

This document is adapted from [Mozilla workplace transition policy guidelines](#)

## Evanston Public Library's Workplace Transition Policy

Human diversity leads to innovation, which is a key value of our work at the Evanston Public Library. We know that there's no one way to be transgender and there's no one right way to come out at work. However, know that we will support you through this process in a way that is comfortable for you. We will protect your privacy and confidentiality. We will also protect people who report to you.

The intended audiences for this document are Evanston Public Library employees transitioning their gender in the workplace, managers and colleagues of people who are transitioning, and interested Evanstonians.

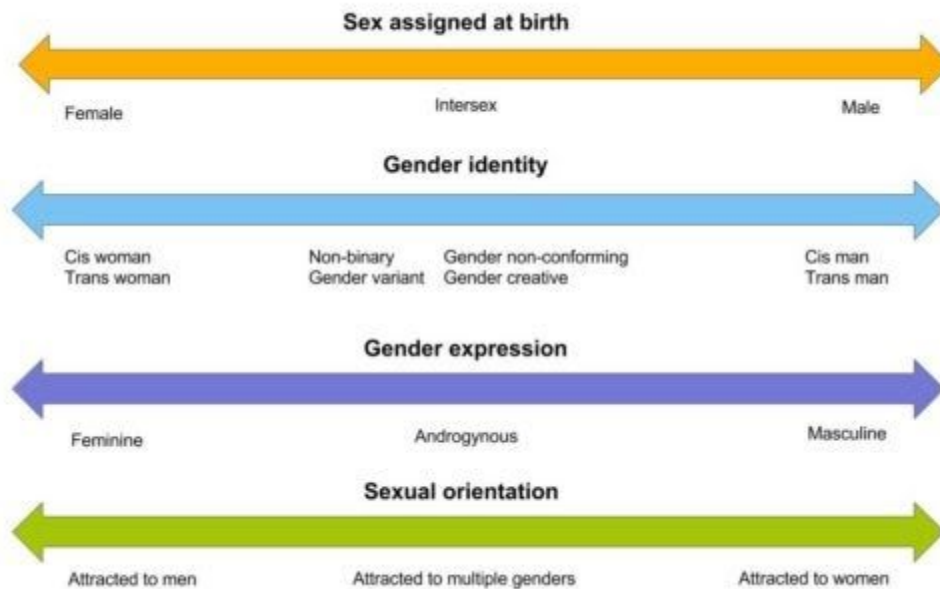
### Definitions and concepts

These definitions, adapted from the [Berkeley Lab Workplace Gender Transition Guidelines](#), are not intended to label employees, but rather to assist in understanding this policy and the legal obligations of employers. Employees may or may not use these terms to describe themselves. For more information on terminology, visit the National Center for Transgender Equality's [website](#). Evanston Public Library recognizes that the terms and definitions around gender and identity are themselves fluid and changing and support an individual's right to choose the best language to describe themself.

- **Gender identity:** A person's internal, deeply felt sense of being male, female, or something other or in-between, regardless of the sex they were assigned at birth. Everyone has a gender identity.
- **Gender expression:** An individual's characteristics and behaviors (such as appearance, dress, mannerisms, speech patterns, and social interactions) that may be perceived as masculine, feminine, both, or neither.
- **Cisgender:** An umbrella term that describes people whose gender identity and/or expression corresponds to their sex assigned at birth.
- **Transgender:** An umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from their sex assigned at birth.
  - A person whose sex assigned at birth was female but who identifies as male is a transgender man.
  - A person whose sex assigned at birth was male but who identifies as female is a transgender woman.

- Some people described by this definition don't consider themselves transgender—they may use other words, or may identify simply as a man or woman. **Evanston Public Library prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender, sex, and gender expression regardless of whether someone identifies as transgender.**
- **Gender non-conforming:** This term refers to individuals whose gender identity or expression exists outside of the gender binary of woman or man. This includes, for example, nonbinary, gender-fluid, gender creative, genderqueer, gender non-conforming, and agender people.

This figure, produced by [TransFocus](#), illustrates the spectrums of sex assigned at birth, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation.



It is important to note that everyone has a:

- Sex assigned at birth
- Gender identity
- Gender expression
- Sexual orientation

Here are a few more definitions:

- **Transition:** The process some transgender people go through to begin living as the gender with which they identify, rather than the sex assigned to them at birth. This may or may not include changes in name and pronoun, bathroom and facility usage, participation in activities such as sports teams, hormone therapy, gender confirmation surgeries, or other medical procedures. There are many different ways to transition. For some people, it is a complex process that takes place over a long period of time, while for others it is a one- or two-step process that happens more quickly. Transition may include coming out (telling family, friends, and coworkers); changing the name and/or sex on legal documents; and, for many transgender people, accessing medical treatment such as hormones and surgery.
- **Sexual orientation:** Refers to the identities or groups of identities you are attracted to sexually. Straight, gay, and bisexual are some ways to describe sexual orientation. It is important to note that sexual orientation is distinct from gender identity and expression. Transgender people can be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or straight, just like cisgender people.
- **LGBT:** A common abbreviation that refers to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community.

### **Reporting harassment**

Discrimination based on gender identity or expression is not tolerated at Evanston Public Library. Derogatory, hurtful, or harmful language is not tolerated. This includes deliberately referring to someone by a gender that they do not identify with, and/or questioning the legitimacy of an individual's gender identity. This could also include being dead named (using someone's birth name instead of their chosen name) or not respecting a person's pronouns. If you experience or witness harassment, please report it.

## **Rights and responsibilities**

There are rights, expectations, and responsibilities of each party associated with a transition in the workplace. It is essential that open and honest communication be established to build trust for each party. With each right also comes responsibility or an expectation. A successful transition in the workplace can occur only with commitment and understanding of each involved part.

## **Transitioning individual**

If you are the transitioning employee, you have the right to work openly and authentically. This means that you may express your gender identity, characteristics, or expression without fear of consequences by the Evanston Public Library.

It is important for you to advocate for yourself. You are not required to tell anyone at the Evanston Public Library; however, if you choose to disclose, the first step is to inform key personnel who can assist you. Your initial point of contact may be your supervisor, another member of the Administrative Team or the library's social worker. Note that if you choose to disclose, at some point, your immediate supervisor, manager, or HR representative will become part of your support team.

Remember, Evanston Public Library employees are covered under the City of Evanston's Healthy Workplace policy and Personnel Manual (section 3.4), but Evanston Public Library must be aware of your situation in order to provide support. Explain your intentions, needs, and concerns to your supervisor or support person. In reporting any situation where you are not feeling comfortable at work, it helps your manager or support person to understand what result or change you wish to see. In addition, the library's social worker can support you with resources or by being an additional support and resource for your manager and team.

## **Managers**

Evanston Public Library's culture supports diversity and inclusion. If someone who reports to you informs you of their desire to transition, or if an individual in your workplace is currently in the transition process, your support is critical. Below are tips to reflect your support:

- If you are unfamiliar with the transition process, use the coaching and resources available to you through the Admin Team to become familiar with this process.

- For supervisors, you should also use these guidelines to further educate your staff.
- Listen carefully to what the individual is telling you and how they'd like to be treated (Do they want to keep their transition as quiet as possible or do they wish to celebrate publicly?)
- When meeting with the transitioning individual about their needs and concerns, remain respectful and open-minded.

If you oversee, manage or lead an employee who is transitioning, it is important that you demonstrate an understanding of (and use a sensitive approach to) their needs and concerns. It may be challenging for transitioning individuals to make themselves vulnerable to a person upon whom their job depends. Make it clear that you will not gossip and only share information where there is a legitimate need to know. Managers should use discretion and be as confidential and discreet as possible. For example, if you need to contact Human Resources, do not copy extraneous people to the email. Before referring to your employee by their new name or pronouns on an email list or other communication channel, confirm with them that this is appropriate. Explain questions and concerns you might have and ask their opinion on matters covered in subsequent sections of this document and the "Creating a Plan" Worksheet. Be prepared to have open conversations with your staff to answer any of their questions regarding the transition process.

Evanston Public Library requires all managers and colleagues to use the transitioning individual's correct gender pronouns. Please note that pronouns are not limited to "she" or "he," but can also include other non-binary pronouns such as "they" or "ze."

### **Developing a plan**

Discuss the expected timeline with the transitioning employee:

- When the individual will begin their transition at work. This will probably be the point at which the individual begins to present in accordance with their gender identity, including change of name, pronouns, dress, grooming, appearance, and restroom use.
- When to inform various stakeholders.
- Anticipated time off required for medical treatment, if known. Since benefits may vary depending on coverage, contact the Human Resources department for more information.

## **Addressing concerns of coworkers and patrons**

If you are a supervisor, you can reference the guidelines contained in this document when communicating about transition-related topics with your team. If additional questions or concerns arise that are not covered by these guidelines, you can use the Additional Resources at the end of this document, as well as speak to the other members of the Admin Team about the specific questions. If patrons have concerns, they should be directed to a member of the Admin Team.

## **Co-workers**

Evanston Public Library's workplace values require that all employees treat one another with dignity and respect. This includes the requirement that all managers and colleagues use a transitioning individual's correct gender pronouns. Please note that pronouns are not limited to "she" or "he," but can also include other non-binary pronouns such as "they" or "ze."

All EPL employees should familiarize themselves with the points made in the brochure [Tips for Working with Transgender Co-workers](#).

If an employee has questions or concerns about the topics covered in this document, they should speak to their supervisor or another member of the Admin Team. They should not expect a transitioning colleague to answer their questions about transgender issues.

## **Specific policies and guidelines**

### **Privacy**

Transgender employees have the right to discuss their gender identity or expression openly, or to keep that information private. The transgender employee gets to decide when, with whom, and how much to share their private information.

We expect Evanston Public Library employees to respect the privacy of all individuals, including transgender individuals.

Management and coworkers should not disclose information that may reveal an employee's transgender status or gender non-conforming presentation to others who do not have a legitimate need to know. For example, a transitioning employee may choose to disclose to coworkers but keep this information private from library patrons.

## **Names and pronouns**

An employee should be addressed by the name and pronoun that correspond to the employee's gender identity, upon request; a court-ordered name or gender change is not required. The intentional or persistent refusal to respect an employee's gender identity (for example, intentionally referring to the employee by a name or pronoun that does not correspond to the employee's gender identity) can constitute harassment and is a violation of EPL's policies. If you are unsure what pronoun a transitioning coworker might use, you can politely ask your coworker how they would like to be addressed.

## **Official records**

Evanston Public Library will change an employee's official record to reflect a change in name or gender upon request from the employee. Certain types of records, like those relating to payroll and retirement accounts, may require a legal name change before the person's name can be changed. Evanston Public Library may also not be legally able to change some records. Many records, however, can be changed to reflect a person's name without proof of a legal name change. For specifics, see [Creating a Plan worksheet](#).

We will update any photographs that the transitioning employee identifies in the workplace that are Evanston Public Library's possession and that Evanston Public Library has the right to unilaterally alter, so the transitioning employee's gender identity and expression are represented. If a new or transitioning employee has questions about library records or ID documents, the employee should contact the Assistant Director.

## **Restroom access**

At Evanston Public Library locations, transitioning employees have the right to use the restroom that corresponds to the employee's gender identity or gender expression, regardless of the employee's sex assigned at birth. The transitioning employee knows their gender better than the person objecting does.

## **Creating a plan**

A plan can help facilitate a smooth transition process. The [Creating a Plan \(CAP\) Worksheet](#) lists potential items of consideration for the transitioning employee, along with estimated timelines. Please note that not all gender transition "steps" occur in the same way, or in the same order. Some items in the CAP sheet may happen in a different way or order, depending on the individual's particular situation. The CAP sheet merely functions as an overview of various steps that an individual might consider in the

gender transition process. It is not intended as a definitive document or a checklist that requires strict adherence.

### **Putting together a stakeholders list**

If you are a transitioning individual, you might consider the following questions related to stakeholders:

- Who are all the people (internal and external) that you may need to engage at some point during your transition?
- When do they need to be engaged?
- Are there any specific issues that must be addressed sooner rather than later?

### **Creating a timeline**

As a transitioning employee, it can be useful to review a list of possible action items to consider before transitioning. These steps can be tailored according to the individual's own time frame and are just a suggestion of one way to approach transitioning at work. If you are a transitioning employee and need assistance with developing your plan, contact your supervisor or the library's social worker.

At some point in the process, the transitioning individual may want to legally change their name. For more information on legal identity change in the US, refer to the document [ID Please](#) from the Transgender Law Center.

## **Creating a plan worksheet**

This worksheet, based on [Appendix A of the Berkeley Lab Guidelines](#), is a list of potential items to consider, along with estimated timelines. Please note that not all gender transition "steps" occur in the same way, or in the same order. Some items in the Creating a Plan (CAP) sheet may occur in a different way or order, depending on the individual's particular situation. The CAP worksheet merely functions as an overview of various steps that an individual might consider in the gender transition process. It is not intended as a definitive document or a checklist that requires strict adherence.

### **Additional considerations when creating your plan**

The following are additional considerations for the transitioning employee:



- Which of these possible steps are important to you? Do you want to come out at work? Not telling people is an option, too.
- Consider any unintended consequences. For example, a new subscriber ID from your insurance company may result in cancellation of pending claims, preauthorization approvals, or dependent claims, and/or may impact your selected primary care physician.
- When will you need to process any necessary changes to other items, such as professional licenses, publications, degrees, credentials, etc.?
- Search for your current name in various Evanston Public Library web pages or other references. Which references would you like to have altered or removed?
- Informing your supervisor: if and when you feel comfortable and safe to come out. Not telling people at work is an option, too.
- Informing the people you work with: if and when you feel comfortable and safe to come out. Not telling people at work is an option, too. How would you like your team to find out about your transition (for example, a letter, a face-to-face meeting, individual discussions, your supervisor explaining)? If in person, who do you want in the room?
- Coming out—telling everyone who works with you (collaborators, patrons, external partners, relevant communities): if and when you feel comfortable and safe to come out. Not telling people at work is an option, too. How would you like to inform your stakeholders, patrons, and/or partners?

## Additional resources

- The National Center for Transgender Equality has an excellent [guide on how to be a good ally](#).
- The National Center for Transgender Equality also has an excellent [resource for understanding, and being supportive and inclusive of non-binary people](#).
- The Transgender Law Center has a good [2-page PDF brochure](#) with tips for working with transgender coworkers.
- Sage Sharp has a [blog post on coming out as non-binary](#). Sage is an inclusion consultant who was a Linux kernel developer for 10 years. Toward the end, they have an excellent section about how to talk about their new name and pronouns.
- [A site from Mozilla's Bugmaster Emma Humphries on people, names, systems, and software](#). In particular, her 2015 Open Source Bridge talk titled [Design for Renaming](#) is excellent. Emma has a [call to action](#) about improving

systems to make it easier for people to change their names and to have those changes be consistent throughout various systems.

- [Gender-Neutral Pronoun 'They' Adopted by Associated Press](#)
- [This 11-minute TED talk](#) by author Ivan E. Coyote titled “Why we need gender-neutral bathrooms” is helpful.
- [These guidelines from the United Nations on gender inclusive language](#) is a useful resource on speaking and writing in a way that does not discriminate against a particular sex, social gender or gender identity, and does not perpetuate gender stereotypes. Given the key role of language in shaping cultural and social attitudes, using gender-inclusive language is a powerful way to promote gender equality and eradicate gender bias.