



## TRANSGENDER PARTICIPATION POLICY

The NAIA supports fair and safe competition opportunities for all student-athletes. Title IX ensures there are separate and equal opportunities for female athletes. As a result, the NAIA offers separate categories of competition in all sports except for competitive cheer and competitive dance, which are both co-ed.

Student-athletes may participate in NAIA competition in accordance with the following conditions.

- A. Participation by students in sports designated as male by the NAIA:  
All eligible NAIA student-athletes may participate in NAIA-sponsored male sports.
  
- B. Participation by students in sports designated as female by the NAIA:  
Only NAIA student-athletes whose biological sex\* is female may participate in NAIA-sponsored female sports. They may participate under the following conditions:
  1. A student who has not begun any masculinizing hormone therapy may participate without limitation.
  2. A student who has begun masculinizing hormone therapy may participate in:
    - a. All activities that are internal to the institution (does not include external competition), including workouts, practices, and team activities. Such participation is at the discretion of the NAIA member institution where the student is enrolled; and
    - b. External competition that is not a countable contest as defined by the NAIA (per NAC Policy Article XXV, Section A, Item 12). Such participation is at the discretion of the NAIA member institution where the student is enrolled.

An NAIA institution that has a student-athlete who has begun masculinizing hormone therapy must notify the NAIA national office. The national office will take the necessary steps to provide appropriate privacy protections.

This policy will be subject to review in light of any legal, scientific, or medical developments.

NOTE: With the exception of competitive cheer and competitive dance, the NAIA created separate categories for male and female participants. Each NAIA sport includes some combination of strength, speed, and stamina, providing competitive advantages for male student-athletes. As a result, the NAIA policy for transgender student-athletes applies to all sports except for competitive cheer and competitive dance, which are open to all students.



It is imperative that the dignity and privacy of transgender athletes be respected. Therefore, the NAIA will rely on its long-standing process for complying with all NAIA regulations, which places primary responsibility for adherence to all rules and policies on the institution. Similarly, should any institution determine it has violated these policies, the institution is expected to self-report the violation. Should any institution become aware of an apparent violation by another NAIA institution, the NAIA's existing process for reporting violations as described in NAIA Bylaws Article VI, Section B, Item 3 will apply.

*\*For the sake of this policy, biological sex is defined by distinguishing characteristics and can be supported by birth certificate or signed affidavit. While rare, there have been cases where the sex assigned at birth does not match the biological sex, which led to the use of biological sex in this document.*

Effective Date: August 1, 2024

