

Gender Affirmation Process and Support Guide

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Purpose of Document:

The ABC values diversity and inclusion and the creation of a safe workplace for all. When an employee works in an inclusive workplace they have the best opportunity to reach their full potential. We do not discriminate against people because of their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression. We are focused on strengthening diversity in our workforce to better reflect the broader community and draw on talent and experiences from a wide array of employee backgrounds. The ABC is committed to supporting our employees who affirm their gender and these guidelines aim to provide a clear outline to support this process.

It is on this basis that we have developed a guide for **Gender Affirming employees, their manager's, peers and colleagues**. This document outlines key terminology and points of contact relating to gender affirmation. It details the responsibilities of the affirming employee and their manager and a guide to developing an action plan for creating a supportive process tailored on the individual's needs.

Throughout this document affirmation refers to both social affirmation and medical affirmation. Not all who affirm their gender undergo medically assisted gender affirmation.

By adopting this supportive process, the ABC is clear in our support for all transgender employees and gender diverse employees.

1. General

1.1 Application

This document is applicable to all employees. A reference to an 'employee' in this document includes any employee, temporary worker or contractor. However this is with the exception of the Leave provisions eligibility as set out in the Enterprise Agreement and ABC Leave Policy under clause 6g, Miscellaneous Leave, Gender Affirmation item. The Leave Policy available on the ABC Intranet or requesting a copy from People & Culture team.

1.2 Questions and Contacts

The ABC is committed to ensuring employees have access to individuals who can be contacted confidentially for assistance. The below are relevant contact points for those considering affirming their gender and for their managers and others involved in the affirming process such as colleagues.

Internal

- Indigenous, Diversity & Inclusion team **s 47E(c)**
- **s 47E(c)** the intranet offers additional supporting information
s 47E(c)

- Employee Assistance Program **S 47E(c)**

External

- [Pride in Diversity](#), national employer support program for LGBTQ workplace inclusion.
- [Australian Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Human Rights Campaign](#)
- [National Centre for Transgender Equality](#)
- [Parents, Family & Friends of Lesbians and Gays](#)
- [QLife](#)

1.3 Review of this Guide

This document will be reviewed annually by the Indigenous, Diversity & Inclusion Team in consultation with ABC Pride and leading practice from Pride in Diversity references.

1.4 Definitions and Terminology

In this document you will find the below terms and abbreviations:

I,D&I Team - Indigenous, Diversity & Inclusion team

ABC Pride – The ABC LGBTIQ+ Employee Network Group

LGBTIQ+ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex plus other identities within this community including but not limited to Asexual, Demi-sexual, Pansexual.

The following are terms and definitions; the meaning, value and understanding of which may differ for individuals so where necessary please consult with your employees or colleagues.

Ally: An Ally is an educator, promoter and supporter of LGBTIQ+ inclusion. They are an advocate for change and are role models of inclusive behaviour.

Gender Identity: One's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither – how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

Gender Expression: refers to the way in which someone expresses their gender to society through clothes, makeup, hair styles and their outward appearance and mannerisms.

Intersex: People with intersex status are born with physical, hormonal, or genetic features that are neither wholly female nor wholly male, or a combination of female and male. Intersex is always congenital and can originate from genetic, chromosomal, or hormonal variations.

Sex: refers to chromosomal configuration, hormonal profile, reproductive organs, and secondary sex characteristics such as breasts, body hair and voice (anatomy).

Sexual Orientation: An inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people.

Transgender: Transgender (sometimes shortened to “trans”) is an umbrella term used to describe a wide range of gender identities that differ from the perceived ‘norms’ aligned to biological sex. Transgender is a term that may be used to describe someone whose gender identity does not match their birth gender, someone who identifies as both genders, neither gender or a third gender. Common terminology includes;

- Transwomen (M to F) refers to those who were born male but identify as female, although

many will identify only as female (not transwomen)

- Transmen refers to those who were born female but whose gender identity is male (F to M),

although many will only identify as male and not transmen

Some transgender people seek surgery or take hormones to bring their body into alignment with

their gender identity, or change their gender expression to match their affirmed gender; many do

not.

Affirming: The process by which some people strive to more closely align their internal knowledge of gender with its outward appearance. Some people socially transition, whereby they might begin dressing, using names and pronouns and/or be socially recognised as another gender. Others undergo physical transitions in which they modify their bodies through medical interventions.

1.5 Associated Policies and Related Documents

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- ABC Pride support page for Gender Affirmation guidance and support
- ABC Leave Policy

2. Guidelines for Affirming Employee

We are committed to supporting individuals through their affirmation. The P&C, I,D&I team and your manager will work closely to provide personalised support, aid in establishing an action plan and setting expectations. This document serves as a guide and is designed to be flexible based on individual needs.

2.1. Roles & Responsibilities

Every individual’s journey of affirmation is different, and the expectations and responsibilities of each party will be unique to each person. We encourage everyone to be open about who they are, and, whilst maintaining professional expectations, affirming should not be attached to fear of consequences.

This comes with a responsibility to work with your managers and support networks to outline all expectations to ensure a positive experience. It is essential that open, honest communication is maintained to build trust and ultimately a positive experience of workplace affirmation. Success can only be achieved if everyone has a clear understanding of their responsibilities and roles. Below are some areas for consideration and guidance for workplace gender affirmation.

2.2. Your initial discussion

We are committed to creating a workplace that is safe and supportive and encourage you to reach out to the supports available that can help with your initial conversation to affirm. Our I,D&I team can act as a confidential first point of contact to assist you. Likewise Pride in Diversity, ABC's LGBTIQ+ partner organisation, is available to facilitate the initial discussions related to workplace affirmation. These points of contact will then, in consultation with you, provide comprehensive support. We offer an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) with a specialised LGBTIQ+ Helpline who can provide additional support. Their number is available via the ABC Pride intranet support site.

2.3. Developing a Workplace Affirmation Plan

An important step is developing the time frame for the workplace affirmation, the key milestones and communication and education factors. This does not need to be developed by anyone individual alone. It can involve consultation from various areas, support services and with your manager.

2.4. Clients and Stakeholders

Think about how and when you will communicate your affirmation to key clients and stakeholders, and who you would like to be part of these conversations. Internal and/or external clients that you deal with on an ongoing basis may need to be engaged during your affirmation and notified of your new identity after this period. Other potential areas to consider relate to identification with your stakeholders (for example email contact information, access to third party premises etc). Work with your manager or contact the I,D&I Team in developing an appropriate communication plan.

2.5. Appearance and Dress

The ABC does not have a dress code policy but rather encourages everyone to dress in a way that is consistent with their personal style and preferences. We also ask that Work, Health and Safety requirements of your job role are taken into consideration and that you dress safely and appropriately for the nature of your work. If you are unsure or have any questions please feel free to speak with your manager or the I,D&I Team.

2.6. Name change, security identification and other facilities

At some point in the affirming process, an individual may change their name, this may be by how they are known by friends and family and may extend to a legal change of name too.

Security identification and personal identification (e.g. payroll) and any related industry and personal licenses may need to be updated as a result. Consider replacing all photographic identification and allow for changes in internal systems to be reflected. Discussions with your manager and I,D&I Team will uncover any other facilities requirements and changes to be implemented.

3. Guidelines for Managers

The ABC supports diversity and inclusion, and a workplace where employees feel safe, comfortable and valued. If an employee you manage approaches you with the intention to affirm their gender, your support is critical. Below are some of the key areas your assistance is required in this process.

3.1. Confidentiality and privacy

As a manager and in accordance with existing policies, you are required to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality and privacy in relation to employee matters. Information should only be disclosed to those who need to know, are involved in the process, or have the consent of the affirming employee.

Individuals are not required to disclose medical information associated with their gender affirmation processes to the organisation and is not required to form part of your conversation.

3.2. Sensitivity and respect

Be prepared to treat all employees but especially an employee who is affirming their gender with respect and sensitivity. Be ready to listen and understand their needs and concerns and ask any relevant questions. Your support is essential to the experience of your employee.

3.3 Involvement in the development of an affirmation plan

When an individual approaches you with their intention to affirm their gender, it is imperative that you are supportive, open-minded and honest. Be prepared to discuss their aims and expectations, and what they intend your role to be in their affirmation. Make sure to consider stakeholders, peers and colleagues, policies and procedures existing in the workplace. Contact I,D&I Team for guidance and support as needed. Additionally, our external employer support partner, Pride in Diversity is available for support and the Employee Assistance Managers Hotline. Details of which are available on the Intranet, Wellness Hub.

3.4. Addressing concerns of colleagues – education and awareness

A lack of knowledge and awareness can create discomfort, tension and nervousness amongst employees. This can lead to misunderstandings and tension in the workplace. Whilst everyone is expected to behave in accordance with ABC policies it is important that the affirming employee's peers and colleagues are provided with clear expectations and relevant information (as agreed with the affirming employee). Their positive involvement is critical to achieve a positive experience for the employee affirming their gender. Therefore be available to answer questions and be aware of differentiating between personal beliefs and appropriate behaviour. At all times employees are expected to behave in a manner aligned to the ABC Code of Conduct and ABC Values.

Further support and guidance is available for Managers and Employees by contacting the ABC's EAP specialist **s 47E(c)** for workplace related matters and the People & Culture contact.

In addition to information sessions and forums hosted by the management team, there are educational resources available on the ABC Pride page including; [Ally Training with a focus on Transgender](#) and **s 47E(c)** to learn more about individuals different lived experiences. **s 47E(c)**

3.5. Communication

Clear, open and honest communication from managers, peer & colleagues and the affirming individual is essential. Communication will be different in all affirmation plans; and dialogue can help alleviate any potential difficulties or issues. Hosting information and awareness sessions for team members and other stakeholder should be considered when developing the plan. Other fundamental communication areas to consider are what the affirming employee is comfortable with and willing to share as each individual affirming may have their own set of unique factors which may require a customised plan.

3.6. Leave entitlements and benefits

Managers should provide information and reasonable flexibility to meet the employee's needs, in accordance with existing ABC Enterprise Agreement and Leave policy which outlines leave options for Gender Affirmation.

An employee covered by the ABC Enterprise Agreement (other than a casual employee) who is transgender and who is undertaking Gender Affirmation, will have access to:

- Up to 10 days' paid Gender Affirmation Leave, which counts as service for all purposes; and
- Up to 12 months' unpaid Gender Affirmation Leave. Unpaid Gender Affirmation Leave does not count as service.

This paid leave is in addition to existing entitlements and may be taken as consecutive days, or as a portion of a day.

3.7. Bathroom and Change-room Facilities

We understand that the use of facilities can bring with it some anxiety for trans and gender diverse people. The ABC aims to create a safe and inclusive workplace for all employees and supports individuals to use the facilities of your affirmed gender or those which you are most comfortable using. If an individual experiences any concern regarding their safety with the facilities available at their place of work they are encouraged to have a discussion with their manager or a member of the I,D&I Team.

4. Guidelines for Peers and Colleagues

The ABC supports diversity and inclusion, and a workplace where employees feel safe, comfortable and valued. An a peer or colleague to a person affirming their gender your level of

support is critical to the creating a positive experience for the individual. Below are some of the key areas your assistance is required in this process.

4.1. Confidentiality and privacy

As a peer or colleague you may be made aware of your colleagues gender affirmation ahead of broader stakeholders being informed. It is important that you respect any requests to treat the information sensitively and with respect. Information should only be disclosed to those who need to know or have the consent of the affirming employee.

4.2. Sensitivity and respect

Be prepared to treat all employees but especially an employee who is affirming their gender with respect and sensitivity. Be ready to listen and understand their needs and concerns and ask any relevant questions. Your support is essential to the experience of your colleague.

4.3 Involvement in the development of an affirmation plan

When you are made aware of your colleague intention to affirm their gender, it is imperative that you are supportive and respectful. You play an important role within the affirmation plan to help create a supportive and safe environment for an individual to affirm their gender. This may include a name change, changes to pronouns he/him, she/her, them/ they and other variations that may be communicated to you. It is Please feel free to speak to your Manger or contact I,D&I Team for support or to seek clarification as needed. Additionally, the ABC partners with Pride in Diversity and is available for support and the Employee Assistance § 47E(c) available. Details of which are available on the Intranet, Wellness Hub.

4.4. Education and Awareness

A lack of knowledge and awareness can create discomfort, tension and nervousness. This can lead to misunderstandings and tension in the workplace. Everyone is expected to behave in accordance with ABC Code of Conduct and the ABC values, it is therefore important that you as peers and colleagues are provided with clear expectations and relevant information (as agreed with the affirming employee). Your positive involvement is critical to achieve a positive experience for the employee affirming their gender. Therefore you can expect to receive training and additional resources to help develop your awareness. Despite this if you have any questions or require additional education further support and guidance is available for peers and employees by contacting your manager, I,D&I Team, the ABC's EAP specialist § 47E(c) for workplace related matters and your divisional People & Culture contact.

In addition to information sessions and forums hosted by the management team, there are educational resources available on the ABC Pride page including; [Ally Training with a focus on Transgender](#) and § 47E(c) to learn more about individuals different lived experiences. Some of the stories shared are from current ABC employees.

5. In Summary

The tone and support that managers, peers & colleagues demonstrate will have a significant impact on the experience of the employee affirming their gender. We are focused on continuing to strengthen diversity in our workforce to better reflect the broader community

and draw on talent and experiences from a wide array of employee backgrounds. The ABC is committed to supporting our employees who affirm their gender and these guidelines aim to provide a clear outline to support this process.