

**The Ohio State University Department of Athletics' Guidelines
Regarding Transgender Student-Athlete Participation**

I. Goal

The Ohio State University's Department of Athletics (OSUDA) is committed to providing an exceptional experience for its student-athletes, which includes a welcoming environment and fair competition for all intercollegiate participants. OSUDA values and celebrates diversity and equal opportunity for all student-athletes, personnel and coaches within our athletic programs. The OSUDA Transgender Guidelines are focused on maximizing inclusiveness and, as such, the OSUDA is committed to creating and supporting an inclusive culture that fosters equitable participation for all student-athletes without invading the privacy of athletes who transition to a new gender.

II. Non-discrimination

In accordance with The Ohio State University's Affirmative Action, Equal Employment Opportunity & Non-Discrimination / Harassment Policy, the University does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV / AIDS status, military status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, protected veteran status, or any other bases under the law, in its activities, programs, admission and employment.

III. Definitions

In order to promote a non-discriminatory environment for our student-athletes and better understand these guidelines, it is helpful to understand the terms associated with gender identity while recognizing that gender identity is more complex than our society generally acknowledges. Using accurate language can help to overcome many of the misperceptions associated with gender and transgender student-athletes. The following definitions and explanations will apply throughout these Guidelines:

Biological/Anatomical Sex ("Birth Sex") – Refers to sex assigned at birth based on the anatomical, physiological and chromosomal characteristics associated with males, females, or intersex people.

Intersex – Refers to people who are born with both male and female anatomical, physiological or chromosomal characteristics.

Gender Identity – One's inner concept of self as male or female or both or neither. One's gender identity can be the same or different than the gender and/or sex assigned at birth. Most people become conscious of their gender identity between the ages of 18 months and 3 years. Most people have a gender identity that matches their assigned gender at birth. For some, however, their gender identity is different from their assigned gender and/or sex. Some of these individuals choose to live socially as the other gender and may also hormonally and/or surgically change their bodies to more fully express their gender identity. All people have gender identity, not just transgender people.

Gender Expression – Refers to the ways in which people externally communicate their gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, haircut, voice, and other forms of presentation. Many

transgender people seek to make their external appearance – their gender expression – congruent with their internal gender identity through clothing, pronouns, names, and, in some cases, hormones and surgical procedures. All people have gender expression, not just transgender people.

Gender Fluid – Someone who does not restrict themselves to the stereotypical classification of males or females, therefore, their gender expression may change from day to day.

Transgender – Sometimes used as an “umbrella term” to describe anyone whose gender expression falls outside of stereotypical gender norms. More narrowly defined, it refers to an individual whose gender identity does not match their assigned birth gender and/or sex.

FTM (Female-to-Male)/Affirmed male/trans-male – A child or adult who was assigned to the female sex at birth but has a male gender identity.

MTF (Male-to-Female)/Affirmed female/trans-female – A child or adult who was assigned to the male sex at birth but has a female gender identity.

Transsexual – A person whose gender identity differs from their assigned sex at birth, and who elects to change their sex expression to match their gender identity and gender expression. Transsexual people do not identify with their birth-assigned gender and/or sex and desire to live and be treated by others in a manner consistent with their gender identity. In addition to transitioning socially, transsexual people may also physically alter their bodies surgically and/or hormonally. This physical transition is a complicated, multi-step process that may take years and may include, but is not limited to, cross-gender hormone therapy and a variety of surgical procedures.

IV. NCAA Guiding Principles

In the 2011 NCAA Inclusion of Transgender Student-Athletes handbook, the following guidelines are provided for use by collegiate athletics when creating policies that govern the participation of transgender student-athletes:

- Participation in intercollegiate athletics is a valuable part of the education experience for all students
- Transgender student-athletes should have equal opportunity to participate in sports
- The integrity of women’s sports should be preserved
- Policies governing sports should be based on sound medical knowledge and scientific validity
- Policies governing sports should be objective, workable and practicable; they should also be written, available and equitably enforced
- The legitimate privacy interests of all student-athletes should be protected
- The medical privacy of transgender students should be preserved

- Athletics administrators, staff, parents of athletes, and student-athletes should have access to sound and effective educational resources and training related to the participation of transgender and gender variant students in athletics
- Policies governing the participation of transgender students in athletics should comply with state and federal laws protecting students from discrimination

V. Participation in Intercollegiate Competition – Single Gender Teams

A transgender student-athlete may be allowed to participate in any sports activity so long as that athlete’s use of hormone therapy, if any, is consistent with the NCAA’s existing policies on banned medications. Specifically, a transgender student-athlete may be allowed to participate in sex-separated sports activities under the following conditions:

A. Transgender student-athletes who are undergoing hormone treatment:

1. A male-to-female (MTF) transgender student-athlete who is being treated with testosterone suppression medication for a diagnosed Gender Identity Disorder or gender dysphoria and/or transsexualism (collectively referred to as “GID”) may compete, for purposes of NCAA competition, on a men’s team, but may NOT compete on a women’s team (without changing it to a mixed team status) until the student-athlete has completed one calendar year of testosterone suppression treatment (a mixed team has both female and male participants and may be restricted in championship play according to specific NCAA rules).
2. A female-to-male (FTM) transgender student-athlete may NOT compete on a women’s team after beginning hormone treatment without changing it to a mixed team. A student-athlete who has received medically prescribed testosterone must request and receive a medical exception from the NCAA prior to competing since testosterone is an otherwise banned substance.
3. NCAA Bylaw 31.2.3 identifies testosterone as a banned substance, but the NCAA provides for a medical exception review if the student-athlete can show a demonstrated need for the use of a banned medication. It is the responsibility of the institution to submit a request for a medical exception for testosterone treatment prior to allowing the student-athlete to compete while undergoing treatment. In the case of testosterone suppression, the institution must submit written documentation of the year of treatment and ongoing monitoring of testosterone suppression to the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports.
4. For the purposes of NCAA competition, cases involving interruptions of GID treatment will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports.

B. Transgender student-athletes who are NOT undergoing hormone treatment:

1. A female-to-male (FTM) transgender student-athlete who is not taking testosterone related to gender transition may participate on a men's or women's team.
2. A male-to-female (MTF) transgender student-athlete who is not taking hormone treatments related to gender transition may only compete on a men's team and may not compete on a women's team.

VI. Participation in Intercollegiate Competition – Mixed Gender Teams

- A. Transgender student-athletes who are undergoing hormone treatment
 1. A male-to-female (MTF) transgender student-athlete who is being treated with testosterone suppression medication shall be counted as a male participant until the athlete has completed one calendar year of hormone treatment at which time the athlete shall be counted as a female participant.
 2. A female-to-male (FTM) transgender student-athlete who is taking medically prescribed testosterone shall be counted as a male participant and must request a medical exception from the NCAA to compete because testosterone is an otherwise banned substance.
- B. Transgender student-athletes who are NOT undergoing hormone treatment:
 1. A female-to-male (FTM) transgender student-athlete who is not taking testosterone related to gender transition may be counted as either a male or female.
 2. A female-to-male (FTM) transgender student-athlete who is not taking testosterone participating on a women's team shall not make that team a mixed gender team.
 3. A male-to-female (MTF) transgender student-athlete who is not taking hormone treatment shall count as a male.
 4. A male-to-female (MTF) transgender student-athlete who is not taking hormone treatment participating on a men's team shall not make that team a mixed gender team.

VII. Implementation Process

- A. The student-athlete's responsibilities:
 1. In order to ensure that the nature of the team for NCAA competitive purposes is not changed to a mixed team and to avoid challenges to a transgender student-athlete's participation during a sport season, a student-athlete who has completed, plans to initiate, or is in the process of taking hormones as part of a gender transition shall first discuss this matter with his/her coach. The student-athlete shall then submit the request to participate on a sports team in writing to the Director of Athletics at the

earliest opportunity – at the latest, upon matriculation at Ohio State or when the decision to undergo hormonal treatment is made. The student-athlete shall sign an appropriate FERPA waiver authorizing the University to share information relating to the student's request with the NCAA, the Big Ten Conference and/or the sport's national governing body and other university personnel, as necessary, to implement the student's desire to participate on intercollegiate teams.

2. The student-athlete's request to the Director of Athletics shall include a letter from the student's physician documenting the student-athlete's intention to transition or the student's transition status if the process has already been initiated. This letter shall identify the prescribed hormonal treatment for the student's gender transition and documentation of the student's testosterone levels, if relevant.

B. The Ohio State University's responsibilities:

1. The Director of Athletics or the Deputy Title IX Coordinator for Athletics shall meet with the student to review eligibility requirements, the procedure for approval of transgender participation, and the documentation that the student must submit. The Director of Athletics may deny the student's request for participation if:
 - Hormone treatments have not been taken for the required period of time
 - The NCAA denies the University's request for a medical exception
 - The transgender student-athlete's inclusion on the team causes team grant-in-aid limits to be exceeded
 - The transgender student-athlete's inclusion on the team causes the team to become a mixed team
 - The transgender student-athlete does not meet the performance standards reasonably expected by the coach as demonstrated by other members of the team
2. The Director of Athletics shall notify the NCAA of the student's request to participate with a medical exception request and communicate all decisions with the student-athlete.
3. Protecting the privacy of transgender student-athletes must be a top priority for all athletic department and affiliated school personnel, particularly when in the presence of the media. All discussions among involved parties and required written supporting documentation should be kept confidential, unless the student-athlete makes a specific request otherwise. All information about an individual student-athlete's transgender identity and medical information, including physician's information provided pursuant to these Guidelines, shall be maintained confidentially in accordance with applicable

state, local and federal laws, except as may be necessary to implement the student's request.

4. If a student-athlete's request is denied by the Director of Athletics, the decision must be automatically reviewed by a Transgender Participation Committee, which should include, but not be limited to, representation from the Office of Legal Affairs, the Office of Counseling and Consultation Services, the University's Title IX Coordinator, Faculty Athletic Representative, and the Athletic Director for Sport Performance. This committee shall be convened and its decision reported to the Director of Athletics in a timely fashion.
- C. Transgender student-athletes subject to a one-year transition period may petition to receive an extension of their eligibility at the end of their transition period, upon timely review and approval by the NCAA.
 - D. An opposing team or school may only challenge a transgender student-athlete's approved eligibility through the accepted formal appeal process of the NCAA.

VIII. Best Practices

The following additional guidelines should assist coaches, teams and student-athletes in creating an inclusive environment.

A. Language: Name changes / Preferred Name / Pronouns

It is very important to abide by a transgender student-athlete's name and pronoun preferences because they are an essential part of validating and respecting the athlete's gender identity and expression. Furthermore, coaches should not (and should not permit student-athletes to) call a male student-athlete a "girl" or by a girl's name in a derogatory fashion as a way of motivating athletic performance. Similarly, the practice of calling strong, athletic women "masculine" or referring to them by men's names or comparing them to men should not be tolerated. These practices can create a hostile and unwelcoming climate for all student-athletes, but especially for transgender student-athletes.

- Teammates, coaches, and all others should refer to transgender student-athletes by the student's preferred name.
- Similarly, pronoun references to transgender student-athletes should reflect the student's gender and pronoun preferences.

B. Locker Rooms / Bathrooms / Changing Areas

Transgender student-athletes should be able to use the locker room, shower and toilet facilities in accordance with the student's gender identity. Every facility should have some private, enclosed changing areas, showers, and toilets for use by any athlete who desires them. When requested by a transgender student-athlete, Ohio State will attempt to provide private, separate changing, showering

and toilet facilities for the student's use, but transgender students should not be required to use separate facilities. Factors that will be taken into consideration are: the wishes of the transgender student-athlete, available facilities and any other considerations deemed appropriate by the Director of Athletics or the opposing school's athletic director.

If a transgender student-athlete chooses to use a separate locker room space –designated as gender neutral – coaches and team members are strongly encouraged not to use the common locker room as a team meeting space or the only location that important team information is shared. Instead, coaches and team members are encouraged to identify other spaces to conduct team meetings.

Competition at Another School – If a transgender student-athlete requires a particular accommodation to ensure access to appropriate changing, showering, or bathroom facilities, coaches and/or athletic directors, in consultation with the transgender student-athlete, should notify their counterparts at other schools prior to competitions to attempt to ensure that the student has access to facilities that are comfortable and safe. This notification should maintain the student's confidentiality. Under no circumstances should a student-athlete's identity as a transgender person be disclosed without the student-athlete's express permission.

C. Team Travel

Specific team travel accommodations and hotel room assignments will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Transgender student-athletes should be assigned to share hotel rooms based on their gender identity, with a recognition that any student who requests extra privacy should be accommodated whenever possible.

D. Dress Code and Team Uniforms

- Dress Codes – Transgender athletes should be permitted to dress consistently with their gender identities. For example, a female-to-male transgender athlete should be permitted to dress as a male. A male-to-female should be permitted to dress as a female.

Dress codes for athletic teams when traveling or during a game day at school should be gender-neutral. For example, women's teams should not be required to wear dresses or skirts, but should be required to wear clean, neat and appropriately "dressy" or professional clothing for the occasion.

- Uniforms – All team members should have access to uniforms that are appropriate for their sport and that they feel comfortable wearing. No student should be required to wear a gendered uniform that conflicts with the student's gender identity, unless the rules of the NCAA or the particular sport's governing body require a specific uniform. The University will make every attempt to request a waiver of NCAA rules so that the transgender student-athlete can wear the uniform of the student's choice.

IX. Education

Coaches should inform their sport AD immediately after becoming aware that a potential transgender student-athlete might be a part of their team. Sport AD's shall then meet with the Director of Athletics, Associate AD for Sport Performance, the Deputy Title IX Coordinator for Athletics and legal counsel as soon as possible to determine an appropriate plan for ensuring that the student-athlete's experience at Ohio State is inclusive and welcoming. This plan shall include a discussion of appropriate education to team members as well as Athletics Communication staff and other athletic department personnel. In consultation with the transgender student-athlete, athletics administrators and coaches will develop a plan for communication with their counterparts at other institutions and officials prior to competitions in which a transgender student-athlete is participating. This plan will allow OSUDA to establish expectations for treatment of transgender student-athletes on and off the field. This does not require "outing" or otherwise identifying a particular student-athlete as transgender, but rather establishing general expectations for the treatment of all student-athletes, including those who may be transgender. The University will also educate all personnel who are authorized to speak with the media about appropriate terminology, use of preferred names and pronouns and University, Big Ten Conference and NCAA policies regarding the participation of transgender student-athletes on school sports teams.

X. Enforcement and Retaliation

- Enforcement – Any person who has been found to have violated the University's non-discrimination or harassment policies, these Guidelines or other federal or state laws or by breaching medical confidentiality, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
- Retaliation – Retaliation is specifically forbidden against anyone who complains about discrimination based on gender identity or expression.
- Complaints about violations of these Guidelines should be made, in the first instance, to the Director of Athletics or the Deputy Title IX Coordinator for Athletics. Complaints about violations of these Guidelines may also be made to the University's Title IX Coordinator or to the Office of Human Resources in accordance with the University's Affirmative Action, Equal Employment Opportunity & Non-Discrimination / Harassment Policy.