	Description
2.1	Light aerobic activity	Walking, elliptical, stationary cycling at slow to medium pace. No resistance training.
2.2	Moderate aerobic activity	Jogging, swimming, skipping, other aerobic activities. No head impact activities.
2.3	Sport-specific activity	Sprinting, mitts, bag/footwork, walk-through grappling. No partner work. May start progressive resistance training.

Stage 3: Return to non-contact fighting activities

Stage	Activity type	Description
3.1	Bag/mitt work with movement	Tests fighter ability to punch and/or kick in multiple planes.
3.2	Shadow boxing/drills	Re-introduces fighter to sport environment and re-establishes footwork.
3.3	One-sided sparring & grappling	Fighter begins to spar without the concern of contact. Reacts to opponents movements and begins to get timing back for punches, kicks and body position.

Stage 4: Return to contact fighting activities

A fighter may only advance to this stage when **medical clearance has been obtained** from a medical practitioner fully appraised of the concussion episode.

Stage	Activity type	Description
4.1	Sparring – short duration	First step of live sparring. Rounds of short duration with long breaks. Number of rounds is small to begin with but can be increased as tolerated.
4.2	Sparring – longer duration	Rounds at this stage can begin to lengthen in duration while breaks between can shorten. Number

¹ Adapted from Nalepa B, Alexander A, Pardini J, et al. 'Fighting to keep a sport safe: Toward a structured and sport-specific return to play protocol', *The Physician and Sports Medicine*. February 2017.

Stage	Activity type	Description
		of rounds can increase as fatigue allows.
4.3	Full contact practice	Full return to normal training. Return to normal rounds and time limits based on sport and next potential bout. Contestant should be able to tolerate normal parameters of training/sparring and it training without a return of symptoms.
4.4	Return to fight/contest	

Contact information

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