



SUPPORTING TRANSGENDER STAFF AT PNNL

A Guide for Managers

WE ARE COMMITTED

At PNNL, we are committed to solving the world's most challenging problems and answering its most elusive questions. Diversity of people and thought is part of our unique social fabric and a key to our research success. It is also a daily personal commitment and an expectation. We strive to encourage and enhance an inclusive, professional environment where everyone respects and values individual differences. Each employee has a role to play and a responsibility to act. By providing a work environment of respect, trust, collaboration, and cooperation, PNNL can fulfill its mission of conducting great science and fostering technological advancement.

An Inclusive Workplace

For PNNL to succeed, all staff must be able to contribute to their maximum abilities. Ensuring that everyone thrives in their careers requires maintaining a safe, professional workplace in which every employee can bring their whole self to work. Transgender staff often face a unique set of challenges in the workplace. Thirty percent of respondents to the **2015 U.S. Transgender Survey** reported being fired, denied a promotion, or experiencing other workplace mistreatment because of their gender identity or expression within just one year of taking the survey. Given these challenges, this guide is intended to help all staff understand the best ways to support their transgender colleagues.

Additional resources from PNNL include:

"Transitioning While at PNNL: A Guide for Transgender Staff"

"Supporting PNNL's Transgender Staff: A Guide for All Staff"

If you need help understanding this document or would like to have a conversation about the content, please contact the Manager, Diversity & Inclusion, EEO or your Human Resources (HR) Manager.

PURPOSE

This document is a resource for managers to understand key topics related to PNNL's transgender staff. Given that many transitioning employees must come out to their employers to live consistently with their gender identity full-time, employers necessarily become involved in an employee's transition. While awareness of transgender issues is at an all-time high, misconceptions about transgender individuals and the issues they face can lead to misunderstandings in the workplace. As a manager at PNNL, it is your responsibility to help create an inclusive, professional work environment for all of your staff members. While much of the guidance in this document is aimed at supporting transitioning staff members, many points below are applicable to supporting any transgender staff member regardless of the status of their transition.

IN THIS GUIDE:

- PNNL's non-discrimination and anti-harassment policy
- Clarifications on common terminology
- Guidance on names/pronouns
- Information that dispels common misconceptions
- Specific information on how to help your staff navigate the transition process at PNNL
- Links to external resources

POLICY

This guide supports PNNL's Non-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment Policy, which includes gender identity and expression. PNNL is an advocate for diversity, inclusion, and equal employment opportunities. Every person makes a unique contribution in establishing PNNL as a place where people can grow and succeed. Managers enable these contributions by maintaining a professional workplace environment that embraces diversity, and fosters creativity and innovation. Accordingly, fairness and equity must be defining characteristics of our workplace environment.

Non-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment Policy:

"We strive to create and maintain a culture that enables the achievement of the highest levels of innovation, creativity, and problem solving. Consistent with all state and federal anti-discrimination laws, we will not tolerate discrimination, including harassment, in any form on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, genetic information, veteran status, perceived or actual disability, or any other status or characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law. Allegations of discrimination will be thoroughly and promptly investigated and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken."

DEFINITIONS

The definitions provided here are not intended to label employees but rather to help staff understand these topics, and encourage communication and inclusivity. Although employees may not choose to use these terms to describe themselves, all employees are protected under PNNL's Non-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment Policy regardless of how they identify. You can find more information about terminology through **PFLAG's Straight for Equality Project**.

Definitions Specifically Related to Gender Identity:

Assigned sex: The sex (e.g., male, female, intersex) assigned to an infant at birth.

Cisgender: An umbrella term that can describe people whose gender identity and/or expression corresponds to their sex assigned at birth.

Gender: A set of social, psychological, or emotional traits often influenced by societal expectations that commonly classify an individual as either feminine or masculine.

Gender-affirming surgery: Surgical procedures that help people adjust their bodies in a way that more closely reflects their gender identity. Not every transgender person desires or has the resources for gender-affirming surgery.

Gender dysphoria: Distress caused by a conflict between a person's physical or assigned gender and the gender with which they identify.

Gender expression: An individual's characteristics and behaviors (such as appearance, dress, mannerisms, speech patterns, and social interactions) that may be perceived commonly as masculine or feminine.

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 non-conforming: This term describes people who have, or are perceived to have, gender characteristics, behaviors, or appearances that do not conform to traditional or societal expectations. These expectations vary

across cultures and time. Some, but not all, gender non-conforming people are transgender, and some, but not all, transgender people are gender non-conforming.

Misgender: The action of identifying someone as an incorrect gender (e.g., using he/him pronouns for someone who uses she/her pronouns). This can be intentional or accidental.

Non-binary: An understanding that gender is more complex than only having the binary categories of male and female. People who identify as non-binary may not feel comfortable within the gender binary and may feel most comfortable identifying with neither binary gender, both, or some combination. They may also use terms such as NB, genderfluid, or genderqueer to describe themselves.

Non-binary or gender-neutral/inclusive pronouns: Binary pronouns align with the concept of binary gender, with he/him used for male and she/her used for female. Gender-neutral pronouns are ones that do not denote gender (e.g., singular they: "Alex is a good employee. They have been working here a long time."). Some non-binary people prefer other pronouns, such as ze/zir or ze/hir ("Alex is a good employee. Ze has been working here a long time."). They may also use gender-neutral titles such as Mx., Dr., or prefer no title at all.

Transgender: An umbrella term that can describe people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from their sex assigned at birth. Transgender is an adjective. It is grammatically incorrect to call someone "a transgender" or "transgendered." "Trans" is a common shorthand for transgender and the two can usually be used interchangeably.

- **Transgender man:** A person whose sex assigned at birth was female but who identifies as male
- **Transgender woman:** A person whose sex assigned at birth was male but who identifies as female

Transition: The process some transgender people go through to begin living as the gender with which they identify. This may or may not include changing their name and pronouns, clothing, bathroom and facility usage, hormone therapy, surgery, and/or other medical procedures.

Transsexual: Considered offensive and out of date by many, a term used to describe those who have undergone some form of gender-related surgery. Some people who identify as transsexual do not identify as transgender and vice versa. Transgender is a safer term to use unless you know the individual prefers transsexual.

Additional Definitions:

Asexual/aromantic: A term that describes people who experience limited or no sexual/romantic attraction. Asexual/aromantic people may identify with any sexual orientation.

Coming out: The process in which a person first acknowledges, accepts, and appreciates their sexual orientation or gender identity, and begins to share that with others. There are many different degrees to being out: some may be out to friends only, some may be out publicly, and some may be out only to themselves. It is up to each person, individually, to decide if and when to come out.

Intersex: A term that describes people born with bodies that do not align with binary definitions of sex as either male or female. This may or may not be related to their chromosomal makeup (e.g., XXY rather than XX or XY) or to their body's physical development.

LGBTQ+: A common abbreviation that refers to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community. The "+" symbol refers to the inclusion of identities not captured in LGBTQ. Some examples include intersex, asexual, and questioning (i.e., questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity). In some cases, you may see LGBTQQIA+ used to include more additional identities.

LGBTQ+ ally: An LGBTQ+ ally is someone who may not identify as LGBTQ+ but supports those with LGBTQ+ identities with visible actions. Ally behavior includes listening to the experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals, speaking up when people use hurtful or ignorant language/actions against LGBTQ+ people, respecting people's pronouns, and finding other ways to be visibly supportive.

Queer: Historically a derogatory word, queer has been reclaimed as an inclusive term to include sexual orientations and gender identities that are either non-heterosexual or not cisgender. Although it is widely used, particularly by younger individuals, some people are still uncomfortable with the use of the word because of its history.

Sexual orientation: A person's physical or emotional attraction to people. Straight, gay, bisexual, and queer are some ways to describe sexual orientation. Sexual orientation is distinct from gender identity and expression. Transgender people can be gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, or straight, just like cisgender people. Transgender and cisgender are gender identities, while gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, and straight are sexual orientations.

It is important to note that every single person has a:

- **Sex assigned at birth** (e.g., male, female, intersex)
- **Gender identity** (e.g., cisgender, transgender, non-binary)
- **Gender expression** (e.g., masculine, feminine, non-conforming)
- **Sexual orientation** (e.g., straight, gay, queer)

All of these identities are welcome and protected at PNNL. Everyone has the right to a safe, professional workplace.

GUIDANCE FOR MANAGERS OF TRANSITIONING EMPLOYEES

When a transgender person changes their gender presentation in society, it is known as “transitioning.” A person transitioning may change their name, clothing, and appearance. It is up to this person to decide what their needs are for their transition. Each person will have their own set of unique factors and desires that will require a customized plan. You can help support your colleague by listening to their needs and respecting their individual gender identity and expression. It is important that a transitioning person works with a support team (i.e., line manager and HR) to allow for a smooth transition process within the workplace.

Members of PNNL’s leadership and management team advocate for diversity and inclusion. If someone who reports to you informs you of their desire to transition, or if a person in your workplace is currently transitioning, your support is critical. As soon as possible, seek consultation and guidance from the HR Diversity, Inclusion, and EEO Manager, and be aware of all related anti-discrimination laws and potential legal ramifications of not handling an employee’s transition appropriately. The goal is for everyone to navigate this process successfully, and in a way that creates a safe and inclusive environment for all. Openly discuss these topics with HR, since it is your primary resource.

Understanding HR’s Role:

- *Support the transitioning individual*
- *Support the line manager*
- *Ensure that the transition is a seamless process for both the person transitioning and the line manager*
- *Legally protect the organization*

Your Job as a Manager is to:

- *Support the transitioning individual. As a manager, you are required to ensure your employees have a safe, professional workplace. Supporting a transgender employee’s transition is part of this responsibility*
- *Effectively communicate to your group that their behavior will be held to high expectations to create a safe, professional workplace*
- *Make sure the transitioning person has access to all the available internal resources they need, including HR*

Understand that every person’s transition is unique to their specific goals and needs. There is no one “right” way to transition, so it’s important that the transitioning staff member takes charge in deciding what their transition plan looks like. Your role is to support their transition where possible. Appendix A provides an example of different items to address in a transition plan, including who is responsible for each task. Keep in mind that your transitioning staff member will require your support before, during, and after their transition.

Confidentiality:

If you oversee, manage, supervise, or lead an employee who is transitioning, it is important to show an understanding and use a sensitive approach to their needs and concerns. It may be difficult for transitioning individuals to make themselves vulnerable to people in a position of power.

Make it clear to the transitioning person that you will hold your conversation in confidence. Let them lead the conversation, particularly in terms of the support they need. Explain questions and concerns you might have. Ask their opinion on matters covered in subsequent sections of this document and on putting together a plan for transitioning at work (see Appendix A for additional guidance). Be prepared to have open conversations with your staff to answer any of their questions regarding the transition process.

NEXT STEPS

1. START OFF ON THE RIGHT FOOT

EDUCATE YOURSELF

- Engage with your HRM and the HR Diversity, Inclusion, and EEO Manager as soon as you become aware of your staff member's transition so they can make sure you and the staff member receive the appropriate resources.
- Use resources available to you through the HR Diversity, Inclusion, and EEO Manager, your local HR team, and those listed at the end of this document.
- Understand that no two transitions are alike; there is no single formula. Specific steps in a person's transition and their timing can vary, and individual preferences as to the openness and dissemination of information will always be different. It is up to the person transitioning to decide what their needs are for their transitioning process.
- Expect the transition process and associated workplace logistics to take an extended period of time. The transitioning staff member and the rest of the team/group you manage will need your support throughout this time.

BE SUPPORTIVE

- Remain respectful and open-minded.
- Affirm your support of the transitioning person.
- Remind them that they are covered by the existing policies outlined in the "Policy" section of this document.
- Make it clear you and HR are available to handle any issues that may arise, and that HR has available resources, such as "Transitioning While at PNNL: A Guide for Transgender Staff."
- Listen carefully to what the person is telling you about how they'd like others to be informed about their transition (do they want to keep their transition as quiet as possible or do they wish to announce it publicly?). Information regarding a person's transgender status is considered privileged medical information and should only be shared with others when necessary, and with consent from the transitioning employee.

- Be mindful of using the transitioning person's pronouns as you have been directed, just as you would when learning someone's title, nickname, or new last name. If you are having trouble making the switch, try practicing at home. Putting in time on your own to make yourself familiar with someone's new name and pronouns is something small you can do that will have a big impact. While you may make mistakes while just learning someone's new name or pronouns, it is important to put in the effort to get it right. If you do make a mistake, do your best to calmly and quickly correct it. Transgender employees may feel uncomfortable with the extra attention that an extravagant apology can bring, so keep any apology short and to the point. Note that pronouns are not limited to "she" or "he," but can also include non-binary pronouns such as "they" or "ze."
- Having attention drawn to being misgendered can be uncomfortable for many transgender people. Some staff members may prefer to move on and only offer a correction in a less public setting. In some cases, it may be appropriate to privately consult the individual to see how they would like the situation to be handled.
- Consistently misgendering a person can constitute a hostile work environment and should be taken seriously. If you observe this behavior, reach out to the HR Diversity, Inclusion, and EEO manager, or your local HR team.

2. IDENTIFY KEY CHOICES

- Talk to the transitioning staff member early, either one-on-one or with an HR staff member present, depending with what you and the transitioning staff member are comfortable.
 - Discuss the timeline with which the transitioning person is comfortable.
 - Ensure they have access to the appropriate HR staff member.
 - Review **Appendix A** together.
- Ask the transitioning person for suggestions on what you can do to help them during their transition.
- Ask if they are considering a name and/or gender-marker change. If they are, ask what name and/or pronouns they will use and when they will want you to begin referring to them using their new name and/or pronouns. Keep in mind they may prefer a staged approach wherein you use their new name and/or pronouns in one-on-one settings before using them publicly.
- Ask when they will begin their transition at work, which may include change of name, pronouns, dress, and/or appearance. Be aware these changes may occur over an extended period or all at once. Set realistic expectations with the transitioning staff member about the time it takes to change some of the PNNL systems. Since multiple organizations must partner to update all parts of the PNNL system, anticipate the process taking four to six weeks.
- Ask how and when they would like their team to find out about their transition (e.g., a letter, a face-to-face meeting, individual discussions, an explanation from their supervisor). If in person, ask who they want in the room.
- Ask how and when they would like their sponsors, clients, and/or external collaborators to be informed.
- Discuss when they will need to process any necessary changes to other items, such as professional licenses, publications, degrees, credentials, etc.
- Discuss if they will need workspace changes.
 - **Note:** If they are interested in workspace changes because of anticipated or observed conflict related to being transgender, the conflict should be investigated and dealt with appropriately, rather than solved by moving the transgender person's workspace without question. See the "Handling Conflict" section for more information.
- Ask if they anticipate needing time off for medical treatment. Explain normal sick pay and leave policies will apply, as well as the Family and Medical Leave Act

(FMLA) and, if enrolled, disability insurance coverage as offered by their provider. Since benefits may vary depending on coverage, they should contact the Benefits Office for more information.

3. PROVIDE SUPPORT TO ALL STAFF

- It is critical that you support the transitioning staff member and set the expectation for other staff to do the same after the staff member has made it clear they are comfortable publicly announcing their transition.
 - PNNL staff come from a wide variety of backgrounds and some may feel less comfortable with the transition than others. Expect knowledge of transgender issues to vary among staff members.
 - You **MUST** insist on the same level of respect from staff toward the transitioning individual as you and the organization expect from/for anyone in the workplace. That includes using the correct name and pronouns.
- It is your job to support all of your staff. After the employee makes their transition known, talk with your staff. Connection and information flow reduce the likelihood of unexpected or undesirable responses and reactions.
 - Remember that the transitioning staff member should be in charge of deciding how to inform other staff members. They may prefer to do so themselves either in person or by email. In some cases, they may prefer that you let others know. Appendix B provides an example email you may send to your staff in this scenario.
 - If you've been asked to inform other staff about the transition, be sure to listen to the transitioning staff member about how they would like this to occur. In some cases, it may make sense to have a meeting with staff who have regular contact with the person. It can be helpful to do this without the transitioning staff member present. This type of meeting should only occur with the explicit permission of the transitioning staff member. Remember, you set the expectations for your group.
 - Disseminate (with the approval of the individual) basic information about what is happening and what the transitioning staff member's plans are.
 - Show your support for the transitioning staff member.
 - Remind staff of PNNL policy relating to the situation.
 - Discuss expectations regarding the staff's behavior.
 - Discuss concerns staff may have.
 - Inform staff of other resources, including "Supporting PNNL's Transgender Staff: A Guide for All Staff".

HANDLING CONFLICT

Remember it is your job as a manager to ensure all of your employees have a safe, professional work environment. If conflicts arise specifically related to a person being transgender, work with your HRM to navigate the conflicts.

Keep in mind that it is not the transgender person's fault if a staff member is uncomfortable or upset by them being transgender. In these situations, blame or responsibility should not be placed on the transgender individual. If a staff member is creating a hostile work environment for a transgender employee, the issue should be dealt with immediately, like any other instance of an employee creating a hostile work environment.

Examples of Potential Conflicts:

- A staff member approaches you because they are not comfortable with a transgender employee using the same bathroom facility as them.
 - **Appropriate action:** Discuss and be open to the staff's concerns as you would with any staff member. Make clear that the transgender employee has the right to use the facilities they choose. Explain that if the staff member is not comfortable using a shared bathroom facility with transgender staff, they are welcome to use the single stall bathrooms that exist throughout PNNL's campus.
- A staff member is consistently misgendering or using the wrong name for a transgender employee.
 - **Appropriate action:** Meet with the staff member to discuss the situation. Make it clear that they must respect the transgender person's name and pronouns. Feel free to direct them to the "Supporting PNNL's Transgender Staff: A Guide for All Staff" document and suggest they try practicing the new name and pronouns at home if they are having trouble. If necessary, work with your HRM for guidance.
- A transgender staff member approaches you because they are concerned their officemate is not comfortable with them being transgender. The transgender staff member asks to move offices.
 - **Appropriate action:** Work with both employees (separately) as appropriate to understand the concerns that have arisen, just like you would with any workplace conflict. If the appropriate steps have been

taken to address the conflict and the transgender employee still does not feel comfortable sharing the office, consider an alternate workplace arrangement for one or both of the employees. Do not assume the transgender employee must be the one to move, and do not assume the transgender employee cannot have an officemate.

NAME/ PRONOUNS

Using someone's correct name and pronouns is both a form of mutual respect and courtesy and a key way to make people feel understood and accepted. Employees should have an opportunity to inform you of their name and pronouns and decide how they would like to inform other staff members. Using the correct pronouns is particularly important because being misgendered (being identified as an incorrect gender) can be hurtful, embarrassing, and create unnecessary workplace tension.

Because gender identity is internal, keep in mind you cannot always identify a person's gender by looking at them. If someone corrects you regarding their gender, be respectful. While many transgender employees identify with she/her or he/him pronouns, non-binary or genderfluid people may prefer a gender-neutral pronoun such as they/them (e.g., "Alex is a good employee. They've been working here a long time."). If someone comes out to you as transgender, that initial discussion is a great opportunity to ask the person what pronouns and name they would like you and others to use. Keep in mind that this might change over time and that some people have multiple pronouns they are comfortable using.

Creating Opportunities:

It's important to create opportunities for staff to share their pronouns without singling out transgender employees. Here are some ways you can create opportunities to ask for or offer pronouns:

- *During the interview process, if an interviewee communicates a name and/or pronouns, be sure to use them. While the application process may require legal names, it's good practice to allow interviewees to*

disclose names, not just for transgender employees, but for any employee whose name differs from their legal name.

- *Normalize including pronouns in email signatures (e.g., Jane Smith, she/her, Energy and Environment Directorate, PNNL). By providing your own pronouns, you normalize sharing pronouns, which allows transgender employees to share their own without inherently outing themselves as transgender. This small action can help your colleagues feel more comfortable and welcome at work.*
- *While running meetings or events, make offering pronouns a part of the introduction. By making this a routine, you normalize the process without singling out transgender employees. When you introduce yourself – in meetings or in one-on-one interactions – you can offer your own pronouns with your name to expand awareness of pronoun use and helps others remember that they cannot necessarily determine someone’s pronouns from their appearance alone.*
- *Add a pronoun button or sticker to your lanyard or badge holder (contact prism@pnnl.gov for one).*
- *If you would like to directly ask for someone’s pronouns, you can consider asking, in a private setting, in the same professional, simple manner you would ask for someone’s name (e.g., “I’m sorry if I missed this earlier, but would you mind reminding me what your pronouns are?”).*

Pronoun Misuse:

While you may make mistakes after just learning someone’s new name or pronouns, it is important to put in the effort to get them right. If you do make a mistake, do your best to calmly and quickly correct it. Transgender employees may feel uncomfortable with the extra attention that an extravagant apology can bring, so keep any apology short and to the point. Remember that if you are having trouble making the change, practicing at home can be extremely helpful. If you do not know someone’s pronouns, pay attention to how others interact with the employee, consider asking your shared manager about correct behavior, or consider asking the transitioning employee in private. Note that pronouns are not limited to “she” or “he,” but can also include non-binary pronouns such as “they” and “ze.”

Mistakes happen and correcting other staff can be a great way to help support your transgender colleagues. If you hear a staff member using the incorrect name or pronouns for any employee, there are a number of ways you can deal with the situation:

- *Model the correct name and pronouns for the staff member (e.g., “Oh, you mean Sarah? She’s been working on a different project.”).*
- *If necessary, you may need to give a more explicit, gentle correction (e.g., “Just to be clear, Sarah uses she/her pronouns.”).*
- *Having attention drawn to being misgendered can be uncomfortable for many transgender people. Some staff members may prefer to move on and only offer a correction in a less public setting. In some cases, it may be appropriate to privately consult the individual to see how they would like the situation to be handled.*
- *Consistently misgendering a person can constitute a hostile work environment and should be taken seriously. If you observe this behavior, reach out to the Human Resources Diversity, Inclusion, and EEO manager, or your local HR team.*

People are sometimes confused about what name or pronouns to use when talking about a transgender person when referring to the time before they publicly came out as transgender. When talking about an individual in the past, it is always appropriate to use their current name and pronouns, unless they specifically indicate otherwise.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- **Appearance Standards:** A transgender employee may dress consistently with their gender identity or expression, and must comply with the same standards of dress and appearance that apply to all other people in their workplace and similar position. Dressing in a gender non-conforming manner does not violate PNNL workplace appearance standards.
- **Restroom and Locker Room Access:** All employees have the right to use restrooms, locker rooms, and facilities that align with their gender identity, or that they feel most comfortable using. If preferred, all PNNL staff may use single-stall or all-gender facilities, but it is a personal choice and not a requirement. For a list of some available single-stall restrooms and showers, visit prism.pnl.gov.
- **External Sponsors and Collaborators:** Serving PNNL's sponsors and collaborators is not a reason to deny a transitioning person the right to present themselves in accordance with their gender identity. If you need resources to develop a communication plan for external

partners, you are welcome to contact the HR Diversity, Inclusion, and EEO Manager or your local HR team. PNNL holds the same high standards for anti-discrimination and anti-harassment with our external sponsors and collaborators as it does with PNNL employees. Encourage your staff members to report inappropriate behavior whether or not it occurs between staff members at PNNL or with external stakeholders.

- **Statement of Confidentiality:** A person's transgender status is considered confidential and should only be disclosed on a need-to-know basis, and only with the transitioning person's consent. Transitioning individuals should communicate with their coworkers at whatever level they are comfortable.
- **Educating Others:** While some transgender people are happy to help educate their colleagues, it is not an employee's responsibility to educate others about their identity. If you have specific questions for a colleague, be sure to keep them professional. Questions about current or future medical status, other than discussing required leave time, are generally not appropriate. Consider reaching out to HR or looking through the resources at the end of this document for answers to general questions.

Tips for Success

THINGS TO AVOID	SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES
<p>DO NOT call someone "a transgender" or "transgendered." "Transgender" is an adjective used to describe a person and is not a noun. Referring to someone in this way is othering, and can create feelings of isolation and concerns for safety.</p>	<p>INSTEAD you can say "a transgender person," "a transgender man," "a transgender woman," "a person," "a man," or "a woman." Referencing a person's transgender status can out someone as transgender, so first make sure they are comfortable with other people knowing.</p> <p>INSTEAD if you are worried a colleague does not know the correct pronouns for a transgender colleague, you can start off the conversation by using your transgender colleague's correct name and pronouns in natural conversation.</p>
<p>DO NOT call someone "transsexual" unless you know they prefer the term. Although some people do identify as transsexual, it is more commonly used within a medical context and is generally considered an out-of-date and offensive phrase.</p>	
<p>DO NOT call someone "an FTM," "an MTF," "a female-to-male transgender person," or "a male-to-female transgender person."</p>	
<p>DO NOT disclose someone's status as transgender to other people without express permission.</p>	

THINGS TO AVOID	SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES
DO NOT ask about surgeries or medical procedures a transgender person has had or plans to have.	INSTEAD remember that every staff member has a right to privacy about their medical information.
DO NOT comment on whether you could or could not tell that someone is transgender.	
DO NOT use the term "sex change" in reference to surgical procedures.	INSTEAD remember that preferred terminology includes "gender-confirmation surgery" or "genital reconstruction surgery" and remember that every staff member has a right to privacy about their medical information.
DO NOT ask what someone's "real name" is.	INSTEAD try practicing someone's pronouns and name at home to make it easier to get it right in person.
DO NOT avoid using someone's pronouns or name just because they are unfamiliar to you.	
DO NOT use someone's old pronouns or previous name.	

REMEMBER

Respecting your transgender colleagues mostly comes down to maintaining a professional work environment. Respecting your colleagues' names, pronouns, and titles is an important part of sustaining a workplace where all employees feel supported and welcomed. Likewise, all employees have a right to maintain the privacy of their personal medical information.

External Resources:

Trans Toolkit for Employers: The Human Rights Campaign created a toolkit that provides practical guidance in creating a more inclusive workplace for transgender and gender non-conforming employees.

PFLAG: Founded in 1973, PFLAG (formerly Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) has 400 volunteer-run chapters that support family and friends of LGBTQ+ individuals as well as LGBTQ+ people themselves.

Our Trans Loved Ones (PDF): Created by PFLAG, it provides questions and answers for parents, families, and friends of people who are transgender or gender expansive.

PFLAG Benton/Franklin: By uniting people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) with families, friends, and allies, PFLAG is committed to advancing equality through its mission of support, education, and advocacy.

PFLAG's Straight for Equality Project: A national outreach program that provides information and resources that help straight allies understand their role in supporting and advocating for LGBTQ+ people.

GLAAD's Tips for Allies of Transgender People: These are tips that can help you move toward being a better ally to transgender people. Of course, this list is not exhaustive and cannot possibly include all the "right" things to do and say — because there is often no one "right" answer to every situation you might encounter. When you become an ally to transgender people, your actions can help change culture, making society a better, safer place for transgender people, and for all people who do not conform to gender expectations.

Talking About Pronouns: The Human Rights Campaign compiled these useful guidelines on how to talk about pronouns and why using the correct pronouns is an important step in affirming transgender people.

Issues Affecting Transgender People: The National Center for Transgender Equality compiled this information about existing laws and policies that affect the transgender community.

APPENDIX A:

CREATING A WORKPLACE GENDER TRANSITION PLAN

PNNL recommends the transitioning employee and their manager work together to create a plan to help facilitate a smooth transition process. The table below can be used as a plan template for the transitioning employee, their manager, and Human Resources to refer to and use as a resource, in conjunction with “Transitioning While at PNNL: A Guide for Transgender Staff” and “Supporting PNNL’s Transgender Staff: A Guide for Managers”. The HR Diversity, Inclusion, and EEO Manager can help you navigate all of the tasks listed below.

The table below functions as an overview of some steps that may need to be completed as part of the transitioning process, along with estimated timelines and possible dependencies. Given that each individual has different needs, please note that not all tasks will occur in the same way or in the same order. Some items may not be needed at all. The table should not be treated as a comprehensive list or as a checklist that requires strict adherence (please allow room for flexibility). Starred items (*) require legal name change.

Coming Out (transitioning staff choose the order of action)

TASK	WHO SHOULD HANDLE?	SUGGESTED TIMEFRAME	TIME TO COMPLETE	COMMENTS
Contact the HR Diversity, Inclusion, and EEO Manager (HR D&I)	Transitioning Employee, Line Manager, or HR Manager (HRM)	Anytime	<i>Varies based on method (in person, email, phone).</i>	The employee decides whether to contact the HR D&I Manager diversity.inclusion.eeo@pnnl.gov or manager first
Communicate with manager/supervisor	Transitioning Employee	Anytime	2-3 weeks.	
Communicate with people with whom you work directly	Transitioning Employee (see comments)	When the employee is comfortable, typically after telling manager and HR	Varies based on transitioning employee's preference.	HR D&I Manager, HRM and the employee's manager will help with this process and be mindful of employee's communication preferences.
Communicate with everyone else who works with you (collaborators, sponsors)	Transitioning Employee (see comments)	When the employee is comfortable, typically after telling manager and HR		

Updating PNNL Systems (total process will likely take 4-6 weeks)

TASK	WHO SHOULD HANDLE?	WHO MAKES CHANGE?	SUGGESTED TIMEFRAME	TIME TO COMPLETE	COMMENTS
Update preferred name in PNNL Drill Down/ Microsoft systems/Skype for Business/ Entrust/Teams/HUB	Transitioning Employee	HRIS & Computer Accounts	Before legal name change and after employee comes out to co-workers	1 week	Unless legally changed, new name will be considered preferred in the system. Note that receiving a new OneKey prior to a legal name change can only occur if the preferred last name remains the same as listed on the driver's license. Otherwise, OneKey distribution will occur after the legal name change.
Contact PNNL-IT Help Desk to receive a new OneKey	Transitioning Employee	Computer Accounts	Anytime	Varies	
Update picture in profile.pnl.gov	Transitioning Employee	Transitioning Employee	Anytime	10 mins	

Updating PNNL Systems Cont. (total process will likely take 4-6 weeks)

TASK	WHO SHOULD HANDLE?	WHO MAKES CHANGE?	SUGGESTED TIMEFRAME	TIME TO COMPLETE	COMMENTS
Update name and gender on PNNL badge* and all other PNNL systems required by a legal name change <i>(i.e., PeopleSoft, MyTravel, software enterprise purchases, etc.)</i>	Transitioning Employee	HRIS, Computer Accounts & PNNL Badging Office	After legal name and/or gender change	2-3 days	For name change, a copy of the social security card is sent to HRIS. For gender change, a copy of the driver's license is sent instead. Name change checklist: hdi.pnl.gov/hdi/product/exhibits/namchg.doc
Update photo on PNNL badge	Transitioning Employee	PNNL Badging Office	Any time appearance changes substantially	1 hour	Badge ID photos should reflect your accurate appearance and can be changed as needed.
If legal name change is not the same as in Task 1 for preferred name, Repeat Tasks 1, 2, and 4	Transitioning Employee	HRIS, Computer Accounts & Transitioning Employee	After legal name change	2-3 days	None
Update outgoing voicemail message <i>(landline & cell phone)</i>	Transitioning Employee	Transitioning Employee	After employee comes out to co-workers	10 mins	None
Update all miscellaneous user names	Transitioning Employee	Transitioning Employee	After employee comes out to co-workers	1 day	Git, JIRA, Confluence, other work-related accounts or software

Updating External Information

TASK	WHO SHOULD HANDLE?	WHO MAKES CHANGE?	SUGGESTED TIMEFRAME	TIME TO COMPLETE	COMMENTS
Go through legal name change process	Transitioning Employee	Government	Anytime	Varies according to steps	Please refer to WA Courts for information about name changes in WA state.
Update name change at bank (for paychecks)*	Transitioning Employee	Bank	After legal name change	Varies according to bank	None

If Considering Medical Procedures

TASK	WHO SHOULD HANDLE?	WHO MAKES CHANGE?	SUGGESTED TIMEFRAME	TIME TO COMPLETE	COMMENTS
Discuss leave options with your medical provider and Unum for info on short term disability and family medical leave (STD/FMLA)	Transitioning Employee	N/A	Anytime	N/A	Internal: mybenefits.pnl.gov External: benefits.pnnl.gov
Inform supervisor of any planned leave	Transitioning Employee	N/A	Recommended 2-3 weeks prior to taking a leave for coverage purposes	N/A	Contact HR Manager for guidance, if needed
Keep supervisor informed of leave time required or need for adjusted work schedule	Transitioning Employee	N/A	As needed	N/A	None

* requires legal name change

APPENDIX B:

Email Example

It's not your staff member's responsibility to communicate about their transition to their colleagues alone. HR and their manager can help them with this process. Everyone has their own set of unique factors and circumstances that determine their customized plan, and they have to decide what they are comfortable sharing and doing. Below are two examples of the types of messages they might consider sending their peers either from themselves or through their manager.

EXAMPLE 1:

Dear [Colleague],

I am writing this letter to tell you about a matter that is primarily personal but will result in some changes at work. I am transgender, and I have begun transitioning publicly. If you are unfamiliar with these terms and would like to learn more, please check out the "Supporting PNNL's Transgender Staff: A Guide for All Staff." As I transition over the next several months, you will notice some changes in my appearance. I have also changed my name from [old name] to [new name], and now use the pronouns [new pronouns] instead of [old pronouns].

I am excited to be able to take this step forward in my life. I know this will be a shift for everyone and that it may take some time before you are used to using my new name and pronouns. I will understand if you occasionally make mistakes, but I ask that you please do your best.

If you have questions or concerns, you are welcome to talk to me, [manager name], or the HR Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Employment Opportunity Manager.

Thank you for your support,
[New name]

EXAMPLE 2:

Colleagues,

I would like to both express my support for and share an upcoming change with you regarding our team member, [new name]. [New name] (formerly [old name]) is coming out as transgender, so you will now be able to find [new pronoun] in Drill-Down and Outlook under [new pronoun] new name, [new name] (newemail@pnnl.gov).

Both [line manager and team leader names] will be happy to answer any questions you may have, and [new name] would like to let you all know that [new pronoun] is willing to answer any respectful questions you have as well. If you would like to learn more about transgender individuals and their rights, feel free to take a look at the educational materials below. For additional information, please explore the sites further or reach out to [new name] or Diversity, Inclusion, & Equal Employment Opportunity Manager.

A welcoming and inclusive work environment is critical for enabling all of us to come to work each day and contribute our talents and skills to the work we do for our nation and the world. Please join me in making this a smooth transition for [new name].

[Insert appropriate links and include PNNL's Transgender Resource documents]



**Pacific
Northwest**
NATIONAL LABORATORY

Questions or Concerns:

If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to the HR Diversity, Inclusion, and EEO Manager:

Manager

Diversity & Inclusion, EEO

Diversity.Inclusion.EEO@pnnl.gov



Prism.pnl.gov

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