



# Monash Sports Clubs

LGBTIQ  
Engagement

Monash Council acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government



# Monash Sports Clubs – LGBTIQ Engagement

Playing club sport is great for people's physical and mental health, and helps to build community connections. While we strive for everyone to feel comfortable at our clubs, research shows that many LGBTIQ people face discrimination or do not feel welcome at sports clubs. With help from Council and other organisations, clubs can take action to better understand the barriers that LGBTIQ people may face, and make changes to ensure clubs are welcoming and inclusive of everyone, no matter their background, sexual orientation or gender identity. This will not only help individuals, but will also make your club a more diverse and high performing space. It may also assist clubs to meet the criteria in the Active Monash Sports Club Framework.

## What does LGBTIQ mean?

LGBTIQ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer (or Questioning). If you're not sure about any of these terms, or the difference between sex, sexuality, gender, and gender identity, there is some more information in the glossary at the end of this document.

Remember that terminology is more about respect than getting it right. If you make a mistake – for example you use the wrong pronoun – it is best to apologise, thank the person for correcting you, and move on.

## What does this mean for sports clubs?

It is important that clubs reflect the diversity of our communities. While around 15% of the Australian population identify as LGBTIQ, LGBTIQ people have some of the lowest rates of participation in sport in Australia of any community group. Not only are these individuals missing out on the benefits of sport, but clubs are also missing out on the benefits that diversity brings. We know that:

- People who identify as LGBTIQ have fewer visible role models in sport
- 80% of people have witnessed or experienced homophobia in sport
- Most gay people play team sports, but 70% believe youth team sports is not safe for gay people
- More than half of gay, lesbian or bisexual sport participants conceal their sexuality from their team/club and report feeling unwelcome.

In 2018 Monash Council undertook a consultation to connect with the Monash LGBTIQ community and determine what priorities, programs or activities Council could progress. Our community clearly told us that sport and recreation was a key area to develop, and that we should:

- Provide targeted support to Monash sporting clubs to ensure clubs are welcoming and inclusive to all genders
- Provide education to sporting clubs on how to be more welcoming and inclusive.





Diversity and respect is a guiding principle of the Active Monash Sports Club Framework which will apply from 2022, and it is Council's aim that clubs are inclusive of people who identify as LGBTIQ. We want to support clubs to help meet the needs of our community by being more welcoming of LGBTIQ people and we have put together some tips below for you to get started, with help from Women's Health East and Monash University. **Those marked with an asterisk (\*) indicate actions that will also help you meet Active Monash Sports Club Framework criteria.**



## Understanding the LGBTIQ community

- Attend LGBTIQ inclusion training\* (e.g. Play By the Rules and Proud 2 Play online for free)
- Keep up to date with evolving language and identities in relation to gender and sexuality
- Get in touch with Council for more information on where to start



## Governance

- Have strong policies around discrimination and harassment and make sure you follow through with them.\* This might be incorporated into your Code of Conduct or Member Protection Policy
- Consider developing an LGBTIQ inclusion policy and make sure you implement it\*



## Organise and participate in social events

- Get your club involved in LGBTIQ events\* e.g. IDAHOBIT, Wear it Purple day, Midsumma Festival
- Consider holding a Pride Cup.\* This involves running a round of your competition with a pride theme and Pride Cup Australia can help you. Research has shown Pride Cup events can raise awareness and reduce the use of homophobic language



## Language and communication

- Use appropriate pronouns (e.g. her/his/their). It is okay to politely ask people what pronouns they use
- Do not allow homophobic or other discriminatory jokes or language. Call it out by showing it is not okay, support the person who was the target, or speak up if you feel you can. Make sure your club policies back this up. If you want more tips on how to be an active bystander, Council periodically offers free training sessions
- Make sure images in your communications reflect diversity of the community (e.g. same sex parents, a transgender sports participant)
- Use inclusive language e.g. refer to partners (rather than WAGS), parents or family (not just mum and dad)
- Display rainbow posters\* e.g. downloadable posters from Proud 2 Play. Let people know your club does not tolerate homophobia or transphobia



## Membership options and other considerations

- Provide a non-binary option on registration forms instead of just male/female
- Offer social sport or casual sport options that are based on inclusion and fun and not based on gender
- Consider your uniform options so that people can wear what they are most comfortable in (e.g. few differences between men and women design, cater for different sizes and shapes)



## Monash Civic Centre

293 Springvale Road,  
Glen Waverley, 3150

8.30am to 5.15pm  
Monday to Friday

## Oakleigh Service Centre

3 Atherton Road,  
Oakleigh, 3166

8.30am to 5.15pm  
Monday to Friday

☎ 9518 3555

**National Relay Service**  
(for people with hearing  
or speech impairments)  
1800 555 660

🌐 [www.monash.vic.gov.au](http://www.monash.vic.gov.au)

✉ [mail@monash.vic.gov.au](mailto:mail@monash.vic.gov.au)

## Language Assist

普通话	9321 5485
Ελληνικά	9321 5482
廣東話	9321 5481
සිංහල	7005 3002
Italiano	9321 5483
हिंदी	7005 3000
Việt Ngữ	9321 5487
தமிழ்	7005 3003
한국어	9321 5484
Bahasa Indonesia	7005 3001



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## Further help and resources

- Women's Health East: Step Up: A Guide for Practice From the Voices of LGBTIQ Young People: [https://whe.org.au/custom\\_type/step-up-a-guide-for-practice-from-the-voices-of-lgbtqi-young-people/](https://whe.org.au/custom_type/step-up-a-guide-for-practice-from-the-voices-of-lgbtqi-young-people/)
- Proud 2 Play: Resources Hub: <https://www.proud2play.org.au/resources>
- Play By the Rules: Training – Creating an LGBT+ Inclusive Club: <https://www.playbytherules.net.au/online-courses/creating-an-lgbti-inclusive-club>
- Sport Australia: Trans and Gender Diverse Inclusion: [https://www.sportaus.gov.au/integrity\\_in\\_sport/transgender\\_and\\_gender\\_diverse\\_people\\_in\\_sport](https://www.sportaus.gov.au/integrity_in_sport/transgender_and_gender_diverse_people_in_sport)

## Glossary<sup>5</sup>

**Sex:** The biological characteristics related to sexual reproduction (including anatomy, hormones, and chromosomes) that are used to define humans as male or female.

**Sexuality:** Experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practice, roles and relationships. While sexuality can include all of these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed.

**Gay/lesbian:** A person who is primarily attracted to the same sex or gender as their own.

**Bisexual:** A person who is emotionally and romantically attracted to multiple genders.

**Gender:** The socially learned roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that any given society considers appropriate for men and women. Gender defines masculinity and femininity. Gender expectations vary between cultures and change over time.

**Gender identity:** Refers to a person's innate, deeply felt psychological identification of their gender, which may or may not correspond to the person's designated sex at birth.

**Transgender:** An umbrella term for people who identify differently to the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Cisgender:** A person whose gender identity aligns with the sex assigned to them at birth.

**Non-binary:** Refers to someone who identifies outside the gender binary of woman to man but can also be its own term of identification.

### References:

1. Proud 2 Play, Tips for Talking to your committee about LGBT+ inclusion, [https://a3febde3-d370-46a8-84c6-270a6a7dfac2.filesusr.com/ugd/eda345\\_66af3e903e454feb9b940b197b25cd8f.pdf](https://a3febde3-d370-46a8-84c6-270a6a7dfac2.filesusr.com/ugd/eda345_66af3e903e454feb9b940b197b25cd8f.pdf)
2. Denison, E., Kitchen, A., 2015: Out on the fields: the first international study on homophobia in sport. <https://www.outonthefields.com/media/#Australia>
3. Denison, E., Kitchen, A., 2015: Out on the fields: the first international study on homophobia in sport. <https://www.outonthefields.com/media/#Australia>
4. Clearinghouse for Sport, 2020: Sexuality and Gender Perspectives on sports Ethics, <https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/kb/sexuality-and-gender-perspectives-on-sports-ethics>
5. Thank you to Women's Health East as the definitions used here have come primarily from their *Step Up: A Guide for Practice from the Voices of LGBTIQ Young People* resource.