



Guidance for Supporting Transgender, Non-Binary & Gender Diverse Athletes

Purpose

This document provides guidance to soccer organizations on implementing inclusive practices that support transgender (trans), non-binary, and gender diverse participants. It outlines recommended practices to support participation in a safe, respectful, and inclusive way for all individuals.

This document is intended to provide practical guidance and does not replace applicable federal, provincial, or territorial laws or regulations.

Training

Canada Soccer recognizes that inclusive environments are built through both clear policy and ongoing education. To support this work, Canada Soccer offers 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion training for clubs, leagues, coaches, referees, administrators, and volunteers. This training is designed to build understanding, confidence, and practical skills to support implementation. Visit www.canadasoccer.com/idea for more information.

Registration, Names, Pronouns, and Gender

Soccer organizations are encouraged to adopt registration practices that affirm and respect all participants' gender identities.

Where administratively feasible, organizations are encouraged to allow participants to update their name during the season without requiring legal documentation.

As a best practice, registration forms may include:

- A section for players to indicate their pronouns, and
- Space for both a legal name (if required for travel or identification purposes) and a name for use (chosen name).
- Wherever feasible, player books/cards, rosters, and competition materials should reflect the player's chosen name, unless legal documentation is required for travel.

Changerooms and Washrooms

- In many soccer settings, especially outdoor fields, changerooms and permanent washroom facilities may not be available. In these cases, organizations should prioritize

providing safe, private, and dignified options for all participants, recognizing that access may be limited to portable toilets or temporary facilities.

- When available, organizations will ensure that individuals have safe access to a changeroom, locker room, or washroom that aligns with their gender identity.
- Individuals are not required to provide justification for the facility they choose to use. Gender identity and expression are protected under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and applicable provincial/territorial human rights codes.
- It is not appropriate to suggest or expect that individuals change or prepare in alternate or non-private areas (e.g., hallways, closets, or storage spaces).

Travel and Rooming

- For travel to games and competitions, coaches and team staff are encouraged to consult with all participants regarding rooming preferences and comfort.
- Decisions should be made collaboratively, with consideration for privacy, safety, and team dynamics.

Uniforms

- Organizations should work with suppliers to ensure inclusive sizing and fit so that no participant is excluded or made to feel uncomfortable due to uniform availability.

National Teams and International Competitions

While Canada Soccer does not have jurisdiction over international competitions, it will support trans, non-binary, and gender diverse athletes who are part of Canadian national teams or competing internationally.

Canada Soccer Commitments:

- Work with FIFA to support the use of an athlete's chosen name and consistent recognition of pronouns.
- Act as a liaison with the Canadian Anti-Doping Program (CADP) and World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) to assist athletes with required Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUEs).
- Provide support for athletes navigating national or international eligibility requirements.

Athletes with questions regarding national team eligibility, or requiring support in navigating FIFA policies, may contact: IDEA@canadasoccer.com

Key Messages for Implementation

To ensure consistent and meaningful inclusion across the soccer ecosystem:

- Inclusion is a shared responsibility, and all clubs, leagues, and staff play a role in fostering environments where participants feel safe and respected.
- Privacy and confidentiality must be maintained at all times.
- Language matters—use chosen names consistently.
- When in doubt, ask respectfully and listen to the athlete's preferences.
- Create proactive policies that make inclusion the norm, not an exception.
- Education matters—Canada Soccer's 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion training is strongly encouraged for all staff and volunteers to support consistent, informed, and respectful implementation of these guidelines.