

Waka Ama New Zealand Transgender and Transsexual Policy

Introduction and policy statement

Waka Ama New Zealand (Waka Ama NZ) has developed a policy in respect of transgender people, which includes people who identify as transsexual and transgender. The policy is in line with Waka Ama NZ values and relates to all aspects of the sport i.e paddlers, employees, coaches, officials, volunteers and all Waka Ama whānau. Waka Ama NZ are committed to providing a safe, fair and inclusive sporting environment where people of all backgrounds can be part of the community and participate.

Manaakitanga: We encourage the *practice of* reciprocity and *inclusivity* through sharing of ourselves and of our resources, *nurturing all people and accepting our differences*.

Whanaungatanga: *Is our sense of belonging, identity and collective strength*, not only through kinship / whakapapa but also being related to all within the Waka Ama community.

Hauora: *We support and promote the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of all our participants*.

Tū Tangata: We are accountable for our actions. *We have respect for each other*, for our waka and our environment. We stand proud in our integrity and passion

We acknowledge there are an array of definitions and variations on how people choose to be identified. For the purpose of this policy we have used the following umbrella definitions.

Transgender – A person whose gender identity differs from that which was assigned at birth

Transsexual – A person whose gender identity differs from that which was assigned at birth and have taken steps to physically transition their bodies to that which more closely aligns with their gender identity.

For a full glossary of terms, the following link can be found

<https://genderminorities.com/database/glossary-transgender/>

In line with our values Waka Ama NZ will promote a zero-tolerance approach to transphobia. Transphobia includes discriminatory language or behavior directed towards anyone who comes under the umbrella term of transgender and anyone that may be perceived to be a transgender person (whether they are or not).

The following points are considered good practice for all Waka Ama NZ and its members when dealing with members of the paddling community who come under this umbrella term of transgender:

- Treat the individual with dignity and respect.
- Explain the Waka Ama New Zealand policy and procedure to the individual and ask their view on how to proceed.

- Respect the private and confidential nature of the individual's situation.
- Agree with the individual what information is to be shared with others and, if this is necessary, how this should be shared. In general, no information should be shared by the local club official unless they have express permission from the person.
- Encourage the individual to feedback any inappropriate language or behaviour from other individuals so that it can be dealt with.
- Ensure a Code of Conduct is publicized indicating their zero-tolerance policy towards all bullying/harassment of people.

Transgender/Transsexual people competing:

Waka Ama New Zealand and its members must not restrict the participation of a transsexual/transgender person in competitive sport unless this is strictly necessary to uphold a fair or safe competition or comply with international eligibility; any other restriction would amount to direct discrimination.

Waka Ama New Zealand support and encourage paddlers participating in the gender with which they identify. We also recognize that there is still an ongoing debate if a male-to-female transgender person may obtain a physical advantage over other female participants.

In line with our values Waka Ama New Zealand's intention with this is to be both inclusive and develop a sense of belonging for all participants while also retaining a fair playing field for all paddlers.

Any negative effect of restricting the participation of transsexual or transgender people must be mitigated as far as possible, to permit as much inclusion as is fair and safe and to allow the emotional and physical well-being of our paddlers to be considered.

Waka Ama New Zealand will recognize that the International Va'a Federation (IVF) are responsible for implementing transgender/transsexual policy for all International competitions and any Waka Ama NZ selections will be consistent with the IVF position on eligibility. For further information see *Appendix A*.

The International policy will also be implemented for National Championships as these events are frequently qualifiers for International events. National competitions include "National Sprint Championships" and "Long-Distance National Championship". Any paddlers wishing to look at dispensation for these events can do so by contacting Waka Ama NZ and will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

Factors that will be considered in granting any dispensation will include but not limited to:

- Level of the team/ paddler
- Length of time living as the identified gender (Athlete must be living full time as their desired gender for a minimum of 2 years)
- Transition, if in the process of undergoing transition procedures.

Waka Ama NZ will also follow these guidelines for all Level 1 sanctioned events and work with event organisers to be as inclusive as possible for the races. For example

- *Takapuna Beach Cup and Whaingaroa Hoe*

Local events run by clubs and regions will be encouraged to be raced on a self-identification basis. Waka Ama NZ will assist with this via the online entry system at request. The health and wellbeing of our paddling whānau is essential along with alignment of all our values, Hauora, Manaakitanga, Tū Tangata and Whanaungatanga.

Waka Ama Database

Any paddlers who have completed their transition and have the medical confirmation or have had their gender legally changed on their birth certificate can apply to have their gender adjusted on the paddlers database.

Transgender and Transsexual people as Waka Ama New Zealand employees:

Any discrimination, unfair or unreasonable behavior, or treatment will be taken seriously, and action taken in accordance with best practice standards.

Policy Development and Education

Due to the current lack of substantial research and ongoing emerging research around the actual physical implications of a transitioned paddler, and an acknowledgment that there remains a large amount of unknown aspects in this area, Waka Ama NZ will continue to be cognizant of research moving forward and will review the existing policy on an annual basis.

Waka Ama NZ are committed to educate the membership about trans identified and principles of transgender inclusion. If any clubs need support in this area Waka Ama NZ will do all they can to assist.

Issues and concerns can be voiced directly to Waka Ama New Zealand and will be dealt with under the complaints policy procedure.

For further information

<http://www.outline.org.nz/free-helpline-service/>
<https://genderminorities.com/database/resources/>

Appendix A

IVF Race Rules (*September 2018*)

4. Gender Verification

- a. Any entrant may be asked to prove gender by any area member through the competition director.
- b. To authenticate gender, the entrant must produce both their passport and their birth certificate.
- c. Once the documents are presented, either the entrant or the questioning party may challenge the documents and call for medical verification which is to be carried out at the expense of the challenging party.
- d. Medical verification will follow IOC procedures, with the medical committee and/or the IVF (Board) setting the procedures on a case-by-case basis as directed by the President