

# Dept. of Safety and Professional Services: Mary Murphy Edwards named Wisconsin Commissioner of Unarmed Combat Sports by the Department of Safety and Professional Services

Posted on Monday, Oct 3, 2022

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Madison, Wis. – Mary Murphy Edwards has been named the Wisconsin Commissioner of Unarmed Combat Sports.

Murphy Edwards had been the deputy commissioner since 2018. She was named commissioner on Sept. 14, 2022, by Department of Safety and Professional Services Secretary-designee Dan Hereth.

Murphy Edwards, a Wisconsin native, has been involved in unarmed combat sports for nearly four decades. She holds a 7<sup>th</sup>-degree black belt in Shaolin Kemp Karate and previously owned several martial arts schools.

“As commissioner, I want to be able to move the sports forward, make things safer, more fair,” Murphy Edwards said. “We want to increase the program and the business in Wisconsin.”

The Wisconsin Unarmed Combat Sports program consists of full contact boxing, kickboxing, mixed martial arts, and Muay Thai.

“Mary has shown her passion, knowledge and insight for unarmed combat sports for

the past four years,” Hereth said. “I am extremely pleased to name her commissioner. She is focused on making these sports safe, growing the events and cares deeply for the participants.”

The department grants licenses and provides other oversight for adult participants of these sports. Among her many duties, Murphy Edwards oversees promoters and hires officials, judges, referees, physicians and inspectors for every event.

In her time as deputy, Murphy Edwards has seen the events she oversees nearly double and they are held all over the state, from Superior to Bayfield to Milwaukee to Madison. In 2022, 30 events were scheduled — more than the state has ever done before — and 2023 looks to be more of the same, she said.

“I think that’s a good sign — it shows people want to hold events and they feel comfortable working with us,” Murphy Edwards said. “People must like the experience or they wouldn’t be coming back. I am proud to represent the state because it represents something bigger. It’s being in a position where you can really impact safety.”

About DSPS: The Department of Safety and Professional Services issues more than 240 unique licenses, administers dozens of boards and councils that regulate professions, enforces state building codes, runs the state fire prevention program, and maintains the award-winning Wisconsin Enhanced Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, which is a key tool in the multi-faceted public health campaign to stem excessive opioid prescribing. A fee-based agency, the Department of Safety and Professional Services is self-sustaining and receives no general fund tax dollars for its day-to-day operations. With five offices and 250 employees throughout Wisconsin, DSPS collaborates with constituents and stakeholders across a wide range of industries to promote safety and advance the economy.