

Gender Diversity Policy for AFLW and AFL – FAQs

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1. Who does the Gender Diversity Policy apply to?

The Gender Diversity Policy (the **Policy**) applies to the following gender diverse people wanting to play in the AFLW or AFL:

- A trans woman, being a person who was assigned male at birth but whose gender identity and gender expression is female;
- A trans man, being a trans person who was assigned female at birth but whose gender identity and gender expression is male;
- A non-binary person, being a person assigned either male or female at birth, but who identifies as having a gender which is neither 'male' nor 'female'.

2. What does the term “cis-gendered” mean?

A cis-gendered person is a person whose gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth.

The Policy contains a Glossary of other terms to assist in understanding the Policy and in the use of respectful and inclusive language.

3. Does the Policy allow trans women and non-binary people to play in the AFLW?

Yes, subject to the satisfaction of some requirements designed to ensure any safety concerns are reasonably considered and to ensure that a gender diverse applicant does not have a relevant competitive advantage (in terms of their strength, stamina or physique) over cis-gendered AFLW players.

The AFLW is the elite Australian Rules Football competition for women and involves remuneration and other non-financial benefits for its participants. The AFL accordingly considers it appropriate that the AFL act to ensure that no gender diverse player has a significant advantage over another because of their strength stamina or physique.

4. What does a trans woman or non-binary person have to prove to be able to play?

They must show that their testosterone levels are below 5 nanomoles per litre of blood at the time they apply and have been so for at least the previous 2 years before the date of their application. They also must provide a range of data about their physical characteristics and athletic output that will be compared to data from cis-gendered AFLW players.

5. Why does the level of 5 nmol/L need to be maintained for at least a two-year period?

Research demonstrates that testosterone levels in a cis-gendered woman will not normally exceed 5 nmol/L and that is the usual threshold now imposed on athletes in comparable elite sports. Given the extremely physical nature of Australian Rules Football, it is considered that maintenance of testosterone at or below that level for at least 2 years is reasonable to ensure that the competitive advantage of higher levels

of testosterone have dissipated to an acceptable degree at the time the trans or non-binary person proposes to play against cis-gendered players in the AFLW competition.

6. Who makes the decision on whether a trans woman or non-binary person can play?

An application by a gender diverse person will be considered by an AFL sub-committee drawing on relevant expertise across the AFL. The applicant will have an opportunity to make submissions on a provisional decision by the AFL sub-committee to refuse an application and can also seek review of a final decision to refuse an application.

Where an application is approved by the AFL sub-committee, the person will need to maintain their testosterone levels below 5 nmol/L and will be subject to testing.

7. Why does the Policy treat trans women and non-binary people in the same way for AFLW?

The Policy operates to ensure that non-binary people do not have a relevant competitive advantage over cis-gendered AFLW players. The same requirements and processes that the AFL will adopt in considering an application by a trans woman are suitable for assessing competitive advantage in relation to non-binary people.

8. Why has the AFL introduced the Policy?

Because the AFL considers that facilitating the participation of gender diverse people in Australian Rules Football is the right thing to do.

The AFL is also legally obliged to not discriminate against people because of their gender identity (i.e. if they are trans or non-binary) save for where the exception in sport arises, that is where relevant issues of strength, stamina or physique arise such that there is an appreciable effect on the ability of a trans woman or non binary player to compete (as compared to cis gendered players) .

9. Why does the Policy treat trans men and non-binary people differently for AFL?

Speaking generally, trans men and non-binary people can nominate for the AFL draft and play in the AFL without the same requirements or assessment as trans women and non-binary people for the AFLW. This is because there is not the equivalent potential for relevant competitive advantage in favour of trans men and non-binary people over cis-gendered players in the AFL.

10. Why doesn't the Policy deal with community football (i.e. football below AFLW and AFL)?

It is very important for there to be a policy around the inclusion of gender diverse people in community football and the AFL is working on that policy with a view to introducing it – with the necessary guidance and resources to support it – as soon as possible. The AFL is also developing resources to assist leagues and clubs in supporting gender diverse people to participate in our game.

In the meantime, the AFL requires the Policy for elite football to be in place before the opening of the nominations for the AFLW draft for the 2019 AFLW season.