



Athletics Canada Policy on Transgender and Gender Diversity Inclusion

Preamble

Athletics Canada believes all people, regardless of age, gender, sex, ethnicity, or ability, should have the opportunity to participate in athletics.

It is widely known that inclusive and safe sport benefits all participants^{1 2 3}. These benefits include increasing self-esteem⁴, developing sound work habits, perseverance in the face of obstacles⁵, improved academic attainment⁶, reduced youth criminalization⁷, and improved physical and mental health outcomes.^{8 9} Studies confirm that people who are excluded from sport on the basis of their gender identity, gender expression, or intersex status do not reap the benefits of sport¹⁰. In fact, exclusion from sport further isolates and marginalizes this vulnerable group, exacerbating negative social and health outcomes¹¹.

Athletics Canada also acknowledges the importance of maintaining fairness and competitive integrity for the women's competitive category. Our aim is to eliminate barriers to participation for transgender and gender diverse athletes, while also maintaining the integrity and fairness in the women's competitive category.

At all times, Athletics Canada shall respect the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and act in a manner consistent with the Canadian Human Rights Act, 1985. Athletics Canada also recognizes that Bill C-16 (an act to amend the Canadian human rights act and the criminal code) adds gender identity and expression to the list of prohibited grounds of discrimination in Canada^{12 13 14 1}.

Athletics Canada also acknowledges that the governing bodies for Athletics, World Athletics and World Para Athletics, determines the parameters for qualification for International Competitions which impacts athletes and their ability to compete in these competitions.

This policy has practical applications in two main areas:

1. Grassroots Competitions - for local competitions, fun runs, and other athletic events that are geared towards participation rather than performance (e.g., any domestic competition that is not sanctioned by World Athletics or World Para Athletics), athletes shall be able to compete in the competitive category in which they identify. There shall be no restrictions placed on transgender or gender diverse athlete participants.

2. World Athletics Sanctioned Competitions - any competition that is categorized and/or sanctioned by World Athletics or World Para Athletics must adhere to World Athletics or World Para Athletics regulations for transgender athletes. The policy that follows indicates how transgender or gender diverse athletes may compete in the competitive category in which they identify.

Definitions:

Athlete: refers to any individual registered as a participant/competitor within Athletics Canada.

Area Association: World Athletics is divided into six (6) geographical regions of the world called "Areas". Each Area has an Area Association which has delegated authority from World Athletics to make decisions in their Area in accordance with the World Athletics Constitution and the World Athletics Rules and Regulations.

Competitive category: athletics competitions are divided into two competitive categories, men and women. An athlete's competitive category is the group against whom they compete, either men or women.

Domestic competition: any competition, for any age group, in any of the disciplines governed by Athletics Canada held in Canada. In a domestic competition, athletes are not representing their countries, but may represent other affiliations such as clubs, regional teams, provincial/territorial teams, or corporate sponsors. For the avoidance of doubt, any World Athletics Sanctioned Competition is not considered a "Domestic Competition".

Gender: the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a society assigns to masculinity or femininity. These include an evolving set of social roles, expectations, and stereotypes that are ascribed to biological sex and vary with time and culture.

Gender confirmation: medically-supervised program of treatment to transition a person's body to align with their gender identity through hormone therapy and/or surgery.

Gender diversity: a term that captures the wide range of ways people understand their identities, which is more complex, or different from, traditional gender categories of men and women. The term gender diversity acknowledges and respects the ways people identify outside of the traditional binary men/women gender.

Gender expression: the way an individual represents or expresses gender to others through behaviour, hairstyles, activities, voice, mannerisms, etc.

Gender identity: a person's deeply-held sense or knowledge of their own gender.

Inclusion: acceptance of individuals with diverse personal characteristics into a group or organization regardless of those characteristics.

International competition: any competition where athletes, selected by Athletics Canada, compete against athletes representing other countries. Examples of these include (but are not limited to) the Olympics, Paralympics, World Championships, and Commonwealth Games. It also includes competitions in the World Athletics Series and other competitions organized by or on the behalf of

World Athletics/World Para Athletics or as specified in the WA/WPA Competition Rules and Regulations.

Intersex: a term used to describe a person born with reproductive anatomy, chromosomes and/or hormones that are not easily characterized as men or women. This might include a woman with XY chromosomes or a man with ovaries instead of testes. Typically, intersex people are assigned one sex, men or women, at birth. Some intersex people identify with their assigned sex, while others do not. Some choose to identify as intersex, whereas others do not.

Legal gender: A person's legal gender is the gender that is recognized under the law(s) of the jurisdiction where a person lives. A person's legal gender is typically illustrated by things like legal documents and government issue ID. The process for changing one's legal gender is onerous. It is thus not uncommon for trans people, as well as people who do not identify as either male or female, not to complete the process of bringing their legal gender (that is, the gender on their identification) in line with their gender identity.

Self-identification: the act of personally identifying oneself as belonging to a specific group of people, or as having a specific identity.

Sex: the term sex refers to a set of biological attributes in both humans and animals. It is primarily associated with physical and physiological features including chromosomes, gene expression, hormone levels, and reproductive and/or sexual anatomy.

Non-binary: common term used to refer to the fluidity of gender along the gender spectrum (Also Gender Queer and Gender Fluid).

Transgender: people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were registered at birth.

Transgender Boy/Man: someone who was assigned female sex at birth but who identifies as a boy/man.

Transgender Girl/Woman: someone who was assigned male sex at birth but who identifies as a girl/woman.

World Athletics Categorised Competition: any stadium or out of stadia competition that is categorised by World Athletics under clause 1.3 of the World Ranking Rules (www.worldathletics.org/world-ranking-rules/basics) where the Eligibility Rules for Competition apply.

World Athletics Sanctioned Competition: A competition which is conducted in full compliance with the applicable and relevant World Athletics Competition and Technical Rules and which has submitted an application, through or endorsed by its Member Federation (e.g. Athletics Canada), to World Athletics. World Athletics maintains and publishes a list of such competitions on the calendar page of its website.

World Para Athletics Sanctioned Competition: A competition which is conducted in full compliance with the applicable and relevant World Para Athletics Rules and Regulations and which has submitted an application, through or endorsed by its Member Federation (e.g. Athletics Canada), to World Para Athletics.

1. Inclusion Principles

- 1.1. Athletics Canada recognizes the immense physical, psychological, and social benefits of participating in sport.
- 1.2. Athletics Canada is committed to fostering a safe, inclusive environment for all athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, and staff.
- 1.3. Athletics Canada believes that everyone, regardless of their gender identity, expression, sex and/or sex variations should be able to participate in sport safely and without prejudice.
- 1.4. Athletics Canada is committed to maintaining fairness and competitive integrity for the women's competitive category.
- 1.5. Athletics Canada understands that an important facet of inclusion is putting forth an ongoing and honest effort to create an organizational framework where people with a wide range of diverse characteristics and identities can thrive.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. To provide clarity and guidance for the participation of transgender and gender diverse athletes in athletics competitions conducted in Canada in the context of Athletics Canada as a member federation of World Athletics and World Para Athletics.
- 2.2. To maintain athlete eligibility in World Athletics and World Para Athletics Sanctioned Competitions recognizing the separate competition categories for men and women as defined according to those separate and independent rules and regulations.
- 2.3. To provide clarity and guidance for participation in competitions other than World Athletics and World Para Athletics Sanctioned Competitions where, athletes, regardless of age, may participate in any event based on the gender with which they identify.
- 2.4. To provide a clear, fair, respectful, and confidential process by which athletes may establish their eligibility for Domestic & International competitions.
- 2.5. Athletics Canada acknowledges that:
 - 2.5.1. It is a member organization of World Athletics & World Para Athletics
 - 2.5.2. World Athletics & World Para Athletics enforce rules relating to participation of transgender men and transgender women athletes at World Athletics and World Para Athletics governed competitions; and
 - 2.5.3. Various Athletics competitions conducted in Canada are relevant to National Team selection and representation at World Athletics / World Para Athletics competitions.

3. Policy Scope and Application

- 3.1. This policy applies to Athletics Canada and all Member Branches of Athletics Canada

3.2. This policy applies to transgender and gender diverse athletes who seek to compete in World Athletics and World Para Athletics Sanctioned competitions conducted by Athletics Canada or its Member Branches in Canada which are required to adhere to World Athletics and World Para Athletics Rules and Regulations.

3.2.1. Competitions sanctioned by World Athletics / World Para Athletics include:

- i. Olympic Games / Paralympic Games
- ii. World Athletics Series
- iii. The athletics programme of Games and other athletics competitions with participants from different areas
- iv. One-day meeting circuits / Road Races
 - a) Diamond League
 - b) World Athletics Continental Tour, World Athletics Indoor Tour, Combined Events, Race Walking and Cross Country Tours
 - c) Label Road Races (limited to elite component and defined by race organizer)
 - d) International Competitions including teams from different Areas.

3.2.2. Competitions sanctioned by World Athletics and World Para Athletics and conducted by an Area Association include:

- i. Area Championships (all types and disciplines)
- ii. Intra-Area Championships
- iii. The athletics programmes of Games and other athletics competitions with participants confined to one Area
- iv. One-day meeting circuits (Gold, Silver, Bronze, or Area Permit level)
- v. International Competitions between teams from same Area (sanctioned by Area Association)

3.2.3. Competitions sanctioned by World Athletics and World Para Athletics and conducted by Athletics Canada include:

- i. National Championships (for all disciplines included within the World Athletics and World Para Athletics Championships and World Athletics Indoor Championships competition programme)
- ii. Selected domestic competitions as identified by Athletics Canada and subject to appropriate notification to the relevant Area and World Athletics or World Para Athletics.

- 3.3. This policy applies to athletes. For the avoidance of any doubt, this policy does not apply to coaches, officials, athlete support personnel, administrators, or any other roles.
- 3.4. This policy does not apply to any other activity undertaken by a Member Branch or to activities which are ancillary to competition (e.g., Coach Education, Officials Training).
- 3.5. This policy is not intended to apply to individuals of Intersex Status where an individual is participating in the category consistent with their Sex as assigned at birth. However, the [World Athletics Eligibility Regulations for the Female Classification](#) may be relevant for individuals of Intersex Status.

4. Eligibility Rules for World Athletics and World Para Athletics Sanctioned Competitions

- 4.1. World Athletics and World Para Athletics Sanctioned Competitions are those competitions authorized by World Athletics, World Para Athletics, and are dependent on all World Athletics and World Para Athletics Rules and Regulations being met to be considered as valid for World Rankings, Top Performance Lists, Entry Standards, World Records, Qualification to major Championships and Olympic/Paralympic Games, and any other World Athletics / World Para Athletics statistical purpose.
- 4.2. At World Athletics and World Para Athletics Sanctioned Competitions conducted in Canada, an Athlete must comply with the Eligibility Rules for the Competition set out by World Athletics and World Para Athletics, including the [World Athletics Eligibility Regulations for Transgender Athletes](#). The specific eligibility conditions are set out in section 3 of the World Athletics Eligibility Regulations and, in summary, include:
 - 4.2.1. Transgender men who wish to participate in the men's competitive category are required to provide a written and signed declaration that they identify as a man.
 - 4.2.2. Transgender women who wish to participate in the women's competitive category are required to provide:
 - 4.2.2.1. a written and signed declaration that they identify as a woman;
 - 4.2.2.2. demonstrate that the concentration of testosterone in their serum has been less than 5 nmol/L continuously for a period of at least 12 months; and
 - 4.2.2.3. keep their serum testosterone concentration below 5 nmol/L in order to maintain eligibility to compete in the women's competitive category.
 - 4.2.3. For the avoidance of doubt, this means any competition that is conducted by Athletics Canada and/or an Athletics Canada Member Branch that has been duly sanctioned and/or categorized according to clause 1.3 of the World Athletics Ranking Rules and is listed on the World Athletics Competition Calendar. This includes, but is not limited to, events such as the Athletics Canada's U16, U18, U20, and Senior National Championships (Track & Field, Cross Country, Road Running, Mountain/Ultra/Trail Running).

- 4.2.4. In the case of mass participation events conducted in Canada with a World Athletics Categorization (e.g., Gold, Silver or Bronze Label Marathons and Road Races) or any World Athletics and World Para Athletics Sanctioned events conducted within mass participation events open to the public (e.g., Canadian Marathon Championships), the application of the Eligibility regulations shall only apply to participants in the recognised elite and/or National Championship section of that event.

5. Domestic Competitions

- 5.1. In competitions other than World Athletics and World Para Athletics Sanctioned Competitions, athletes, regardless of age, may participate in any event based on the gender in which they identify. This could include, for example, local grassroots competitions, fun runs, mass participations events (apart from elite/competitive sections).
- 5.2. In registering for a domestic competition, an athlete may select the category that best reflects their gender identity and sense of self.
 - 5.2.1. Coaches, officials, staff, and volunteers must support an athlete's right to select a competitive category that best matches their gender identity.

6. Provincial/Territorial, National, Area, and World Records

- 6.1. In order for an athlete's performance to be considered for a U16, U18, U20, or Senior Provincial/Territorial, National, Area, or World Record, an athlete must first meet the [World Athletics Eligibility Regulations for Transgender Athletes](#).

7. Assessment of Eligibility

- 7.1. As a Member Federation of World Athletics and World Para Athletics, Athletics Canada, and by affiliation, its Member Branches, are required to comply with various World Athletics and World Para Athletics policies.
- 7.2. For the purpose of confirming an athlete's Eligibility for World Athletics & World Para Athletics Sanctioned Competitions conducted in Canada by Athletics Canada and or its Member Branches, Athletics Canada shall defer assessment and decisions on Eligibility to an Expert Panel as established by Athletics Canada.
- 7.3. Athletes must submit documentation in accordance with clause 3 of the [World Athletics Eligibility Regulations for Transgender Athletes](#) to Athletics Canada's Chief Medical Officer for review by the Athletics Canada Expert Panel prior to the Athlete participating in a World Athletics & World Para Athletics Sanctioned Competition.
- 7.4. The Expert Panel will follow an assessment process in line with clauses 4.3 to 4.8 of the World Athletics Eligibility Regulations for Transgender Athletes to determine Eligibility.
- 7.5. In some instances, Athletics Canada may be required or choose to refer assessment of eligibility to World Athletics or World Para Athletics in which case the assessment of eligibility will be determined by World Athletics or World Para Athletics in accordance with the processes outlined in the World Athletics Eligibility Regulations for Transgender Athletes policy.

8. Selecting a Competitive Category

- 8.1. This policy outlines how any athlete, regardless of their gender identity, may compete at any level of sport as long as they meet the eligibility regulations set forth in section 4.2 and 6.0 of this policy.
- 8.2. Each calendar year, athletes will have the option to register with their Provincial/Territorial Branch as a competitive or non-competitive member.
 - 8.2.1. “Competitive” Members 14 years and older (the age at which athletes first become eligible to compete at World Athletics & World Para Athletics Sanctioned Competitions), will be required to select and certify the gender category in which they are eligible to compete. Failure to do so, or provision of a false certification, will render the athlete ineligible.
 - 8.2.2. “Non-Competitive” members, or athletes under the age of 14, will have the option to register in the competitive category in which they identify.
- 8.3. In cases where an athlete has undergone or is currently undergoing a gender transition and wishes to compete in a World Athletics and World Para Athletics Sanctioned Competition in the category of competition consistent with his/her gender identity they must adhere to [World Athletics Eligibility Regulations for Transgender Athletes](#).
- 8.4. The situation may arise when an athlete is not sure in which category they are eligible to compete in. The following individuals may contact Athletics Canada for confidential guidance on this issue:
 - 8.4.1. The athlete themselves
 - 8.4.2. The athlete’s parent(s) or guardian, if the athlete competes in the Under 20 age group or younger age classifications
 - 8.4.3. The athlete’s personal coach, with permission from the athlete. The coach must obtain the athlete’s permission even if the athlete competes in the Under 20 or younger age classifications
- 8.5. For the avoidance of doubt, no athlete will be forced to undergo any medical assessment and/or treatment. It is the athlete's responsibility, in close consultation with his/her medical team, to decide on the advisability of proceeding with any assessment and/or treatment.
- 8.6. **Switching Competitive Categories**
 - 8.6.1. **International Competitions.** As per the [World Athletics Eligibility Regulations for Transgender Athletes](#) (Section 3.5), once a Transgender athlete has satisfied the relevant eligibility requirements and has started participating in International Competition in the category of competition consistent with his/her gender identity, he/she may not then switch back to participating in the other gender category in International Competition

unless and until (a) at least four years have passed since the first International Competition in which he/she participated as a Transgender athlete; and (b) he/she satisfies all of the conditions for eligibility to compete in the other gender category.

8.6.2. **Domestic Competitions.** If the athlete is not competing in international competitions and solely competing in domestic competitions:

8.6.2.1. “Competitive” members 14 years and older may change their competitive category each calendar year at the time of registration as set out in section 8.2 of this policy.

8.6.2.2. “Non-competitive” members, or athletes under the age of 14 may change their competitive category at any time during the year and such request will be considered by Athletics Canada and/or Provincial/Territorial Branch.

9. Objections

9.1. Enquiries into an athlete’s right to compete in a given category must be done through the Office of Athletics Canada’s Commissioner. Commissioner@athleticscommissioner.ca.

9.2. Openly contesting or protesting an athlete’s right to compete in their competitive category is prohibited and could be considered Psychological Maltreatment and a violation of the AC Code of Conduct.

10. Complaints or Appeals

10.1. Any complaint or appeal in relation to this policy is to be submitted to the Office of Athletics Canada’s Commissioner. Commissioner@athleticscommissioner.ca.

11. Anti-Doping Requirements

11.1. Athletics Canada encourages 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 World Athletics / World Para Athletics Anti-Doping Rules and WADA Code requirements where necessary. The Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport provides assistance to all athletes with these aforementioned tasks.

12. Uniforms

12.1. Participants, regardless of their gender identity or competitive category, may wear the uniform of their choosing, so long as it conforms with the relevant rules of competition.

13. Periodic Reviews

13.1. Athletics Canada commits to continually monitoring and evaluating this policy so as to maintain those inclusion principles and purpose statements outlined herein while updating to reflect any changes in International Competition guidelines that may otherwise impact its athletes.

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