

The UCI updates and clarifies its regulations on transgender athlete participation

Feb 11, 2020, 10:52 AM

In line with the announcement it made on 4 November 2019, the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) approved its new regulations on the eligibility of transgender athletes to compete in events on the UCI International Calendar. The decision was made at the meeting of its Management Committee in Dübendorf (Switzerland) on 30 January.

The new regulations, which will come into effect on 1 March 2020, are designed to encourage transgender athletes to compete in the category corresponding to their new gender, while guaranteeing a level playing field for all athletes in the competitions in question.

What are the eligibility criteria?

Up until then, the eligibility criteria for competing in the corresponding gender-identity category were based on the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Guidelines which were agreed upon at a consensus meeting organised by the IOC in 2015. The provision of new scientific knowledge led to those eligibility criteria being reviewed – in particular for male-to-female athletes. At a working meeting organised by World Athletics in Lausanne on 19 October 2019, and which was attended by the UCI, other International Federations, experts and representatives of transgender and cisgender athletes, it was agreed that if a Federation decides to use testosterone as an indicator, the transgender athlete will only be eligible to compete in the Women category if their serum testosterone level is below 5 nmol/L.

What is the eligibility procedure?

- All transgender athletes wishing to compete in the category corresponding to their new gender must make their request to the medical manager appointed by the UCI, at least six weeks before the date of the first competition.
- The athlete's file will be passed on to a commission of three international experts independent of the UCI. The commission's members will assess the athlete's eligibility to compete in the new gender category and will inform the UCI's medical officer of their conclusions.
- The athlete must prove that their serum testosterone level has been below 5 nmol/L for at least 12 months prior to the eligibility date.
- Once deemed eligible, the athlete must agree to keep their serum testosterone level below 5 nmol/L for the entire time they compete in the Women category.
- The athlete must undergo serum testosterone tests conducted using a benchmark method (mass spectrometry).

Once their eligibility to compete has been confirmed, the UCI's medical manager will be responsible for ensuring the athlete complies with the eligibility regulations throughout their sporting career. Should they fail to do so, the medical manager may choose to suspend their eligibility to compete until such time as the athlete proves that they are able to comply with the criteria again.

In the event of any breach of the regulations, a penalty system shall come into effect. Penalties shall range from a mere reprimand and warning to disqualification and a fine.

The UCI has asked its National Federations to include these new directives in their regulations.

"The adoption of new directives in the UCI Regulations will provide the cycling community as a whole with a clearly defined regulatory framework that applies to everyone," said **UCI President David Lappartient**. "Thanks to this consensus, achieved by a working group representing our sport's various stakeholders, our Federation has given itself the wherewithal to take into consideration – and in reflection of developments in our society – the desire of transgender athletes to compete, while guaranteeing a level playing field for all competitors. This is an important step in the inclusion of transgender athletes in elite sport."