

Trans or transgender hockey players – guidance for local hockey organisations



**ENGLAND
HOCKEY**

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Guidance for local hockey organisations

England Hockey (EH) is committed to ensuring that there is open access to all those who wish to participate in the sport and that they are treated fairly. It is also committed to confronting and eliminating discrimination because of any protected characteristic - age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnic origin, nationality and colour) religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

We use the term trans or transgender to describe those people who, as defined by the Equality Act 2010, share the protected characteristic of gender reassignment and are described in the legislation as transsexual people. We do not include intersex people, androgyne and polygender people, cross-dressing and transvestite people in these terms. Under current UK legislation, hockey, as a gender-affected sport, may be regulated by the EH in respect of the participation of a transsexual person.

EH has a clear policy with regards to trans hockey players and you should already be running your organisation in line with its policies.

Any trans person (male or female) is permitted to participate fully, i.e. train, play in informal matches or play in hockey competitions, in their affirmed gender. Verification of their sex should be no more than is expected of any other player.

The only restriction is that for player in the performance pathway seeking to train and challenge for a position in a national squad should meet the criteria set out by the FIH. This applies from under 16 National Age Group Squads (NAGS) as this is the point from which FIH sanctions international competition.

The use of changing and toilet facilities prior, to and during gender reassignment where the individual may present an ambiguous appearance and may be highly self-conscious represents a difficult issue. Many trans people prefer to refrain from using communal sports facilities during this time, particularly facilities where privacy is likely to be an issue. In addition, there may be trans people who do not undergo sex reassignment surgery and will continue to present with secondary sex characteristics in their former gender. In line with good safeguarding practice it is recommended that adults (unless they are the parents) do not use the same changing facilities as children under the age of 18 unless there are separate cubicles. If this cannot be avoided due to the nature of the facility it is recommended that all adults come ready changed for their hockey activity.

Complaints from other users must be handled carefully. It may be that other users find it uncomfortable to share facilities with trans people but it is the duty of club officials to ensure that confidentiality is not compromised and that members are not subjected to abuse, whether physical or verbal, on any ground. However other users' or members' discomfort must not be ignored and they too should be treated with dignity, should their discomfort continues they may arrive ready changed for their hockey activity. The provision of good quality facilities, an open and welcoming atmosphere and training for members may help alleviate such discomfort.

All hockey organisations should:

- Treat the trans person with dignity and respect.
- Welcome the player just as you would any other new attendee or member
- Accept them in the gender they present; verification of their identity should be no more than expected of any other player.
- If asked, explain that there are no restrictions on playing in domestic hockey competitions or participating in training or playing in informal matches.
- Respect the private and confidential nature of the person's situation.
- Agree with the trans person how information is to be shared with others if this is necessary.
- Support the trans person with their choice of changing facilities.
- Take prompt and decisive action against anyone in the organisation whose behaviour or language is inappropriate or offensive to or about trans people. Use your disciplinary procedures to manage this.
- Ensure a Code of Conduct is publicised indicating your zero-tolerance policy towards all bullying/harassment of people with protected characteristics.
- Ensure that any training the organisation undertakes with regards to equality covers trans people and the policy as well as the general equality policy.

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