Gender Equity Policy

Policy Statement

1. Water Polo West is committed to broadening access, ensuring opportunity, and equitably distributing resources for all participants of Water Polo in British Columbia.

Background

1. All individuals, regardless of gender, should have equitable opportunities to take part in the sport of water polo as a participant, coach, official, administrator or leader.
2. Gender equity is the belief and practice of treating all persons of all genders and sexes in ways that are fair and just.
3. The concept of equity requires consideration of the unique needs, interests and experiences of the target group and the elimination of gender and sex-based discriminatory practices which are barriers to full participation.

Objective

1. Water Polo West will play a leadership role in raising awareness and understanding of gender equity amongst its members by establishing:
	1. Fair, unbiased, and equitable opportunities to participate in quality sport and physical activity programming, attain and sustain leadership roles, and access resources and facilities; and
	2. A safe, supportive, inclusive, and relevant environment for sport participation.

Application

1. Water Polo West is committed to increasing the level of participation in programs and leadership by:
	1. Using gender neutral language in the organization’s bylaws, policies and publications.
	2. Declaring that it is an equal opportunity employer and respecting the principles of pay equity.
	3. Striving to have a gender balance in the appointment of all committees and the board of directors.
	4. Ensuring equitable opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity are provided for all genders by:
		1. Making gender equity a key consideration when developing, updating and delivering programming;
		2. Working proactively to identify and eliminate barriers facing underrepresented groups in Water Polo;
		3. Ensuring funding and resources are equitably distributed to all genders; and
		4. Collecting gender-based statistics on an annual basis.
	5. Increasing exposure and building awareness of gender equity in all aspects of Water Polo*.*
	6. Supporting inclusion, equity and access for underrepresented groups including LGBTQ+ individuals, women, Indigenous peoples, and people with disabilities.
	7. Continually evaluating the organization’s progress towards a more inclusive sport system.

Guiding Principles

1. Water Polo West (WPW) supports the recommendations outlined in *Creating Inclusive Environments for Trans Participants in Canadian Sport*, the guidance document developed by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) Trans Inclusion in Sport Expert Working Group. WPW adopts the following policy guidance statements in the development of this Inclusion Policy:
	1. Individuals participating in developmental and recreational sport [LTAD stages: Active Start, FUNdamental, Learn to Train, Train to Train, Train to Compete (until international federation rules apply) and Active for Life] should be able to participate in the gender category with which they identify and not be subject to requirements for disclosure of personal information beyond those required of cisgender athletes. Nor should there be any requirement for hormonal therapy or surgery.
	2. Hormone therapy should not be required for an individual to participate in high-performance sport [LTAD stages: Train to Compete (once international federation rules become a factor) and Train to Win] in the gender category that is consistent with their gender identity, unless the sport organization can prove that hormone therapy is a reasonable and bona fide requirement.
	3. Individuals should not be required to disclose their trans identity or history to the sport organization in order to participate in high-performance sport [LTAD stages: Train to Compete (once international federation rules become a factor) and Train to Win] unless there is a justified reason requiring them to do so.
	4. Surgical intervention should not be required for an individual to participate in high-performance sport [LTAD stages: Train to Compete (once international federation rules become a factor) and Train to Win] in the gender category that is consistent with their gender identity.

Definitions

1. The following terms have these meanings in this document:
	1. ***Cisgender*** means a term to describe a person whose gender identity corresponds with their birth-assigned sex (e.g. someone whose gender identity is man and was assigned male at birth).
	2. **FINA** means Fédération Internationale de Natation
	3. ***Gender*** means the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a society assigns to masculinity or femininity
	4. ***Gender Expression*** means 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, choice of clothing, hairstyle, and wearing make-up and/or accessories. The traits and behaviours associated with masculinity and femininity are culturally specific and change over time
	5. ***Gender Identity*** means a person’s innermost sense of their own gender. This can include man, woman, both, neither or something else entirely. Gender also refers to a variety of social and behavioral characteristics (e.g. appearance, mannerisms)
	6. ***Gender reassignment*** means a medically-supervised program of treatment to transition a person’s body to align with their gender identity through hormone therapy and/or surgery
	7. ***Intersex*** means a combination of features that distinguish male and female anatomy
	8. ***Sex*** means the classification of people as male, female or intersex. Sex is usually assigned at birth and is based on an assessment of a person’s reproductive system, hormones, chromosomes and other physical characteristics, most notably external genitalia
	9. ***Trans*** means an umbrella term that describes people with diverse gender identities and gender expressions that do not conform to stereotypical ideas about what it means to be a girl/woman or boy/man in society. It includes but is not limited to people who identify as transgender, transsexual, cross dressers (adjective) or gender non-conforming (gender diverse or genderqueer).
	10. ***Transgender Female*** means someone who was assigned the male sex at birth, but whose gender identity is female
	11. ***Transgender Male*** means someone who was assigned female sex at birth, but whose gender identity is male
	12. ***WPC*** means Water Polo Canada
	13. ***WPW*** means Water Polo West

Purpose

1. WPW believes that all individuals deserve to participate in respectful and inclusive environments that value the individual’s gender identity and gender expression. WPW seeks to ensure that all participants have access to programming and facilities in which they feel safe and comfortable. WPW is committed to implementing this policy in a fair and equitable manner.

Actions for Inclusion

1. WPW pledges to:
	1. Provide this Policy to staff, directors, its members and all persons and provide education on the importance of trans inclusion and all that it entails in terms of practices, policies, procedures and norms of behaviour.
	2. Provide registration forms and other documents that allow:
		1. the individual to indicate their gender identity and expression, rather than their sex or gender; and
		2. the individual to abstain from indicating a gender identity with no consequence to the individual
	3. Maintain organizational documents and the WPW website in a manner that promotes inclusive language and images
	4. Allow individuals to indicate their preferred name and pronoun and refer to individuals by their preferred name and pronoun
	5. Work with trans athletes or advocates on the implementation, monitoring and/or modification of this Policy
	6. When WPW has the authority to determine participants’ use of washrooms, change rooms, and other facilities, that individuals be permitted to use the facilities of their gender identity
	7. Ensure uniforms and dress codes that respect an individual’s gender identity and gender expression
	8. Determine Eligibility Guidelines for transgender participants (as described in this Policy)

Eligibility Guidelines - Exceptions

1. When applicable, the eligibility guidelines of FINA, and/or any major event regarding trans athlete participation will supersede the eligibility guidelines as outlined in this Policy.

Eligibility Guidelines

1. At both recreational and competitive levels, an individual may participate in their expressed and identified gender category.
2. Individuals are not required to disclose their trans identity or history to WPW or any of their representatives (e.g., coaches, staff, Directors, officials, etc.).
3. All athletes must be aware that they may be subject to doping control testing pursuant to the Canadian Anti-Doping Program. Trans athletes undergoing gender reassignment are encouraged to contact the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) to determine what procedures, if any, are required to obtain a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE).

Confidentiality

1. WPW will not disclose any information about an individual’s gender identity and expression to any third parties without permission. Individuals’ privacy and confidentiality are paramount.

Ongoing Monitoring

1. WPW commits to monitoring ongoing developments regarding national and international participation guidelines for trans athletes and pledges to monitor the implementation, review and/or revise this policy whenever new information becomes available.

Resolving Gender Identity and Expression Issues

1. Should an individual feel they have been subject to, or witness, discrimination, bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, vilification or victimization based on gender identity or expression, they should take appropriate action through WPW’s Code of Conduct with Disciplinary Procedures. Should the person not feel safe in doing so, they should seek assistance from the Executive Director of WPW for advice and support, or action on their behalf.

Appeal

1. Any decision rendered by WPW in connection with this policy may be appealed in accordance with WPW’s Appeals Policy.