

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR THE INCLUSION OF MINOR TRANSGENDER ATHLETES

The following are recommended practices provided to assist USA Synchronized Swimming member clubs who wish to develop a club policy for the inclusion of transgender athletes. These recommendations are consistent with USA Synchronized Swimming values of equal opportunity and the right for all members to participate. Such a policy is not required by the Safe Sport Program, but clubs who wish to implement one may use the following as a resource.

DEFINITIONS

Transgender: a person whose gender identity does not match the person's sex at birth

Gender identity: a person's deeply-felt internal sense of being male or female

Gender expression: a person's external characteristics and behaviors that are socially defined as either masculine or feminine (i.e., dress, speech, mannerisms, social interactions)

RECOMMENDED POLICY

A minor transgender athlete and member of USA Synchronized Swimming should be allowed to participate in accordance with his or her gender identity, irrespective of the gender listed on the athlete's birth certificate or other records and regardless of whether the athlete has undergone any medical treatment. The policy should not prevent an athlete from electing to participate in an activity according to his or her assigned birth gender.

This means an athlete who is biologically female but has a male gender identity should be allowed to participate in male events and an athlete who is biologically male but has a female gender identity should be allowed to participate in female events.

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

1. When an athlete (and/or the athlete's parents) discloses a transgender identity, coaches should request a change of the athlete's gender by contacting Membership at USA Synchro. Once this is completed, the athlete will be able to be entered in events that match his/her gender identity.
2. At all times, teammates, coaches, and all others should respect the confidentiality of transgender athletes. Discussion or disclosure of an individual's gender identity should only take place after expressed permission is given by the individual or the individual's parents.
3. In all cases, teammates, coaches, and all others should refer to transgender athletes by the athlete's preferred name. Similarly, in all cases, pronoun references to transgender athletes should reflect the athlete's gender and pronoun preferences.
4. Transgender athletes should be able to use the locker rooms, changing facilities, and restrooms that are consistent with his/her gender identity. When requested by the transgender athlete or his/her family, transgender athletes should be provided access to a gender-neutral space (i.e., family restroom).

5. Prior to meets, without violating an athlete's confidentiality, coaches should communicate with the meet host regarding expectations for treatment of transgender athletes in the pool, on deck, and in the locker room.
6. When overnight travel is involved, transgender athletes should be assigned to share hotel rooms based on their gender identity. Transgender athletes who request extra privacy should be accommodated whenever possible.
7. Transgender athletes should be permitted to dress consistently with their gender identities, including warm-ups and team gear when applicable. A male transitioning to female should be permitted to wear the same bathing suit as the rest of her team. A female transitioning to male should wear a bathing suit that has appropriate coverage of the body. Transgender athletes should be permitted to wear whatever swimsuit is most comfortable for them while keeping with the same theme and decoration as the rest of the team.
8. Clubs should provide training to their 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.

USA Synchronized Swimming Code of Regulations specifies that membership in the Corporation shall be open, without regard to gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status, geographical location, beliefs, or levels of mental or physical ability to groups, athletes, and individuals who are not athletes, as set forth in Article 1.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Trans*Athlete: a resource for students, athletes, coaches, and administrators to find information about transgender inclusion in athletics at various levels of play.

www.transathlete.com

NCAA Inclusion of Transgender Student-Athletes:

https://www.ncaa.org/sites/default/files/Transgender_Handbook_2011_Final.pdf