



USA LACROSSE TRANSGENDER PARTICIPATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YOUTH ATHLETES

USA Lacrosse (USAL) seeks to foster a national lacrosse community that encourages understanding, appreciation, and acceptance. Further, USAL believes that broad representation and participation add significant value to the lacrosse experience of each of us, and that these experiences are enhanced by embracing underrepresented and underserved communities. In line with this mission, USAL is equally committed to ensuring fairness and safety in the sport of lacrosse, so as to not provide any unfair and/or disproportionate competitive advantage over the other athletes competing at an elite level.

INTRODUCTION

USA Lacrosse has developed these recommendations for the inclusion of transgender and non-binary youth (14U) athletes in a proactive effort to help guide and support members of the lacrosse community. The goal of these recommendations is to provide transgender and non-binary youth athletes an avenue to participate in lacrosse, while also assisting local organizations with the tools to establish appropriate strategies for inclusion.

TERMINOLOGY

- **Gender identity** – an individual’s internal psychological identification as a boy/man/masculine or girl/woman/feminine, both, neither or anywhere along the gender spectrum.
- **Gender transition** – the process of developing and assuming a gender expression to conform with an individual’s gender identity (e.g., changing their name, taking hormones, having surgery, or changing legal documents to reflect their new gender).
- **Transgender** – describes an individual whose gender identity does not conform with the person’s biological sex assigned at birth. A transgender woman is a person assigned male at birth but who identifies as girl/woman/feminine, and a transgender man is a transgender person who was assigned female at birth but who identifies as boy/man/masculine.
- **Youth Athlete** – a person (14U) who is participating in organized or non-organized local sport activities that require physical strength, agility, or stamina.

STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS

Laws on this topic are largely determined on a state-by-state basis, thus please refer back to state and federal law. USA Lacrosse cannot and does not regulate transgender participation on a statewide basis or at the local level. It is the goal of USAL, however, that these youth athlete participation recommendations will assist local lacrosse organizations and other lacrosse related professionals in making informed decisions regarding transgender and non-binary youth participation matters. USA Lacrosse supports the inclusion of transgender and non-binary youth athletes in sports aligned with their gender identity and the ability for non-binary youth athletes to choose their team or game.

PARTICIPATION

A youth athlete should be allowed to participate in lacrosse in accordance with their gender identity, irrespective of their gender assigned at birth. Team or league policies should not prevent a youth athlete from electing to participate in an activity according to their gender identity.

This means a transgender youth athlete who is assigned female at birth but has a male gender identity should be allowed to participate in male events; a transgender youth athlete who has been assigned male at birth but has a female gender identity should be allowed to participate in female events; and youth athletes identifying as non-binary can choose to participate in either game. These participation recommendations will be in place for USAL-run events (for 14U and younger) and is recommended for adoption by independent youth lacrosse leagues and events.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Below are recommendations for coaches, officials, and administrators to support their interaction with transgender and non-binary youth lacrosse athletes.

1. At all times, teammates, coaches, and others should respect the confidentiality of transgender and non-binary athletes. Discussion or disclosure of an individual's transgender status should only take place after expressed permission is given by the individual or their parents.
2. In all cases, teammates, coaches, and all others should refer to transgender and non-binary athletes by the athlete's preferred name. Similarly, in all cases, pronoun references to transgender and non-binary athletes should reflect the athlete's gender and pronoun preferences.
3. Teams, programs, and host sites should allow transgender athletes to access locker rooms and bathrooms consistent with their gender identity.
4. Leagues should work with officials to enforce the zero-tolerance policy and educate them to support and protect transgender and non-binary athletes in instances of discrimination or bullying either from other players or the sidelines.
5. Teams should provide training to their coaches, staff, and regular volunteers regarding their responsibilities to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Such topics should include terms and concepts of gender identity and expression and bystander intervention strategies related to bullying. Be prepared to address discriminatory behavior, based on any perceived or actual gender identity or gender expression of an athlete. The team or program should make available these policies and educational resources to parents.



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