

## Trans-gender and Cadets

### Definition and Legal Status

Trans is the word for someone who has changed their gender from the one that was given them when they were born.

**NB - In this guidance we use the term Trans person as a generic descriptive term and should be used as such, rather than 'a trans' or 'a transgender'.** We do recognise however that this is not a term that everyone uses, and we recognise and respect an individual's right to choose how they are described.

This is a complex area of guidance so firstly here is a link to [Understanding Transgender](#)

### National VPC Statement

When supporting a cadet who identifies as trans, further advice can be gained from your Force LGBT Network and/or the National VPC Team.

It is very difficult to write guidance around this as each individual has specific needs. Good practice has been to sit down with the cadet and their parents/carers and discuss what their wishes are, how they want to be treated and how we can best support them on their journey. There may need to be some communication and education around the subject with other cadets and parents/carers but the LGBT Network, National VPC Team and the cadet involved can advise you.

### Key areas to consider:

#### 1. Names and Pronoun change.

Respecting a cadet's request to change name and pronoun is a pivotal part of supporting and validating that young person's identity. It is also important to consistently use preferred pronouns and names in order to protect a cadet's confidentiality and to not 'out' them in ways that may be unsafe and exposing. Some trans- young people may wish to change their name to make it in line with their chosen gender identity. Although they may not have changed their name legally, individuals have the right to choose the name by which they are known to cadet leaders, friends and family. Any problems are likely to be the practical ones of proving that different names refer to the same person.

#### 2. Working with parents and carers

Many parents/carers of a cadet who identifies as trans or gender questioning will be supportive of their child's gender identity; however, this is not always the case. When working with parents/carers, leaders should bear in mind that they are representing the interests of the cadet.

As far as possible, care should be taken to ensure the wishes of the individual cadet are taken into account with a view to supporting them during potential transition. Confidential information must not be shared even with the parents/carers without the child or young person's permission unless there are safeguarding reasons for doing so. The fact that a cadet identifies as Trans is not in itself a safeguarding issue.

### **3. Toilets**

Cadets have the right to access the toilet that corresponds to their gender identity. Any cadet who has a need or desire for increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reason, should be provided access to a single stall toilet, but no cadet will be required to use such a toilet.

### **4. Changing Rooms**

The use of changing rooms by trans cadets should be assessed on a case -by- case basis in discussion with the trans cadet and their parents/carer. In most cases, trans cadets should have access to the changing room that corresponds to their gender identity unless they choose not to. This approach is underpinned by the Equality Act 2010 where refusing a young person access to the changing room of their true gender identity would constitute an act of discrimination.

Any cadet who has a need or desire for increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reason, should be provided with a reasonable alternative changing area such as the use of a private area (e.g.: a nearby toilet stall with a door, an area separated by a curtain or a nearby office), or with a separate time to change (e.g.: using the changing room that corresponds to their gender identity before or after other cadets). Any alternative arrangement should be provided in a way that protects the cadets' ability to keep their trans-status confidential if required.

### **5. Residential trips**

A degree of discussion, care and preparation is required to enable trans cadets to participate in residential trips. To exclude trans cadets from residential trips would be contravening the Equality Act. As far as possible, trans cadets should be able to sleep in dorms appropriate to their gender identity where they wish to.

Some trans young people may not feel comfortable doing this and in such cases alternative sleeping and living arrangements should be made. Discuss this with the trans young person and their family.

Similarly, the degree of participation in physical activities that a trans child or young person feels comfortable with should be discussed prior to any residential trip with them and if appropriate their parents/cares. For example, young trans men who are binding their breasts can often experience a great degree of discomfort when participating in activities such as climbing or canoeing. Where a trans cadet feels that they do not want to or cannot participate, alternative arrangements should be made to allow for them to participate in a more appropriate activity.

Risk assessments should be carried out prior to residential trips in order to make reasonable adjustments which would enable the participation of trans cadets. If travelling abroad leaders should consider and investigate the laws regarding trans communities in countries considered for visits. The International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) have information on their website about countries that pose a risk to trans individuals.

## Find Related Guidance

### [Trans-inclusive Residential](#) – **Gendered Intelligence**

[Trans gender in the UK](#) Government briefing Sheet – great for use as an activity or quiz

[Rethink Mental Illness](#) – A useful website

[Stonewall](#) – A good website for guidance for all ages. Primarily looking at School and workplace good practice and toolkits for LGBTQ+

[Gendered Intelligence](#) website – Good training resources plus up to date news and legislation news

If you need further guidance, please contact the [National Safeguarding Manager](#) or Force Diversity Unit or Staff Associations who will be able to help signpost you.