

# Gender Affirmation Policy and Guidelines Template

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## How to use this policy and guidelines template

This policy and guidelines are intended as a starting point of suggestions for Human Resources/People and Culture developing a workplace gender affirmation policy and guidelines, in concert with existing organisational policies.

The contents of this template should be amended to reflect the operating environment, and relevant policies, processes and entitlements of your workplace. This policy is for existing employees of an organisation who are in the process of affirming their gender, and their employers.

[Employer] can be replaced throughout the document with your workplace information. Additionally, there are a number of other sections to replace or amend throughout the document and it is important to read through the entire policy and guidelines to make sure they are appropriate for your industry and organisation.

If you are a Pride in Diversity member, you can speak to your relationship manager for advice and support about adapting this policy and guidelines template. [You can find a full list of Pride in Diversity members on the Pride in Diversity website.](#)

This document has been technically reviewed and developed for [TransHub](#).

# [Employer] Workplace gender affirmation policy

Contact:

Approved by:

Date of effect:

Date of last review:

## 1. Overview and purpose

[Employer] is committed to providing a safe and inclusive workplace to all trans and gender diverse (henceforth trans) employees. All employees must treat others with dignity, courtesy and respect. We value diversity among our staff and will not tolerate discrimination.

This policy aims to ensure employees affirming their gender are properly supported, can easily access relevant entitlements and are treated equally in a safe and inclusive workplace. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Workplace Gender Affirmation Guidelines included in this document and [insert discrimination, bullying and harassment policies]. Together these documents provide information and guidance about the kinds of processes, planning, education, and support that might be implemented to ensure that we uphold our commitment and responsibilities to our trans employees.

While this document was specifically developed to provide guidance for employees who are in the process of affirming their gender, and their employers, many points will also be relevant to all trans people.

## 2. Application of policy

This policy:

- applies to all employees, including executives and managers in our workplaces;
- applies to behaviour during the course of work, including:
  - in the workplace, during and outside normal working hours;
  - during work activities, including dealing with clients, suppliers or contractors; and
- at work related events, including social events.

## 3. Key terms

It is useful to set out here some of the key terms used by trans and gender diverse people. You can find a more thorough list of terms in 'Appendix I: Definitions' at the end of this document.

**Trans, trans and gender diverse** or **transgender and gender diverse** are umbrella terms. We use the phrase trans and gender diverse to be as broad and comprehensive as possible in describing members of the many varied communities globally of people with gender identities and expressions that differ from the gender they were presumed to be at birth.

This includes people who have culturally specific and/or language specific experiences, identities or expressions, and/or that are not based on or encompassed by Western conceptualisations of gender or the language used to describe it. Throughout this document we use trans as the shorthand for trans and gender diverse, rather than using an acronym.

Some trans people may consider their gender to be simply female, male, or a non-binary identity, with other trans people positioning 'being trans' as a history or experience. Some trans people

connect strongly with their trans experience, whereas others do not. Processes of gender affirmation may or may not be part of a trans or gender diverse person's life. This is different to **cisgender** people, whose gender is the same to what was presumed for them at birth.

Throughout this policy the terms **gender** and **gender identity** are used interchangeably as they mean the same thing. The term **affirmed gender** is used to clarify when talking about a trans person's preferred/true gender, as opposed to the gender they were presumed to be. A trans person's **affirmed gender** and **gender/gender identity** are the same.

#### 4. Gender affirmation

Gender affirmation (sometimes also referred to as 'transition' or 'transitioning') refers to the steps trans people may take to feel more aligned with their gender. These steps may include:

- Social affirmation – e.g. changing the name and pronouns they use, and/or their presentation
- Medical affirmation – e.g. taking gender affirming hormones and/or having surgery
- Legal affirmation – e.g. changing their legal gender marker and/or name

Processes of gender affirmation may or may not be part of a trans person's life. Not everyone will take all of these steps (or take them in this order), or any of these steps, and the timing of gender affirmation (if any) will vary from person to person. It is always best to let someone tell you what steps they will be undertaking, when, and how these steps will look for them, rather than assuming a specific outcome, timeline, or destination.

#### 5. Support and resources

Initially we encourage the person planning to affirm their gender, or a representative, to speak with their line manager and/or Human Resources (**HR**) Manager to commence their support. Some example correspondence can be found at **Appendix III: Sample correspondence**.

[Employer] will then provide comprehensive support including assisting our employees in the development of a workplace plan. This may be in collaboration with our external partners, Pride in Diversity, who can provide resources, education, and tailored advice [delete if not a Pride in Diversity member].

[Employee may access our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for confidential professional guidance and counselling support services – delete if your EAP does not provide counselling or support services related to gender affirmation].

NB: Employers seeking an inclusive and affirming LGBTQ+ specialist EAP service can register with [ACON Pride EAP](#).

#### 6. Leave

Employees can access up to [X] days paid leave for the purpose of affirming their gender. This leave may be taken for reasons that include, but are not limited to:

- a. medical or legal practitioner appointments;
- b. changing dress and presentation;
- c. attending counselling;
- d. implementing other aspects of a workplace plan.

This leave may be taken in one continuous period or over several shorter periods. The leave must be taken at a time mutually convenient to the employee and [Employer], and with the prior approval of

the employee's manager, Director and HR. This leave is in addition to the employee's other leave entitlements.

In addition, employees affirming their gender can access [unlimited/X days/on a case-by-case basis] unpaid leave, and may also discuss flexible working arrangements with their manager, Director and HR.

## 7. Other benefits

[Here is space to add specific details of other benefits and entitlements provided to employees affirming their gender. These benefits may be industry specific, and we encourage you to consider the needs of employees in your particular organisation. This may include:

- A grant to help contribute to a new workplace wardrobe for the employee;
- A grant to cover medical affirmation costs;
- Private health insurance;
- A grant to assist the employee with costs associated with registering a name change with the relevant authority.]

## 8. Confidentiality and privacy

Any personal information about an employee's gender affirmation and/or gender identity should generally be treated as sensitive information, and should be kept confidential and only be used and disclosed with the employee's knowledge and consent (unless your manager advises you that the use or disclosure is strictly required in respect of a specific employment function, or another relevant exemption under privacy law applies).

Where an employee breaches these privacy and confidentiality requirements with respect to another employee's personal information, it may result in disciplinary action in accordance with [relevant internal policies relating to discipline and conduct]. Employees who have access to other employees' personal information for HR and other business purposes are acting on behalf of [Employer] and are bound by [insert any organisational Code of Conduct] and relevant privacy legislation.

[Employer] will not require an employee affirming their gender to provide information where that information could be used to discriminate against the employee and that information would not be sought from a person with a different gender identity or without a gender history in circumstances that are the same (or materially the same).

## 9. Facilities

All employees have the right to access the bathrooms and change rooms that best affirm their gender. [Employer] is mindful of the importance of how these facilities might affect or affirm trans people. This includes trans people who are male or female, as well as non-binary people. While some trans people prefer to use all-gender facilities, others will be more comfortable using gendered facilities.

[Employer] strives to make all-gender facilities available to all employees and in all locations, and have information available to any employees who request it.

Further information about best practice for providing appropriate facilities is available at <https://www.transhub.org.au/allies/bathrooms>

## **10. Uniforms and dress code**

The same standards of dress and appearance apply to all employees in our workplace. Trans employees should dress in a manner that best reflects who they are, while adhering to the requirements of their specific role. If an employee is required to wear a uniform, they may wear the uniform that best aligns with their affirmed gender and must not be directed to wear a uniform that does not match their gender.

## **11. Discrimination, bullying and harassment**

All employees have the right to be protected from discrimination, bullying and harassment in the workplace. For employees affirming their gender, this discrimination, bullying and/or harassment may include the following conduct:

- The deliberate use of incorrect names or pronouns;
- Outing or threatening to out a colleague as trans, or sharing their private information without consent;
- Inappropriate and invasive questions about someone's physical appearance, past or future medical procedures, sexuality, or sex life;
- Denying promotion or other opportunities because of their gender or gender affirmation;
- Changing the nature of someone's work because of their gender affirmation, such as removing them from a client-facing role;
- Ridiculing or gossiping about someone's affirmed gender or gender affirmation.

Any instances of alleged discrimination, bullying, or harassment should be dealt with discreetly, in accordance with the relevant discrimination and grievance policies [\[link to policy\]](#). The employee experiencing the negative behaviour should be given as much choice as possible as to what steps they would like taken, and who they want to be involved in the process.

## **12. Breach**

A person who is found to have breached this policy or the accompanying guidelines may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the [\[insert disciplinary policy or Code of Conduct\]](#), which may include termination of employment.



# [Employer] workplace gender affirmation guidelines

## 1. Message from leadership

[Employer] is committed to providing an inclusive workplace culture where all our people are valued and recognised for their unique qualities, ideas and perspectives.

The release of this guide indicates our clear support for all employees seeking to affirm their gender while working at [Employer], as well as our support of any employees present and future who have affirmed their gender already. We want to do what we can to ensure a smooth and supportive experience.

I encourage you to not only read the guidelines, but to think about your role in contributing to build and foster a diverse and inclusive workplace culture.

We are committed to providing a positive working environment that values diversity and inclusion which supports all employees to reach their full potential. Our people must remain focussed upon driving positive change within our organisation and beyond, and striving for an inclusive workplace.

Understanding our diversity and elevating our words into positive behaviours and action is an essential part of our working environment.

##name of leader##

##title##

## 2. Purpose of guidelines

These guidelines have been created in association with the [Employer] Gender Affirmation Policy. They provide information and guidance to employees affirming their gender in the workplace, their line managers, and their colleagues.

This document may be used as a guide for [Human Resources/HR/People and Culture/P&C], the employee and their manager to develop a workplace plan that details the steps and actions required to ensure a positive gender affirmation process in the workplace.

## 3. The trans community

A trans person is someone whose gender does not exclusively align with the one they were assigned at birth. Trans is an umbrella term for all gender diverse people, but not everyone uses these words to describe themselves or their experiences. For example, a woman who was presumed male at birth might refer to herself as 'a trans woman', 'a woman with a trans history' or just 'a woman'.

Some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples may identify as Sistergirls or Brotherboys, as well as, or instead of, trans women, trans men or non-binary people. Other trans people may be non-binary, gender fluid, genderqueer, or agender. As with all language, these terms and their usage will continue to evolve over time.

Pronouns are words that we use to refer to people when we're not using their name. Pronouns include he/him/his and she/her/hers, and the singular they/them/theirs, and others. Singular gender neutral pronouns are not only grammatically correct, they've been around for centuries. Gender neutral pronouns are also a polite and easy way to refer to someone whose gender you're unsure of.

Be mindful to reflect the language people use for themselves, rather than making assumptions. The definitions in **Appendix I: Definitions** provide a useful guide, and more information is available at <https://www.transhub.org.au/language> .

## 4. Guidelines for employees affirming their gender in the workplace

[Employer] is [statement of support, which should be developed in consultation with pride networks / employee representatives].

These guidelines aim to provide some guidance and clarity around what affirming your gender at [Employer] might look like. We recognise that gender affirmation looks different to every person, and that these guidelines should act as a template from which you can build out a plan that works for your needs.

Affirming your gender in the workplace can mean different things for different people. It can be useful to think about what this process looks like for you, and also consider who you are most comfortable speaking to and working with to take these steps. This may be your line manager, or you may prefer to deal directly with your HR Representative or other member of the management team.

### 4.1. Initial conversations

Once you are ready to discuss your gender affirmation plans, set up a time to speak with your line manager or other contact, and invite any support people you would like to be present. Here are some things you might discuss during initial conversations:

- What steps you will be taking, and when
- How you would like these changes communicated to colleagues and other stakeholders, including external stakeholders
- Any new uniforms required
- Any leave that may be required
- The kinds of supports you have in place.

### 4.2. Developing a workplace plan and checklist

Affirming your gender in the workplace can require the involvement of multiple people, teams, and processes. Many employees and their managers find it useful to have a plan and/or checklist of steps to outline tasks, set timeframes, and work out responsibilities.

When developing your workplace plan and checklist, it is important to consider and communicate how confidential you would like this process to be, particularly when it may involve multiple teams across the organisation. If you prefer, [Employer] can appoint a single point of contact (who does not need to be you) for each team and ensure that only the requisite amount of information is shared. However, you can determine how open you would like this information to be.

Workplace gender affirmation plans and checklists are discussed in more detail in the management section below.

### 4.3. Support

All employees are able to access our EAP counsellors.

You can also contact our external workplace LGBTQ+ inclusion partner, *Pride in Diversity*, to facilitate the initial discussions within your workplace [delete if not a Pride in Diversity member]. You might also want to have a close colleague come along to meetings with you as a support person.

### 4.4. Colleagues and stakeholders

Some colleagues and stakeholders may have little to no awareness or education in relation to LGBTQ+ matters. To ensure that everyone is aware of the role they need to play to create an

inclusive workplace, and so that everyone understands what their expectations are, it is important to ensure education is provided.

When developing a workplace plan consider what you would like to be included within this education and how much or little you would like to be involved in the delivery of the education. Work with your manager and HR Manager to have this implemented.

#### 4.5. Bullying, discrimination and harassment

Every employee has a right to feel safe, valued, and respected in the workplace. If you are experiencing discrimination, harassment, or bullying, refer to the [insert internal policies on discrimination, bullying and harassment] to find out reporting processes.

#### 4.6. Updating details

If you are changing your name, gender or title (legally or not), or updating your photo, there will be a requirement for IT systems, physical signage, employee lists, etc. to be updated. To do so, you may be asked to provide certain information to [Employer]. [Employer] will strictly use this only for the purpose it was provided, as permitted or required by law or otherwise with your consent, and will not use this information in a discriminatory way.

[Employer] will use all reasonable endeavours to ensure that all internal visible places which hold your name or gender details are updated in a timely manner (including where you request that we make those updates), to ensure there are no reasons for somebody to be accidentally misgendered. There may be external facing or 3rd party systems or processes that cannot be updated due to someone having a different legal name and gender than their affirmed name and gender. In this situation, these details should not be visible to any other [Employer] employees. A thorough audit of all points should be conducted as part of the plan.

[The below table should be filled out with details and processes added and removed as necessary, and include links to the forms or people to contact to update that information. There should be no need to request evidence from an employee to update details other than a legal name, or dealing with an external licensor or registration body.]

Personal Details	Process details	Evidence Required	Forms / Contact/s
<b>Title</b>	This can be updated to Mrs / Ms / Miss / Mr / Mx	No	
<b>Name</b>	You can use this prior to legally updating your name, including on your email and security pass	No	
<b>Legal name</b>	Your legal name. This is required for legal documents, such as payroll and employment contracts. It can be updated if you have legally changed your name and have supplied documentation (such as a statutory declaration).	Yes	
<b>Gender</b>	Your gender marker can be amended (to M, F, or X), on your personal record	No	
<b>Email</b>	Your email address can be updated to your preferred name, even if it is different to your legal name	No	
<b>Security Pass</b>	If a new security pass is required images will also be updated. [You can update your photo numerous times, as desired.]	No	

<b>Security clearance</b>	[Process required depending on security clearance levels]	Depends	
<b>Other accounts</b>	[List of other systems that will need to be updated]	No	
<b>Name badge, desk plates and business cards</b>	New name badges, desk plates and business cards may be requested.	No	
<b>Licenses</b>		Depends	
<b>Professional registration</b>		Depends	

## 5. Guidelines for management

Employers, management, leadership, and HR departments all play an important role in supporting employees who are affirming their gender at work, and leading by example when it comes to being a trans affirming workplace.

It is important that managers are educated about broad experiences of gender, and issues that trans employees face in the workplace. If an individual approaches you with the intention of affirming their gender, your support is critical. Below are some of the key areas where your assistance is required in this process.

### *5.1. Management as allies*

- Model respectful behaviour
- Always use the correct name and pronouns, even when the employee is not present
- Don't ask invasive or unnecessary questions
- Do not discuss the employee's personal information without their direct consent
- Let colleagues know the appropriate people to direct any questions to (such as yourself)
- Make sure organisation-wide communications and procedures are inclusive
- Address any negative behaviour from colleagues immediately
- Educate yourself, and make sure information and support is available to colleagues

### *5.2. Consultation and collaboration*

When you become aware of an individual who intends to affirm their gender, it is imperative you are supportive, open-minded and honest. Be prepared to discuss their aims and expectations, and ask what they want your role to be throughout the process. Make sure to consider stakeholders, colleagues, policies and procedures existing in the workplace.

It is important to respect the agency of employees affirming their gender, and to let them guide what they want this to look like in the workplace. It is important to remember that consultation should be an ongoing process.

### *5.3. Confidentiality and privacy*

You should maintain confidentiality and privacy in relation to all employee matters. Personal information of employees (including details relating to their gender affirmation, gender identity and/or deadnames) should generally only be used and disclosed with the knowledge and consent of the employee, and disclosed only to those who directly 'need to know' the information in the context of a specific employment function. When working with teams such as HR and IT, it is ideal to have a single point of contact to minimise who has access to this information. Remember that individuals are not required to disclose medical details or other health-related or sensitive information (which may, in certain circumstances, include details of their gender affirmation, identity or deadnames) and you should always obtain their consent to collect that information from them.

Confidentiality and privacy are also key in discussions of workplace diversity. When you talk about being an LGBTQ+ affirming workplace, it's important to do so in a way that does not draw attention to or out an employee without their consent. You should avoid naming them, referring to their role or department, or anything else that may draw unwanted attention to their trans identity.

### *5.4. Language and pronouns*

It is important that you, and any other employee, ask the employee what name and pronouns they would like you to use, rather than to assume. If you repeatedly use the wrong name and/or

pronouns, you are acting in a discriminatory way that is not condoned by [Employer] and may result in disciplinary action. This conduct may also constitute unlawful discrimination, bullying and/or harassment. Please see [Employer] policies on [insert internal policies on discrimination, bullying and harassment].

### *5.5. Developing a workplace plan and/or checklist*

Gender affirmation at work can entail numerous processes and changes to systems, and require the involvement of management, HR, and IT teams. Developing a workplace gender affirmation plan and/or workplace gender affirmation checklist can be useful for managing the various actions required, delineating responsibilities, and setting expectations.

It is recommended that an audit is conducted of the systems, teams, stakeholders, etc. that apply to an individual working within the organisation. Additionally, management should work with the employee to develop a detailed checklist, as what this plan looks like, as this will differ from employee to employee, even in the same organisation, division, or team.

You can use the template in **Appendix II: Example workplace gender affirmation checklist** as a starting point for working out an individualised Workplace Gender Affirmation Checklist.

### *5.6. Leave entitlements*

Providing reasonable flexibility and the ability for the person affirming their gender to access leave in accordance with existing leave policies is essential. Refer to the [Employer] *Workplace Gender Affirmation Policy* for information about leave entitlements.

[Organisation to insert relevant details of gender affirmation leave booking procedure (leave type, documentation requirements, approval process, etc.)]

### *5.7. Facilities*

Bathrooms and changing room access can cause anxiety for some trans people, particularly in the early stages of their gender affirmation. Any person who works at [Employer] has the right to use the bathroom/facility of their choice. Employees should be made aware that they are able to use the toilet of their affirmed gender as soon as they begin their gender affirmation. They should also be made aware of any all-gender toilets available, and be advised that they are free to use these if they wish – however, it is important to not assume that all trans people will want to use all-gender toilets.

If a colleague is concerned or uncomfortable with the facilities someone uses, it may be necessary to develop a plan with that the colleague, for them to use alternative facilities, so that the person affirming their gender can use the facilities of their choice in safety. If alternative facilities are not available, [Employer] will ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the welfare of its employees when using facilities. This may include organising educational programs.

### *5.8. Uniforms and dress code*

The same standards of dress and appearance apply to all employees in our workplace. Trans men, trans women and non-binary employees should dress in a manner that best reflects who they are, while adhering to the requirements of their specific role.

### *5.9. Education and awareness*

A lack of knowledge and awareness can create discomfort, tension and nervousness among employees. While everyone is expected to behave in accordance with policies, there should also be an opportunity for education and questions to be asked related to the gender affirmation process. It may be useful to host information sessions and forums to address concerns and educate employees

who work in the team. The person affirming their gender should be consulted when deciding what education will be provided, and given the opportunity to join in any sessions if they wish to do so.

Contact your HR Representative to organise LGBTQ+ awareness training or ally workshops where needed through our partnership with Pride in Diversity **[delete if not a Pride in Diversity member]**.

#### *5.10. Communication*

At some point in the gender affirmation process, colleagues will become aware of the employee's gender affirmation. It is important to have open conversations with the employee to develop a communications strategy for how people will be informed and what information they are to be given.

Communication will be different in all workplace plans and dialogue can help alleviate any potential difficulties or issues.

The employee may want:

- to personally inform all colleagues of their gender affirmation;
- to personally inform some close colleagues whilst their manager and/or HR representative informs the rest of the team;
- to have their manager and/or HR representative inform colleagues.

In the case that the employee's manager and/or HR representative is to inform colleagues about their gender affirmation, it is important to have a record of the employee's consent to disclose that information, and to keep the employee's privacy and confidentiality at the forefront of their mind. Colleagues may be informed through multiple means such as a confidential email or a scheduled meeting with the employee's team.

Hosting information and awareness sessions for team members and other stakeholders should be considered when developing the workplace plan. Contact your HR Manager to organise trans awareness training or ally workshops where needed.

Respectful communications that are created with involvement from all parties is essential. It is natural for colleagues to be curious; however, most information about gender affirmation may be provided without disclosing the individual's personal information. If colleagues express curiosity about the individual's personal circumstances, or would like more particular questions answered (i.e., expectations of their behaviour), then you must discuss this with the person affirming their gender and not disclose any personal information without their express consent.

For your assistance, an example communication via email can be found in [Appendix III](#).

#### *5.11. Addressing concerns of colleagues*

It is important to monitor the workplace for any tensions arising throughout the process and check in to find out the experience of the person affirming their gender. Addressing expectations, goals and related matters are critical for everyone involved, in order to achieve a positive outcome. Be available to answer questions and be aware of differentiating between personal beliefs and appropriate behaviour. Involving the employee who is affirming their gender in the content (but not necessarily delivery) of the education of colleagues is recommended and the level of involvement will differ in each instance. Our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) providers are also available to provide support and guidance on workplace related matters.

### *5.12. Addressing negativity*

While we hope that the entire experience of someone affirming their gender will be incredibly supportive and respectful, there may be instances of people who struggle with the change. Negative behaviour, destructive gossip and deliberate attempts to isolate or make a person uncomfortable must not be tolerated and need to be handled quickly (some conversations can take place around bathroom use or intentional or ongoing use of the incorrect names or pronouns).

### *5.13. Bullying, discrimination and harassment*

While it is understandable that some colleagues may have questions and concerns about what it means when another employee affirms their gender, this is no excuse for discrimination, harassment, and bullying. Negative behaviour, destructive gossip, and deliberate attempts to isolate or make a person uncomfortable need to be handled quickly. Refer to the *[Employer] Workplace Gender Affirmation Policy* and the **[internal discrimination, bullying and harassment polices]** for further advice.

### *5.14. Further information*

For more information and links to resources, visit [www.transhub.org.au/allies/employers](http://www.transhub.org.au/allies/employers).



## 6. Guidelines for colleagues

Being someone's colleague is a slightly different role to being their friend, and is often less intimate or less knowledgeable about their personal circumstances. If a colleague approaches you intending to affirm their gender, your support is critical. Below are some of the key areas where your assistance is essential to the process.

### *6.1. Sensitivity and respect*

Treat any employee who is affirming their gender with respect and an open-minded attitude. Be ready to ask questions, listen and understand their needs and concerns. All employees deserve to be treated with respect and sensitivity. Support is essential and expected, and transphobic attitudes will not be tolerated.

### *6.2. Language and pronouns*

The most important way you can respect your colleague is by consistently using their affirmed name and pronouns, even if they are different to the name or pronouns you've used for them before. You can learn more about pronouns, including finding a tool to practice pronouns you're less familiar with at <https://www.transhub.org.au/101/pronouns>. If you make a mistake, don't make a big deal about it. Just apologise, move on, and get it right next time.

### *6.3. Referring to the past*

When you talk about the time before your colleague's affirmation, be careful to avoid statements such as "when you were male/female..." because the person may feel that they have always been their current gender and are simply affirming it now.

If you have a long work history with the person, you may talk about experiences you have shared in the past. The best option is to ask the person how they would like you to refer to them when talking about past events. Another way is to avoid gendering the person at all, by referring to the relevant time instead. For example, "In September last year..." or "when you were a child". Be guided by the words they use when they refer to themselves in the past.

### *6.4. Avoid inappropriate questions*

Use caution when asking questions about the person's gender affirmation or identity. Many topics are not appropriate or polite to raise in conversation, and they include:

- the person's anatomy or body, including genitals, internal organs, or other characteristics;
- whether the person has or intends to have surgery;
- whether the person is on gender affirming hormones;
- the person's sexuality (sexuality is not relevant to gender).

If the person raises these issues themselves, and is comfortable discussing these topics, that is alright. But as a general rule, ask yourself, "Would I ask a cisgender colleague this question?"

Importantly, inappropriate questions and comments, particularly where the behaviour is repeated, may constitute discrimination, bullying and /or harassment. Please see [Employer] policies on [insert internal policies on discrimination, bullying and harassment].

### *6.5. Jokes*

Jokes can be discriminatory and cause unintentional harm. A person who is affirming their gender is going through a major, stressful life change. Understandably, they may be sensitive to jokes, especially about their anatomy. If other people make jokes like that, speak up if you can, and say that those kinds of jokes are not appropriate.

### *6.6. Be a trans ally*

An ally is someone who is actively and visibly supportive of others. Key ally actions are:

- Use and encourage others to use the correct name and pronouns. It is ok to make a mistake, correct it and move on. Be mindful not to make a big deal out of it.
- Someone who is beginning to question their gender identity may shift back and forth as they find out what works for them. Be patient, kind and respectful.
- Ensure that bad behaviour is called out. No-one should feel disrespected and sometimes it can be your voice that makes the change.
- Facilities are there to be used, but sometimes difficult to navigate. If you need to be there as a buddy, feel free to accompany someone.
- Remember to listen with an open mind.

Everyone is the expert on their own lives. It is important to remember that being an ally is not something that you can just say once, it is a continual journey.

In accordance with our existing policies, you should maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality and privacy in relation to all employee matters. Information should only be disclosed to people who are already involved in the process, or with the consent of the person who is affirming their gender.

### *6.7. Addressing concerns of colleagues*

A lack of knowledge and awareness can lead to misunderstandings, concerns and tension in the workplace. Be aware of any tensions arising and check in with the person affirming their gender. Addressing expectations, goals and related matters are critical for everyone involved, in order to achieve a positive outcome.

Be available to answer questions and be aware of differentiating between personal beliefs and appropriate behaviour. Our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) providers are also available to provide support and guidance on workplace related matters.

### *6.8. Further information*

For more information and links to resources visit [www.transhub.org.au/allies/colleagues](http://www.transhub.org.au/allies/colleagues).

## Appendix I: Definitions

### Definitions

It is useful to know some of the key terms used by trans and gender diverse (trans) people. Here are some of the most common words and concepts you may come across:

#### *Binary*

Something that is binary consists of two things, or can refer to one of a pair of things. When talking about genders, binary genders are male and female, and non-binary genders are any genders that are not just male or female, or aren't male or female at all.

#### *Brotherboy*

A term used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to describe trans people who have a male spirit and take on men's roles within the community. Brotherboys have a strong sense of their cultural identity.

#### *Cisgender*

A cisgender (cis) person is someone whose gender is the same as what they were assigned at birth, that is, someone who isn't trans or gender diverse.

#### *Deadname*

A term used by some trans people to describe the name they were given and known by prior to affirming their gender and/or coming out and/or inviting in.

#### *Gender affirmation*

This refers to the steps people may take to socially, medically, and/or legally align more with their gender.

#### *Gender dysphoria*

The distress or unease sometimes experienced from being misgendered and/or when someone's gender and body don't feel connected or congruent. Many trans people do not experience gender dysphoria at all, and if they do, may cease with access to gender affirming healthcare and/or peer support. With or without the presence of gender dysphoria, being trans and/or gender diverse is not a mental illness.

#### *Gender diverse*

An umbrella term used to describe genders that demonstrate a diversity of expression and experience outside of cisgender binary experiences. Gender diverse people may or may not consider themselves trans, and may be men, women, non-binary, or may have a personal or culturally specific term to refer to their gender.

#### *GRS*

Genital reconfiguration surgery, sometimes also known as sexual reassignment surgery (SRS), 'bottom surgery', 'lower surgery', and a range of other names. There is no need for an employee to explain that they want or are undergoing GRS at any point, and we advise that any benefits such as leave are not associated with employees accessing medical affirmation processes, including no requirement to provide this level of detail on any medical certificate for a leave application.

#### *HRT/GAHT*

Hormone Replacement Therapy, sometimes also known as GAHT or Gender Affirming Hormonal Therapy. This consists of taking new hormones and/or blocking existing hormones in the body. There

is no need for an employee to explain that they want or are undergoing GAHT at any point, and we advise that any benefits such as leave are not associated with employees accessing medical affirmation processes, including no requirement to provide this level of detail on any medical certificate for a leave application.

### *Legal Gender marker*

The classification recorded when a child's birth is registered. In Australia this is either M or F at birth, and can later be amended to match one's gender on birth certificates, passports, and in other legal systems.

### *Legal name*

A person's name as listed on their birth certificate or other official documentation.

### *Misgendering*

Referring to someone by words or language that is not affirming for them, such as using a former name or pronoun, or making assumptions about their appearance.

### *Non-binary*

This is an umbrella term for any number of genders that sit within, outside of, across or between the spectrum of the male and female binary. A non-binary person might be gender fluid, trans masculine, trans feminine, agender, bigender, or another gender/s.

### *Name (as opposed to previous name, old name, or deadname)*

The name a person uses and is known by, which may or may not be their legal name. It's okay to say name, as opposed to 'preferred name' or 'known name'.

### *Pronouns*

Pronouns are words that we use to refer to people when we're not using their name. These include he/him/his, she/her/hers, and they/them/theirs. Some trans people may prefer that you use their name instead of a pronoun or may prefer more than one pronoun.

### *Sistergirl*

A term used by some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to describe trans people that have a female spirit and take on women's roles within the community. Including looking after children and family. Many Sistergirls live a traditional lifestyle and have strong cultural backgrounds.

### *Trans and gender diverse*

**Trans, trans and gender diverse** or **transgender and gender diverse** are umbrella terms. We use the phrase trans and gender diverse to be as broad and comprehensive as possible in describing members of the many varied communities globally of people with gender identities and expressions that differ from the gender they were presumed to be at birth.

This includes people who have culturally specific and/or language specific experiences, identities or expressions, and/or that are not based on or encompassed by Western conceptualisations of gender or the language used to describe it. Throughout this document we use trans as the shorthand for trans and gender diverse, rather than using an acronym.

Some trans people may consider their gender to be simply female, male, or a non-binary identity, with other trans people positioning 'being trans' as a history or experience. Some trans people connect strongly with their trans experience, whereas others do not. Processes of gender affirmation may or may not be part of a trans or gender diverse person's life. This is different to cisgender people, whose gender is the same to what was presumed for them at birth.

## Appendix II: Example workplace gender affirmation checklist

Every organisation, or parts of an organisation, will use different systems, processes and procedures.

Every employee works with different teams and stakeholders, who may need to be involved in the employee's gender affirmation.

It is recommended that an audit is conducted of the systems, teams, stakeholders, etc. that apply to an individual working within the organisation, to develop a detailed checklist. An example is included below.

Step	Complete	Responsibility	Notes
<b>1. Employee consultation</b>			
i. Identify a first point of contact for the employee	<input type="checkbox"/>	Direct manager	
ii. Create a support team	<input type="checkbox"/>	Direct manager	
iii. Clearly map out roles and responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Direct manager / HR	
<b>2. Privacy and confidentiality</b>			
i. Discuss the boundaries of what information the employee is comfortable sharing and with whom, and seek their express consent for any use or disclosure	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>3. Design a communication strategy</b>			
i. Map out who will need to be informed and what they will need to be informed of	<input type="checkbox"/>		
ii. Plan how the information will be communicated and when	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>4. Setting important dates</b>			
i. Map out any key dates	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>5. Identify what needs to be changed or updated</b>			
Audit of what may need to be changed. This may look different for each employee, even in the same organisation or team, and so is important to conduct for each employee.			
i. Discuss any name, gender marker or photographic identification that may need to be changed	<input type="checkbox"/>		
ii. Identify the systems and records that need to be updated	<input type="checkbox"/>		

iii. Identify what documentation will need to be prepared to implement these changes	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>6. Discuss leave</b>			
i. Discuss leave requirements and available leave entitlements for leave approval	<input type="checkbox"/>		
ii. Discuss if any flexible working arrangements are required	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>7. Employee support</b>			
i. Discuss any additional employee support available	<input type="checkbox"/>	HR	
ii. If a support person is decided on, consult with them and advise on their role	<input type="checkbox"/>	HR	
<b>8. Design a workplace plan</b>			
i. Develop a 'workplace gender affirmation plan' document if desired	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>9. Prepare and provide any required documentation</b>			
i. Collate any required documentation for leave approvals and/or system and record changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Direct manager	
ii. Provide any required documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employee	
<b>10. Update systems and records</b>			
i. Submit request for changes to be made in systems and records	<input type="checkbox"/>	Direct manager / HR	
ii. Provide name, gender marker and photographic identification and any required documentation to update systems and records	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employee	
<b>11. Uniforms (if applicable)</b>			
i. Order any new uniform garments	<input type="checkbox"/>	Direct manager / HR	

## Appendix III: Sample correspondence

The below emails may be used within the workplace to notify relevant staff about an employee's decision to affirm their gender. These emails are examples only and should be varied to suit individual circumstances.

### Draft email – from Employee to Manager

Hi [Manager],

I understand that [Employer] values diversity among its staff and is committed to providing a safe and inclusive workplace for all transgender and gender diverse employees. You may not be aware that I [identify as [insert]/am trans/am gender diverse] and intend to [insert relevant changes (e.g. affirm my gender, transition, etc)] over the coming [weeks/months]. These changes will not impact my ability to carry out my role or responsibilities.

My preferred name is [insert] and my pronouns are [insert].

I would like to meet with you to discuss this important personal matter as I will require [Employer's] support and understanding in the workplace. During our meeting, I am hoping that we can achieve the following:

- Develop a plan and appropriate action items that will allow me to have my gender recognised at work; and
- Discuss some of the key issues raised in [Employer's] Gender Affirmation Policy and Guidelines.

Please let me know when you would be available to meet. I would prefer this meeting to be held [outline preference].

If you have any questions in advance of our meeting, please let me know.

Kind regards,

[Employee]

### Draft email – from Manager to other staff

Hi all,

I wanted to provide you with an important update about some changes within our team.

As you would know, [Employer] values diversity among its staff and is committed to providing a safe and inclusive workplace for all employees.

Your colleague, who was previously known as [Employee], has recently made the decision to affirm their gender and will now be known as [Employee's preferred name] with the pronouns [pronouns]. [Employee's preferred name] has given me [his/her/their] consent to inform you of this change so that we can all support [him/her/them] in the workplace.

I ask that you all help to ensure that [Employee] feels welcome and supported. This includes using [Employee's] preferred name and pronouns. If you make a mistake, just apologise and focus on correcting your mistake next time.

I understand that this might be an unfamiliar concept for some of you and encourage you to refer to [Employer's] Gender Affirmation Policy and Guidelines for more information. You can also reach out to myself, [insert relevant team or person] or our Employee Assistance Provider.

[Employee's preferred name] is also open to respectful questions about their transition and what this means to them. However, please be mindful of the setting in which you are asking any questions and consider whether your questions are appropriate.

I trust that you will all be respectful of [Employee preferred name's] courage and will continue to support them as a colleague.

If you would like to learn more, please take some time to visit [ACON's TransHub](#).

Kind regards,

[Manager]