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Transgender Participation Policy

USA Powerlifting is an inclusive organization for all athletes and members who comply with its rules, policies, procedures, and bylaws. USA Powerlifting is not a fit for every athlete and for every medical condition or situation. Simply, not all powerlifters are eligible to compete in USA Powerlifting.

USA Powerlifting, as a National Affiliate of the International Powerlifting Federation (IPF) adopted, and follows the policies as defined by the IPF Medical Committee which impact the participation of transgender individuals in events sanctioned by USA Powerlifting.

Two areas of policy impact such participation:

The first has to do with the use of testosterone or other androgens, commonly used to assist in transition from female to male. By virtue of the anabolic nature of these compounds, they are not allowed, nor is a Therapeutic Use Exemption granted for such use for anyone. This applies to any and all medical conditions which might be treated through use of androgens.

The second area involves the participation of male to female competitors. Through analysis the impact of maturation in the presence naturally occurring androgens as the level necessary for male development, significant advantages are had, including but not limited to increased body and muscle mass, bone density, bone structure, and connective tissue. These advantages are not eliminated by reduction of serum androgens such as testosterone yielding a potential advantage in strength sports such as powerlifting.

The IPF added acceptance of the International Olympic Committee Guidelines on inclusion of transgender individuals in competition. However, the IOC Guidelines also allows sports to determine the impact on fair play through such inclusion. The IPF Medical Committee, while respecting the rights of those who choose to transition, has been consistent in its opinion that use of testosterone and participation of male to female transgender athletes in our sport compromises fair play.

While other sports and activities, and other powerlifting organizations may choose a different interpretation of the impact on their respective competitive activities, USA Powerlifting will



Constitution and Bylaws of our Federation, chooses to address these policies, their interpretation and adherence to them may change.

FAQ

Q – *Why is USA Powerlifting not following the IPF Constitution on Transgender Athletes?*

A – The IPF Constitution to adopt the IOC Guidelines on Transgender Athletes is just that, an acknowledgement that the IPF recognizes the IOC Guidelines. Within those IOC Guidelines, each sport is given the latitude to determine how the guidelines are applied. The IOC Guidelines is not a blanket approval over all sports. The IPF Medical Committee has set the policy for transgender athletes which USA Powerlifting abides by.

Q – *Why did you ban transgender athletes?*

A – USA Powerlifting has not ban transgender athletes. There are rules surrounding requirements for membership as with any organization. Policy is set for the most fundamental of all of the rules, drug testing and secondly fairness in competition.

Q – *Why do you not allow transgender women?*

A – The IOC sports are a wide in spectrum. Take sports such as curling, equestrian, shooting and archery, these sports are more sport of skill, whereas powerlifting is a sport of strength. Men naturally have a larger bone structure, higher bone density, stronger connective tissue and higher muscle density than women. These traits, even with reduced levels of testosterone do not go away. While MTF may be weaker and less muscle than they once were, the biological benefits given them at birth still remain over than of a female.

Q – *Why do you not allow transgender men?*

A – We do allow transgender men. What is prohibited in USA Powerlifting is the use of external androgens in this organization. This is the same rule that applies to all members. We have many older male lifters for example who require through their doctor to take hormone therapy(HRT). We respect their need to follow their doctors advice, but with that said, they are no longer eligible to be compete within USA Powerlifting.

Q – *Why does the IOC Guidelines and WADA allow testosterone and USA Powerlifting does not?*

A – One must remember that both the IOC and WADA are written to apply to all sports.



would aid in the performance within this specific sport. Therefore, not allowed for any powerlifting athlete, no matter what their medical needs are.

Q – *I am a female and do not care if I compete against a transgender female, so why is it not allowed?*

A – While we find it commendable that you feel this way, we must also look at the fairness in competition for the majority of our female members.

Q – *Why don't you just have another division for transgender athletes to compete in?*

A – This option, interestingly has been implemented within the LGBT Powerlifting Union. While their organization does not follow the drug testing policy for USA Powerlifting, it appears to be a viable option for them and will be included in the 2020 Gay Games.

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Mission Statement

It is the mission of USA Powerlifting to provide powerlifting competition of uniform high quality which is drug tested and available to all athletes who meet the criteria for membership throughout the United States.

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