

BC Summer Swimming Associations Transgender Athlete Policy

The BCSSA recognizes all forms of gender expression and identity, and supports athletes competing in the gender category they identify with, regardless of the sex/gender that was assigned to them at birth.

Guiding Documents:

BCSSA has used the ViaSport LGBTQI2S Guiding Document, the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport and *Leading the Way: Working with LGBTQ Athletes and Coaches*, and the Ontario Human Rights Council to guide this policy. For an in depth look into these documents please refer to:

Ontario Human Rights Commission. (2014). *Policy on Preventing Discrimination because of Gender Identity and Gender Expression*. [PDF Document]. Government of Ontario.

Pentifallo Gadd, Caitlin. & Sport Inclusion Task Force. (2018.) *LGBTQI2S Resources*. [PDF document]. ViaSport British Columbia.

Trans Inclusion in Sport Expert Working Group. (2018). *Creating Inclusive Environments for Trans Participants in Canadian Sport: Guidance for Sport Organizations*. [PDF Document]. Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport.

The BC Summer Swimming Association commits to monitoring ongoing developments regarding national and international participation guidelines for transgender athletes and pledges to review and/or revise this Policy whenever new information becomes available, and at a minimum every 3 years.

Definitions:

1. Sex: The classification of people as male, female or intersex. Sex is usually assigned at birth and is based on an assessment of a person's reproductive system, hormones, chromosomes and other physical characteristics. (CCES)
2. Gender: The complex relationship between physical traits and one's internal sense of self as male, female, both or neither as well as one's outward presentations and behaviours related to that perception. Biological sex and gender are different; gender is not inherently connected to one's physical anatomy. (CCES)
3. Gender Identity: Each person's internal and individual experiences of gender. It is a person's sense of being a woman, a man or both, neither or anywhere along the gender spectrum. A person's gender identity may be the same as or different from their birth-assigned sex. Gender Identity is fundamentally different from a person's sexual orientation. (viaSport)
4. Gender Queer/ Gender Diverse: Common terms used to refer to the fluidity of gender along the gender spectrum. (CCES)
5. Gender Expression: Gender expression is how a person publicly presents their gender. This can include behaviour and outward appearance such as dress, hair, make-up, body language and voice. A person's chosen name and pronoun are common ways of expressing gender. (OHRC)
6. Trans/ Transgender: An umbrella term referring to people with diverse gender identities and expressions that differ from stereotypical gender norms. It includes, but is not limited to, people who identify as transgender, trans woman (male-to-female), trans man (female-to-male), transsexual, cross-dresser, gender non-conforming, gender variant or gender queer. (OHRC)

7. Two-Spirit: A term used by Aboriginal people to describe, from a cultural perspective, people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans or intersex. (CCES)
8. Transition: The process by which a Trans individual seeks to achieve consistency with their gender identity and which may, but not necessarily, include changing the person's body through hormones and/or surgical procedures. The transition process can look different for each person and involves some combination of social transition, hormonal transition and/ or surgical transition, but for others it may not. (CCES)
9. Transitioning: Refers to a activities that some trans people may pursue to affirm their gender identity. There is no average time, checklist or universal endpoint for the transition process. Some examples of transitional acts are: changing their name, dress, use of specific pronouns, surgical procedures. (CCES)

Purpose

BCSSA believes that all individuals deserve respectful and inclusive environments for participation that value the individual's gender identity and gender expression. BCSSA supports the inclusion of transgender participants in all aspects of the BCSSA and aims to provide an environment where these athletes feel safe and accepted. We will support athletes competing in the gender category they identify with, regardless of the sex/gender that was assigned to them at birth.

Disclosure

1. Disclosure of an athlete's transgender status is the athlete's choice.
2. While the BCSSA is entirely supportive of transgender participation and welcomes the disclosure of this where an individual prefers, disclosure of transgender status is not a requirement of participation. Such a disclosure should not be sought of by any athlete, coach, parent, guardian, volunteer, official, or board member.

Application

Athletes will be allowed to participate in any BCSSA associated events in accordance with their gender identity, irrespective of the gender listed on their birth certificate or other official government documents and regardless of whether they have undergone any medical treatments.

1. All individuals participating with BCSSA member teams or events are expected to observe and follow this policy.
2. Any member of the BCSSA community who becomes aware of conduct that violates this policy should report the conduct to a person within the Provincial Board of the BCSSA.
3. Any member of the BCSSA community who violates this policy may be subject to sanction, including exclusion from BCSSA member teams and events.
4. The BCSSA is committed to implementing this policy in a fair and equitable manner and will work within this policy to ensure fair competition for all participants.

Confidentiality

Any communication to the BCSSA and its member clubs regarding participation or transgender policies between a transgender athlete and the BCSSA will remain confidential to the extent requested by the

athlete and/or their family. (do we include “unless required by the law or in the use of implementing this policy”?)

Facility Use – Washrooms & Change rooms

1. Athletes may use the washroom and change room consistent with their gender identity.
2. The BCSSA recommends provisions of gender neutral facilities where available.
3. With the support of the BCSSA, member clubs will proactively work to ensure that all change room and washroom spaces are safe, inclusive, and equitable.
4. If an athlete feels unsafe or uncomfortable using a public facility, the BCSSA and member club will make alternative arrangements in order to provide a safe facility for the athlete.

Actions for Inclusion

1. An athlete may register and compete under the gender with which they identify. They will not be subject to requirement for the disclosure of personal information beyond those required by cisgender athletes. (viaSport)
2. The athlete will be allowed to wear the swim suit in which they feel comfortable. They will not be subject to any dress codes or expectations.
3. BCSSA athletes, parents/guardians, coaches, volunteers, officials and board members will make every effort to learn and use the athletes chosen name and pronouns in recognition that the use of an incorrect name or pronoun is discriminatory.

The BCSSA recognizes the importance and value of inclusive sport and will do the upmost to implement and adhere to this policy. Any questions or concerns regarding this policy can be directed towards the BCSSA Provincial Office.