

Children's National Hospital

Gender Transition Guidelines

A tool for transitioning employees, their managers, and co-workers



Children's National[®]

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Introduction

Children's National is an advocate for diversity and equal employment opportunities for all qualified candidates. We do not discriminate on the basis of gender identity or expression. We believe that providing a work environment based on respect, trust, and collaboration creates an exceptional employee experience where employees can bring their whole selves to work and thrive in their careers.

These guidelines are intended for Children's National's transgender and gender non-conforming employees, their co-workers (all administrative and clinical personnel, including residents and fellows), managers, human resource professionals, LGBTQ+ employee group leaders and others who may be involved in a workplace gender transition. They cover best practices for employees and managers, as well as how to address patients and clients.

Transgender is a broad umbrella term for people whose gender identity, expression or behavior is different from those typically associated with their assigned sex at birth. This includes people who socially and medically transition, as well as others who simply feel their assigned sex at birth does not reflect their true gender.

About Gender Transition

While the majority of people are comfortable with, and identify with, the physiology and identity they are assigned at birth, there is a portion of the population who are not. These people may or may not identify as transgender. Generally they may take steps to actively change their:

- **Physiology** – which can include hormone therapy and surgery for altering sex characteristics (surgical procedures may also include gender affirmation surgery); or
- **Expression** – for example clothing, hairstyle, mannerisms/body language or voice – to better express and interact with the world as they truly are.

The process a transgender person goes through to publicly change their gender presentation in society is known as “transitioning”. Not everyone who considers themselves transgender will undergo a medical (or physiological) transition and those that do may take all the steps available to them, or only some of them. Gender transition is a personal process and it is important to note that there is no one way to transition.

The person transitioning usually legally changes their name as well as their clothing and appearance to coincide with their gender identity. Some will make body changes such as hormone replacement therapy (HRT), gender affirmation surgery, and/or other components. These changes may be medically necessary for people with gender dysphoria and take place under strict medical supervision.

It is important to realize that each individual undergoing a transition will have their own set of unique factors which will require a customized plan. Like any significant life event, employees may benefit from additional support. It is also important for the individual to work with their manager and HR Business Partner in an open and honest way to allow for a smooth process in the workplace.

Best Practices for the Transitioning Employee

If you are the transitioning individual, you have the right to openly be who you are. This means that while still maintaining professional expectations, you may express your gender identity, characteristics or expression without fear of negative consequences.

With this right, however, also comes the expectation that you will work with others to ensure they understand your needs and you understand the expectations of you.

As part of a team, it is important for you to do your part to make the transition successful and one of the first steps is to inform key personnel who can assist you. Your first point of contact may be:

- your immediate manager;
- your HR Business Partner;
- a member of Children's National's [Employee Assistance Program](#); or
- a member of the Children's National Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) LGBTQ+ Subcommittee.

It is important that at some point your immediate manager or HR Business Partner becomes part of your support team.

Remember, as with all employees, you are covered under [Children's National Bias Incidents, Harassment & Discrimination policy](#); however, Children's National must be aware of your situation in order to provide support. Take the time to explain to the person with whom you've selected to speak with your intentions, needs, and concerns. Be aware that your manager and/or HR Business Partners and others may not be educated about transgender issues and may not understand clearly what your needs may be.

If there is a level of education necessary for other employees, you don't need to do it alone. The Children's National DEI LGBTQ+ Subcommittee can help you think through your ideas and prepare for those discussions. The Children's National DEI LGBTQ+ Subcommittee and [Employee Assistance Program](#) can also get you in touch with other employees who may have transitioned in the workplace and may be able to assist you with questions you may have; this connection may often be invaluable.

You can contact the Children's National DEI LGBTQ+ Subcommittee by emailing either Dr. Craig DeWolfe, Director of Medical Student Education in Pediatrics or Mr. George Francois, Executive Center Director, Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders.

Best Practices for Managers and HR Business Partners

Children's National is committed to and supports diversity. If someone who reports to you informs you of their desire to transition or if a person in your workplace is currently in the transition process, your support is critical.

Key Principles

- If you are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with the transition process, **allow the transitioning individual to educate you** (if they are willing). Additional education and support is available from the [Employee Assistance Program](#) or the Children's National DEI LGBTQ+ Subcommittee, as well as your HR Business Partner.
- **Listen carefully to what the individual is telling you** about how they'd like to be treated. For example, do they want to keep their transition as quiet as possible or do they wish to celebrate publicly?
- **Be open-minded** and discuss the transitioning person's needs and concerns.
- If you oversee, manage, or lead an employee who is transitioning, it is important that you **demonstrate an understanding and use a sensitive approach** to their needs and concerns.

Based on past experiences of bias, a transgender employee may be understandably reluctant to disclose and to make themselves vulnerable to a person upon whom their job depends. It is important that you make it clear that your conversation will be held in confidence. Also ask their permission to talk to the HR Business Partner for further assistance.

- **Explain any questions and concerns you might have** and ask their opinion on matters covered in subsequent sections.
- Once the employee has made contact with the people manager or HR Business Partner, information must be gathered **before planning the steps** of transition can begin.

The HR Business Partner needs to know when the transitioning employee expects to start to present themselves in their new gender. Usually by the time an employee comes to HR, they will have a date or timeframe in mind for presenting themselves in their new gender.

The employee may also have an idea about when they may need to take some time off for medical needs. These dates can change, depending on the person's readiness at each stage.

- **Provide support:** Employees who have decided to transition are normally exposed to various levels of stress. It is important that you provide information on the [Employee Assistance Program](#) and other resources for the employee to seek one-on-one counseling during the transition process.
- If the person is married or partnered, ask how you should refer to them during and after the transition, e.g. partner, wife, husband, etc. and identify if there are any implications to employer-provided benefits.

Initial Conversations

When an employee contacts their manager or HR Business Partner to explain they are planning to transition and wants to start presenting in their new identity, the employee will need to be assured that Children's National will work with them to help make their transition as smooth as possible. It is often with great anxiety that the person has come to this point as they may have heard stories from other individuals who have transitioned in the workplace who may have been treated badly at work, so this assurance is important.

Second, the employee should be reassured that the information they share will be treated with absolute confidentiality. The employee has probably taken great care to safeguard their status and wants to be sure this information will be disclosed at an appropriate and agreed upon time, and in a respectful manner.

In addition, the employee would like to feel confident that the people who will help plan their transition will take steps to inform themselves about transgender issues and the transition process.

Finally, the transitioning employee would like to be assured that they will have input into planning the steps of their transition at work. The employee should always have the main voice in the timing of beginning to work in their new gender role and any changes in their workplace routine.

Respecting the Individual's Privacy

Not only do the specific steps of transition and their timing vary, people also differ in how public they want to be as they transition.

Some people prefer that as few people as possible know they are about to transition and hope that after the transition they can quietly blend in as members of their new gender. Others are committed to educating the public about transitioning and are eager to answer questions, and continue to talk openly about being transgender long after transition.

Work situations vary, too. The type of workforce, the nature of work being done, the amount of interaction the individual employee has with peers and patients, and the surrounding culture all have a bearing on how the transition should be handled. For all these reasons, **there is no single formula for managing transitions in the workplace.**

It is important to work closely with the employee to ensure respect for their privacy and to understand their preference on the amount of information that should be shared with the rest of the employees. It is essential that open and honest communication be established to build trust for each party. With each right also comes responsibility or an expectation. A successful transition in the workplace can only occur with commitment and understanding of each involved party.

Control over the flow of information is very important in managing the transition process. The manner in which co-workers and patients are informed about the employee's change and the

timing of this disclosure are critical in making the transition progress smoothly. Therefore, confidentiality should be a primary concern in the early stages of transition planning.

Dealing with Patient Standards

Transgender employees who deal with patients are held to the same appearance and behavior standards as everyone else. Serving patients is no reason to deny a transitioning individual the right to dress and present in their chosen gender. Patient and employee preference is not a reason to deny a transitioning person the right to dress and present in their chosen gender. The [Children's National Bias Incidents, Harassment & Discrimination policy](#) makes it clear that Children's National will not tolerate any form of harassment/discrimination/bias or harassing/discriminating/biased behavior towards its employees, whether by employed staff or by third parties, such as contractors, vendors, volunteers, patients, or visitors to Children's National. This policy serves to provide staff with guidance on how to identify and handle issues that arise both with employees and non-employees during the course of their work. Transitioning employees are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the content and process of the Bias Incidents, Harassment & Discrimination policy.

Communicating with patients may require difficult conversations so a meeting should be held with the transitioning employee beforehand to clarify how certain situations should be handled.


Telling Co-Workers

If the transitioning employee has a people manager who has not been part of the initial conversation but will be impacted by the transition, they should be told about the upcoming transition shortly before the employee's co-workers are told.

A meeting is often the best setting for informing co-workers, and the need for appropriately timed and respectful communication about the transitioning employee should be stressed. However, the personal preference of the transitioning employee should be taken into consideration, as such a meeting may not be always appropriate in all cases.

This information meeting should be timed to occur a week or two **before** the transitioning individual begins presenting themselves in their new gender role. Not everyone needs to be informed; however, co-workers, managers and other employees with close contact should be included.

At this meeting, it is extremely important to reinforce Children's National's commitment to diversity and be supportive of the employee as they deal with this difficult medical issue. Clearly expressed support from executive or senior management can be very helpful. A letter or memo of support for the employee that restates the commitment to Children's National's diversity vision will go a long way to lessening the stress on the person transitioning and to avoiding potential backlash from fellow employees.



It is also important to recognize that people's feelings about sex and gender are issues that can raise strong emotions and discomfort. Employees should be encouraged to examine their feelings and speak to the appropriate resources if necessary. HR representatives, as well as subject matter experts who are there to provide training, can be a valuable resource to draw out feelings and avoid potential situations before they become a problem.

Sometimes the employee who is transitioning wants to personally tell a few co-workers with whom they are close before everyone else is told. This is fine as long as these co-workers are asked to keep the information confidential. All other co-workers should be told at the meeting that one of their co-workers will be transitioning and who that person is. The transitioning employee can be present at the beginning and may wish to speak either personally or in the form of a letter that can be read or handed out; however, it is usually best for them to then leave so that the other employees feel comfortable asking questions or raising concerns. This disclosure meeting should also include a training component.

It is **strongly recommended** that the manager and HR Business Partner work closely with an outside expert on transgender issues and gender transition. This expert might even be at the initial meeting to answer any questions employees may have. If possible, have the expert available for 1-on-1 sessions for additional information and support.

Managing Day-to-Day Issues in the Workplace

Appearance Standards

A transgender employee is permitted to dress consistently with their gender identity and is required to comply with the same standards of dress and appearance that apply to all other people in their workplace and similar position. Managers have the same right to review a transitioning employee's professional attire as they do any other employee, keeping in mind that not all transgender employees fit the binary dress code standards. If a manager has concerns about a transgender employee's dress and appearance, they should contact their HR Business Partner.

If a transgender employee dresses inappropriately, this should be addressed in a manner consistent with any other employee. Dress codes requiring employees to wear appropriate clothing apply to all employees equally.

Any concerns should be addressed with the employee directly. Take care not to use personal opinions to judge a colleague's professional appearance. If the transgender employee dresses or behaves inappropriately according to the dress code, this issue should be dealt with in the same manner it would be addressed with any other employee.

Restroom and Locker Room Access

Restroom and locker room access issues need to be handled with respect and consideration. It is Children's National's obligation to provide all employees, visitors and patients adequate facility access.

Children's National policy is that employees, visitors and patients are permitted to use the facilities that correspond with their gender identity. For example, a person who identifies as a man is permitted to use men's restrooms, and a person who identifies as a woman is permitted to use women's restrooms. All employees, visitors and patients should determine the most appropriate and comfortable options for themselves.

Where possible, employees may use:

- Single-occupancy, gender-neutral (unisex) facilities; and
- Use of multiple-occupant, gender-neutral restroom facilities with lockable single occupant stalls.

Note: any employee may choose to use these options, but no one, including a transgender person, is required to.

As with restrooms, all employees, visitors and patients have the right to use the locker room appropriate to their gender identity. Children's National has taken steps to provide for additional privacy in its locker rooms for those employees who desire more privacy – not just a transgender employee – but any employee who values increased privacy.

Conversations with co-workers around concerns about restroom and locker room access are usually best handled by the training expert at the initial meeting as they have the experience to deal with the matter appropriately. Co-workers who still have personal concerns about sharing a restroom or locker room with a transgender colleague should be invited to have an honest discussion with an appropriate manager or HR Business Partner. In the long run, co-workers uncomfortable with sharing a restroom with a transgender colleague, rather than the transgender person themselves, should be the ones asked to travel to a different floor or work area to use the facilities.

Name and Gender Changes

Legal name and gender “marker” (i.e., “M” or “F” on legal identity documents) changes can sometimes take months or even years to get updated depending on the circumstances. Until then, every effort should be made to use the new name and gender marker on all documentation [e.g. email, phone directory, company identification card or access badge (which should be changed at no cost to the employee), name plate, etc.]. The only exception is where records must match the person’s legal name, such as on payroll and insurance documents.

Employees with a legal change of name and/or gender marker should notify HR by contacting the HR Business Partner to help navigate the process. This change should update all internal and benefits-related systems.

In everyday written and oral communication, the new name and pronouns should be used when the individual is ready.

Using the Appropriate Pronoun

If a co-worker is transitioning and you are not certain which pronouns to use, it is always appropriate to respectfully ask them how they would like to be referred to. One way to do this is to simply say “My name is Terry and I go by he/him/his pronouns. How about you?”

In general, it’s considered insensitive to refer to someone by the wrong pronoun once you have established what the individual prefers. Transitioning employees should also be prepared to understand honest mistakes and help educate their co-workers as necessary.

Continued and prolonged use of the incorrect name and/or pronouns to refer to a colleague can be considered harassment and will be addressed under [Children’s National’s Bias Incidents, Harassment & Discrimination policy](#).

Leave Benefits for Employees

Managers should provide sufficient flexibility to meet the individual’s needs for appointments. Time off for medical appointments and procedures is to be granted on the same basis as for any other scheduled medical appointments and procedures. Please refer to the [Children’s National FMLA policy](#).

Medical Care and Insurance Coverage

Employees (and covered dependents) in the process of transitioning may wish to have appropriate medical care to support their transition including treatments such as hormone replacement therapy and/or gender affirmation surgery. Children's National's health insurance provides coverage for transgender care as follows:

- The surgical procedure
- Physician pre-operative and post-operative hospital and office visits
- Inpatient and outpatient services
- Gender affirmation counseling by a behavioral health provider
- Hormone therapy

Employees who have questions or difficulty accessing coverage are encouraged to contact Children's National Benefits Department at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] for assistance.

As with other aspects of a transition, plans should be discussed and communicated only with affected parties in order to manage expectations and to minimize disruption. Medical information, including surgery plans communicated by an individual, should be treated confidentially.

Right to Privacy and Confidentiality

Transgender employees at Children's National have the right to be who they are without unnecessary disclosure of medical information or gender history. In addition, current and prospective employees who encounter problems concerning identification documentation, such as payroll and insurance forms, should feel comfortable raising those concerns with their manager or HR Business Partner.

The transgender status of an individual is considered confidential and should only be disclosed on a need-to-know basis, and only with the consent of the individual. However, transitioning employees are encouraged to participate in the necessary education of their co-workers at whatever level they are comfortable.

Addressing Concerns of Co-Workers and Patients

The likelihood of negative reactions can be reduced by establishing a culture of appreciation of differences, providing adequate training, and treating all employees fairly.

A diverse workplace means that employees must be able to work with all kinds of people. It is not required that they "believe in" or accept an individual's right to be transgender. All employees are entitled to their beliefs, but everyone should be required to treat the transitioning employee – and every other employee – with respect and without bias. A lack of knowledge about transgender issues has the potential for creating misunderstanding and tension in the workplace.

While everyone is expected to conduct themselves in accordance with [Children's National's Bias Incidents, Harassment & Discrimination policy](#), we must also ensure that a forum is made available

for individuals to express their concerns, ask questions and learn about transitioning in the workplace. It is important to always have a subject matter expert available to help in answering questions or concerns.

The Importance of Training and Education

In addition to a potential workgroup meeting where the transitioning employee's manager or HR Business Partner may announce the transition, training or educational sessions for employees on transgender issues are recommended.

Training helps reduce fear of the unknown and helps promote a positive work environment for all employees. Training or educational sessions should be completed prior to the individual's transition. This provides important information to co-workers, managers and patients on what to expect when the person begins his or her transition. Establishing some level of comfort as to what the transition is and why it is happening is important for preventing future misunderstandings or issues.

Ensuring Long-Term Success: Monitoring Over Time

The difference between a moderate or an "okay" experience with transition and one that is ultimately successful for everyone involved over the long-term depends on effective and meaningful follow-up over time. If issues between co-workers are going to surface, they may not surface right away when a lot of time and attention is focused on the transitioning employee, the educational sessions and so on. Rather, issues may arise one, two, six or even twelve months down the road.

In some workplaces, co-workers express bias or resentment toward the transgender employee (often due to a lack of knowledge). They may express this by refusing to use the new name and correct pronouns, verbally harassing the employee or refusing to work with the employee. Sometimes, more subtle behavior such as isolating the transgender employee from meal periods or group activities takes place. Workplace gossip about the transgender person or unacceptable jokes may surface. The transgender employee may not report such behavior because they believe it may make the situation worse or result in retaliation.

Managers must be proactive in monitoring behavior toward the transgender employee and provide a way for the employee to report issues and challenges confidentially. Any harassment that is taking place should be dealt with immediately to send a clear message to all employees that this behavior is unacceptable and will have consequences for the employees involved. Gossip, unacceptable comments or jokes, and other unproductive behaviors may need to be addressed. Managers can connect with their HR Business Partner to address any such issues.

People who raise concerns about a transgender co-worker should be coached to differentiate personal beliefs from appropriate workplace behaviors where necessary. They will need to work cooperatively with their co-workers regardless of their gender identity and failure to do so could result in disciplinary action. The employee should also be provided with the [Children's National's Bias Incidents, Harassment & Discrimination policy](#) and take the corresponding [Bias Incidents training](#).

Responding to Concerns Regarding Restrooms or Locker Rooms: Talking Points for Managers

If an employee, visitor or patient approaches you with concerns over sharing facilities with a transgender person, consider the following:

- **Listen:** What exactly is the concern? Are they concerned for privacy or safety? If so, an honest and upfront conversation may help alleviate their concerns.
- **Refocus:** Acknowledge apprehension while reminding the person that everyone needs to use the restroom and that this is about ensuring access for all. Refocus conversation on behavior: we all know what appropriate restroom behavior looks like. If everyone's behavior is appropriate, then there should not be an issue.
- **Reinforce:** It may help to reinforce company values of respect for all employees, visitors and patients noting that everyone is allowed, by company policy, to use the facilities that correspond to their gender identity. If useful, share success stories from other company experiences with transgender employees transitioning on the job.
- **Remind:** If the co-worker, visitor or patient is still reluctant and concerned, maintain the policy and remind them of other options. For example, the concerned person may use a restroom on a different floor or in a different area. If no other facilities are available, the person can wait for the transgender employee to exit before using the restroom.

HR Business Partner Role

In addition to ensuring these best practices for managers are followed, HR Business Partners need to ensure that the people manager is supported throughout the entire transitioning process. Regular check-ins with the manager and the transitioning employee are important.

HR Business Partners need to work closely with the manager and the transitioning employee to ensure individual and team meetings are scheduled appropriately and the proper external support is being leveraged.

HR Business Partners also need to keep a close “pulse” on the business unit to ensure there are no negative issues in the workplace that are not being addressed.

Lastly, HR Business Partners are advised to check-in over the long term and not just during the initial transition process. Some issues may not surface until some time has passed and the initial focus on transition is over.

For external training support, contact either Dr. Craig DeWolfe, Director of Medical Student Education in Pediatrics or Mr. George Francois, Executive Center Director, Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders.

Terminology

The following terms are “text book” definitions. Considerations should be taken around level setting in each conversation to ensure everyone involved is using the applicable terms in the same way.

- **Ally** refers to a supporter or advocate for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Queer community. Being an ally is about using inclusive language, showing respect and support for your colleagues and in this case, members of the LGBTQ+ community through your actions and your words. Typically, allies to lesbian, gay and bisexual people are straight and allies to transgender people are cisgender.
- **Cisgender** is a term for people whose gender identity, expression or behavior aligns with those typically associated with their assigned sex at birth. It is the accepted term for people who are “not transgender.”
- **Gender**, while often used interchangeably with “sex,” refers specifically to the behavioral, cultural, psychological or social traits typically associated with one sex, rather than biological characteristics.
- **Gender Dysphoria** is a medical term for the discomfort many transgender and gender non-conforming people experience from the strong internal sense that their true gender identity does not match their physical sex. This discomfort can be severe. Not all transgender people experience or are diagnosed with gender dysphoria. Gender dysphoria, which was previously called “**gender identity disorder**,” replaces the word “disorder” with “dysphoria” as it is not only more appropriate and consistent with familiar clinical sexology terminology, but it also removes the connotation that the patient is “disordered” and the associated stigma.
- **Gender Expression** refers to all of a person’s external characteristics and behaviors — such as clothing, grooming, mannerisms, speech patterns and social interactions — that represent or express one’s gender identity to others. Social or cultural norms can vary widely and some characteristics that may be accepted as masculine, feminine or neutral in one culture may not be assessed similarly in another. A person’s gender expression may also be referred to as their “**gender presentation**.” Workplace practices should generally apply to an employee’s full-time gender presentation.
- **Gender Identity**, distinct from the term “sexual orientation,” refers to a person’s internal sense of being male, female, or something else. Since gender identity is internal, one’s gender identity is not necessarily visible to others. Gender non-conforming refers to individuals whose gender expression is different from societal expectations related to gender. Gender non-conforming, like transgender, is an umbrella term and includes people who may identify as “genderqueer,” as neither a man nor a woman, or as “gender fluid.”
- **Gender non-conforming** is a term to describe people who have, or are perceived to have, gender characteristics and/or behaviors that do not conform to traditional or societal expectations. Keep in mind that these expectations can vary across cultures and have changed over time.
- **Gender Transition** refers to the process through which a person modifies their physical characteristics and/or gender expression to be consistent with their gender identity. It


is important to note that gender transition is an individual and personal process, and there is no one “correct way” to transition. Gender transition may, but does not necessarily, include hormone therapy, gender affirmation surgery, and/or other medical or surgical components. The transition process may also include non-medical components such as telling one’s family, friends and/or co-workers, and changing one’s name and/or gender on legal documents such as a driver’s license, birth certificate and social security card. Any physical part of someone’s transition process is generally conducted under medical supervision based on a set of standards developed by the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) and endorsed by major medical associations such as the American Medical Association (AMA) and the American Psychological Association (APA).

- **LGBTQ+** is an acronym that stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer or Questioning.
- **Sex** refers to the classification of people as male or female. At birth, infants are assigned a sex based on a combination of biological characteristics including: chromosomes, hormones and reproductive organs.
- **Sexual orientation** describes an individual’s enduring physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction to another person. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same. Transgender people may be straight, lesbian, gay or bisexual. For example, a man who transitions from male to female and is attracted to other women would be identified as a lesbian or a gay woman.
- **Transgender** refers to people whose gender identity, expression or behavior is different from those typically associated with their assigned sex at birth. Transgender is a broad, umbrella term and is good for non-transgender people to use. “Trans” is shorthand for transgender.” (Note: Transgender is correctly used as an adjective, not a noun or verb, thus “transgender people” is appropriate but “transgenders” and “transgendered” are often viewed as disrespectful.) Transgender, as an umbrella term, encompasses transsexuals, genderqueer people, and other gender non-conforming people. Not all people who consider themselves, or who may be considered by others, as transgender will undergo a gender transition.

About Gender Diverse and Expansive Identities

Increasingly employees are entering the workplace with gender identities and expressions that may be different from what we most frequently think of when discussing gender. While many transgender people identify on a binary scale – as either male or female – some do not and may instead refer to themselves as “genderqueer,” “gender fluid,” “non-binary” or other terms. These gender expansive identities are generally considered part of the greater transgender community.

Gender expansive employees – those that do not self-identify as male or female – often challenge existing understanding and norms around gender. These employees may opt to use gender expansive pronouns such as “they, them and theirs” instead of the gendered “he, him and his” or “she, her and hers.” In addition, gendered honorifics such as “Ms.” or “Mr.” may change to the more inclusive “Mx.”



Everyone deserves to have their self-ascribed name and pronouns respected in the workplace. Just as with other transgender employees, companies should seek to support individuals in being recognized for their true selves. Where a person's preferred name does not match their legal name, the preferred name should be used wherever possible such as e-mail, employee directory, company identification, name plates, business cards, etc., except where records must match the employee's legal name such as on payroll and insurance documents.

Additional Resources

HRC – The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) is the largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) lobbying group and political action committee in the United States. The HRC mission statement states “HRC envisions an America where lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people are ensured equality and embraced as full members of the American family at home, at work and in every community.” www.hrc.org/transgender

NCTE – The National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) is a national social justice organization devoted to ending discrimination and violence against transgender people through education and advocacy on national issues of importance to transgender people. By empowering transgender people and our allies to educate and influence policymakers and others, NCTE facilitates a strong and clear voice for transgender equality in our nation’s capital and around the country. www.transequality.org

PFLAG – Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) is a group of family members and friends of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBTQ) people. According to PFLAG’s mission statement, the organization “promotes the health and well-being of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender persons, their families and friends through: support, to cope with an adverse society; education, to enlighten an ill-informed public; and advocacy, to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights. www.PFLAG.org

Guidance for the Transitioning Employee

We recommend creating an engagement plan to help smooth the transition process. A plan also helps reduce uncertainties and provides a common road map for everyone. The outline below will vary depending on your individual needs and situation. For example, some of this language applies to what are very binary oriented transitions – from male-to-female or female-to-male – and may be less relevant to non-binary, gender expansive employees.

1. **Get support from the people around you.** As a transitioning employee, you should try to create a support team. Try to involve your manager, HR Business Partner and/or other supportive co-workers to work together to develop an appropriate plan for you and your business. The following is a suggested list of things to consider and discuss with your support team.
2. **Develop a stakeholders list.**
 - Who are all the people in the work group you may need to engage at some point during the transition? Example: HR Business Partner or member of the Children's National DEI LGBTQ+ Subcommittee.
 - When do they need to be engaged?
 - Are there any specific issues that need to be addressed sooner rather than later?
3. **Create a timeline – suggested: what are your milestones?**
 - Discuss the expected timeline.
 - Block out dates such as legal name change, transition milestones and other events.
 - Review the stakeholder list and develop the program to allow time for education.
 - Anticipated time off required for medical treatment, if known.
4. **Things to Consider**
 - How would you like your team to find out about your transition? (e.g. letter, face-to-face meeting, individual discussions, your manager/HR Business Partner)
 - Will you need to make workspace changes during the transition?
 - How long do certain HR functions take? (e.g. legal name changes, company directories, etc.)
 - How do you think your patients should be informed?
 - When will you need to process any necessary changes to professional licenses?
 - List all the things that a new employee must do during the first week of employment. How long do these normally take?
 - Do a search for your current name on the company's intranet for team rosters and other references. How many of these pages will need to be altered or removed?

Guidance for Co-Workers

The moment a friend, loved one, colleague or acquaintance makes the decision to ‘come out’ as transgender, is always a unique event. Understand that when someone ‘comes out’ to you, it is an act of trust – and that person deems you trustworthy. There is no one ‘right’ way to demonstrate your support — and being supportive does not require you to march in parades or become an activist.

Be as open and honest as you would like your co-worker to be with you.

- If this is new for you, say so.
- Ask your co-worker to be honest with you about what you say or do, which may make him or her uncomfortable.
- Let your co-worker know if they say or do something that makes you uncomfortable.
- Ask the ‘dumb questions’ but also understand if the person declines to answer. Usually these questions are best asked of the external facilitator/support because they are a neutral third party and are usually happy to help both during and afterward the training is complete.
- Take the time to talk and be prepared to listen.

Here are some “ally” behaviors that help create an inclusive workplace:

- Don’t make assumptions about a person’s sexuality or gender. Not everyone’s appearance or behavior plays to stereotypes.
- Know and understand Children’s National’s policies on sexual orientation and gender identity: non-discrimination, harassment, domestic partner benefits, bereavement leave, etc.
- Let your co-workers know that you won’t tolerate even subtle forms of discrimination or harassment in the workplace.
- Join the Children’s National DEI LGBTQ+ Subcommittee

Why become an ally?

- Make a positive impact on a fellow employee’s life;
- Become a better leader;
- Personal and professional growth;
- Personal satisfaction;
- Help create a better and more productive workplace;
- Career networking;
- Champion and celebrate all aspects of diversity.