



Gender Affirming Policy FAQ

What is Gender Affirmation?

Gender affirmation or gender transition is the process where a transgender or gender diverse person takes steps to socially and/or physically feel more aligned with their gender identity.

What does Transgender or Gender Diverse mean?

An umbrella term for individuals whose gender identity or expression does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. Often shortened to trans.

Why does an organisation implement a Gender Affirmation Policy?

Organisations that are committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all employees understand the need to celebrate and support all gender identities. Organisations that respect gender diversity and are committed to supporting transgender, nonbinary, takatāpui and gender diverse employees understand the need to clearly outline their commitments in writing and not just rely on 'good will'.

Who is eligible for support under such policies?

Any employee who chooses to be openly gender diverse and/or to seek gender affirmation while at work. This should cover a wide range of identities including non-binary employees.

What types of supports should be available?

Organisations committed to gender diversity will strive to support employees however is most beneficial, including a gender affirmation support plan, gender affirming leave, changing names and pronouns in their systems, and training for managers and colleagues if required.

Support through counselling, EAP Services and/or a dedicated support person in Human Resources should be made available. These supports should be rainbow safe with experience and/or training focused on gender affirming support, or organisations should seek this out.

What is Gender Affirming leave?

The new gold standard for leave in New Zealand is *up to 20 days'* paid leave and up to 12 months' unpaid leave for full-time employees, and pro-rata for part-time and casual to support gender diverse employees through their affirmation or transition. Relying on 'discretionary' leave is not recommended as this can provide an inconsistent experience for employees.

What types of things can an employee take leave for?

Organisation should recognise that each employee will have different needs, and this will be outlined in the Gender Affirmation Plan, however, leave is intended to cover time to attend medical and follow up procedures, legal support, mental health support and more relating to an employee's affirmation.

What other changes should organisations support employees with?

Organisations should work with employees to ensure changes to in-house details (e.g. email account, computer login, ID card or badge, personnel records, and payroll) and changes to their legal name, pronouns and preferred name.

What about uniforms and bathrooms?

Organisations must support employees to change their uniform, and the potentially the inclusion of permitted custom items if requested; and support employees to use of the toilets and other facilities that they feel are appropriate and safe for them. In addition to gendered bathrooms, organisations should ensure they have all gender or gender neutral bathrooms available for employees in all office/site locations.