



Gender Diversity Policy

Introduction

Bentstix Hockey Club is an inclusive club that welcomes hockey player at all levels, regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion, nationality, age or ability. BHC recognises all gender identities and supports participants regardless of the gender that they identify with and how they express it.

Bentstix Hockey Club (BHC) acknowledges that strong evidence exists that trans, gender diverse and intersex people face significant barriers to participation in sports, and when they do participate, frequently face discrimination and harassment. For this reason, BHC has drafted the following Policy to ensure that anyone wishing to play hockey for our club can do so in a safe, supportive environment.

Definitions

Gender: Gender is a part of one's internal sense of self. It can be female, male, neither, a combination of both, or exist completely outside that. A person's relationship with their gender can also change over time.

Trans or gender diverse: Umbrella terms that describe people who identify differently to the legal sex that was assigned to them at birth.

Gender expression: ways in which one communicates masculinity or femininity (or both or neither) externally. This is done through physical appearance including clothing, hairstyles, cosmetics. It also includes mannerisms such as the way a person speaks or behavioural patterns and other personal traits.

Non-binary: Any gender identity which does not fit within the binary of male and female.

Cisgender: is when one does exclusively identify as that they were assigned at birth.

Background

A report on LGBT experiences in Victorian sport indicates that "[t]ransgender participants identified a number of ways in which they were excluded associated with their gender identity, and the more rigid and traditional interpretations and organisation of gender in sport" (Symons et al 2010, pp 9).

As gender is a strong organising feature in sport, and drives subsequent expectations about how people should act and appear, the report concluded that "transgression from ... norms around gender and sexuality is punished in sport, and particularly in team sport" (Symons et al 2010, pp 7). The report found "experiences of discrimination based on this ignorance and prejudice, a lack of policies to enable their participation in sport, concerns with using change rooms, and being accepted and fitting in" (Symons et al 2010, pp 7).

The experience of gender diverse players in other states is not different. In the Australian Capital Territory, the Inclusive Sport Survey found that most people surveyed were 'not out' regarding their sexuality and/or being transgender (ACT Government 2014, pp 6). Furthermore, 40.8 per cent of respondents had felt unsafe in a sporting environment and that 58.4 per cent of respondents did not know if their club or recreation provider had anti-discrimination policies regarding sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status (ACT Government 2014, pp 6).

While data from other states is not currently available, the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC, 2015b) launched a national survey in 2015 on the participation of trans, gender diverse and intersex people in sport to ensure their rights are protected in the policies and practices of sporting codes. In announcing the survey, Human Rights Commissioner Tim Wilson acknowledged that in a national consultation while some "transgender, gender diverse and intersex people reported positive experiences in sport participation; others said they have experienced exclusion, violence and harassment on the basis of their gender identity or intersex status" (AHRC 2015b). The Australian Human Rights Commission's Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Intersex (SOGII) Rights Report notes that lived experience of unjust discrimination can significantly limit an individual's sense of security to publicly participate in sports (AHRC 2015a).

Our Commitment

BHC is committed to providing a safe space for trans, gender diverse and intersex people to play hockey and seeks to ensure that members do not experience unjust discrimination or harassment while playing hockey.

Inclusion of Trans, Gender Diverse and Intersex Players

BHC is committed to facilitating participation in hockey for all on the basis of the gender with which each person identifies. As such, BHC will facilitate registrations for players under the gender with which they identify. BHC acknowledges that gender is not binary, and not all people are or identify as either female or male, or women or men. The club recognises that transitioning and living as a trans, gender diverse or intersex individual can be an isolating experience, and many face rejection and exclusion from various social groups (including family, work and sport) and violence and harassment from the community at large.

BHC registers teams in both winter and summer hockey leagues across Sydney. Where these competitions are gendered male or female, BHC will work with the various hockey associations to support all players to play for a team of the gender with which they most closely identify. We will seek support from external advisors and/or community organisations, when required.

As all clubs have the same capacity to register trans, gender diverse and intersex players, BHC does not accept that one team has an unfair advantage over any other due to their inclusion. BHC has assisted, and will continue to assist, other clubs within the relevant associations in developing an inclusive culture within their club.

Code of Conduct and Action Plan

The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission Guideline on Transgender People and Sport outlines how clubs have a positive duty to take reasonable and proportionate steps to prevent discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation under anti-discrimination law. This positive duty focuses on eliminating the causes of discrimination, not just responding to complaints that arise, and clubs are vicariously liable for their staff (Human Rights Commission, 2015). In New South Wales, similar provisions exist under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977. BHC commits to establishing a trans, gender diverse and intersex working party of members to guide and advise policy in this area. Inclusive policy and practice in this area requires the review of our club of a code of conduct, sensitivity training and an action plan to guide players, referees, clubs and coaches on the field.

References

ACT Government (2014), 'Inclusive Sport Survey', Report, April. AHRC (Australian Human Rights Commission) (2015a), 'Resilient Individuals: Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity & Intersex Rights', Report, 10 June.

AHRC (Australian Human Rights Commission) (2015b), 'Survey on Transgender, Gender Diverse and Intersex Rights In Sport', Media release, 20 August.

ASADA (Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority) (2015), 'In Advance TUEs', ASADA website, 15 February, Available at <https://www.asada.gov.au/substances/therapeutic-use-exemption/advance-tues>.

Symons, C, Sbaraglia, M, Hillier, L and A Mitchell (2010), 'Come Out To Play. The LGBT Sport.

Flying Bats Football Club Gender Diversity Policy 2016

Cricket Victoria Trans and Gender Diverse Participation Guidelines 2019