



# **Rule Book**

IMMAA  
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## **1. Introduction**

The NGB IMMAA Limited trading as the Irish Mixed Martial Arts Association is the national governing body for the sport of Mixed Martial Arts in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

The Irish Mixed Martial Arts Association (hereinafter IMMAA) is a company limited by guarantee and its constituent documents are its Memorandum and Articles of Association (the “Company”). The Memorandum and Articles of Association of a company provides the framework within which the Company will operate. The IMMAA Memorandum and Articles deal primarily with the functioning of IMMAA as a legal entity (i.e. a company) but does not provide the level of detail required for the day-to-day operating of the organisation. Therefore, this Rule Book deals with the more general aspects of the day-to-day operations of IMMAA.

Please note that this Rule Book refers to other documentation that may be pertinent for the purposes of IMMAA Rules and Regulations. Such documentation can be obtained from the IMMAA.

### **1.1 Objectives and Functions of IMMAA:**

- To Foster and develop the Sport and Art of Mixed Martial Arts in Ireland.
- To cater to and provide for all the Mixed Martial Arts needs and requirements for all Mixed Martial Arts practitioners in Ireland.
- To organise all and any IMMAA events pertaining to the Sport and Art of Mixed Martial Arts in Ireland and to host IMMAA annual National Mixed Martial Arts Championships.
- To provide a National governing body (NGB) for Mixed Martial Arts in Ireland, to represent all Mixed Martial Arts participants and clubs within Ireland.
- To promote, monitor and maintain the highest standards for Mixed Martial Arts practices in Ireland and to ensure the implementation of best practices, after consultation with Sport Ireland, IMMAA’s medical partners, appropriate government appointed agencies and the International Mixed Martial Arts Federation.
- To adopt and oversee the implementation of Sport Ireland’s Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children in Sport and also to adopt and oversee the implementation of anti-doping programmes as endorsed by Sport Ireland and the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).
- To Select and train athletes, teams and officials to represent Ireland at International Competitions and events.
- To select and appoint delegates to represent Ireland in International Bodies concerned with the Sport of Mixed Martial Arts.
- To uphold IMMAA’s status as the Mixed Martial Arts body recognised by the International Mixed Martial Arts Federation for the Republic of Ireland.
- To take all reasonable steps to ensure that member clubs provide a safe environment, having consideration for the physical safety, mental health and emotional well being of all IMMAA members.

- To provide equal opportunity for participation and the practice of Mixed Martial Arts by all irrespective of Race, Colour, Creed, Gender, Religion or Sexual Orientation. To recognise the unique challenges faced by those with an impairment or disability and give all reasonable supports to allow for their inclusion in the Sport at a level of participation that ensures their safety.

## 2. Definitions

“Member” means both individual and honorary members, as defined in section 5.

“Club” means a body as defined in section 5.

“Ireland” means the twenty-six county entity often referred to as “the Republic of Ireland”

“Medical Partners” means any group, body, organisation, person or company that IMMAA contracts with, or takes advice from on medical matters.

“Board” means the Board of Directors of IMMAA for the time being;

### 2.1 Interpretation

In this Rule Book:

- The singular shall include the plural and vice versa.
- The interpretation of the Board shall be final in all matters pertaining to these rules and related documents.

## 3. General

### 3.1 Affiliation

All Members and Clubs must affiliate to IMMAA on an annual basis based on the rules in operation at that time. Fees due in relation to Members and Clubs can be remitted to IMMAA via [www.IMMAA.ie](http://www.IMMAA.ie) or alternatively a bank transfer can be arranged by contacting [info@mmaireland.ie](mailto:info@mmaireland.ie)

### 3.2 Compliance

All Members, Clubs and Regions are bound by and must comply with the rules and regulations contained in the following documents (as amended from time to time):

- IMMAA’s Memorandum and Articles of Association
- IMMAA’s Rule Book
- Sport Ireland’s Code of Ethics and Good Practice in Children’s Sport in Ireland
- IMMAA’s Child Welfare Guidelines and Regulations
- IMMAA’s Codes of Conduct
- IMMAA’s Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures
- The Irish Anti-Doping Rules (or equivalent rules produced by Sport Ireland) and the IMMAF Technical and Anti-Doping Regulations
- IMMAA’s and IMMAF’s Competition Rules
- Any other rules, directions and regulations adopted by the Board.

All Clubs must provide IMMAA with an up-to-date list of their Club Members as part of the annual affiliation process and must ensure new members are registered with IMMAA within 30 days of joining the Club and commencement of participation in Club activities.

Each Club must make available to all its Club Members the documents at 3.2 above. 'Make available' means notify Club Members of the existence of this documentation and direct them where such documentation can be viewed, primarily IMMAA's website.

All those involved in the operation and management of Clubs must be Members of IMMAA for compliance with this Rule Book.

Non Compliance: Any claim that a Member, Club or any other person bound by the provisions of this Rule Book has breached any provision of the Rule Book will be dealt with through the IMMAA Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures.

## **4. Governance**

### **4.1. Board**

The Board of IMMAA shall consist of ten persons appointed or elected at the Company Annual General Meeting in accordance with the provisions of the IMMAA Articles of Association. The Board shall be responsible for managing the affairs of the Company. At each AGM three elected members shall step down and their position be open for nominations. Board members so stepping down shall not be disbarred from being nominated for re-election.

The Board is made up of the following specific roles:

President, Vice-President, Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Child Protection Officer. Board members may be assigned a specific role by the Board such as Anti-Doping Officer.

Board members shall receive no remuneration (with the exception of reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the performance of their duties, which must be authorised by the Board.

Notwithstanding the above paragraph, the Board may also appoint up to two external members in the interests of good governance. Such external members should be suitably qualified/experienced and may receive such remuneration as the Board deems appropriate.

The IMMAA Board will meet as often as is necessary at the request of the Chairman or Secretary or at the behest of any four or more members of the Board but in any case not less than four times a year.

The management of IMMAA shall be the responsibility of the IMMAA Board – with the exception of matters which are considered by the Board to be more appropriately dealt with by an IMMAA General Meeting.

### **Subcommittees**

The Board may form, as necessary, any subcommittees it shall see fit. The Board shall approve the Terms of Reference of each such subcommittee, and each such subcommittee must be Chaired by a member of the Board.

## **4.2 General Meetings**

### **Quorum**

No business shall be conducted at any general meeting of the company unless a quorum is present. Twenty (20) members entitled to attend and cast votes at a general meeting of the Company and who are present in person shall constitute a quorum. Proxy voting shall not be allowed.

### **Voting**

Each fully paid up Member shall be entitled to one (1) vote. All votes shall be by show of hands with the exception of the election of Board members, which shall be by secret ballot.

### **Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

The Company will hold a general meeting each year in accordance with the provisions of the Articles of Association.

Notice of the AGM shall be given to Members at least 28 days prior to such a meeting.

### **Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)**

All general meetings other than AGMs shall be called Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMs). The Board shall convene an EGM, giving at least 21 days prior notice if:

Two-thirds of the Clubs resolve to convene such a meeting, or

Two-thirds of the Members resolve to convene such a meeting. or

Two-thirds of the Board resolve to convene such a meeting.

## **4.3 Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

It is the responsibility of IMMAA board members, members and employees to declare a conflict of interest where one arises. This specifically pertains to the awarding of contracts to vendors/suppliers/service providers in which a board member, member or employee has a vested interest.

## **5. Membership**

There are three (3) types of membership possible:

Individual membership

Club membership

Honourary Membership

A Club shall mean:- A group of persons (Junior & Senior) of not less than ten (10) in number who train in the Sport of Mixed Martial Arts in an organised fashion in keeping with the

Objectives and Functions of IMMAA who are prepared to be bound by all that Membership of IMMAA entails.

Every individual person involved in the practice of Mixed Martial Arts or it's constituent parts (whether as an athlete (competitive or not), coach, assistant coach or similar) as part of club must become an individual member of IMMAA.

Individuals who are no longer classed as individual members, but who maintain an active interest in the Sport, and who, in the opinion of the Board (by simple majority), by virtue of their service to the Sport and/or specialist knowledge, are deserving of continued membership of the Association shall be granted Honourary Membership. Honourary members shall have the same rights and responsibilities as individual members. In this document any reference to "Member(s)" shall be deemed to include Honourary Member(s).

The IMMAA will advertise to recruit new member clubs quarterly on its social media channels as well as on the [www.IMMAA.ie](http://www.IMMAA.ie) website, detailing the steps involved in applying for membership.

### **Obligations of IMMAA Members and Clubs**

All Membership applications and renewals, together with the appropriate fees should be submitted to the IMMAA Secretary as they fall due. Any Member or Club which has not paid its annual fee by the due date will be liable to penalties including suspension or expulsion.

All Members are responsible for their conduct and behaviour. Clubs are responsible for the conduct and behaviour of their members.

All Members and Clubs are strictly bound by this Rule Book and associated documents and any breach of the same may result in penalties, including suspension or expulsion of the Member or Club. Furthermore, all individual members and Member Clubs are bound by the IMMAA Disciplinary Code, as amended from time to time.

Any Member who behaves in a manner which brings the Sport of Mixed Martial Arts into disrepute, or impugns the integrity of IMMAA will be liable to penalties including suspension or expulsion.

The IMMAA Board reserves the right to refuse any membership application if it considers that such membership would be prejudicial to the interests of IMMAA.

A Club, shall not assist in the promotion of, or participate in a competition or event not approved by IMMAA.

All Members are required to report to the IMMAA Board any action or behaviour of a Member or Club which is considered by the reporting Member to be detrimental to the Sport and practice of Mixed Martial Arts and contrary to the interests of IMMAA.

All Clubs shall have full authority to conduct their own internal disciplinary matters, and no Member shall have recourse to IMMAA in such matters, except in the case where the

Member believes they have been discriminated against on any of the grounds specified in the Equal Status Acts, as amended.

## **6. Conduct/Complaints And Disciplinary Procedures**

All members of IMMAA must abide by the IMMAA complaints and disciplinary procedures. It is the responsibility of each Club to ensure the enforcement of the decisions and/or recommendations of the relevant Complaints or Disciplinary panel. . All complaints must be dealt with in accordance with the relevant complaints and disciplinary procedures.

## **7. Media**

Only designated IMMAA persons shall speak on behalf of IMMAA on any matter and in particular with regard to child welfare or protection matters, anti- doping and legal matters. IMMAA members should refrain from speaking to the media on any of the above issues without prior discussion with IMMAA as they may be deemed to be speaking on behalf of IMMAA due to the nature of their position.

## **8. Finance**

### **8.1 General**

The control and management of the financial affairs of IMMAA shall be vested in the Board of IMMAA which shall have powers to create special funds for any specific purpose consistent with the Memorandum and Articles of Association of IMMAA. The day to day management of the financial affairs shall be delegated to IMMAA staff. All funds or other property of IMMAA shall be applied to the furtherance of the objects of IMMAA or for any charitable purpose approved by the Board and permitted under the Memorandum of IMMAA. In the event of dissolution, the funds remaining shall be devoted to objects similar to those of IMMAA.

### **8.2 Sponsorship**

Members or Clubs shall not enter into any individual or event sponsorship contracts or commitments for any event, demonstration or competition run under the auspices of IMMAA without the prior approval of IMMAA - such approval is not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed. In the case of IMMAA, withholding consent would be reasonable where (amongst other things) in the honest opinion of IMMAA the giving of consent would have a detrimental effect on the functioning of one of its programmes or a detrimental effect on the relationship of IMMAA with a Commercial Partner or State Authority.

### **8.3 Publication of Accounts**

The IMMAA will publish its annual accounts every year on October 31st and circulate to the membership. This will allow adequate time for members to review and prepare questions for the annual AGM.

## **9. Child Welfare**

IMMAA is fully committed to safeguarding the well being of all its Members. Every Member should, at all times, show respect and understanding for members' rights, overall development, safety and welfare. They should conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the organisation and the guidelines contained in the "Code of Ethics and Good



Practice for Children's Sport". This Code is part of IMMAA regulations and is in operation within our sport.

An individual convicted of any child abuse charges will be immediately and permanently excluded from membership of IMMAA in any capacity.

An individual not convicted of alleged child abuse charges, but where the offences are considered by the Director of Public Prosecutions as chargeable is above the threshold of risk considered acceptable by IMMAA and this outcome will result in immediate and permanent exclusion from membership of that individual from IMMAA.

## **10. Anti-Doping**

IMMAA's policy is that doping is contrary to the spirit of sport and every Member and Club has a duty to ensure that the sport is free of doping. Membership of IMMAA means that all competitors may be chosen for testing and must submit to same.

The Anti-Doping Rules of IMMAA are the Irish Anti-Doping Rules as published by Sport Ireland and as amended from time to time. IMMAA accepts the right of IMMAF, Sport Ireland or duly authorized representatives of such bodies, to dope test, in accordance with law, any competing Member both in-competition and out of competition (i.e. un-announced testing).

It shall be a fundamental condition of membership of the IMMAA that Members submit to and comply with any dope testing by IMMAA or any of the bodies referred to above. This is deemed to be accepted on immediately on becoming a Member of IMMAA.

All Club personnel have a responsibility to ensure that Club Members are aware of the Irish Anti-Doping Rules and that there is an atmosphere supporting a drug free sport within the club. A complete copy of the Irish Anti Doping Rules are available through IMMAA. They are also available on the Sport Ireland website.

All Members are strictly and solely responsible for ensuring compliance for themselves with the Irish Anti-Doping rules and IMMAA accepts no liability in this regard.

## **11. International Competition**

The Board shall appoint a Head Coach who is responsible for the National Team. The Head Coach shall submit selection criteria to the Board for approval.

Any Member selected is representing Ireland, not their particular Club. While efforts will be made to ensure that athletes will have access to their preferred corner staff, this can only be as part of the overall team structure, under the direction of the Head Coach.

The Head Coach shall have full authority to issue instructions to Members on all matters relating to their performance, safety and behavior. This includes, but is not limited to, setting of curfews, selection of media appearances, and withdrawal from competition.

## **12. Commercial and domestic competitions/events**

The Board shall appoint a commissioner who is responsible for ensuring competitions and events attended by IMMAA clubs and members meet the criteria set out in “Event and Athlete Medicals standards, January 2022”. Events/competitions who are deemed not to meet the required standards will not have the support of IMMAA members and any members who support such events will be subject to sanction for the disciplinary committee.

The following motions from the January 2022 AGM also apply to commercial and domestic competitions/events.

1. The IMMAA relies on SafeMMA to securely maintain up to date medical records for all fighters and values the complexity and intensity of that service. To maintain efficiency in the service, SafeMMA issues late fees or sanctions if deadlines are missed. The IMMAA will stand by all fines/sanctions issued by SafeMMA.
2. Promotions will have support from the IMMAA provided all the following criteria are met:
  - Medical Safety Standards laid out in “Event and athlete medical standards, January 2022” are met
  - SafeMMA fine/sanctions are cleared (including by all athletes on the event card)
  - In the interest of fairness for both athletes, no athlete to be matched unless they are already SafeMMA Green-lit and continue to be green-lit to the date of the contest (to be verified by the IMMAA Commissioner). This is designed to reduce the risk of last minute fight cancellations.
3. In the interest of child protection, it is proposed that youth bouts are not to be included on commercial events (where alcohol is being served).
4. To provide backup and support to promoters, IMMAA will appoint a Commissioner to act as a liaison with event promoters, advising on the criteria to be met as outlined in “Event and athlete medical standards, January 2022”.

END