

## **RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR GENDER DIVERSE MINOR ATHLETES**

*The following are recommended practices to assist USA Swimming member clubs who wish to develop a club policy for the inclusion of gender diverse minor athletes. These recommendations are consistent with USA Swimming values of equal opportunity and the right for all members to participate. USA Swimming strongly encourages the use of this resource and offers assistance to teams that need guidance in its implementation.*

*\*Athletes qualifying for or competing in Elite level or senior competitions (with time qualifications) must follow current USA Swimming Policies and Procedures for selection, which also fall under the current IOC guidelines. \**

### **DEFINITIONS** (taken from transequality.org)

Transgender: a broad term that can be used to describe people whose gender identity is different from the gender they were thought to be when they were born

Gender identity: a person's internal knowledge of their gender

Gender expression: how a person presents their gender on the outside, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, voice or body characteristic

Sex: The classification of a person as male or female based on what our bodies look like at birth.

Gender Diverse: equitable or fair representation between genders, most commonly the ratio of men and women and may also include non-binary gender categories.

## **RECOMMENDED POLICY FOR PARTICIPATION**

A minor transgender athlete member of a swim club should be allowed to participate in accordance with his/her/their gender identity, irrespective of the sex listed on the athlete's birth certificate or other records and regardless of whether the athlete has undergone any medical procedure.

This means an athlete who is biologically female but identifies as a boy/man should be allowed to participate in men's events and an athlete who is biologically male but identifies as a girl/woman should be allowed to participate in women's events.

## **RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR CLUBS AND MEETS**

1. When a current minor member athlete transitions and wishes to compete in his/her/their gender identity, the athlete or his/her/their designee should request a change of the athlete's gender in SWIMS by contacting Diversity & Inclusion staff at USA Swimming at [inclusion@usaswimming.org](mailto:inclusion@usaswimming.org). Once this process is completed, the athlete will be able to be entered and compete in events that match his/her/their gender identity.

2. At all times, teammates, coaches, and all others should respect the confidentiality of an athlete. Discussion or disclosure of an individual's gender identity should only take place after expressed permission is given by the individual or the individual's parent or another designee.
3. In all cases, teammates, coaches, and all others should refer to an athlete by the name and pronoun they go by.
4. An athlete should be able to use the locker rooms, changing facility, and restroom that is consistent with his/her/their gender identity. When requested and/or where available, an athlete should be provided access to a gender-neutral bathroom or changing facility (i.e., family restroom, gender neutral bathroom).
5. When overnight travel is involved, an athlete should be assigned to share a hotel room based on his/her/their gender identity. An athlete who requests extra privacy should be accommodated whenever possible.
6. An athlete should be permitted to dress consistently with his/her/their gender identity, including warm-ups and team gear.
7. Per USA Swimming's Rule Book in article 102.8.1 B "In swimming competitions, the swimmer must wear only one swimsuit in one or two pieces, except as provided in 205.10.1. All swimsuits shall be made from textile materials. For men, the swimsuit shall not extend above the navel nor below the knees, and for women, shall not cover the neck, extend past the shoulder, nor extend below the knee" Any athlete requesting a deviation from this policy must submit a swimsuit waiver to the Chair of Rules and Regulations Committee. The current Chair is Jay Thomas ([jayfthomas@gmail.com](mailto:jayfthomas@gmail.com)). No exemption to the swimsuit rule will be made that gives a swimmer a competitive advantage (i.e. tech suits). It is important for all members to be aware of relevant state laws with regards to appropriate coverage.
8. Meet Directors and Club Leadership should identify and publicize available gender-neutral bathroom and changing room options at the host facility for meets and practice. Where possible, include information about availability and location of gender-neutral facilities in meet information and on the club's website.
9. Meet Directors and Club Leadership should be aware of and abide by the relevant state and local laws and the rules of the host facility for meets and practice.
10. Clubs should provide training to their staff and regular volunteers regarding their responsibilities to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Such topics should include terms and concepts of gender identity and expression and bystander intervention strategies related to bullying. Contact USA Swimming Diversity & Inclusion staff for training program recommendations.

The US Center for Safe Sport and USA Swimming prohibit discrimination against any member or participant on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, gender expression and gender identity is prohibited (304.3.3). In the event that a question should arise about whether an athlete's request to participate in a manner consistent with his/her/their gender identity is bona fide, USA Swimming will refer to the Code of Conduct and follow its standard procedures of enforcement.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

**Trans\*Athlete:** a resource for students, athletes, coaches, and administrators to find information about transgender inclusion in athletics at various levels of play.

[www.transathlete.com](http://www.transathlete.com)

**NCAA Inclusion of Transgender Student-Athletes:**

<http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/inclusion/lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-and-questioning-lgbtq>

**National Center for Transgender Equality:**

<https://transequality.org/>

**GLAAD Reference Guide (updated 2016):**

<https://www.glaad.org/reference>