



**Canadian Deaf Sports Association  
Policy Manual – Diversity and Inclusion for LGBTQIA+**

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## 1. Definitions

This Policy's key terms are defined below:

- a. **Sex:**  
The classification of people as male, female, or intersex. Sex is usually assigned at birth and is based on a person's reproductive system, hormones, chromosomes, and other physical characteristics.
- b. **Gender identity:**  
A person's innermost sense of their gender. This can include man, woman, both, neither, or something else entirely. Gender also refers to various social and behavioural characteristics (e.g., appearance and mannerisms). People may use many different words to talk about their gender identity and expression.
- c. **Gender expression:**  
The way an individual communicates their gender identity to others. This is done through behaviour, body language, voice, emphasis or de-emphasis of bodily characteristics, clothing choices, hairstyle, and make-up and/or accessories. The traits and behaviours associated with masculinity and femininity are culturally specific and change over time.
- d. **Gender binary:**  
A social system whereby people are thought to have either one of two genders: man or woman. These genders are expected to correspond to the sex assigned at birth: male or female. In the gender binary system, there is no room for diversity outside of man or woman (such as living between genders), or crossing the binary. The gender binary system is rigid and restrictive for many people who feel that their assigned sex at birth does not match their gender.
- e. **Cisgender:**  
A term for someone whose gender identity corresponds with their assigned sex (e.g., someone whose gender identity is man and who was assigned male at birth).
- f. **LGBTQIA+:**  
An umbrella acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual, and two-spirit. Other acronyms commonly used are LGBTQ+ and LGBTQ2.
- g. **Trans:**  
An umbrella term for people with diverse gender identities and expressions that do not conform to stereotypical ideas about gender. It includes but is not limited to people who identify as transgender, cross-dressers (adjective), or gender nonconforming (gender diverse or genderqueer).
- h. **Trans-spectrum:**  
When one is on the trans-spectrum, this individual is under the trans umbrella. See the definition above for "trans."

- i. **Two-spirit:**  
An umbrella term used by some Indigenous people rather than, or in addition to, identifying as LGBTQ. This term affirms the interrelatedness of all aspects of identity—including gender, sexuality, community, culture, and spirituality.
- j. **Intersex:**  
A general term used for a variety of situations in which a person is born with reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't fit the traditional boxes of "female" or "male."
- k. **Sexual orientation:**  
Sexual orientation describes human sexuality, such as gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, and heterosexual. A person's gender identity is fundamentally different from and not related to their sexual orientation. Identifying as trans does not predict or reveal anything about a person's sexual orientation. A trans person may identify as gay, lesbian, queer, straight, or bisexual.

## 2. Purpose

The Canadian Deaf Sports Association will reflect the diversity, equity, and inclusion of the LGBTQIA+ in its administration, policies, programs, and activities. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that the Canadian Deaf Sports Association provides LGBTQIA+ individuals with a complete and equitable range of opportunities to participate and lead. This Policy also aims to ensure the Canadian Deaf Sports Association takes the necessary steps to benefit from diverse perspectives, skills, and experiences in its governance, programs, and operations.

## 3. Application and Scope

This policy and practice guide applies to the Canadian Deaf Sports Association as follows:

- a. It shall be binding on the Board of Directors.
- b. It shall be binding on all staff, including managers and supervisors, as well as full-time, casual, temporary, or permanent staff.
- c. It shall inform all aspects of employment, recruitment, and selection; conditions and benefits; training and promotion; task allocation; shifts; hours; washroom arrangements; workload; workplace environment; equipment; and transportation.
- d. It shall be binding on all volunteers and interns acting in their designated capacities with our organization (e.g., as a member of a formal committee or ad hoc working group, or at a specific sporting event) provided the volunteer or intern has expressly agreed to be subject to it.
- e. It shall inform all aspects of participation in our sports, including team selection and participation, membership, and service delivery (e.g., providing coaching services).
- f. It shall be applicable whether the individual is on-site or off-site, performing after-hours work, at work-related social functions, or at conferences—wherever staff, volunteers, or interns may be in the service of their duties.
- g. It shall govern the treatment of other staff, association members (including athletes, coaches, and officials), clients, and the public encountered in the provision of services and other organizational duties.

#### 4. Guiding Principles

The following principles guided the Canadian Deaf Sports Association in developing our policies and practices on LGBTQIA+ inclusion in our sports:

- a. People of LGBTQIA+ identities should have equal opportunities to participate in our sports and strive for excellence at all levels and capacities.
- b. Policies governing participation of people with LGBTQIA+ identities should nurture fair play, honesty, respect, and integrity.
- c. Policies governing participation of people with LGBTQIA+ identities in our sports should embrace diversity and inclusion, resulting in a positive sporting experience, free of discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.
- d. Participation in our sports should celebrate differences and focus on the benefits and joy of sports.
- e. Policies governing the participation of LGBTQIA+ people, particularly for our athletes, should be evidence-based, recognize the necessity to protect the privacy rights of LGBTQIA+ people, and strive to prevent physical, emotional, and mental harm.
- f. Practices that encourage understanding and support people with LGBTQIA+ identities must be enhanced to acknowledge the challenges and recognize the value of advocating for fair, safe, and open sports.

#### 5. Policy Statement on Creating Respectful Environments for LGBTQIA+ Individuals

a. **Confidentiality**

The Canadian Deaf Sports Association is committed to keeping individuals' LGBTQIA+ identities confidential. If an individual has given the permission to share their identity, it should be applied only to the scope/area for which they've given their permission. The Canadian Deaf Sports Association will not share information with anyone about the sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, intersex condition, or transgender status of an individual without their informed consent.

b. **Location**

The Canadian Deaf Sports Association will strive to advocate that international deaf sporting events do not take place in locations where the fundamental rights of LGBTQIA+ individuals are not protected.

## 6. Policy Statement on Creating Respectful Environments for Trans individuals

### a. Chosen name and pronouns

We will make every effort to learn and use the chosen names and pronouns of our staff and members. We recognize that not respecting an individual's gender identity or expression by deliberately continuing to use either an incorrect name (deadnaming and dead sign naming) or pronouns (misgendering) is discriminatory and will not be tolerated.

### b. Safeguarding an Individual's Right to Privacy and Confidentiality

The Canadian Deaf Sports Association recognizes the privacy rights of all our staff and members. We will only ask for information about gender from our staff and members (a) when it is critical to the services or programs offered, (b) for which there are no consequences for abstaining, and (c) in a manner that is inclusive. We will respect and safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of any staff or member who is trans, because failure to do so may place that individual at risk.

### c. Use of toilets, change rooms, and other facilities

The Canadian Deaf Sports Association make efforts to providing staff and members who identify as trans with safe access and use of toilets, change rooms, and other facilities according to their gender identity or gender expression. We will seek to accomplish this in a discreet, confidential, and sensitive manner that does not reveal an individual's trans identity or expression, respecting their choices. We will also work with other teams and host organizations to ensure respectful treatment of any staff or member who identifies as trans by their coaches, officials, spectators, and the media.

### d. Gender-inclusive attire, images, and language

We will ensure that our dress codes for all staff and members, including team uniforms on and off the field of play, respect an individual's gender identity and expression. The images that we use in our written, video, and online materials will reflect the diversity of our staff and members, using gender-inclusive language.

### e. Supporting Transitioning Individuals

The Canadian Deaf Sports Association is committed to having the necessary supports for staff and members to successfully transition within our sports Association, ensuring they are treated with respect and dignity and according to their expressed needs.

### f. Eligibility Requirements for Participation in Gendered Competitions

#### i. National competitions:

Participants in The Canadian Deaf Sports Association's events under our authority can participate in the gender category in which they identify. For example, in such events, individuals identifying as a girl or woman are eligible to compete with other girls and women, as well as in mixed teams. All identifications of gender identity and expression by our athletes are believed to be made in good faith and do not require further disclosure or documentation.

#### ii. International and other competitions outside our jurisdictions:

The Canadian Deaf Sports Association will keep informed of related eligibility policies in international and other competitions outside our jurisdictions that may impact our trans athletes. We will ensure our trans athletes know about and understand these eligibility requirements and we will work with them at their request to fully support their eligibility choices.

**g. Canadian Anti-Doping Program (CADP) Requirements**

The Canadian Deaf Sports Association encourages trans athletes to seek information regarding the status of any medications they are using to determine their Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUE) requirements for the use of prohibited medications, and to ensure compliance with the CADP and World Anti-Doping Code requirements where necessary. The Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport aids all athletes with these tasks.

**h. Hosting Guidelines and Selection**

When submitting a bid to host an event to the Canadian Deaf Sports Association, potential hosts are required to indicate what changing areas, toilets, and showers are available, including private, separate changing, showering, and toilet facilities, should these be requested by a trans participant. Potential hosts that do not have these facilities in place would not be excluded from consideration as event hosts. However, if a host organization is selected where these requirements are not met, the organization would be expected to work with the Canadian Deaf Sports Association to provide comparable accommodations.

**7. Conflict Resolution Process for LGBTQIA+ Individuals and/or Issues**

- a. Any staff or member of the Canadian Deaf Sports Association who feels they have been discriminated against, bullied, harassed, assaulted, vilified, or otherwise victimized based on sexuality and/or gender identity or expression is strongly encouraged to take appropriate action through our Independent Complaint Process, as described here: <https://assc-cdsa.com/en/independant-third-party-make-a-complaint/> .
- b. Any staff or member of the Canadian Deaf Sports Association who witnesses an individual being discriminated against, bullied, harassed, assaulted, vilified, or otherwise victimized based on sexuality or gender identity or expression is strongly encouraged to take appropriate action through the Canadian Deaf Sports Association, as described here: <https://assc-cdsa.com/en/independant-third-party-make-a-complaint/> .
- c. Any staff or member who does not feel safe or confident to pursue such action may seek assistance from
  - a member of the CDSA Board of Directors
  - OR
  - a neutral person chosen by the person to communicate with the CDSA office

for advice, support, or action on their behalf.

## **8. Decision-Making**

The Canadian Deaf Sports Association is committed to equitably reflecting the LGBTQIA+ in its programs, resources, and services. Thus, the Canadian Deaf Sports Association will:

- a. Consider the needs of the LGBTQIA+ community when its decisions could impact staff and members who are a part of the LGBTQIA+.
- b. Create safer spaces for LGBTQIA+ individuals so they can focus on their excellence in sports.
- c. Create and support new resources and visibility that will make safer spaces for the LGBTQIA+.
- d. Monitor and evaluate the progress of the LGBTQIA+ community inclusion in programming, resources, and services.
- e. Provide opportunities to LGBTQIA+ participants within its activities and programs based on their skills, knowledge, and abilities. The Canadian Deaf Sports Association will also ensure participants are neither disadvantaged nor denied access because of their LGBTQIA+ identities, pursuant to federal human rights legislation.

## **9. Ongoing Commitment to LGBTQIA+ Inclusion and Diversity**

The Canadian Deaf Sports Association is committed to educating our staff and members on the importance of LGBTQIA+ inclusion and what this looks like in practices, policies, procedures, and norms of behaviour.

## **10. Evaluation**

The Canadian Deaf Sports Association commits to ongoing monitoring of developments regarding implementing this Policy, including any unintended consequences. To accomplish this, the Association will:

- a. Report annually on actions taken for the first two years from the date the policy was adopted. From the third year, carry out an evaluation of the policy every 3 years.
- b. Reports will be reviewed by appropriate representatives from the LGBTQIA+ community, including individuals on the trans-spectrum.