

Supporting Gender Affirmation in the Workplace

This guide has been co-created with members of PostPride who have living or lived experience with gender diversity, and provides helpful information in supporting team members, managers, HR, and peers in the gender affirmation process.

Australia Post strives to be a workforce reflective of our communities and having a culture where we all belong. PostPride’s mission is to be a visible support network that inspires and drives positive social change for our LGBTQIA+ team members, customers & communities. We are committed to supporting team members to affirm their gender in the workplace in a safe, positive, and inclusive way and to prevent discrimination on any basis, including on the basis of gender identity or gender expression.

Not all people identify with the gender or sex they were assigned at birth. Transgender is an umbrella term for people whose assigned sex (i.e., the gender written on their birth certificate) does not match their affirmed gender (i.e., the gender they are internally, also known as gender identity or gender).

What is Gender Affirmation?

Gender affirmation is the process where a transgender or gender diverse person takes steps to socially and/or physically feel more aligned with their gender. For people affirming their gender, having their gender recognised at work can be an integral part of this process. This often involves updating someone’s “gender markers” (e.g., their name, pronouns and how they present themselves) to reflect their gender. Every person’s gender affirmation process will be unique and so it is important that the person who is affirming their gender guides and informs the process.

Key areas of support	Information & Tips
Having an initial conversation	<p>When someone decides to affirm their gender in the workplace they may have a conversation with their leader, a peer, a People and Culture representative, a member of the PostPride team or an external organisation to discuss their gender affirmation process. Stakeholders and the individual should work together to develop a Gender Affirmation Plan (a template can be found in the Appendix of this guide). Ideally this should be a face-to-face conversation and led by the team member affirming their gender.</p> <p>Team Member who is affirming their gender You may like to have a conversation with your leader about the support available and the process. If you feel uncomfortable speaking to your leader, please reach out to the Rainbow Peer Support Group or the People Services Portal where you will be put in touch with a Diversity & Inclusion representative. You are welcome to bring a support person to any of these conversations. This conversation may be the first of many, so you don’t have to make any decisions during this initial conversation.</p> <p>Leader You are not expected to be an expert in this topic and there is support available to you from a Diversity & Inclusion representative. First step is to log a request via the People Services Portal for support.</p>

	<p>When a team member shares their intent to affirm their gender with you, it is important that you appropriately support them and the team during affirmation. To do this, you should express your support and work with your team member to develop a workplace Gender Affirmation Plan, if they wish (a template can be found in the Appendix of this guide). Further, there are LGBTQIA+ Awareness Training sessions available to all Australia Post employees delivered by Pride in Diversity.</p> <p>Peers</p> <p>Often people come out to their colleagues before management. It's important you maintain confidentiality and provide support when required. PostPride and the Diversity & Inclusion team can assist with this support. You are not expected to be an expert, you can reach out to the Rainbow Peer Support Group and the People Services Portal.</p>
Communicating the change	<p>Communicating someone's gender affirmation may be an important part of their affirmation.</p> <p>It is essential that the leader is guided by the team member affirming their gender, as to how they would like to communicate their affirmation. It is very important that all people respect the importance, privacy and sensitivity of the information being communicated.</p> <p>The communication process may be ongoing and may change over time. The leader and the team member can keep talking about this, to ensure the process is properly supported. Further, Australia Post can arrange a training session specifically for the team.</p> <p>Team Member who is affirming their gender</p> <p>When considering the communication process, you might like to consider and discuss the following with your leader:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who would you like to know about your gender affirmation? • What information would you like shared and when? <p>This may be different for each individual.</p> <p>Leader</p> <p>You should maintain open and respectful communication with your team member, in line with Australia Post's leadership expectations. It is important to schedule regular catch-ups to ensure they are receiving the appropriate support throughout the process.</p> <p>During your conversations, it is important you identify what information is shared and with who, and when and how your team member would like their gender affirmation communicated. It is important that you only communicate to the people your team member would like to be informed and that the sensitive and private nature of this information is clear to them.</p> <p>Leaders may also need to review any systems, websites, information/resources etc. that include information about their team member that will need updating.</p>

	<p>This should be done in consultation with their team member. There is an Action Plan that covers this in the appendix.</p> <p>Peers</p> <p>You can support your teammate affirming their gender in the workplace by ensuring your workplace is visibly inclusive. You could put up PostPride and Rainbow Peer Support posters in your place of work, or you can reach out to PostPride to obtain Rainbow Lanyards and other collateral, via the People Services Portal.</p>
<p>Pronouns, Name & Updating personal details</p>	<p>When someone affirms their gender, they may choose to change their name and/or pronouns to reflect their gender. Pronouns are often used in our everyday language to assign someone's gender when we talk about them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masculine pronouns – He/him • Feminine pronouns – She/her • Gender neutral pronouns – They/them • Neo pronouns – Ze/Zir • And other pronouns not covered above <p>A person may use pronouns that align with their gender. However, pronouns do not define someone's gender, and someone might use a combination of these pronouns.</p> <p>Team members also have the option to select their pronouns in Microsoft 365. Pronouns will display under a person's profile picture. You can find instructions on how to add this here.</p> <p>Leaders & Peers</p> <p>It is important that you don't assume someone's pronouns or gender based on a team members appearance or name. Always respectfully ask the person and then use their pronouns appropriately.</p> <p>It is important to note that you might make mistakes when you are learning someone's new pronouns and name. That is okay. It is important that you acknowledge your mistake respectfully and do your best not to make the same mistake again. Try to avoid making a big deal about the mistake as this might embarrass the team member.</p> <p>Leaders</p> <p>It is important you talk to your team member about any changes to their pronouns and name. You should use these pronouns and name in all future communication you have with the team member, and about the team member when you are communicating to your team about the team member's gender affirmation.</p> <p>If a team member wants to update their employment profile, email address and other core systems to reflect their affirmed gender, you can find information on how to do this here, the team member or people leader can complete the steps listed in the 'Update Personal Details' section in Isaac located here. In addition, the team member or people leader should complete the 'Modify Display Name' form in MyIT to assist in updating core systems. To request a new security pass please complete a Building and Security Access form in MyIT.</p>

	<p>Note that there are some systems that will require additional requests for updating (i.e., Salesforce and Engage systems in the Contact Centres and Team for Star Track team members) people leaders should assist with updating these. If you require support with this process, People Services can assist you via the People Services Portal.</p> <p>*Certain type of records like those relating to payroll, tax and superannuation may require evidence to change the team member's formal name.</p>
Leave entitlements / Flexibility	<p>Whilst we do not currently have a specific leave provision for Gender Affirmation, team members can access their existing leave entitlements.</p> <p>If a team member is taking leave that is associated with a medical procedure/appointment/intervention (i.e., to affirm their gender), they can access their accrued personal (sick) leave entitlements.</p> <p>If a team member is taking leave relating to other gender affirmation processes (i.e., for attendance at Births, Deaths and Marriages or legal appointments to affirm their gender) they can access their accrued recreation leave entitlements.</p> <p>Team members can also access unpaid leave on a case-by-case basis and discuss flexible working arrangements with their manager and People Services.</p>
Be yourself at work	<p>Appearance and Dress</p> <p>Team members should dress in a manner that best reflects who they are, while adhering to the requirements of their role. Leaders should support their team members to dress in a way that aligns with their gender, which may include updating their uniform. If required to wear a uniform, all team members can wear a version that that best aligns with their affirmed gender and will not be directed to wear a uniform that does not match their gender.</p> <p>If a team member wants to update their uniform, their leader can do this through existing processes, please see instructions below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail Team Members - To look at the retail range, please go onto Workwear Groups micro site where team members can view what is available to order for fair wear and tear items. Once decided, leaders will fill out a fair, wear and tear form and send it to Workwear Group to fulfill the order. • Network Operation Team Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Startrack team members can order uniforms through MyBuy. Refer to the quick guide for ordering ○ Australia Post team members (including contractors) can order uniforms through Zycus. Ordering is done through people leaders and admin teams from their main facility. <p>Note: Someone's gender identity may not align with the gender expression (i.e., a man who dresses in feminine clothing). Please be guided by the team member in what they choose.</p> <p>Use of facilities</p> <p>We acknowledge that most of our Australia Post premises are not currently fitted with all-gender or accessible bathrooms. All team members <u>have the right</u> to access bathrooms and change rooms that best aligns with their affirmed gender.</p>

	<p>Some team members may raise concerns or be uncomfortable with this choice. In this event the Diversity & Inclusion team can assist with education and awareness. Please raise a request via the People Services Portal.</p>
Points of Contact / Resources for more information and support	<p>Australia Post Internal contacts and resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rainbow Peer Support Group • Diversity & Inclusion Team via People Services Portal • Employee Assistance Program with specialised LGBTQIA+ support • PostPride • LGBTQIA+ Inclusion at Australia Post <p>External:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Human Rights Commission www.humanrights.gov.au • Gender Centre www.gendercentre.org.au • National Centre for Transgender Equality https://tgw.org.au/ • https://shinesa.org.au/find-a-clinic/ • https://www.transfolkofwa.org/ • https://quac.org.au/well-being/trans-health/ • https://nt.gov.au/wellbeing/transgender-and-gender-diverse-services • Pride in Diversity https://www.prideinclusionprograms.com.au/
PostPride	<p>The PostPride employee reference group is for all LGBTQIA+ team members and allies. Its mission is to be a visible support network that inspires and drives positive social change for LGBTQIA+ team members, customers, and communities.</p> <p>Team members can connect with PostPride via Viva Engage and read more about LGBTQIA+ inclusion at Australia Post here.</p>
Discrimination, harassment, and bullying	<p>Australia Post does not tolerate discrimination, harassment or bullying in the workplace. Australia Post policies, values and behaviour promote equal opportunity, respect, and dignity.</p> <p>Our Harassment, Discrimination & Bullying Policy Guidelines have clear examples of what constitutes harassment, discrimination & bullying for the LGBTQIA+ community. Refer to these guidelines here.</p> <p>Examples of conduct that that would constitute harassment, discrimination and bullying may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the deliberate use of incorrect names or pronouns • outing or threatening to out a team member as trans, or sharing their private information without consent • inappropriate and invasive questions about someone's physical appearance, past or future medical procedures, sexuality, or sex life • denying promotion or other opportunities because of their gender or gender affirmation • changing the nature of someone's work because of their gender affirmation, such as removing them from a client-facing role • ridiculing or gossiping about someone's affirmed gender or gender affirmation. <p>If you have experienced or witnessed behaviour that constitutes discrimination, harassment or bullying and want to make a complaint or seek further advice, please refer to the Anti-Discrimination & Harassment information on Isaac for details on how to do this.</p>

Appendices

Appendix item 1: Useful links

1. Gender Affirmation Policy – Can be found in the Australia Post HR Manual and in the [People & Culture Policy Library on Isaac](#)
2. Terminology – See below
3. Gender Affirmation Action Plan Template – See below
4. FAQ's – See below
5. Example Team Brief – See below
6. Harassment, discrimination and bullying (HBD) Policy - [link](#)
7. PostPride Poster - [link](#)
8. Rainbow Peer Support Group Poster - [link](#)
9. LGBTQ Helpline - [link](#)
10. Trans Affirming Language Guide - [link](#)
11. Top 10 Tips for being a trans ally Guide – [link](#)
12. PID Showing our Support tip sheet – [link](#)
13. TIES values posters - [link](#)

Appendix item 2: Terminology

We understand that terminology and language is important to create an inclusive culture. We acknowledge that there are many ways in which individuals might define and understand their gender identity.

Ally	an educator, promoter, and supporter of LGBTQIA+ inclusion. They are an advocate for change and are role models of inclusive behaviour
Affirmed gender	means the gender that matches a person's gender identity. For example, if a person is biologically male and identifies as female, their 'affirmed gender' is female
Biological sex	means the physical and biological characteristics that define males, females, and intersex conditions
Cisgender	means that a person's gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. For example, a person understands herself to be female, expresses herself as female, and is also biologically female
Gender dysphoria	is a distress someone may experience when there is a mismatch between physiological sex and their gender identity or expression. This is also a recognised medical diagnosis
Gender expression	is the way in which a person expresses their gender identity to others through name, personal pronouns, behaviour, clothing, appearance, voice and other forms of presentation
Gender identity	means a person's innermost concept of self as male or female – both or neither, how an individual perceives themselves, and what they call themselves
Gender Affirmation	is the process a person goes through when changing their public gender presentation, to match their affirmed gender. A person who is affirming their gender may dress and live as their preferred gender. They may alter their physical appearance or take hormones. Some, but not all transgender people may choose gender affirmation surgery.
Transgender	means a person who does not identify with the biological sex they were assigned at birth

Appendix item 3: Gender Affirmation Action Plan Template

This template is intended to help individuals and their people leaders consider steps that may need to be taken to support Gender Affirmation in the Workplace.

Key areas of support	Action	Who is responsible?	Timeframe	How?
Pronouns, Name & Updating personal details	Update your personal and bank details			
Pronouns, Name & Updating personal details	Name change request in MyIT			
	Security Pass/ID			
	Any other systems for name change?			
	Bcard			
Leave entitlements / Flexibility	Application of leave			
	Development of a work plan to support any extended leave			
	Return to work plan from any periods of extended leave			
Communicating the change	How will your team members be communicated with?			
	Who in the team needs to know?			
	Timing of communications throughout the process			
	What will be included in the communications? e.g., name, pronouns, timeline, use of facilities, support services etc.			
	Frequency of conversations and meetings			
	Education provided to the team? e.g., D&I partner, Pride in Diversity, external presenter			
Be yourself at work	Use of facilities			
	Dress and appearance (including uniform)			
	How will concerns or issues be managed?			
Points of Contact / Resources for more information and support	Access to support services			
	Additional Support?			
Other...				

Appendix item 4: FAQ's

What if I accidentally misuse someone's pronouns?

- Sometimes our unconscious biases mean we can say things that exclude others – even when we do not intend to. If you make a mistake, correct yourself and move on.

How do I respond to non-inclusive language?

- Address any non-inclusive language directly, and at the time it occurs. This includes microaggressions – those little remarks or behaviors that in and of their own might seem insignificant but when happen continuously, might undermine someone.

What is microaggression?

- A comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a team member of a marginalized group (i.e., asking a lesbian team member “who is the ‘man’ in your relationship?”)

What if someone makes a joke about someone's gender or affirmation?

- Call out offensive jokes every time they happen. It is important to remember that what may be funny to one person can be offensive or upsetting to another. Comments intended as a joke can be a form of harassment or discriminatory behavior, therefore any jokes that demean or are disparaging to groups of people or characteristics are best avoided. If you aren’t comfortable calling this out directly, please speak to your people leader.

Do all people who transition have surgery?

- No, many transgender people can successfully affirm their gender without surgery. Some have no desire to pursue surgeries or medical intervention. This is not something that should be asked or discussed in the workplace.

What do the initials FTM and MTF stand for?

- FTM stands for female-to-male and refers to someone who was designated female at birth but identifies and expresses himself as a man. Many FTM transgender people prefer the term "trans man" to describe themselves.
- MTF stands for male-to-female and refers to someone who was designated male at birth but who identifies and expresses herself as a woman. Many MTF transgender people prefer the term "transwoman" to describe themselves.

What is gender non-conforming?

- A broad term referring to people who do not behave in a way that conforms to the traditional expectations of their gender, or whose gender expression does not fit neatly into a category.

What is deadnaming?

- Deadnaming is the act of referring to a transgender or non-binary person by a name they used prior to affirming their gender, such as their birth name.

What’s the difference between being transgender and being gay?

- Being transgender is about an individual’s gender identity, while being gay is about an individual’s sexual orientation, which is our attraction to people of the same gender, different genders, or both. Gender identity and sexual orientation are two different things.

Is there a difference between cross-dressing and being transgender?

- Yes, cross-dressing refers to people who wear clothing and/or makeup and accessories that are not traditionally associated with their biological sex.

- Many people who cross-dress are comfortable with their assigned sex and generally do not wish to change it. Cross-dressing is a form of gender expression that is not necessarily indicative of a person's gender identity or sexual orientation.

Is being transgender a mental disorder?

- No, but this remains a common stereotype about transgender people. Transgender people experience the highest rates of discrimination and mental health conditions compared to the broader LGBTQIA+ community and broader population.
- Transgender identity is not a mental illness that can be cured with treatment. Rather, transgender people often experience a persistent and authentic disconnect between the sex assigned to them at birth and their internal sense of who they are. This disconnect is referred to by medical professionals as "gender dysphoria" because it can cause undue pain and distress in the lives of transgender people.

Why do gender diverse individuals get special privileges compared to other medical situations?

- The purpose of this policy is to bring Australia Post in line with industry standards and provide a better workplace for gender diverse people. This will not take away from other team members working experiences and is not designed to negatively impact people around them.

What if my personal beliefs conflict with what is in this policy?

- Our people are extremely diverse and come from a range of cultural, religious, and linguistic backgrounds, everyone is entitled to their own beliefs and customs, however in the workplace we are bound by our Australia Post TIES values, and Diversity & Inclusion policy and we expect all team members to remain respectful to all others, including gender diverse people.
- Please speak with your People Leader to discuss any conflicts raised for you in this policy.
- If you have questions that may be uncomfortable to raise within your workplace, consider contacting the Rainbow Peer Support Group for guidance on how to handle these situations.

Appendix item 5: Team Brief

This is a guide only. We understand everyone communicates differently please utilise any aspect of this to form your own voice and allow you to deliver it in your own way.

Hi team,

Our Australia Post values underpin everything we do - the services we deliver, the products we provide, and how we behave and communicate with each other and our customers.

One of our key values is Inclusivity, which means that we respect everyone and we proudly welcome and support people of any sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.

Taking this into account, today we want to give you an update about one of our own team members who is currently going through their own journey to affirm their gender and to answer some questions you may have.

As you may be aware, [insert name here] is an important and valued member of our team and is currently on leave. When [insert name here] returns from leave on [insert date here], they will be returning as [insert affirmed name here].

From today, [insert affirmed name here] should always be referred to as [insert affirmed name here] and we ask that you use the pronouns [insert affirmed pronouns here] when referring to [insert affirmed name here]. We understand that it may take some time to get used to using [insert affirmed name here] new name and pronouns

and if you make a mistake, that's ok, we're all human and this is new for all of us. [insert affirmed name here] just asks that you simply correct yourself and move on, not making a big fuss.

[insert affirmed name here] has also acknowledged that you may want to talk to them about their transition, and this is ok, however they have asked that we do not ask about or comment on the medical side of their transition.

Identifying as a [insert affirmed gender here], [insert affirmed name here] will commence using the locker and bathroom facilities reflective of [insert pronoun here] gender.

We expect that [insert affirmed name here] transition will have minimal impact on your day-to-day work and that you should be able to continue working in your job as you would today, simply using [insert affirmed name here] new name and pronouns.

I'd also just like to remind you that we are all responsible for making our workplace a safe place. If inappropriate behaviour occurs, or there is a breach of Our Ethics, action will be taken in accordance with our HDB (harassment, discrimination, bullying) or ECDP (Employee Counselling and Disciplinary Process) policies. It's important to note that in serious situations, disciplinary action can result in termination of employment.

We have flyers to share today that provide us all with some tips on how to support [insert affirmed name], including:

- Showing our support summary
- 10 tips for being a trans-ally
- Trans-affirming language guide

We are happy to organise additional information or training prior to [insert affirmed name here] return to work if you would like. We can also organise rainbow lanyards for the team if you would like to show support by wearing these.

Confidential assistance and support are available to all our team members and their immediate family members through our Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Our contractors have access to our Workforce Assistance Program (WAP). You can find out more about EAP by calling 1300 687 327 (1300 OUR EAP).

We are now happy to answer any questions you may have, and we will be here for the next few hours if you wish to ask any questions privately.