



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF  
AMERICAN FOOTBALL  
TRANSGENDER GUIDANCE



**INTERNATIONAL  
FEDERATION**  
OF AMERICAN FOOTBALL

# Introduction

1.1. This International Federation of American Football Transgender Guideline document has been developed to provide guidance and information in relation to the participation of transgender players in all disciplines of American football.

1.2 At the end of this document there is a glossary which provides definitions relating to the terminology used in this document. For the purpose of this document, the terms 'Men's Tackle', 'Men's / Boy's Flag', 'Women's Tackle' and 'Women's / Girl's Flag' are used to denote the existing categories of IFAF-recognised competitions.

1.3 This Transgender Guideline aims to facilitate the participation of transgender players in American football where it is possible to do so safely and fairly.

1.4 The Guidelines will evolve as IFAF continues to undertake more research on the social and medical implications of transgender participation, in particular with regard to player safety and welfare.

## The IFAF Position on Transgender Participation

1.5 IFAF recognises that member federations may adopt their own position on transgender participation based on their extensive dialogue with their respective national sporting authorities, medical experts, and key stakeholders.

1.6 As such, these Guidelines are for IFAF-sanctioned international competition only.

## Competition Categories

2.1 IFAF will continue to use the following competition categories:

2.1.a Tackle:

Men's Tackle, (M-Tackle)  
Women's Tackle, (W-Tackle)

2.1.b Flag:

Women's Flag, (W-Flag)  
Girl's Flag (for U17 and U15), (G-Flag)  
Men's Flag, (M-Flag)  
Boy's Flag, (for U17 and U15), (B-Flag)  
Mixed Flag, (for Male and Female or Girls and Boys).

## Participation Guidelines

3.1 Transgender girls/women and transgender boys/men in international competition will be able to participate in either their sex assigned at birth or the gender category in which they identify.

3.2 In order to be eligible to compete the player must have identified as being eligible for that gender category by December 31 of the year prior to competing. This must be evidenced by the passport which the player holds (with the issue date of that passport being on or before 31 December of the previous year); or through a government-issued or recognised document which details their choice.

3.3 The implication of this is that a player cannot compete in men's and women's international competition categories at the same time.

3.4 Non-binary athletes in international competition will be subject to the rules as outlined in sections 3.1 to 3.3.

3.5 Transgender girls/women and transgender boys/men and non-binary athletes should be able to use the change rooms of their choice. However, alternative provision should be made available should it be requested. The Team Manager of the competing national team should work with the athletes on inclusion matters prior to the event / fixtures in order to be able to notify the Local Organising Committee whether an additional changing area will be required.

3.6 Where medication is used by the athlete, consultation on TUE status should take place with the domestic National Anti-Doping Agency.

## Definitions

The following terms are applicable to this document:

- a. "IFAF" – International Federation of American Football
- b. "Government-issued or recognised" – a document that is either issued by the government or is recognised by the government when proving identity;
- c. "Cisgender – A term to describe a person whose gender identity corresponds with their birth-assigned sex (e.g. someone whose gender identity is woman and was assigned Women and girls at birth);
- d. "Gender binary" – A social system whereby people are thought to have either one of two genders: man or woman. These genders are expected to correspond to sex assigned at birth: male or Women and girls. In the gender binary system, there is no room for diversity outside of man or woman, for living between or outside of these genders;
- e. "Gender Expression" – The way an individual expresses themselves in terms of their behaviour, body language, voice, emphasis or de-emphasis of bodily characteristics, choice of clothing, hairstyle, and wearing make-up and/or accessories. The traits and behaviours are labelled as masculine, androgynous, feminine are culturally- and geographically-specific and change over time;
- f. "Gender Identity" – A person's innermost sense of their own gender. This can include man, woman, both, neither or something else entirely. There are lots of words people may use to talk about their gender identity;

g. “Gender affirming procedures” – Medically-supervised program of treatment to transition a person’s body to align with their gender identity through hormone therapy, surgeries, and other procedures;

h. “Non-binary” – People whose gender identity is neither exclusively Women and girls nor male. Some individuals self-identify as non-binary, whereas others may use terms such as genderqueer, bi- or polygender, genderfluid, gender non- conforming, or agender. Non- binary people may or may not conform to societal; expectations for their gender expression and gender role, and they may or may not seek gender affirming medical or surgical care.

i. “Participant” – Includes all individuals employed by or engaged in IFAF activities and programmes;

j. “Sex” – The classification of people as male, female or intersex. Sex is usually assigned at birth (with the exception of intersex) and is based on an assessment of a person’s reproductive system, hormones, chromosomes and other physical characteristics, most notably by external genitalia;

K. “Substantive Equality” – means understanding and meeting the needs of disadvantaged persons or groups using historical, legal and social contexts.

L. “Transgender” – People whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. In order to align their bodies with their sense of gender, some transgender individuals undergo gender affirming procedures;

m. “Transgender Girl/Woman” – Someone who was assigned the male sex at birth, and identifies as a woman;

n. “Transgender Boy/Man” – Someone who was assigned Women and girls sex at birth, and who identifies as man; and

o. “TUE” - Therapeutic Use Exemption.

## Safeguarding

Should a Participant feel they have been subject to, or witness, discrimination, bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, vilification, or victimization based on gender identity or expression, they should take appropriate action through the IFAF Discipline and Complaints Policy.

## Appeal

Any decision rendered by the Federation in accordance with this Policy may be appealed in accordance with the Federation’s Appeal Policy.

May 2022