



FAQS ON TOUCH FOOTBALL AUSTRALIA'S *Participation Guidelines for the Inclusion of Transgender and Gender Diverse People in Touch Football Affiliates*

Q: Why implement Guidelines for transgender and gender diverse people?

A: Touch Football Australia, in consultation with many expert and relevant stakeholders, has developed direction for the inclusion of transgender and gender diverse people in Touch Football Affiliates in line with their fundamental human rights including, equality, participation in sport, freedom from discrimination, harassment and privacy. The guidelines demonstrate the game's commitment to include people with an affirmed gender identity – whether or not this aligns with what was presumed at birth – to the game at the grassroots. These Guidelines assist Affiliates, clubs, players, administrators, coaches, referees, support staff and other volunteers to deliver a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment, free of harassment and discrimination.

Q: Who have you worked with to develop the Guidelines?

A: A broad range of stakeholders have been engaged to develop these Guidelines for Touch Football Affiliates. Stakeholders include:

- » Australian Human Rights Commission;
- » Sport Australia;
- » Pride in Sport;
- » Members of the LGBTQ community;
- » Medical and sports science experts;
- » New South Wales Touch Association and Queensland Touch Football;
- » Members of the Emus Women's and Men's representative teams;
- » Touch Football Australia High Performance Coaches;
- » Referees;
- » Touch Football Australia Board; and
- » Touch Football Australia staff.

Importantly, members of the transgender and LGBTQ community have been fully engaged to assist with our understanding of this complex policy landscape.

Q: Why is inclusion important for Touch Football?

A: These new Guidelines are fundamental in Touch Football Australia's vision of providing a safe and inclusive environment for all Australians. We believe that sport is for everyone and in Touch Football we are committed to providing a place on the

field for everyone. We actively encourage all Affiliates, clubs and teams to embrace diversity in all aspects of their operations. Age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, ability, body or religion are not barriers to inclusion in the game of Touch Football. With diversity comes fresh thinking, ideas and enthusiasm that will contribute to the growth, health and sustainability of sport across Australia.

Q: Why are you launching these Guidelines now?

A: Discrimination of any kind has no place in Touch Football, and we are driven to ensure all people experience an inclusive culture and can participate in a harassment-free environment. Touch Football Australia supports athletes electing to participate in Affiliate competitions in accordance with their gender identity, whether or not this aligns with what was presumed at birth, and are supported to do so in a safe and inclusive environment. We are taking a joint approach to the launch of our Guidelines, along with a large range of other national sporting organisations and our partner Pride in Sport.

Q: Shouldn't the people delivering the sport on the ground be responsible for their own guidelines?

A: Every person has a fundamental right to participate in sport, free from harassment and discrimination. These Guidelines from the national governing body have been developed to provide direction and frameworks to ensure that transgender and gender diverse participants have the same opportunities to take part in Touch Football as everyone else in Australia.

Q: How do we get more education about trans and gender diverse people?

A: It's important to remain informed about issues relating to transgender and gender diverse people. A great way to strengthen your understanding of transgender and gender diverse people, populations and needs, is to engage with evidence-informed, inclusive and community-led initiatives, including TransHub – ACON's digital information and resource platform for all transgender and gender diverse people: www.transhub.org.au.





Q: Our club only offers male and female competitions, so how can we include someone who is non-binary or who doesn't identify as exclusively male or female?

A: An individual can participate in the competition/category that best reflects their gender identity.

Q: How can an Affiliate or club include transgender and gender diverse people?

A: Our Affiliates around the country are central hubs of their community and are a welcoming environment for all people. Welcoming transgender and gender diverse people is an extension of this, but we acknowledge there may be some additional areas of education and resourcing to support clubs and associations in providing an inclusive and safe space for transgender and gender diverse people, hence the development of these Guidelines.

Q: How is a transgender or gender diverse person eligible to play in their affirmed gender identity?

A: Any transgender or gender diverse person is eligible to play at an Affiliate. A player is required to nominate their gender identity at the time of registration, demonstrating a commitment that their gender identity is consistent across other aspects of everyday life. Every step of gender affirmation is different and a personal matter for the individual. For this reason, guidance is provided as to an individual's gender affirmation, it may mean that an individual changes their name, dress or other social changes as part of their process, but this may not always be the case.

Q: Are Affiliates and clubs permitted to ask a player for a medical examination to verify gender?

A: No. At no stage are Affiliates and clubs permitted to ask any player to undergo a medical examination for the purposes of gender verification for the sake of participation in community sport.

Q: How will these Guidelines impact grading and selection?

A: Touch Football Australia is fortunate to have well enshrined and established practices of grading and selection of players within existing competitions to address player mismatch. This is to protect the health and safety of participants as well as guarantee fair and meaningful competition.

Q: Could this new governance compromise the physical safety of other players on the field?

A: Injury is an inherent risk when playing sport, but Mixed Touch Football is played widely. Touch Football has a long history that demonstrates that different genders can play safely together. The safety of all athletes is essential for all sporting governance and this is reflected across Touch Football Australia's policies.

Q: Only cisgender (non-trans) women should be able to play in female competitions. Doesn't the development of these guidelines cancel out the point for Women's Touch Football?

A: The inclusion of transgender women in women's Touch Football doesn't challenge the importance of having Women's Touch Football competitions. Touch Football is for everyone. It is important that anyone wishing to participate in our sport consistent with their gender identity is able to do so, free from harassment and vilification. These Guidelines provide clear guidance on ensuring all players continue to participate in fair and meaningful competition.

Q: Why should a trans woman be allowed to play in a women's competition when their muscle mass, hormones and physique are so different?

A: Transgender women are as diverse as every group of women can be. These Guidelines provide clear direction on the inclusion of transgender and gender diverse players in our game to ensure all players continue to participate in fair and meaningful competition. As strength, stamina and physique are all relevant factors when competing in competitive sport, transgender and gender diverse players will be supported to participate in accordance with their gender identity, through the implementation of these Guidelines.





Q: Men who transition genders get a competitive advantage. Why can't they just play in the men's competition? They are biological men after all.

A: These Guidelines have been developed to ensure everyone is afforded their fundamental right to participate in Touch Football. Any person wishing to participate in our sport consistent with their gender identity should be able to do so. As such, these Guidelines provide clear direction on the inclusion of transgender and gender diverse players to ensure all players participate in fair and meaningful competitions. As strength, stamina and physique are all relevant factors when competing in competitive sport, transgender and gender diverse players will be supported to participate in accordance with their gender identity, through the implementation of these Guidelines.

For definitions of key terms, please visit www.prideinsport.com.au/terminology

If you would like further guidance or support, please email Touch Football Australia's National Education and Policy Manager, james.sharp@touchfootball.com.au

Q: What if my Affiliate or club doesn't have adequate facilities to accommodate these Guidelines?

A: We recognise that there may be difficulties faced by Affiliates and clubs to provide adequate changeroom and shower facilities for transgender and gender diverse people. While many transgender and gender diverse people prefer to use bathrooms, showers and changerooms that align with their affirmed gender, there is also a strong preference for privacy. People who identify as non-binary may prefer to use unisex or gender-neutral facilities. When existing facilities are being built or upgraded, considerations to creating inclusive gender-neutral spaces should be made where possible.

Q: Which bathrooms should transgender people use?

A: Transgender and gender diverse people access bathrooms, showers and changerooms for the same reason everyone else does – to utilise the facilities – and they should access the facilities that align with their affirmed gender.

Q: If we have gender-neutral bathrooms, will women be less safe?

A: A sign on the door that labels a bathroom as “male” or “female” does not actually provide any type of physical barrier or protection for the people using the facilities.

