

Transgender Factsheet

INFORMATION FOR CLUBS

Surf Life Saving Clubs benefit from having a wide range of participants and our gender diverse members bring as much passion, ability and interest to their club as any other participant. Open and inclusive Surf Life Saving Clubs have a direct benefit on the health and wellbeing of not just gender diverse members, but also to the wellbeing of all people associated with surf lifesaving.

What does transgender mean?

Transgender (trans) and gender diverse are terms that are interchangeable and describe people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. Gender identity is a person's internal, personal sense of being a male or female. For trans people, the sex they were assigned at birth and their own internal gender identity do not match. For some people, their gender identity does not fit neatly into these options and use the phrase gender diverse or non-binary.

This factsheet uses the term trans to cover all gender diverse people, acknowledging that some people may identify with any or only one of these terms. A full glossary of common terms is available [here](#).

How to best support trans members?

The trans community is diverse and complex, and there is no one right way to handle every situation or interact with every trans person. Like all of us, members of the trans community have different needs and priorities. To be a supportive ally we suggest that clubs and members be respectful, do their best, and continue trying to be considerate and understanding.

What to do if you accidentally say the wrong name or pronoun (mis-gendering)

Pronouns are a grammatical means of referring to someone. Conventional pronouns are 'she/her/hers' and 'he/him/his'. The pronoun people use to describe themselves generally reflects their gender identity, while some trans people may prefer to use gender neutral pronouns, such as 'they/them/their'.

If we make a mistake and use the wrong name or pronoun, it's best to apologise promptly and move on. Dwelling on or 'explaining' the mistake to a trans person will not help. Mistakes are understandable and it's fine to slip up, which is different to deliberately using the wrong pronoun.

What about the use of facilities like toilets and change rooms?

Like all of us, trans people should be able to use the toilets, change rooms and facilities where they feel most comfortable and those appropriate to their identified gender. Not allowing a trans person to do so is not only illegal, but would be very distressing for them, as it would be for anyone. While some trans people may choose to use the accessible toilets, it is inappropriate to request so, as it would be for anyone.

Be careful about confidentiality, disclosure, and 'outing'.

Some trans people feel comfortable disclosing their gender history, and some do not. A trans person's gender history is personal information and it is up to them to share it with others. Do not casually share this information, speculate, or gossip about a person you know, or think is trans either in person or online. Not only is this an invasion of privacy, it also can have negative consequences in a world that can be intolerant of gender diversity.

What about participation in local and/or elite level competition?

Sport Australia recommends that in non-elite level sport, members should be able to participate as their identified gender regardless of hormone or other medical treatments. The SLSA Surf Sports Manual Appendix A - transgender and transsexual athlete guidelines provides more detailed information and can be accessed via the [SLSA Members Area](#).

Where do I go for more information, training or support?

There are a number of stakeholders that work with Surf Life Saving to ensure our community embraces our trans members. [Lifesavers with Pride](#) advocate for sexual and gender diverse participation within Surf Life Saving and promote lifesaving within the LGBTIQ community.

[Pride in Sport](#) deliver ongoing guidance on inclusive practices within the sporting agencies, and Surf Life Saving is a proud member. Further support can be obtained from [Proud2Play](#), [Transhub](#), [QLife](#) and [Trans-Pride Australia](#).

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

Surf Life Saving is committed to providing a safe, fair, and inclusive environment where people of all backgrounds can contribute and participate. People who identify as trans should be treated fairly, and with dignity and respect at all times. Participation in surf lifesaving on the basis of the gender with which they identify is supported in the SLSA Member Protection Policy at 3.5.3.4.

What support is available to trans members?

Direct support is available from your state surf lifesaving office regarding inclusion of all types. SLSA work closely with [Lifesavers with Pride](#) who advocate for sexual and gender diverse participation within Surf Life Saving and promote lifesaving within the LGBTIQ community. They provide ongoing assistance on trans issues and are keen to assist members.

External to the lifesaving community SLSA is a member of [Pride in Sport](#) which provides ongoing guidance on inclusive practices within sporting agencies nationally. Further support can be obtained from [Proud2Play](#) for sporting clubs looking for assistance, [Transhub](#) for trans members looking for directly support, [QLife](#) is a national phone hotline to support the LGBTIQ community and [Trans-Pride Australia](#) is a grassroots support group for trans and gender diverse people.

How do I update details in SurfGuard?

SurfGuard is the membership database where each member's details are listed upon joining the movement. A member's gender should be listed in accordance with their gender identify, keeping in mind that individuals can reassess their gender identity over time. Should a member request to update any of their details (title, name, gender, clothing) this can be done by the member using the [Members Area](#). Changes can also be done by the state surf lifesaving office. All updates are uploaded overnight and reflected in SurfGuard.

All details in SurfGuard are linked to the member's personal details. In the same way that a name change due to marriage updates all awards, proficiencies and patrol hours to the new details, updating a person's gender preference updates all associated details to match the new details.