



# WORLD BOXING ORGANIZATION

**Luis Batista Salas, Esq.**  
**Founder**  
**Championship Committee Chairman**

**February 20, 2025**

**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL:**

**Mr. Dmitriy Salita**  
**Promoter**  
**Salita Promotions**

## **Re: Show Cause Notice – WBO Female Heavyweight Champion, Claressa Shields**

Dear Mr. Salita,

Please be advised that on February 13, 2025, the WBO main office received, via electronic mail, official communication from Mr. Benjamin Parker, Licensing Division Director, on behalf of the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs of the Michigan Unarmed Combat Commission regarding documents concerning WBO Female Heavyweight Champion Ms. Claressa Shields.

Included in the foregoing communication were:

- (i) An affidavit dated February 12, 2025;
- (ii) A formal complaint dated February 12, 2025; and
- (iii) An order of summary suspension dated February 12, 2025.

According to the affidavit provided by the Director of the Corporations, Securities & Commercial Licensing Bureau of the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs of the State of Michigan, Ms. Linda Clegg directed an investigation into complaints alleging violations of the Michigan Unarmed Combat Regulatory Act, MCL 338.3601 et seq., and its associated administrative rules.

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On February 2, 2025, Ms. Claressa Shields participated in a professional boxing contest against Daniele Perkins at the Dort Financial Center in Flint, Michigan. Ms. Shields won the bout via unanimous decision. After the fight, Ms. Shields submitted an oral fluid sample for screening to detect the presence of controlled substances, alcohol, enhancers, stimulants, performance-enhancing drugs, or any other prohibited substances, including their derivatives or metabolites.

On or about February 7, 2025, the Department was notified that Ms. Shields' oral fluid screening indicated a positive result for the presence of Marijuana (THC). According to the complainant (Ms. Clegg), the presence of the aforementioned substance establishes that Ms. Shields conducted herself in a manner that compromises the integrity of the sport of professional boxing and the safety of professional boxers, to the detriment of the public interest. Furthermore, according to the state official, the presence of the banned substance establishes that Ms. Shields conducted herself in a manner that poses an imminent threat to the public interest in professional boxing contests, justifying the summary suspension of her license under MCL 338.3642(1) & (5) and MCL 338.3648(5).

Regarding the complaint filed against Ms. Shields, it is alleged that:

- (i) Ms. Shields has, at all times, been licensed as a professional boxer under the Act;
- (ii) A complaint against Ms. Shields, conforming to the requirements of Section 40 of the Act, MCL 338.3640, was filed with the Michigan Unarmed Combat Commission through the Department;
- (iii) On February 2, 2025, Ms. Shields competed in a professional boxing contest, an activity regulated by the Act, at the Dort Financial Center in Flint, Michigan;
- (iv) On February 3, 2025, following the bout, Ms. Shields submitted an oral fluid sample for screening to detect controlled substances, alcohol, enhancers, stimulants, performance-enhancing drugs, or other prohibited substances, as provided by MCL 338.3633(10), MCL 338.3648(5)(a), and Michigan Administrative Code R 339.269(1);

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(v) The results of the oral fluid screening indicated a positive result for Marijuana (THC), contrary to MCL 338.3633(10) and Michigan Administrative Code R 339.269(3); and

(vi) Ms. Shields engaged in conduct detrimental to a contest or event, contrary to MCL 338.3647(1)(h). A toxicology report of the alleged positive drug test was attached to the complaint.

Based on the conduct referenced in the complaint, the Michigan Unarmed Combat Commission determined that Ms. Shields acted contrary to MCL 338.3633(10), MCL 338.3647(1)(h), and Michigan Administrative Code R 339.269(3), constituting grounds for the assessment of a penalty, as defined in MCL 338.3648, MCL 338.3649, MCL 338.3649a, and Michigan Administrative Code R 339.269(3).

As a result, the Department, on behalf of the Michigan Unarmed Combat Commission, has commenced proceedings under the Michigan Administrative Procedures Act, MCL 24.201 et seq., and the Act to determine whether disciplinary action should be taken against Ms. Shields, including whether her name should be listed in one or more national governing bodies' suspension lists.

Lastly, the Order of Summary Suspension states that the Michigan Unarmed Combat Commission, through its agent—the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, Corporations, Securities & Commercial Licensing Bureau—is taking action against Ms. Shields under the authority set forth in Executive Order 2019-07, the Michigan Unarmed Combat Regulatory Act, MCL 338.3601 et seq., its associated administrative rules, and the Michigan Administrative Procedures Act, MCL 24.201 et seq.

According to the Order, the Department investigated and determined that sufficient cause exists to find that Ms. Shields' conduct as a licensed professional boxer constitutes an imminent threat to the integrity of professional boxing, the public interest, and the welfare and safety of professional athletes, thereby requiring emergency action.

Consequently, an order was issued suspending Ms. Shields' boxing license, effective on the date of issuance. As a result, the Commission will place Ms. Shields' name on the national suspension list or notify national governing bodies of its decision to suspend her license.

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Conversely, as it pertains to the WBO, when a Champion tests positive for banned or prohibited substances, Sections 19 and 28 of our governing regulations mandate our intervention. The alleged offender must “Show Cause” by providing reliable evidence as to why the WBO World Championship Committee should not take affirmative action in light of the alleged violations of the referenced provisions and/or WBO policy.

From the outset, we must stress that, per WBO policy, when any WBO Champion or Participant tests positive for banned or prohibited substances, it is not necessary for the WBO to demonstrate intent, fault, negligence, or knowing use on the fighter’s part. This is because it is the fighter’s duty to ensure that no banned or prohibited substances enter their body. Fighters are fully responsible for any banned or prohibited substances found in their system.

### **SECTION 19. FAILURE OF THE CHAMPION TO COMPLY WITH THE TERMS OF A WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP CONTRACT OR CHAMPIONSHIP RULES**

**(a)** If any WBO Participant, including WBO World and Regional Champion(s), fails to comply with their contractual obligation to fight in any WBO Championship Contest without justifiable cause, or is determined by a Host Commission, a licensing commission, or otherwise to have tested positive for an illegal or performance-enhancing drug, or fails to inform the WBO of any medical condition, impairment, or any other circumstance that jeopardizes their participation in a WBO World Championship contest, or if a WBO Participant or any of their team members misleads, attempts to mislead, or petitions a Local Boxing Commission to illegally or incorrectly license said WBO Participant, the Committee may recommend to the WBO President and Executive Committee that the fighter be stripped of the title and that the title be declared vacant. Additionally, the Committee may take any action deemed proper, equitable, and just against the WBO Participant in accordance with these regulations.

Prohibited Conduct:

1. Domestic Violence
2. Sexual Assault
3. Child Abuse
4. Use of illegal drugs and/or any performance-enhancing substances, including but not limited to steroids/anabolic steroids

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5. Any criminal conduct (Misdemeanor and/or Felony) that implies moral turpitude
6. Any other conduct deemed by the World Boxing Organization to be contrary to the fundamental principles of the organization

### **Procedures - In General**

The WBO World Championship Committee shall have full authority to request, examine, evaluate, and consider any and all relevant facts and supporting evidence from any WBO Participant pertaining to any alleged violations of these prohibitions.

### **SHOW CAUSE NOTICE**

In the event that the WBO World Championship Committee determines there is cause to believe a possible violation of any of these Championship Rules has occurred, the Committee shall notify the WBO Participant through the methods set forth in these Regulations. The WBO Participant must then Show Cause as to why enforcement of this provision—or any other action provided for in these Regulations—should not be imposed.

The Show Cause Notice shall establish the potential violation that must be addressed, along with the evidence, documentation, and procedure established by the WBO World Championship Committee for response. Failure to respond and/or submit the required or supporting evidence within the timeframe set forth in the Show Cause Notice will constitute a waiver of any right to contest the Show Cause Notice.

Upon receipt of the WBO Participant's response, the WBO World Championship Committee shall determine whether a violation has occurred under the WBO World Championship Regulations and issue a ruling on the consequences. All notifications of rulings shall take immediate effect upon issuance.

### **Methods of Verifiable Notification:**

1. Posting on the official WBO website (This method alone suffices for notification purposes)

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2. Personal Service

3. Email

4. Notice to the WBO Participant via their Promoter, Manager, or Advisor

5. Any other verifiable method

### **(b) Other Rulings**

#### **(1) Automatic - Vacant Title**

If the WBO Champion is found guilty or pleads guilty to any of the prohibited acts outlined above by a competent court with jurisdiction, the WBO World Championship Committee may recommend to the WBO President and Executive Committee that the Champion's WBO recognition be withdrawn and the title declared vacant, effective from the date of the official registered guilt.

If the affected former WBO Champion successfully appeals their conviction in a competent Court of Appeals with jurisdiction, and the Appeals Court reverses the conviction, the WBO Participant may request reinstatement in the WBO Ratings according to their weight division and be classified at the number one (1) position. Such requests must comply with the ABC and WBO Ratings Criteria.

#### **(2) Vacant Title Based on Findings of the WBO World Championship Committee**

In the event of a possible violation of any of these Championship Rules by a WBO Participant in connection with a governmental procedural process, such as a criminal proceeding, the WBO World Championship Committee may make its determination through the Show Cause process established in these Rules, independent of the verdict rendered by the governmental process. The WBO World Championship Committee may then recommend a ruling to the WBO President and Executive Committee, which shall determine the appropriate action without regard to the governmental procedure's outcome.

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### (3) Other Rulings

In connection with any Show Cause process, the WBO World Championship Committee shall have the power and discretion to issue rulings, including but not limited to:

1. A lower ranking in the WBO or Regional Ratings
2. Exclusion from the WBO or Regional Ratings
3. A ban from the WBO or Regional Ratings for a period of no less than two (2) years
4. Suspension from all WBO or Regional Contests
5. Withdrawal of WBO or Regional Sanctioning
6. Any other ruling deemed necessary, helpful, or convenient to uphold the purposes, policies, and intent of the World Boxing Organization

### SECTION 28. DRUGS OR STIMULANTS

(a) The use of illegal drugs, performance-enhancing drugs, or stimulants before, during, or after a Championship contest by any contestant shall be sufficient cause for the contestant's disqualification.

(b) A determination of illegal drug use or performance-enhancing drug use under this Section or Section 19(a) may only be made by the Host Commission for the contest or the WBO Participant's Licensing Commission, provided that the finding is supported by test results from WADA, VADA, or any other internationally recognized anti-doping entity.

Therefore, having considered the documents filed by the Michigan Unarmed Combat Commission and the allegations set forth therein, this Committee HEREBY ORDERS Ms. Claessa Shields to "Show Cause" within 30 days from the issuance of this notice as to why the WBO should not take the following actions:

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1. Declare the WBO Female Heavyweight Championship vacant.
2. Impose a ban prohibiting Ms. Shields' participation in the WBO for a period of no less than two years.
3. Exclude Ms. Shields from the WBO World Ratings for a period of no less than two years.
4. Take any further action deemed necessary and appropriate under WBO rules and regulations to uphold the integrity of boxing and serve the best interests of the

Failure to comply with this order will result in Ms. Shields waiving all rights herein, and the Committee will proceed without further hearing or citation.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the WBO main office.

**Yours truly,**

**Luis Batista Salas, Esq.**

**Chairman**

**Cc: Gustavo Olivieri, Esq./WBO President**

**Mark Taffet/Team Shields**

**David Berling/Salita Promotions**

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