

Bridgewater State University

Guidelines for Inclusion and Respectful Treatment of Intercollegiate and Club Sports Transgender Student-Athletes

Statement of Principle

Bridgewater State University is committed to fostering an inclusive environment that prohibits discrimination based on gender identity and gender expression. To support this policy and to uphold the principles of equity and inclusion, Bridgewater State University Athletics and Recreation maintains the following policies to facilitate and encourage the participation of transgender students, staff, faculty, and visitors. These policies cover participation in intercollegiate athletics and recreation and accommodation for transpeople who attend and participate in athletic contests at Bridgewater State University.

These guidelines are underpinned by the belief that, given both the enjoyment and the benefits that sports can provide, all students should have equal opportunity to participate in school sports, whether the students are transgender or cisgender—“cisgender” meaning people whose gender identities align with their bodies in ways traditionally recognized as normative. “Transgender” is a term used to describe an individual whose gender identity does not match their birth-assigned sex.

A transgender male student-athlete is someone assigned female at birth who identifies as male. A transgender female student-athlete is someone assigned male at birth who identifies as female.

As an institution committed to creating a culture of diversity, Bridgewater State University and its athletics department prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual identity or expression and provides equal opportunity for transgender student-athletes to participate in varsity athletics.

Guidelines for Intercollegiate and Club Teams

Transgender student-athletes are allowed to participate in sports activities in accordance with their gender identity, provided that any hormone therapy, if applicable, complies with NCAA and relevant National Governing Body (NGB) policies on banned substances. Specifically, a transgender student-athlete will be allowed to participate in sex-separated sports activities under the following conditions.

NCAA Transgender Student-Athlete Participation Policy

At its January 19, 2022 meeting, the NCAA Board of Governors updated the transgender student-athlete participation policy governing college sports. [NCAA Governance Update Transgender Participation Policy](#)

The new policy aligns transgender student-athlete participation with the Olympic Movement. The resulting sport-by-sport approach preserves opportunity for transgender student-athletes while balancing fairness, inclusion and safety for all who compete. [IOC Framework on Fairness](#)

Like the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee, the updated NCAA policy calls for transgender student-athlete participation for each sport to be determined by the policy for the national governing body of that sport. If there is no NGB policy for a sport, it would then be determined by the policy for that sport's international federation. If there is no international federation policy, it would be determined by policy criteria previously established by the International Olympic Committee. Sport-specific policies are subject to ongoing review and recommendation by the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports to the Board of Governors. [IOC Policy Criteria](#)

The policy has three phases of implementation.

Phase One – 2022 Winter and Spring Championships

For participation in 2022 winter and spring championships, transgender student-athletes were required to provide documentation to the CSMAS within four weeks before the selections date for their championship.

The documentation had to demonstrate compliance with the 2010 NCAA policy, which calls for one year of testosterone suppression treatment. It also had to document a one-time serum testosterone level that fell below the maximum allowable level for the sport in which the student-athlete was competing within four weeks of championship selections for that sport. That means that student-athletes who already fulfilled the 2010 NCAA policy only needed provide one validated serum testosterone level.

Transgender student-athletes who participated in regular season competition (including conference championships) remained subject to the 2010 NCAA policy only.

Phase Two – 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-2025 Regular Season and Championships

Beginning Aug. 1, 2022, participation in NCAA sports requires transgender student-athletes to provide documentation that meets the above criteria for the 2010 NCAA policy, plus meet the sport standard for documented testosterone levels at three points in time:

- Prior to any competition during the regular season.
- Prior to the first competition in an NCAA championship event; and
- Prior to any competition in the non-championship segment. See the transgender student-athlete eligibility review procedures for more information. [NCAA Eligibility Review Procedures](#)

Phase Three – 2025-2026 Full Implementation

Beginning Aug. 1, 2024, participation in NCAA sports requires transgender student-athletes to provide documentation no less than twice annually (and at least once within four weeks of competition in NCAA championships) that meets the sport-specific standard (which may include testosterone levels, mitigation timelines and other aspects of sport-governing body policies) as reviewed and approved by CSMAS. More information about the specific application of Phase Three will be provided prior to implementation.

Implementation Process

The Student-Athlete's Responsibility

In order to avoid challenges to a transgender student-athlete's participation during a sport season, a student-athlete who has completed, plans to initiate, or is in the process of taking hormones as part of gender transition must submit the request to participate on a sports team in writing to the Associate Vice President of Athletics & Student Wellness upon matriculation or when the decision to undergo hormonal treatment is made*

The student is strongly encouraged to seek support and advice throughout their transition process. The university offers resources and a list of supportive individuals who can provide guidance, available through the Associate Vice President of Athletics & Student Wellness, the Associate Athletic Director for Student-Athlete Welfare, the Manager of Diversity, Inclusion and NCAA Compliance, the Coordinator for Club Sports, the Office of the Dean of Students, the Pride Center, or the LGCIE Center.

University and National Governing Body Responsibilities

The Sr. Associate Vice President for Student Life and Athletics will meet with the student-athlete to review eligibility requirements and procedure for approval of transgender participation.

The Sr. Associate Vice President for Student Life and Athletics will notify the NCAA or appropriate club sport association of the student-athlete's request to participate.

If a student-athlete's request is denied by the Associate Vice President of Athletics & Student Wellness, an automatic review by the Transgender Participation Committee is required to ensure fairness and transparency. This committee is charged with conducting a thorough and impartial review, and its decision will be promptly communicated to the student-athlete. This committee shall be convened, and its decision reported to the Sr. Associate Vice President of Student Life and Athletics and the Vice President of Student Life in a timely fashion. This committee should include:

- A health care professional, e.g., physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other licensed health professional with experience in transgender health care and the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) standards of care. This person shall be a designee of the Director of Counseling Center and Student Health Services.
- The faculty athletics representative or their designee
- The Associate Director of Athletics for Student-Athlete Welfare who has been trained about Trans health care and anti-discrimination policy.
- The Assistant Director of Athletics for Sports Medicine who has been trained about trans health care and anti-discrimination policy.

- A representative assigned by the institution's president with knowledge and training in the institutional anti-discrimination policy.

All discussions among involved parties and required written supporting documentation shall be kept confidential unless the student-athlete makes a specific request otherwise. All information about an individual student-athletes transgender identity and medical information, including physician's information provided pursuant to this policy, shall be maintained confidentially for ten (10) years in the athlete's medical file located in the office of the Assistant Director of Athletics for Sports Medicine.

Support, Education and Facilities

Communication and Publications: Pronouns and Name Changes

The preference for using masculine, feminine or gender-neutral pronouns should be the student-athlete's choice. Coaches, administrators, and athletes are required to use a transgender student-athlete's chosen name and pronouns, demonstrating respect for their gender identity and expression. Misgendering or failure to respect these preferences is considered a violation of university policy.

Education

At Bridgewater: Student-athletes, coaches and department personnel are educated about Trans identities and the principles of transgender inclusion. They should be knowledgeable about how, in their particular roles, to support Trans people, and prepared to put this knowledge to use.

Opposing Teams/Universities: Without violating a transgender student-athlete's confidentiality or privacy, school leaders, athletic directors, and coaches will communicate with their counterparts at other schools prior to competitions in which a transgender student-athlete is participating about expectations for treatment of transgender student-athletes on and off the field. This does not require "outing" or otherwise identifying a particular student-athlete as transgender, but rather establishing general expectations for the treatment of all student-athletes, including those who may be transgender.

Access to Locker Rooms and bathrooms

Every student-athlete has access to the locker room, bathroom and shower facilities in a safe, comfortable and convenient environment. Transgender student-athletes may use the locker room, bathrooms, and showers in accordance with their gender identity. If requested by the transgender student-athlete, a separate private changing, showering and toilet facility is available with locker accommodations.

Upon request, transgender student-athletes will be provided access to private changing, showering, and toilet facilities to ensure their comfort and safety. Coaches and team members are required to accommodate these preferences with sensitivity and respect.

Accommodations for Travel

When traveling, the athletic staff will work to identify safe spaces for transgender student-athletes to have their needs met with regard to changing spaces and restroom accommodations without compromising the student's privacy and confidentiality.

Transgender student-athletes will be assigned rooming accommodations based on their gender identity. If a student requests additional privacy, every effort will be made to accommodate their needs while ensuring their inclusion in team activities.

Dress Codes for Uniforms

Dress codes must allow all athletes to dress in ways that align with their gender identity. This includes offering flexible uniform options that respect the diverse gender expressions of all student-athletes. For example, instead of requiring gendered forms of "dressy," such as a skirt or dress, dress codes should require students to dress with appropriate formality in ways that suit their gender identity. Since both transgender and cisgender athletes may have preferred gender expressions that do not conform to traditional norms of dress—for instance, not all women feel comfortable in a skirt—this policy should be understood to apply to all student-athletes.

Official team uniforms that are sport-specific, ideally, should not conflict with a student athlete's gender identity or expression.

Athletic Uniform Branding: Student-athletes who are wearing any undergarments that will show under their uniform, must match the uniform brand if the labeled brand shows.

Confidentiality

The privacy and confidentiality of transgender student-athletes are most important. All medical and personal information related to a student-athlete's transgender identity will be securely maintained, with access strictly limited to authorized personnel.