

LTA TRANSGENDER AND
NON-BINARY INDIVIDUALS POLICY:
**GUIDANCE FOR LTA
REGISTERED VENUES
AND ACCREDITED
COACHES**

LTA TRANSGENDER AND NON-BINARY INDIVIDUALS POLICY: **GUIDANCE FOR LTA REGISTERED VENUES AND ACCREDITED COACHES**

SUMMARY

It is very important to be aware that there are now clearer and more specific obligations on venues that you need to be aware of immediately and consider how to comply with them.

This guidance has been written to support you in making informed decisions about how to implement the LTA's Transgender and Non-Binary Individuals Policy in your role working or volunteering in a venue. In particular, in relation to the playing of Structured Competition in your venue. This summary provides only very basic headline information and so you must read the Policy, and this guidance document, in full if you are responsible for making decisions for your venue in relation to its implementation.

Why are we changing the Policy?

We have a dual responsibility: to preserve the integrity and fairness of competitive tennis, and to ensure that tennis remains as inclusive and welcoming as possible for everyone. Tennis is a gender-affected sport – the average man has a physical performance advantage when playing against the average woman. The majority of currently available research says that some of this advantage is retained in transgender women or non-binary individuals of male sex at birth, making competition potentially unfair for biological women. We also need to be aware of, and compliant with, legal developments including the Equality and Human Rights Commission's ("EHRC") recent [Code of Practice](#), which states that sex categorisation in competitive sport should be on the basis of biological sex.

What are we doing?

In line with the requirements of the EHRC's Code of Practice, we are amending our Policy to restrict transgender women and non-binary individuals of male sex at birth from playing in the women's category in all **Structured Competition**.

Structured Competition means all organised competition which is sex-categorised and from which there is a consequence, such as progressing to a next round, determining a place in a league or ladder, or contributing to a player's rating. This will apply to competitions ranging from National Championships through to competition structures run within venues, such as club championships. For all Structured Competition, eligibility for each competition category in all forms of tennis and padel, and including disability competitions, and in all age groups is:

Gender	Men's Competition Category in Structured Competitions	Women's Competition Category in Structured Competitions
Transgender woman	Yes	No
Transgender man	No	Yes – provided gender-affirming hormone treatment not started
Cis-gender woman	No	Yes
Cis-gender man	Yes	No
Non-binary individual of female sex at birth	No	Yes – provided gender-affirming hormone treatment not started
Non-binary individual of male sex at birth	Yes	No

Other Play is any form of play which is not Structured Competition. In Other Play, where there is either no sex categorisation (e.g. where the competition is explicitly open for either sex to play in) or no consequence of play (e.g. a friendly game played by choice between friends), there are no restrictions on the participation of transgender men or transgender women, or non-binary individuals.

Use of changing rooms

Given each venue will be different, it is not possible for us to provide one-size-fits-all guidance. However, the EHRC's Code of Practice is clear that the starting point for venues is that single sex spaces, which include changing rooms and toilets, should be used on the basis of biological sex. Venues should consult the Code of Practice in making decisions in relation to changing room provision.

INTRODUCTION

This guidance is intended to help LTA Registered Venues and those working and volunteering at LTA Registered Venues, including Accredited Coaches, implement the [LTA Transgender and Non-Binary Individuals Policy](#) appropriately and must be read alongside the Policy. If you are a [player](#) or [Licensed Official](#) you can find specific guidance [here](#).

In developing the Policy, we have worked within the legal framework of the Equality Act 2010 and the EHRC's Code of Practice on the interpretation of the Act, while balancing two potentially conflicting responsibilities as the governing body for tennis and padel. We have a responsibility to ensure competition in our sport is fair and a responsibility to ensure tennis and padel are welcoming and inclusive for everyone. The Policy seeks to ensure that tennis and padel are fully compliant with the law, while encouraging everyone in tennis and padel always to make every effort to ensure that everyone feels welcome and that they belong in our sport.

Where do venues start in implementing the Policy?

We know that those working and volunteering at venues may have concerns about how to implement the Policy appropriately. It is therefore important that all those involved in running venues read through and carefully consider both the Policy and this guidance before making any decisions in relation to implementation, irrespective of whether you are currently aware of having any transgender or non-binary members.

If any element of the Policy or guidance is unclear, or if you have specific questions or concerns about how to implement it after having read both documents, please contact the LTA [here](#). We will work with you to answer your questions and support you through your approach to implementation.

Language and terminology

Language matters. The words we use can have a significant impact on those around us, and it is therefore important that we all strive to use language which is inclusive and respectful for all. We also know that sometimes it can be worrying for people who may be unsure of the right language to use and are concerned about inadvertently saying something which might negatively affect someone else. As a result, we have produced a short video around inclusive language which you can find on the Inclusion section of our website, [here](#).

As a minimum, it is important to understand the meaning of certain terms in order to apply the Policy appropriately:

- **TRANSGENDER** – this is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender identity is different from, or does not sit comfortably with, their sex at birth. “Trans” is often used simply as shorthand for transgender.
- **TRANSITION** – every person's transition is different; it is the process which some people, whose gender identity and sex at birth do not match, go through to align their life and/or physical identity to match their gender identity. This can include different steps such as social transition (e.g. changing the name or pronouns they wish to be known by), medical transition (e.g. taking medical steps such as hormone therapy), or legal transition (e.g. changing their name, gender and/or sex on legal documents).
- **NON-BINARY INDIVIDUAL** – someone whose gender identity does not sit comfortably as ‘female’ or ‘male’. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of male and/or female identities, while others reject binary identities entirely.
- **TRANSGENDER WOMAN** – refers to an individual of male sex at birth who has a female gender identity.
- **TRANSGENDER MAN** – refers to an individual of female sex at birth who has a male gender identity.
- **CISGENDER WOMAN** – refers to an individual of female sex at birth who has a female gender identity.
- **CISGENDER MAN** – refers to an individual of male sex at birth who has a male gender identity.

- **BIOLOGICAL SEX** – refers to an individual’s status as a man or a woman based on biological (in particular chromosomal, gonadal, and hormonal) sex characteristics, which are dichotomous.

A more complete list of terms which you might hear used when talking about the Policy and more generally around inclusion is included at the end of this guidance.

Why have we changed our policy?

The Policy was first introduced in January 2025 and it was based upon various factors including our responsibilities as a governing body, the applicable legal framework, consultation with those affected, the available science and research and, in particular, the guidance from the Sports Councils’ Equality Group to Governing Bodies.

When we published it, we committed to keeping the Policy under review in the light of emerging scientific developments or regulatory changes. The Equality and Human Rights Commission has since published a new Code of Practice, addressing matters including competitive sport and use of changing facilities. This update to our Policy and accompanying Guidance reflects the content of the new Code of Practice.

Who does the policy apply to?

The Policy applies to all individuals at LTA Registered Venues or taking part in LTA Sanctioned Competition. While it contains provisions which apply specifically to transgender and non-binary players, it also places responsibility on all participants, as well as those who run LTA Registered Venues, to help foster a fair and inclusive environment for all.

When does the Policy apply from?

The original version of the Policy has been effective since the 1st January 2025. The updated version of the Policy will come into effect on the 1st September 2026.

How does the Policy divide participation?

The Policy divides participation into two types:

Structured Competition

This is where players take part in organised competitions with sex-based categories (i.e. a men’s and a women’s competition which are separate) of any Grade, from National Championships down to a competition in a venue just for members, and where there is some form of consequence to winning or losing, e.g:

- progression through to the next round of a competition;
- determining the player’s place in a ladder or league structure; or
- contributing towards the player’s ratings.

These are competitions where there will usually be some form of independent draw, meaning, that players do not have choice over who they play against. In these competitions, the Policy places restrictions on the eligibility of transgender and non-binary individuals, in particular preventing them from competing in any category other than the one that corresponds with their biological sex.

Other Play

This is any form of play which is not Structured Competition.

This might include playing points, games or sets against friends, or a competition where there are no sex-based categories, which is based upon level of play and which is designated as ‘open’ to everyone.

For clarity – where LTA Local Tennis Leagues are open to both sexes, they fall into “Other Play”, but where they have been set up as women only, they are “Structured Competition” and subject to the restrictions set out below.

What do LTA Registered Venues need to think about for Structured Competition?

RUNNING A VENUE

What does “Structured Competition” include?

Simply put, this is likely to be all organised competition which is not explicitly designated as “open” by you or the organiser. This will range from our highest level competitions such as the National Championships, through the National, Regional and County Tours, County Cup, Play Your Way to Wimbledon, County and District Leagues at a local level, and down to any organised competition held within your venue, such as club championships or even a social Sunday afternoon tournament.

As before, for any Structured Competitions which are not intra-venue and which are sanctioned by the LTA, e.g. local Grade 5 tournaments, the LTA Competition Management System will determine eligibility to compete in the competition, based on the data we hold on participants.

If your teams compete in local inter-venue leagues which are sanctioned by the LTA, eligibility will again be determined by the LTA Competition Management System based upon the data we hold, so captains will not need to ask members anything in relation to their gender identity or biological sex, though they will have to ensure that players have logged into the Competition Management System in order to have gone through the Competition Category questionnaire.

For guidance on how to raise any concerns about compliance with the Policy, please see below.

What does the Policy say about who can compete in the men’s and women’s category in Structured Competition?

The Policy sets out that a player may generally only compete in Structured Competitions in the sex category which corresponds with their biological sex. This means that transgender women or non-binary individuals of male sex at birth cannot compete in the women’s competition category, and transgender men or non-binary individuals of female sex at birth cannot compete in the men’s competition category.

Transgender men and non-binary individuals of female sex at birth may compete in the women’s category, provided they have not commenced gender-affirming hormone treatment, i.e. have not started taking testosterone. This is because there are no issues around fairness until they begin such treatment.

Venues should bear in mind that this change may mean that players who have participated in a particular competition sex category, potentially for a long time, will no longer be able to do so. Conversations and communication around this should be approached proactively, with understanding and compassion.

What do LTA Registered Venues need to think about for Other Play?

RUNNING A VENUE

What does “Other Play” include?

Simply put, this is everything that is not Structured Competition, either because it is a competition without sex-based competition categories (i.e. “open”) or because it is informal play where there is no consequence to the outcome, for example, where players arrange amongst themselves to play points, games or sets.

The amended Policy separates out this type of play, where either there are no sex-based competition categories (for example, where a competition has been organised on the basis of level-based play, or where it is informal play where there is no consequence to the outcome (for example where four friends arrange to play a game together). In these circumstances, there are no restrictions on transgender and non-binary players based on biological sex or gender identity – they may participate freely.

Some of your members may wish to participate in Structured Competition, which carries the restrictions for sex-based competition categories. This might mean that some of your transgender and non-binary members are unable to compete in the category they identify with. With this in mind, we would strongly encourage all venues to consider the needs of their current members, and potential future members, and seek to find an appropriate balance of competition opportunities, including some “open” competitions based on the level of players rather than their biological sex.

RUNNING A VENUE

What is an “open” category?

An open category either replaces the men’s competition category with, or introduces a third competition that is, an “open” category where everyone is allowed to enter irrespective of their sex or gender. This is more inclusive for transgender and non-binary players. It can also enable you to create explicitly level-based competition, which can have the added benefit of improving the experience for all players.

How can venues be more inclusive generally in implementing the Policy?

Communicate inclusively

It is essential that all LTA Registered Venues, and Accredited Coaches and volunteers working in them, always behave as inclusively as possible towards all individuals who wish to play at that venue.

RUNNING A VENUE

How can I communicate more inclusively around the Policy?

It is important that you communicate clearly and inclusively to all members, understanding that the implementation of this Policy may be very challenging for some. As a result, we have produced a short video around inclusive language which you can find on the Inclusion section of our website, [here](#). Ways in which you can do this, both generally and for the transgender and non-binary communities specifically, include:

- **remember that everyone is an individual** – do not make assumptions either based upon how someone presents themselves or how they look;
- **try to avoid gendered language in communications where possible** – e.g. instead of “if a member wants to take part *he or she* should contact a committee member”, use “if a member wants to take part *they* should contact a committee member”;
- **use the language a transgender or non-binary person uses for themselves and, if you don’t know what pronouns to use, ask.** If it does not come up naturally in conversation and you are still unsure, ask politely and respectfully. Sharing your own pronouns can be a useful way to open that conversation, e.g. “Hi, I’m Rebecca and I use she/her pronouns. How about you?” If you accidentally use the wrong pronouns, apologise and move on – making more of an issue over a pronoun mistake may be awkward and may draw unwanted attention to the transgender or non-binary person;**be careful and considerate about what questions you ask, respecting other people’s right to privacy and confidentiality.** Just because you are interested in or curious about something does not mean that it is appropriate to ask about it. Two questions it is useful to ask yourself are:
 - “**Do I need to know this information to treat this person respectfully?**”, e.g. asking a person’s name and pronoun is almost always appropriate;
 - “**Would I be comfortable if this question was turned round and asked of me?**”, e.g. asking questions about medical treatment a person is undergoing or has undergone is almost never going to be necessary or appropriate.

Ensure you have an inclusive culture and policies

All LTA Registered Venues and Accredited Coaches should maintain a **culture of everyday inclusion**. This includes:

- **having an up-to-date Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy in place** (you can find a template policy [here](#)) – this means publicly committing to ensuring your venue is inclusive for all and is a safe space for under-represented groups, including transgender or non-binary members;
- **encouraging and creating opportunities for venue members and players to learn and deepen their understanding of different communities**, including through events, communications and signposting to relevant resources;
- **adopting a zero-tolerance approach to discriminatory language or behaviour**, including where it is based on a person’s gender identity or gender reassignment, and fostering a culture in which people feel able to challenge and report discriminatory or non-inclusive behaviour; and
- **having an appropriate complaints policy** (you can find a template policy [here](#)) and process in place to deal

effectively with any issues which arise, giving confidence to transgender or non-binary members, and the broader community, that concerns will be taken seriously.

Look at your wider programmes

Many venues also offer specific sessions which will often be delivered and advertised with reference to sex-categorised play.

RUNNING A VENUE

How can we make non-competitive activity more inclusive?

To be fully inclusive of different gender identities, we would recommend organising sessions, where appropriate, by ability (e.g. beginner, intermediate, advanced) rather than by gender identity or biological sex. Again, this is also likely to result in a better playing experience for all players.

Where sessions are categorised by sex, they constitute single-sex spaces and participation must therefore be on the basis of biological sex. While there may be circumstances where this is appropriate, e.g. where a venue works with a local charity which supports victims of sexual violence to provide free court time to those women, venues should always consider how to be inclusive for all members. In such cases, venues should also consider renaming sex-categorised sessions (e.g. Men's Night) as purpose-categorised sessions (e.g. Social Night).

Consider your changing facilities

Each LTA Registered Venue will need to consider independently how best to provide appropriate changing facilities for all its members, players and visitors. Given each Venue will be different, it is not possible for us to provide one-size-fits-all guidance.

The EHRC has made it clear in its Code of Practice that use of sex-categorised spaces (e.g. a "Ladies' Changing Room") must be on the basis of biological sex. This means that transgender women and non-binary individuals of male sex at birth should not use changing spaces/toilets categorised as for women, and transgender men and non-binary individuals of female sex at birth should not use changing spaces/toilets categorised as for men.

Venues must also consider, though, how best to provide for transgender and non-binary users in a way which is non-discriminatory and which maintains their dignity. Where possible, this should include providing additional private facilities, maintained to the same standard as those categorised by sex, so that transgender and non-binary individuals have access to appropriate provision. Where this is not possible, venues should seek to have open, respectful and compassionate conversations with transgender and non-binary members to discuss what is practical and achievable, for example, agreeing timed slots in the changing facilities, in the same way as you would where there is a possibility of children and adults having to use the same facilities.

Again, if you need to discuss your approach further, you can contact us [here](#).

RUNNING A VENUE

Practically what do I need to consider?

- **What spaces and facilities you have available to you and how they are currently used** – this might range from a single toilet through to large multi-person changing rooms.
- **Whether your facilities can be made more private** – consider whether any spaces are, or can be made to be, sectioned off and lockable in some way, and whether this would allow appropriate private provision to be made available to transgender and non-binary individuals alongside the maintenance of sex-categorised spaces for use on the basis of biological sex.
- **How best can these facilities be used to meet the needs of all members, players and visitors** – this might include being more flexible in how facilities are used and considering whether gender-neutral and/or individual changing spaces can be created.
- **Ensuring that any policy is implemented in a way which respects the dignity and privacy of all members, players and visitors.**
- We have a template “Use of Changing Rooms Policy” available [here](#), which can be adapted as necessary to suit the specific circumstances of your venue.

Capture and use data appropriately

All LTA Registered Venues should already be ensuring that they are compliant with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and other applicable law in relation to the processing of members’ personal data. In particular, data relating to gender reassignment may constitute “special category” data, to which specific [rules](#) and restrictions apply.

To help make informed decisions in relation to the Policy, you may wish to review your membership data to gain a clearer understanding of who your members are and what different characteristics they have. This will not only assist in implementing the Policy but will also enable you to meet the different needs of your members more generally. You may already hold relevant data within your membership platform, or you may wish to consider asking your membership appropriate questions to gather it.

RUNNING A VENUE

Practically what do I need to consider?

- **Guidance is available as part of the venue support toolkit** [\[insert link\]](#). This includes a list of sample questions you could use to understand your members better.
- **It is good practice to ensure that your membership application process enables prospective members to share their gender identity in a way which represents who they are.** For example, you might include predetermined options such as “male”, “female” and “non-binary”; an open-text field to allow people to express their gender in the way most relevant to them; and a “prefer not to say” option.
- **If you use the Clubspark platform, you will be able to collect equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) data for your members to support and inform your decision-making.**

APPENDIX A – USE OF LANGUAGE

As referenced above, language matters. It is useful to educate yourself, where necessary, on the following terms which might help in having inclusive conversations on this topic. Some terms are included here not because they are directly relevant to Transgender and Non-Binary people but to help differentiate for those with less understanding or lived experience of trans and non-binary people:

SEX OR BIOLOGICAL SEX

this refers to an individual's status as a man or a woman based on biological (in particular chromosomal, gonadal, and hormonal) sex characteristics, which are dichotomous. Note: intersex is a separate term and is defined below, and an individual's legal sex may not be the same as their biological sex.

GENDER IDENTITY

this refers to an individual's self-identified gender. This may be the same as or different to an individual's biological sex. Gender identity is not binary and can exist across a broad spectrum. A person may identify at any point on this spectrum or outside it entirely, including as transgender, non-binary, gender fluid or gender-neutral.

TRANSGENDER

refers to an individual whose gender identity is different from their sex at birth, whether or not they have commenced or undergone any form of medical transition. "Trans" is often used as shorthand for transgender.

NON-BINARY INDIVIDUAL

refers to individuals whose gender identity does not sit comfortably as 'male' or 'female'. Non-binary identities are varied. Some individuals identify with some aspects of binary male and/or female identities, while others reject them entirely.

TRANSGENDER WOMAN

an individual of male sex at birth who has a female gender identity.

TRANSGENDER MAN

an individual of female sex at birth who has a male gender identity.

INTERSEX

is a general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy which does not fit the typical definitions of female or male. For example, a person might be born with female typical appearance on the outside but having mostly male typical anatomy on the inside. For the purposes of the LTA Policy, biological sex is treated as dichotomous (male or female).

CIS-GENDER

a term describing an individual whose gender identity is the same as their biological sex. For example, a cisgender woman is an individual of female sex at birth who has a female gender identity, and a cisgender man is an individual of male sex at birth who has a male gender identity.

TRANSITION

every person's transition is different; it is the process that some people, whose gender identity and sex at birth do not match, go through to align their life and/or physical identity with their gender identity. This can include different steps such as social transition (e.g. changing the name or pronouns they wish to be known by), medical transition (e.g. taking medical steps such as hormone therapy), or legal transition (e.g. changing their name, gender and/or sex on legal documents).

GENDER DYSPHORIA

this describes a sense of unease or distress that a person may have because of a mismatch between their biological sex and their gender identity.

GENDER AFFIRMING HORMONE TREATMENT

this is hormone therapy, such as the taking of testosterone or oestrogen supplements, to help better align a person's body/physical appearance with their gender identity.

GENDER REASSIGNMENT

is where a person undergoes or proposes to undergo, a process for the purposes of reassigning their sex.

GENDER RECOGNITION CERTIFICATE (GRC)

this is a legal document issued under the Gender Recognition Act 2004 that a person can apply for in order to have their acquired gender legally recognised in the UK. A GRC changes a person's legal sex for most legal purposes. Obtaining a GRC is not a requirement for participation in tennis under this Policy, which is based on biological sex rather than legal sex.

GENDER PRONOUNS / PERSONAL PRONOUNS

personal pronouns are words we use every day to refer to ourselves or others (for example, she/her, he/him, or they/them). Pronouns can be an important way for a person to express their gender identity and should be respected and used appropriately when referring to that person.

DISCRIMINATION

there are different types of discrimination:

- **Direct discrimination** – this is when you are treated worse than another person or other people because: you have a protected characteristic (including sex and gender reassignment); someone thinks you have that protected characteristic; or you are connected to someone with that characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination** – this happens when there is a policy which applies in the same way for everybody but which disadvantages a group of people who share a protected characteristic.

TRANSPHOBIA

this is intolerance of gender diversity or fear, dislike or prejudice against someone on the basis that they are transgender.

DEAD NAMING

this is the act of referring to a transgender person, whether intentionally or not, by the name they used prior to transitioning. This can be deeply hurtful and should be avoided.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

this is about who you are attracted to and want to have romantic or sexual relationships with. This includes gay, lesbian, heterosexual, bisexual and asexual, as well as other orientations.

LTA
The National Tennis Centre
100 Priory Lane Roehampton
London SW15 5JQ

www.LTA.org.uk

