



Be Prepared...
for new adventure!

SUPPORTING ADULT VOLUNTEERS – GENDER IDENTITY

This Fact Sheet contains practical guidance on supporting adult volunteers with gender identity issues.

Scouts Queensland is committed to diversity and inclusion, and is open to all people regardless of their gender identity.

People who are transgender have a right to be treated as their acquired gender, regardless of what (if any) medical or legal steps they have taken.

Gender reassignment is a protected characteristic of the *Federal Government Guidelines Recognition of Sex and Gender, July, 2013* placing similar obligations on organisations as is required for disability, whether or not the person is undergoing medical treatment.

Discrimination or harassment is against the law, and there is a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that Trans Members can access Scouting, including anticipating the needs of any future members.

How can I support a volunteer who is transgender?

- Respect the person's rights and privacy.
- Reassure the person that you will support them and ask how you can support them. Don't be afraid to ask questions.
- Be sensitive and empathetic; consider how you may feel if you were born with a body that did not match your gender. The individual may have had negative experiences in the past and

their mental health may have been affected by this.

- Don't treat the person differently – treat them as a member of what they consider to be their true gender.
- Ensure when addressing the person, that you use their preferred name and pronouns. If you're unsure, ask. Deal with any mistakes sensitively and simply, and correct by use of the person's preferred name.
- Do not share information about the person's gender identity history or Trans status, unless at the specific request and agreement of the person.
- If needed, you can seek support without revealing the person's name/identity.
- Do not comment on the person's appearance in relation to their acquired gender (their 'passability') unless they specifically ask for your opinion.
- Be prepared for any questions or comments from other volunteers or young people.

What facilities should the person use?

The person has a right to use the toilet facilities of their acquired gender. However, if they are not comfortable with this (particularly if they have recently transitioned), they may wish to use a unisex toilet (e.g. accessible / disabled toilet) instead.

What do I need to think about when planning trips or events?

Be aware that some countries are not as open as Australia, legally and culturally. Some may

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even have laws which make it illegal to be part of the transgender community. Check the laws for the county before you visit, and plan ahead. Consider any border crossing processes (e.g. airport security screening).

How does this affect the Appointments Process?

Be aware that the A1 form (Application for Appointment – Adult Member) asks applicants to state any previous names they have been known by, as it incorporates the information needed for a Blue Card application. Therefore, applicants who are transgender should contact the Membership Support Officer in the Branch Support Office, who can deal with the person’s application separately.

It is a criminal offence for anyone acquiring information about a person’s gender recognition history in an ‘official capacity’, to disclose this to another person, without consent of the person.

How can I support someone undergoing gender reassignment or transition during their role?

A current adult volunteer may inform you that they will be changing their physical appearance, from their birth gender to their acquired gender. Careful preparation and planning is needed, to support the volunteer.

We would recommend a private discussion with the volunteer, to discuss how they would like to proceed and how you can support them. You can discuss a range of options, as appropriate, including:

- Remaining continuously at the same Group;
- Having a break for a number of weeks or months, then returning to the Group as the opposite gender; and,
- If the person is uncomfortable remaining within the same Group, they may wish to move to a different Group, starting their new role in their acquired gender.

It may be appropriate to plan (alongside the

volunteer) a discussion with young people or parents/carers. In this case, we recommend the following is considered, when working together to determine the best course of action:

- Current awareness of the Group involved and the characteristics/dynamics of the young people, parents, etc.;
- Who the person is comfortable confiding in;
- Keeping the volunteers’ thoughts and feelings at the centre; and,
- It is important to update all communication and records as soon as possible, to the correct pronouns and name. You do **not** need to ask for proof for their records to be altered (e.g. to show their Gender Recognition Certificate).

How do I respond to any volunteers in my District/Region who are not inclusive of transgender Members?

Volunteers should be reminded of their commitment to our Diversity and Inclusion QBSI and their team leader should support them to change their practise. Often, a lack of awareness or understanding can be to blame, and some education may be needed. This could involve discussion, or it may be useful to arrange an awareness raising session in your District/Region. Our team of Specialist Advisers for Inclusion and Diversity may be able to support you with this.

It is the responsibility of all adults to act as role models by celebrating diversity and creating an environment in which all Members can enjoy safe, inclusive Scouting.

*Adapted with permission from UK Scouts
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