



## Grand Valley State University Athletic Department's Policy on Transgender Student-Athletes

### Statement of Inclusion:

Possessing and mastering a range of thoughtful perspectives is necessary for open inquiry, a liberal education, and a healthy community. Recognizing this, the University seeks to include, engage, and support a diverse group of students, faculty, and staff. The institution values a multiplicity of opinions and backgrounds, and is dedicated to incorporating multiple voices and experiences into every aspect of its operations. We are committed to building institutional capacity and strengthening our liberal education through providing an inclusive environment for all of our University constituents.

### Transgender Policy for GVSU Athletics:

A transgender student athlete will be allowed to participate in any varsity sports activity so long as that athlete's use of hormone therapy, if any, is consistent with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) existing policies on banned substances. Specifically, a transgender student-athlete will be allowed to participate in varsity sports activities under the following conditions:

### Participation on Varsity Sports Teams

- A. Transgender student athletes who are undergoing hormone treatment
  1. A **trans female** (MTF) student-athlete who is being treated with testosterone suppression medication for Gender Identity Disorder or Gender Dysphoria and/or Transsexualism, may participate on a men's team at any time, but must complete one year of testosterone suppression treatment before competing on a women's team.
  2. A **trans male** (FTM) student-athlete who is taking medically prescribed testosterone related to diagnoses of a Gender Identity Disorder or Gender Gysphoria and/or Transsexualism may not participate on a women's team after beginning such treatment, and must be granted a medical exception for

treatment with testosterone from the NCAA prior to competing on a men's team because testosterone is a banned substance.

3. In any case where a student athlete is taking hormone treatment related to Gender Identity Disorder or Gender Dysphoria and/or Transsexualism that treatment must be monitored by a physician and GVSU must receive regular reports about the athlete's eligibility according to these guidelines.

**B. Transgender student athletes who are NOT undergoing hormone treatment**

1. Any transgender student athlete who is not undergoing hormone treatment related to gender transition may participate in varsity sports activities in accordance with his or her assigned birth gender.
2. A trans male (FTM) student-athlete who is not being treated with testosterone related to gender transition may participate on a men's or women's team.
3. A trans female (MTF) student-athlete who is not undergoing testosterone suppression treatment related to gender transition may not compete on a women's team.

**Implementation Process**

**A. The student's responsibility**

- In order to avoid challenges to a transgender student's participation during a sport season, a student athlete who has completed, plans to initiate, or is in the process of taking hormones as part of a gender transition shall submit the request to participate on a sports team in writing to the athletic director upon matriculation or when the decision to undergo hormonal treatment is made.
- The student shall submit his or her request to the athletic director or his/her designee. The request shall include a letter from the student's physician documenting the student's intention to transition or the student's transition status if the process has already been initiated. This letter shall identify the prescribed hormonal treatment for the student's gender transition and documentation of the student's testosterone levels, if relevant.

**B. Grand Valley State's responsibility**

1. The athletic director or his/her designee and the Head Athletic Trainer shall meet with the student to review eligibility requirements and procedure for approval of transgender participation.

2. The athletic director or his/her designee shall notify the NCAA and the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) of the student's request to participate.
3. If a student's request is denied by the athletic director or his/her designee, the decision must be automatically reviewed by a Transgender Participation Committee to be established by a school administrator. This committee shall be convened and its decision reported to the athletic director or his/her designee and the school administrator in a timely fashion.

This committee will include:

- A health care professional, e.g. physician, psychiatrist, psychologist or other licensed health professional with experience in transgender health care and the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) Standards of Care. The student athlete's physician can serve in this role.
  - The faculty athletic representative; and
  - The university Title IX Coordinator
4. The athletic director or his/her designee will inform the NCAA and the GLIAC of the appeal outcome.
  5. GVSU and the Center for Drug Free Sport will confirm that the treatment requirement has been met.
  6. GVSU will petition to the NCAA for transgender student-athletes, subject to a one-year transition period, to request an extension of their eligibility at the end of their transition period.
  7. An opposing institution may only challenge a transgender student-athlete's approved eligibility through a formal appeal process through the appropriate oversight body.
  8. All discussions among involved parties and required written supporting documentation should be kept confidential, unless the student-athlete makes a specific request otherwise. All information about an individual student's transgender identity and medical information, including physician's information provided pursuant to this policy, shall be maintained confidentially.

## Additional Guidelines

### A. Facilities Access

1. Changing Areas, Toilets, Showers – Transgender student-athletes will be able to use the locker room, showers and toilet facilities consistent with the student's gender identity. Every effort will be made to have private, enclosed changing areas, showers and toilets for use by any athlete who desires them. When requested by the transgender student-athlete, GVSU will make every effort to provide separate changing, showering and toilet facilities for the student's use, however transgender student-athletes shall not be required to use separate facilities
2. Competition at another institution – If a transgender student-athlete requires a particular accommodation to ensure access to appropriate changing, showering or bathroom facilities, the GVSU Athletics Director or his/her designee, in consultation with the transgender student-athlete, will notify their counterparts at other institutions prior to competition to ensure that the student has access to facilities that are comfortable and safe. This notification will maintain the student's confidentiality. Under no circumstances will the student-athlete's identity as a transgender person be disclosed without the student's express permission.
3. Hotel rooms – Transgender student-athletes will be assigned to share hotel rooms based on their gender identity, with recognition that any student who needs extra privacy should be accommodated whenever possible.

### B. Language

1. Preferred Names – In all cases, teammates, coaches and administrators will refer to transgender student-athletes by their preferred name.
2. Pronouns – In all cases, pronoun references to transgender student-athletes will reflect the student's gender and pronoun preferences.

### C. Dress Codes and Team Uniforms

1. Dress Codes – While representing the institution, transgender student-athletes will be permitted to dress consistently with their gender identities, while conforming to GVSU athletic department standards.
2. Uniforms – All team members will have access to uniforms that are appropriate for their sport and that they feel comfortable wearing. No student-athlete will be required to wear a gendered uniform that conflicts with the student's gender identity.

## Enforcement and Non-Retaliation

- A. Enforcement – Any member of the GVSU athletics department who has been found to have violated this policy by threatening to withhold athletic opportunity or harassing any student on the basis of their gender identity or expression, or by breaching medical confidentiality will be subject to disciplinary action. Any member of the athletics department who becomes aware of conduct that violates this policy should immediately report the conduct to the Athletics Director. A formal report will be made through the appropriate office as it relates to the specific violation of this policy.
  - Withholding of athletic opportunity/Harassment: Office of Inclusion & Equity
  - Breaching medical confidentiality: Athletic Director
- B. Retaliation – Retaliation is specifically forbidden against anyone who complains about discrimination based on gender identity or expression. The GVSU athletics department will take steps to prevent any retaliation against any person who makes such a complaint.
- C. Anti-Harassment Policy – Should this policy be violated, steps will be taken in accordance with the University Anti-Harassment Policy.

## Education

- A. Institutions – All members of the athletic department will receive information and education about transgender identities, institutional and conference non-discrimination policies, the use of preferred names and pronouns, and expectations for creating a respectful team and school climate for all students, including transgender and gender-variant students.

## Media

- A. Training – All school or athletics representatives (sports information departments and personnel, school leaders, athletics administrators, team members, and coaches) who are authorized to speak with the media will receive information about appropriate terminology, use of names and pronouns, and school and athletics conference policies regarding the participation of transgender student-athletes on school sports teams.
- B. Confidentiality – Protecting the privacy of transgender student-athletes is a top priority for all athletics department and affiliated school personnel, particularly when in the presence of the media. All medical information shall be kept confidential in accordance with the applicable state, local and federal privacy laws.