

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

14 JULY 2020

BOXING SOUTH AFRICA'S STATEMENT ON RESUMPTION OF NON-CONTACT TRAINING

The Boxing fraternity,

On the 11 July 2020 the Board of Boxing South Africa held its regular quarterly meeting and passed a number of resolutions, key among which is the much anticipated approval for resumption of non-contact training under strict conditions. Other board resolutions will be communicated later in a separate update to licensees.

1) Resumption of non-contact training

On the 11 June 2020 the Minister gazetted the Directions for resumption of Sport, Arts and Cultural Activities under level 3. In terms of these Directions, BSA had until 26 June 2020 to submit its Operational Plans to the Minister, detailing how best and safely, can boxing activities resume under the prevailing Covid-19 conditions. Following an elaborate and rigorous process by the department, on 9 July 2020 BSA received an approval from the Minister. The approval is for resumption of non-contact training as per the Operational Plan submitted by BSA. The Operational Plan titled, "**Risk-adjusted plan for safe return to the ring**" is available on BSA Website, www.boxingsa.co.za

The Board discussed the Minister's approval and expressed its unreserved appreciation and gratitude for this major breakthrough which couldn't have come at a better time. The board further noted that notwithstanding the Minister's approval, BSA still need to allocate time to ensure that all systems are in place before giving its own green light for boxing gyms to resume training. For that reason, the Board resolved that boxing gyms can only start to operate from 1 August 2020 provided that they comply with the following requirements as clearly spelt out by the Minister:

- a) *For now, approval is strictly for training and **NOT** competitions/ tournaments.*
- b) *The trainer/ manager responsible for the gym must sign acceptance letter of appointment as Compliance Officer and return the signed copy to BSA.*
- c) *Covid-19 test results of boxers and trainers must be submitted to BSA.*

- d) *Each boxing club must have submitted its Gym Inspection Form and addressed the areas in the inspection form which were still lacking.*
- e) *Only licensed BSA boxers can attend training (No SANABO boxers or unlicensed practitioners)*
- f) *Gym must be disinfected and cleaned every day*
- g) *Training times provided in the Gym Inspection Form must be adhered to enable BSA inspectors to monitor compliance, including through unannounced visits.*
- h) *No spectators or visitors are allowed at training venues.*
- i) *Gym must have received its Covid-19 attendance register from BSA and the Compliance Officer must ensure that it is kept for all people entering the gym.*
- j) *All people entering the gym must wear masks and must be screened on daily basis.*
- k) *Any person with high temperature must not be allowed to enter the gym ($\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$)*
- l) *Gyms in areas declared as hotspots will not be approved to reopen unless an advisory is received from the Department of Health and extra precautionary measures are put in place after receiving this advisory from Department of Health.*

2) Risk-adjusted plan for safe return to the ring

Risk-adjusted plan for safe return to the Ring is BSA's Operational plan presented by the Medical Committee of the Boxing South Africa. This plan seek to support and guide all licensees of BSA to navigate safe return to boxing activity through careful planning, assessment and managed execution. The plan is intended to work in tandem with the National Risk-Adjusted Strategy and other concomitant Directions as issued by various Ministries, more especially those addressing the Sport, Arts and Culture sector. The plan is available on BSA Website, www.boxingsa.co.za.

While a lot of emphasis should rightfully go towards the safety of spaces, safety of equipment and safety of procedures, the ultimate safety determinant rests with the safety of attitude and individual practices of licensees! For that reason, it is extremely important for each and every BSA licensee and practitioners to have full knowledge of **WHAT TO DO** and **WHAT NOT TO DO**. Hereunder are some of the key points to know as we prepare for resumption of non-contact training on 1 August 2020.

3) Key Issues to note

(a) The testing of athletes

Before any boxing gym is permitted to resume training, all participants in the gym including technical and support personnel must submit to BSA their Covid-19 test results. For that reason, BSA has reprioritized funds in this financial year in order to assist needy boxers by paying for their Covid-19 tests. Details about the approved laboratories to use will be released soon.

(b) Waiting period of the results

In the intervening period between testing and receiving results, no boxer will be allowed to resume training or reunite with trainer. Boxers should instead practice self-isolation in line with the guidelines provided by the Department of Health.

(c) Cleaning and disinfection of the sporting venues

Since June 2020, BSA has been inspecting all boxing gyms around the country. There is a detailed inspection questionnaire used to establish and confirm each gym's capacity to comply with the Health, Hygiene and Covid-19 mitigation measures. Only gyms that they have filled and submitted this questionnaire to BSA will be considered for opening.

(d) Cleaning and disinfection supplies

In order to augment capacity of each gym, BSA will give each gym some basic once off supply of cleaning and disinfecting material. This will be rolled out before 1 August 2020.

(e) Appointment of Compliance Officer

As part of the gym inspection exercise, BSA licensed trainers and managers of the respective gyms have been inducted to understand the additional responsibilities that will come with the eminent reopening of gyms in a Covid-19 environment. Each trainer or manager will now assume additional responsibilities of Compliance Officer as per the Disaster Manager Act Regulations for Level 3. The Compliance Officer must first accept the appointment in writing by signing the acceptance letter and handing it back to BSA for safe filing before the gym can open.

(f) Covid-19 Screening Register

In order to standardize the process and ensure that there are proper registers at gyms, BSA will issue each gym with standardized registers for daily screening. The register will entail all basic and required information which must be filled and signed for by each member on daily basis.

(g) Covid-19 Screening equipment

In order to ensure that each boxing gym has capacity to conduct daily screening of boxers, BSA will give each gym a single blue-tooth thermometer. There is also a detailed health questionnaire which is part of the Gym Inspection Form, which must be filled by each member and submitted to BSA before the gym can be given permission to open.

(h) People above age of 60 and those with comorbidities

All people above the age of 60 and those with comorbidities are encouraged not to come to the gym unless they have been medically cleared to do so by a Medical Practitioner. Their medical clearance note/ certificate note must then be submitted to the Chief Medical Officer, medical@boxingsa.co.za

(i) Transportation arrangements

Majority of boxers either walk or run as means of travel between home and gym. This is because most boxers, more especially those who are still up and coming, choose to train at gyms closer to their places of residence. A few other boxers either use public transport or own transport. Boxers who utilize public transport remain a worrying group for BSA. Full compliance with the overall Directions issued by the Department of Transport is therefore emphasized, including wearing of masks at all times and practicing other health and hygiene measures whilst in transit!

(j) Catering and socializing at the gym

No catering, socializing or lounging is allowed to take place at the gym. The principle that must be adopted should strictly be that of, **'ARRIVE, GYM, GO!'**.

All other spaces at the gym such as toilets, change rooms, showers, steam room, lobby, etc must be avoided as far as possible to avoid multiple touch points through which the virus can easily be spread and the compliance officer must keep them locked.

(k) Training methodology

No contact training of any form is to be allowed in the gym until further approval is granted for competition/tournaments to resume. *No Sparring, No focus mitts, No congested group training.*

(l) Publishing names of approved gyms

The list of all gyms which will be allowed to open on 1 August 2020 will be published by BSA and those will be gym that:

- *Have been inspected and filled their inspection forms*
- *Have appointed Compliance Officers*
- *Have submitted their training schedule and list of professional boxers*
- *Have their names officially published by BSA on its website*

(m) Gyms in areas designated as hotspots

No boxing gyms in areas designated as Hotspot areas will be allowed to resume training, unless an advisory is received from the Department of Health and extra precautionary measures are put in place after receiving this advisory from Department of Health.

Unfortunately, at the moment the majority of BSA boxing gyms are located in hotpot areas, which are, (1) Johannesburg, (2) Ekurhuleni, (3) Tshwane, East London, (4) Port Elizabeth, (5) Cape Town and (6) Durban as well as some identified district municipalities. Additional information can be obtained at: <https://sacoronavirus.co.za/faqs>

(n) Identification of isolation area

We do understand that not all gyms have isolation areas. For that purpose, the applicable protocol is that any boxer who doesn't feel well must not come to the gym and anyone who arrives at the gym and fail the daily screening will be turned back at the door.

4) Handling of positive or suspected cases

All cases of suspected infections or boxers who have tested positive for Covid-19 should be handled in terms of BSA's document titled, "**Handling of Positive Cases**", which is available on the website, www.boxingsa.co.za. The following are some of the key points to note:

- a) Boxers and technical personnel should be screened for COVID-19 related symptoms and report such symptoms to the compliance officer prior to entry into the gym.
- b) Compliance officer must check with all members whether they have experienced sudden onset of any of the following symptoms: cough, sore throat, shortness of breath or fever/chills (or $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ measured temperature if this is available at the worksite), in the past 24 hours.
- c) Should any member report any of the abovementioned symptoms, s/he should immediately be advised not to come to the gym and referred to the occupational health clinic, family practitioner or primary care clinic for further clinical evaluation and COVID-19 testing.
- d) On receiving feedback the member should notify the compliance officer. The compliance officer must ensure that the gym take proactive steps to obtain feedback.
- e) Any positive COVID-19 test will require all potential contacts in the gym to be assessed. The COVID-19 register should therefore be kept on daily basis and should always be accurate.
- f) A positive COVID-19 test will further require the gym to be immediately closed and remain closed until a thorough cleaning and disinfection has been carried out.
- g) On returning to the gym after isolation or quarantine period, all members should follow general restrictions that include:
 - *undergo medical evaluation to confirm that they are indeed fit to resume training.*
 - *Full compliance with all other health and hygiene measures.*
 - *Adherence to hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette*
 - *Continued self-monitoring for symptoms, and seek medical re-evaluation if respiratory symptoms recur or worsen*

5) General measures

- *Training should be conducted in small groups (not more than 5 boxers plus other personnel.)*
- *Maintain social distance of 2m between people in the gym. (1 person per 4m².)*
- *No sharing of any personal equipment (eg, skipping ropes, gloves, towels, water bottles, etc)*
- *Some sharing of training equipment permitted provided that it shall be constantly disinfected/ cleaned before each user touch it. (eg, Punching bags. Speed ball, weights, mats, etc)*
- *Non-contact skills training. No Sparring, No focus mitts, No congested group training.*

6) In conclusion

The decision to allow for resumption of non-contact training did not come easy. The Covid-19 situation in the country remains fluid and as the President mentioned on Sunday, 12 July 2020, *“the surge in infections that we had been advised by our medical experts would come, has arrived. The storm is upon us!”*. With these words in mind, we remind our licensees that it is not compulsory for all gyms to open, however where a gym seek to open, full compliance and precautions are non-negotiable.

This juncture marks commencement of one of the most precarious journeys we have ever taken since the breakout of this pandemic. The next two weeks or so, will be extremely crucial in determining whether or not, we will be ready to resume training by 1 August 2020. We therefore plead for maximum discipline and optimum cooperation as we walk this tight rope towards safe return to the ring. Our success or failure in this milestone will determine whether or not we are subsequently granted approval to proceed to the next milestone of tournaments!

This statement is subject to any further updates or instructions as may be released by Government and National Sports and Health Authorities. For any enquiries please feel free to contact the Director of Operations, Ms. Cindy Nkomo on directorops@boxingsa.co.za

ISSUED BY BOXING SOUTH AFRICA