



The Football Association
Policy on Trans People in Football
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. What is The FA policy on transgender or transsexual people playing football?

The FA's policy on transgender or transsexual people playing football in their affirmed gender aims to ensure the game is enjoyed by anyone who wants to play, wherever possible. The FA believes gender identity should not preclude a person's participation in football.

Football is a gender-affected sport of a competitive nature where physical strength, stamina or physique of a person's sex could put someone at a disadvantage compared to an average person of the other sex. The participation of trans people in competitive sports cannot and will not be restricted by The FA unless it is strictly necessary to pursue a legitimate aim, i.e. securing fair competition and safety of other competitors.

2. What is The FA trying to achieve through this Policy?

The FA has produced this Policy to set out its position on the involvement of transgender and transsexual people playing football which is governed by The FA. The FA is committed to inclusion and one of its strategic goals is "Football for Everyone". Through the recent review undertaken on the 2007 Policy, careful consideration was given to guidance issued by the Sports Council Equality Group "Guidance for National Governing Bodies of Sport". Following this review and listening to a wide range of stakeholders and seeking legal advice, The FA has developed an inclusive Policy which is supportive of and welcoming to trans people in football and ensures fair competition and safety of all those on the field.

When considering a trans player's application The FA will make a presumption that an application will be approved if the individual satisfies the hormone-based requirements. If the requirements are met The FA will only refuse an application if The FA decides in its absolute discretion that it is necessary to refuse an application to ensure the applicant's safety and that of other participants, and/or fair competition.

3. What does the Policy not cover?

The Policy does not cover individuals training, playing or competing in friendly matches, pre-season matches or club training as these situations are not sanctioned activities that are covered by The FA rules. The responsibility for the safety of participants therefore lies entirely with the organisers of that activity. The Policy does not govern participation in international football or international competitions governed by FIFA, UEFA or the IOC.



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4. How do Participants make an application to The FA to play in their affirmed gender?

The Policy is designed to ensure any transgender or transsexual persons wishing to play in their affirmed gender can do so by contacting The FA. The application initially will take the form of a confidential conversation with the applicant and details of the evidence that The FA would require will be discussed with the person concerned. Except where the individual is 18 years old or under, a club, coach, manager or players cannot make an application on an individual's behalf. Where the individual is under 18 years of age, a confidential conversation and discussion of the evidence will still be required, but the individual may elect to be supported by a responsible adult.

5. What evidence are we looking for to determine participation?

The FA will consider all evidence and reach a decision with the safety of the applicant and other players in mind, and in the context of the need to ensure fair competition.

The table below provides an overview of the requirements and evidence that will usually be required for applicants applying to play in their affirmed gender.

All applicants will be asked to permit their GP and/or Consultant to disclose relevant medical information to The FA and to permit The FA's Equality Manager to liaise with their GP and/or Consultant.

| Requirement | Evidence |
|---|---|
| Transsexual male (female-to-male transsexual person) | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hormone therapy results in blood testosterone levels within natal male range | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual case-by-case review Medical information/records demonstrate hormone therapy administered in a verifiable manner Blood testosterone within range for an appropriate length of time so as to minimise any potential advantage Hormone treatment to be verified annually Proof of ID required is identical to that required of all players i.e. passport or driving licence. |
| Transsexual female (male-to-female transsexual person) | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hormone therapy <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gonadectomy results in blood testosterone within natal female range | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual case-by-case review Medical information/records demonstrate hormone therapy administered in a verifiable manner Blood testosterone within natal female range for an appropriate length of time so as to minimise any potential advantage Hormone treatment to be verified annually Proof of ID required is identical to that required of all players i.e. passport or driving licence. |

However, each application will be considered on a case by case basis; The FA retains the discretion as it considers necessary to ensure safe play and fair competition.

6. Must an individual have undergone or be undergoing hormone therapy and/or a gonadectomy to make an application to play in their affirmed gender?

The FA is committed to inclusion and welcomes applications from all trans people to play football in their affirmed gender. The FA's general requirement is that the hormone-based and evidential requirements set out above are met, and that The FA is satisfied that any potential gender-related advantage is minimised. Where these are not satisfied, in exceptional circumstances, The FA may decide at its absolute discretion that an individual may play in their affirmed gender if it is satisfied that there is no gender-related advantage or disadvantage and there is no risk to safe play or fair competition.

7. Who makes the decisions on whether a person can play in their affirmed gender?

Applications are administered and managed by The FA Equality Manager. A panel involving the Equality Manager, the Head of Medical Services, a medical representative such as an Endocrinologist who is appointed by The FA and any other relevant specialist, will reach a decision. All personal and sensitive information will be handled sensitively and confidentially in accordance with the provision of the Data Protection Act 1998, the Gender Recognition Act 2004 and The FA policies (if any) regarding such data. Applicants are not entitled to play in affiliated football matches in their affirmed gender until they have been provided with written approval by The FA.

8. How will The FA track an applicant's eligibility to play beyond an approved application to play in an affirmed gender?

The FA will work with The FA Registration team to register players that have been affected by the policy. Each player's clearance, in particular any hormone-related treatment will continue to be verified annually at the end of the season to ensure its continued validity. There will be some applicants living in their affirmed gender who, if hormone treatment stops, will continue to produce hormones as a result of their birth sex that affect their strength or stamina. The FA may withdraw its clearance in such instances.

9. How will The FA deal with applicants who are not having any hormone therapy or surgery?

If an applicant has not undergone or is not undergoing hormone therapy or gonadectomy, The FA will consider their application taking into consideration the two requirements (safety and fair competition) and evidence presented to ensure the applicant's and fellow player's safety and fair competition.

10. How will applicants be notified of a decision?

The FA will notify applicants in writing with a full written explanation of the outcome.

11. Can applicants appeal?

Any applicant applying to play football in their affirmed gender may appeal against The FA's decision. Any appeals should be in writing, setting out the detail, the full grounds of the appeal to The Equality Manager within 14 days of the date on which the applicant was informed of the decision.

12. What if queries around a player's gender are raised?

Any queries around whether a player is permitted to play in their team, based on the appearance of that person's gender, must be made by any person who is in authority (e.g. coach, manager, organiser). A formal written request needs to be presented to The FA, setting out clearly the grounds on which it is based. If The FA considers it necessary and appropriate, The FA will work with the player to undertake a sensitive and confidential review of their circumstances on a case by case basis.

The FA may need to establish gender identity to ensure that its rules are complied with, and to protect fair competition and player safety and as part of this review, an individual may be asked to undergo blood tests to check hormone levels.

The FA is committed to dealing with any such queries as sensitively as possible and takes very seriously its duty of confidentiality to a player in these circumstances. As such, where The FA receives a formal written query around a player's gender, The FA will acknowledge receipt of this written request. However, The FA will not then enter into further communication or discussion regarding the process or outcome of any such review with the individual or organisation which made the formal written request.

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