

Policy Guidance: 2SLGBTQI+ Inclusion



Introduction

At viaSport BC, we recognize and celebrate the diversity of individuals. People come from different places and have different backgrounds, belief systems, and forms of self-expression, and we should all find a home in sport. Embracing diversity recognizes the uniqueness of every individual, fostering a more vibrant and inclusive environment.

Inclusion in sport refers to creating a welcoming, supportive environment where everyone feels respected, valued, and able to participate. While there are many factors to creating an inclusive environment, like offering inclusion training to employees, policy is a key component that outlines organizational priorities and commitments to advance them. This resource supports sport organizations to develop more inclusive policies.

viaSport uses the acronym 2SLGBTQI+ when referring to the community, pertaining collectively to people who identify as Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, along with other gender expressions.

General Policy Guidance

When creating any policy, consider the guidance about the following areas.

Structure

Well-designed policies include the following sections or contain content about:

- Purpose: outlines the goal of the policy, with linkage to any relevant legislation or requirements.
- Glossary: a list of definitions for words used in the policy that might be unfamiliar
- Application: outlines to whom the policy applies
- Actions or procedures: description of the actions necessary to implement the policy
- Non-compliance: if relevant, the policy should address what occurs when someone does not follow the policy or meet the requirements set out in the policy
- A date on which the policy comes into effect or the date that updates were made
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Principles

When creating more inclusive policies, consider the following principles:



Collaboration: When developing policy regarding a targeted population, it is best practice to seek insight or feedback from those with lived experience.



Intersectionality: When creating more inclusive policies, keep in mind that individuals have unique identities based on social characteristics (such as race, class, and gender) that shape their experiences and potentially lead to different challenges. Recognize that one solution may not work for all individuals of a particular group.



Equity: In policy development, recognize that while all people have the right to be treated equally, not all experience equal access to resources, opportunities, or benefits. Achieving equity does not necessarily mean treating individuals or groups in the same way, but may require the use of specific measures to ensure fairness. Gender equity seeks to address imbalances in the benefits available and provide equitable access and opportunities to participants of all genders.



Privacy & Confidentiality: Organizations have a responsibility to protect individuals' personal data. Ensure information that is collected is necessary and truly relevant. Maintain records in a way that respects an individual's right to privacy and confidentiality. Do not disclose information about an individual's gender identity, or sexual orientation without an individual's consent.

Gender-Neutral Language

Incorporate gender-neutral language into your policies. Gender-neutral language refers to words and phrases that avoid specifying an individual's gender. This helps ensure that all individuals regardless of their gender identity or expression, feel included and respected, by avoiding assumptions and acknowledging the diversity of identities.

The key components of gender-neutral language include:

Pronouns: use gender-neutral pronouns rather than gender-specific pronouns

Role terms: replace language that specifies gender, such as "chairman"

Family/relationship terms: Recognize the uniqueness of family structures by using terms such as "parent" or "partner" rather than traditional relationship terms

Titles: avoid gender-based titles such as Mr, Miss, Mrs within policy writing

Less Inclusive	More inclusive
His/Her	Their
Himself/Herself	Themselves
He/She	They
Man/Women	Individuals
Chairman	Chair

Internal Policy

Internal policies include those that apply to a sport organization's employees and volunteers. Employee policies are foundational to the culture within the organization and can contribute to the recruitment, retention and empowerment of employees to fully contribute in the workplace. Policies should promote equity and fairness in hiring, training, compensation and development.

The following outlines some examples of what should be addressed in your employee policies.

Hiring Practices

Your hiring practices should promote equal employment opportunities, improve the workplace environment, and promote the inclusion of diverse perspectives and experiences, particularly for individuals with marginalized identities – and be explicit about it. Here is an example of a statement of inclusion from viaSport:

viaSport is proud to be an equal-opportunity employer. We recognize that a diverse workforce is critical to accomplishing our vision and are committed to fostering a culture of inclusion where all employees are supported to reach their potential. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status or disability. viaSport welcomes and encourages applications from people with disabilities. Accommodations are available on request for candidates taking part in all aspects of the selection process.

Benefit Packages

Traditional benefit packages may not address the needs and circumstances of all groups. Ensure that benefits packages recognize diverse family compositions and same-sex spouses and are relevant to all employees, with specific regard to medical coverage and parental leave.

Employers are responsible for supporting transgender and gender-diverse employees in the workplace. This includes providing trans employees access to mental health resources, time off for medical treatments, and making accommodations for employees who are transitioning.

Respectful Workplace

Employee Policies should address legislative requirements, including [WorkSafe BC requirements](#) for employers to respond to reports or incidents of bullying and harassment.

Create a Code of Conduct and/or Discipline and Complaints Policy that includes: procedures for addressing a harassment complaint; roles and responsibilities of

employers, supervisors and others involved, information on how inquiries will be managed/investigated, and; record keeping requirements.

Ensure [dress codes](#) respect the individuals' right to dress in a manner consistent with their gender identity or gender expression. In workplaces where dress codes may be necessary, employers should recommend employees dress to meet professional standards rather than outlining appropriate dress for men or women.

External Policies

External-facing policies governing participation in sport should embrace diversity and inclusion, resulting in a positive sporting experience, free of discrimination or harassment based on gender identity and expression.






These policies include those that apply to a sport organization's members, such as an Equity and Access policy. Typically, an Equity and Access or Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy, is meant to apply to many different equity-deserving groups. However, it is recommended that the policy specify the groups in which it is looking to include so that it is clear they are a priority.

These policies should outline specific actions that the organization is committed to undertaking. Organizations should consider actions related to leadership, resource allocation, programming, communications, etc.

Here are some examples of statements in policies that illustrate this point:

- [Rowing BC's Gender Diversity Inclusion Policy](#) outlines a specific action related to registration forms.
 - For example, provide registration forms and other documents that allow:*
 - The individual to indicate their gender identity, rather than their sex or gender*
 - The individual to abstain from indicating a gender identity with no consequence to the individual.*
- [BC Lacrosse's Transgender Policy](#) also outlines their specific action related to registration forms with the following:
 - For the purpose of registration in gender-based teams or events, a player may register under the gender with which the player identifies.*

Policy Checklist

-  Your Employee policies have considerations of 2SLGBTQI+ individuals (benefits, parental leave, dress code, etc.)
-  Your organization has a Privacy Policy that protects the privacy of all individual's personal information
-  Your organization has a Code of Conduct which includes a non-discrimination statement inclusive of 2SLGBTQI+ employees and participants
-  Your organization has an Equity and Access Policy (or equivalent) that speaks to your vision of inclusion
-  Your organization has adopted guidelines or policies to enable individuals to participate in sport consistent with their gender identity

Further Guidance

For further background, information and resources, refer to:

- [Egale Resources](#)
- [Government of Canada Guide on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Terminology](#)
- [Qmunity Resources](#)