



## FAQ SHEET

### TRANS AND GENDER DIVERSE PARTICIPATION – COMMUNITY RUGBY LEAGUE

#### WHY IS INCLUSION IMPORTANT FOR SPORT?

It is important that we provide a safe and inclusive environment for all members of our community. We actively encourage all clubs, associations, and teams to embrace diversity in all aspects of their operations. Age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, ability, body, or religion are not barriers to inclusion in the game. With diversity comes fresh thinking, ideas and enthusiasm that contribute to the growth, health, and sustainability of sport across Australia.

#### HOW CAN A CLUB INCLUDE TRANSGENDER AND GENDER DIVERSE PEOPLE?

Local sporting clubs around the country are central hubs of their community and are a welcoming environment for all people. Welcoming transgender and gender diverse people is an extension of this, but we acknowledge there may be some additional areas of education and resourcing to support clubs and associations in providing an inclusive and safe space for transgender and gender diverse people. For this reason, the QRL Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy (QRL Member Protection Policy) has been developed. QRL will continue to provide ongoing support.

#### ARE THERE INSURANCE IMPLICATIONS AND THEREFORE LIABILITY THAT SITS WITH THE CLUB/S IF THE REGISTRATION IS APPROVED AND INJURY OCCURS?

No. Individuals participating in the game by the gender with which they identify is part of the State (QRL) and National (NRL) Member Protection Policies. These policies are also consistent with anti-discrimination law in this Australia. All participants are required to register via the same process. Once approved, all participants are covered by the games insurance policy for sanctioned games or competitions. Therefore, Club liability in relation to member protection is the same for all participants and covered via the Club's compulsory Management Liability Insurance provided decisions are made in good faith.

#### WHY IS COMMUNITY SPORT DIFFERENT FROM ELITE SPORT?

While there is no clear line between where elite sport and community sport intersect, community sport is more focused on participation and community connection. In elite sport it is potentially easier to define any performance advantage, and competing at an elite level is often less about 'participation'. It is acknowledged that in most senior level competitions team selections are performance and merit based.



### **WILL THIS LEAD TO MORE REQUESTS FROM TRANSGENDER PARTICIPANTS?**

We hope that our inclusive approach to participation does support more gender diverse people wanting to participate in Rugby League. Transgender athletes are generally under-represented in sport, so there is no evidence to suggest that sport will be flooded with requests immediately. We understand the impact that sport has on community connection and mental health and available data suggests that members of the LGBTQI community are over-represented in mental health and suicide statistics. Our policy indicates that all applications are considered on a case-by-case basis and is one of inclusion. A policy of inclusion in our sport will benefit everyone in the long term.

### **WE HAVE MINORS (U/18) PLAYERS IN OUR TEAM. ARE THERE IMPLICATIONS WITH THIS?**

No. The same level of safety is applied to all participants in the game. Similarly, the same code of conduct and behaviour standards both within a Club and across the game exist for all participants to feel welcomed, included and have a positive experience.

### **WHOSE DECISION IS IT TO APPROVE THE REGISTRATION?**

Ultimately it is an individual Clubs decision to approve or reject the registration of a participant. The QRL policy is very clear and our advice will always be based on this policy. Clubs need to be aware of their obligations in relation to discrimination. If there is potential for a registration refusal to be considered discrimination (lacking valid reason) then QRL would advise Clubs to seek independent legal advice.

### **HOW ARE FACILITIES LIKE CHANGEROOMS MANAGED?**

A general etiquette across all change rooms should be applied regardless of whether a gender diverse participant is registered. This should be agreed between all team members and support staff. QRL acknowledge that not all facilities across the state have suitable infrastructure that supports a level of privacy for the comfort of all participants. Temporary measures can be considered alongside the general etiquette as agreed above.

### **WHAT ADDITIONAL SUPPORT WILL THE QRL PROVIDE TO HELP EDUCATE OTHER MEMBERS?**

QRL will continue to support all Clubs and individuals through both ongoing education and wellbeing support as required. We are a member of Pride in Sport and therefore have direct access to subject matter experts who we will continue to take counsel from and connect with the Clubs for direct education. We acknowledge that for many people, including internally at QRL, truly inclusive participation is a steep learning curve, so the commitment remains to support Clubs and individuals through regular contact via face to face/online connection and the provision of written resources.



### **WHAT PROCESS DOES THE GAME GO THROUGH TO DETERMINE ANY POSSIBLE PERFORMANCE ADVANTAGE OR SAFETY?**

While there are no set criteria for assessing performance at a community level, a basic assessment of physical characteristics can be done anecdotally. Similarly, assessment could be completed based on the participants previous playing history and experience relative to the competition they are plying in. In some cases, an individual may choose to disclose medical information relating to their transition (e.g. testosterone levels in the case of a transgender female) but this is private information and does not need to be disclosed. It is important to note that if physical testing was to be completed with a transgender athlete, the same metrics that are used to determine performance advantage or safety would need to be applied across all participants.

### **WHAT IF THE PARTICIPANT IS TARGETED BY OTHER PLAYERS OR SPECTATORS?**

The same standards of behaviour apply to all participants in the game. There are several reference documents for administering behaviour standards all are linked to the National Code of Conduct that applies to all involved with the game.

- QRL Rules – outlines process for disciplinary matters both on and off field.
- Member Protection Policy – outlines process and expectation for behaviour relating to harassment, discrimination, bullying etc.

### **CAN A COACH BE LEGALLY CHALLENGED IF HE/SHE DOESN'T PROVIDE GAME TIME TO A TRANSGENDER ATHLETE?**

If its senior rugby league, then game time is dependent on a coach's criteria for selection such as ability, training attendance, injuries, etc, etc. The same criteria for assessment needs to be applied to all players.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF THE PERSON STOPS TAKING THE MEDICATION THAT LOWERS TESTOSTERONE?**

Participants in community sport are not required to undergo hormone testing or provide this information to Clubs. Similarly, this information is not a determining factor in approving a registration or otherwise. As per the QRL Member Protection Policy, initial assessment based on performance advantage and safety is considered but this is anecdotally determined rather than via specific performance tests or endocrinology (hormone) reports. Transgender and gender diverse players will be supported to participate in Community Rugby League in accordance with their gender identity. At no stage are clubs and associations permitted to ask any player to undergo medical examination for the purpose of gender verification.

### **HOW DO WE GET MORE EDUCATION ABOUT TRANS AND GENDER DIVERSE PEOPLE?**

It's important to remain informed about issues relating to transgender and gender diverse people. A great way to strengthen your understanding of transgender and gender diverse people, populations and needs, is to engage with evidence-informed, inclusive, and community-led initiatives, including TransHub – ACON's digital information and resource platform for all transgender and gender diverse people in NSW, allies and health providers.