Workplace Gender Transition

A resource for faculty and staff at the University of Michigan

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Applicable to all ●●●

Specific to Transitioning Employee ●

Feedback on this guide

If you have feedback or suggestions about this guide, please share using this form:
umich.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_dj1GSCexcmBoj2e

About this transition guide

Creating a welcoming environment for all identities includes awareness around our policies and procedures, education and training, and supporting our faculty and staff. The information in this document is intended as a resource around gender transition in the workplace for the entire University of Michigan faculty and staff.

This guide was created by members for members of the University of Michigan community. It is their hope this guide will serve as a helpful tool to better navigate this complex process.

This resource guide hopes to focus on providing support in several areas:

- Information and resources aimed at helping create an inclusive space

- Clarity around policies, procedures, and benefits related to workplace gender transition

- Additional services available to transitioning individuals

- Resources supporting transitioning employees and their managers, colleagues and business partners

How to use this guide

While this guide is a comprehensive document, certain sections will be applicable to either the transitioning employee, manager or HR business partner, co-workers, and others. Even though certain sections may not apply to you and your role, it may be beneficial to review those in order to bring awareness to the entire process.

Use this legend to help guide what section will be most applicable to you based on your role.

Applies to:

● **Transitioning employee**   ● **Management/HR**   ● Co-worker

Policies

The University is committed to protecting faculty and staff with diverse sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. Our policies outline important guidelines for helping create this environment. Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement should refer to their specific contract for further specifics around compensation, leave, and benefits.

University of Michigan & Michigan Medicine

- Non-discrimination
- Discrimination and harassment
- EEO/Affirmative Action Policy
- Recruitment and employment

Faculty specific

- Discrimination based on sexual orientation
- LGBT policies, resources, community, and benefits

Workplace specific policies and guidance

	Ann Arbor Campus	Michigan Medicine
Absence from work	Campus employees have separate short term sick and vacation accumulation banks. Absence from Work	Michigan Medicine employees have a combined short term sick/vacation accumulation under the PTO program. Please see expanded section on webpage specific to Michigan Medicine employees. Time Away from Michigan Medicine
Appearance Standards	Our appearance policies are inclusive of all gender expressions. These policies are provided for your reference. SPG	Our appearance policies are inclusive of all gender expressions. These policies are provided for your reference. PolicyStat
Gender inclusive restroom maps	Gender Inclusive Restrooms on the Ann Arbor Campus (Spectrum Center)	All-Gender Restroom (patient areas)
Health plan coverage	U-M health plans cover many gender-affirming services for transgender members when medically necessary. Health Plans	Gender affirming services fact sheet	
Health plan support	Faculty and staff with questions about benefit issues related to transgender status are encouraged to contact a member of the benefits office listed on this page. Benefits Office Contact	
Personnel updates	Updates to Personal Data, such as legal name or gender, can be made with the Shared Services Center. *Note: Documentation (Birth Certificate, Driver's License, or Social Security Card) may be required to update certain items* Personal Data Change Form	
Updating pronouns and accurate name	The university recognizes that as a community many of its members use names other than their legal names to identify themselves. As long as the use of this different name is not for the purposes of misrepresentation, the university acknowledges that an accurate name can and should be used wherever possible in the course of university business and education. U-M Preferred Name Policy Step-By-Step: Pronouns / Accurate Name	Michigan Medicine employees can update their accurate name in the Michigan Medicine Profile. (You must be on a Mich Med network or on the VPN) In the "Basic Information" section you can add a "Preferred First Name". This will update how first names display in MS Outlook and in the directory. Michigan Medicine User Profile
Mcard Updates	Faculty, staff, and retiree cardholders may have an appropriate accurate name used on their Mcards. Accurate names populate in the ID Card database from Wolverine Access and are not changed at an ID Issuing Station; please make sure to update your information prior to arriving. Existing cardholders may have one and only one Mcard reproduced with their accurate name printed at no charge. (current Mcard must be turned in, otherwise a replacement fee must be paid) Mcards - What are Preferred Names	Step-By-Step: Accurate Name	
Uniqname	ITS will change your uniqname for reasons such as misspellings, legal name changes, gender identity, marriage, divorce, harassment, or if your originally selected uniqname contains profanity. *Note: The email account associated with the old uniqname will be disabled and all memberships and accounts associated with the original uniqname will have to be updated by the individual.* Changing Your Uniqname	

Resources

You don't know what someone's gender identity is by looking at them or hearing their voice over a phone. People with diverse gender identity or expressions will use names and pronouns that align with identity of self. Using the wrong salutation, name, or pronouns can cause trauma for people. This section identifies some of the basic terminology that will aid us in communicating together.

Terminology is always expanding or being updated. We encourage you to visit the Spectrum Center education page for current terms and definitions.

'Preferred' (accurate or chosen) names ●●●●

Using a name that is different from a person's legal name is referred to as a 'preferred' name - while the University of Michigan uses preferred names, you may also see this referred to as 'accurate' or 'chosen' name. Names are important and when engaging with others it is important to use a person's 'preferred' name in written and spoken formats.

Note: The remainder of this document will use the term accurate name.

The University of Michigan is committed to supporting its faculty and staff in a way that affirms their identity. Use of accurate names is one way to do this. While not an exhaustive list, consider the following important points:

- Do not make inappropriate phrases or comments related to someone's accurate name or pronouns.

- Consider why you need to ask/know about someone's legal/birth/previous name, also known as a "deadname", before asking.

- Consider why you need to ask why someone's uniqname or email name is different from how someone introduces themselves

Pronouns ●●●●

A pronoun is "a word that can function by itself as a noun phrase and that refers either to the participants in the discourse (e.g., I, you) or to someone or something mentioned elsewhere in the discourse (e.g., she, it, this)". Correctly using someone's pronoun is one of the most basic ways to show your respect for their gender identity. When someone is referred to with the wrong pronoun, it can make them feel disrespected, invalidated, dismissed, or alienated (or, often, all of the above).

The table below provides some insight into how to use four common pronouns. This list is not exhaustive. For more information, visit www.mypronouns.org.

Subject	She	He	They (singular)	Ze
Object	Her	Him	Them (singular)	Hir
Possessive	Her/Hers	His	Their/Theirs (singular)	Hir/Hirs
Reflexive	Herself	Himself	Themself/Themselves (singular)	Hirself

Some things to keep in mind: ●●●

- The singular of they is considered appropriate grammar.
  merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/singular-nonbinary-they

- Pronouns can be designated in Wolverine Access by all members of the University of Michigan community.

- Some individuals will use pronouns not listed above. Others prefer to just be called by their name. Speak with colleagues about their pronouns. Consider doing this in private so as to not "out" someone.

- We are not always going to get it right, and that's okay! If you use the wrong pronoun, apologize, correct it, and then move forward. And, if you forget what someone told you, acknowledge that and ask for reinforcement.

- Consider practicing using a person's pronouns with another person to build your confidence.

- If you do not know someone's pronouns, consider using their name in communication.

- Use gender inclusive language in communications by avoiding binary terms or concepts (e.g., he/she, chairman, etc.)

- Use more inclusive written language (e.g., spokesperson instead of spokesman)

Additional information on pronouns is available through the University of Michigan Spectrum Center: spectrumcenter.umich.edu/article/designated-pronouns

Resources for a transitioning employee in the workplace

Note: The purpose of this section is to assist an employee (faculty or staff) who is considering sharing their gender identity and/or transition in the workplace. Feel free to fill this guide out as a planning tool. It can be shared with your manager/HR, but is not required.

The section is intended to help you begin to think about various parts of this process. Recognizing a plan will not be the same for every individual, we encourage you to use this as a template and adjust based on your needs.
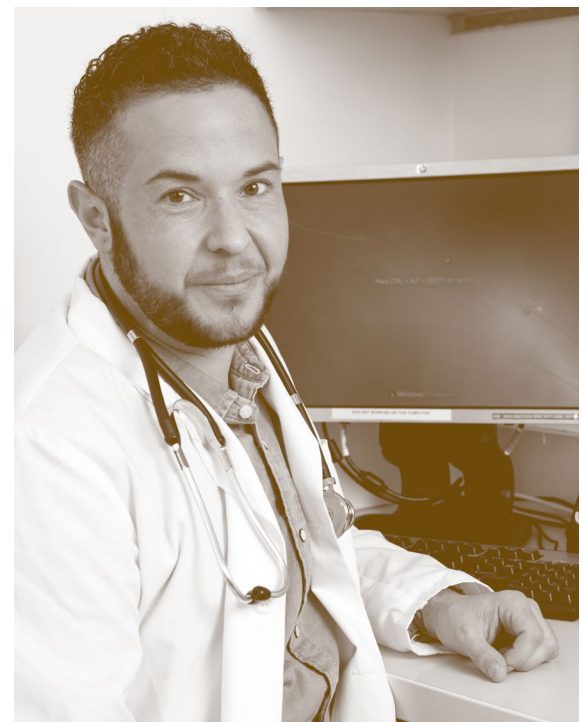
Meeting you where you are ●

The University provides a variety of resources, ranging from counseling to medical benefits, that can help to support and assist you no matter where you are in your process.

Gender affirming care

- Comprehensive Gender Services Program (CGSP) - Clinical social workers provide counseling services for people who identify as transgender, gender non-conforming, gender queer, or nonbinary. Services are also provided to people questioning their gender.

General health

- Michigan Medicine LGBTQ+ Health

- University Health Service

- Center for Sexual Health - The center, part of the University of Michigan Department of Social Work, is staffed by Certified Sex Therapists who are mental health professionals specializing in the treatment of sexual difficulties. Therapists work in close consultation with U-M nurses and physicians to offer integrated clinical care. The center and its therapists are committed to providing sensitive and competent care that is respectful of people's cultural and religious values as well as their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Additional resources are provided by the Spectrum Center

General counseling

- [Faculty and Staff Counseling and Consultation Office](#) (FASCCO) - All active or retired faculty and staff (including temporaries) are eligible to use FASCCO services, as well as their immediate (benefit-eligible) adult family members. FASCCO counselors adhere to strict professional and ethical guidelines pertaining to any faculty, staff, retirees or others who use FASCCO services. You are assured that all information is held in confidence except in those circumstances legally limited (i.e., imminent risk to life and court-ordered reporting for child or dependent adult abuse). No other information is released without the signed consent of the client.

- [Office of Counseling and Workplace Resilience](#) (OCWR) - Provides confidential, no-cost, compassionate, evidence-based counseling, consultation, and debriefing services to all Michigan Medicine faculty and staff.

- Additional resources are provided by the [Spectrum Center](#)

- All U-M health plans provide coverage for counseling and behavioral health services. For support and information about providers, call the number on the back of your health plan ID card or go to your health plan's website for an on-line provider directory.

Considerations ●

You can use the following questions as a starting point. Keep in mind that this list may evolve or grow as you continue on your journey.

- **Who do you talk to first?**
  - You have options and should choose what makes you feel the most safe. This could be your supervisor, your HR business partner, a trusted ally, etc.

- **What do you feel is the best communication style for you?**
  - Would you rather communicate directly with HR? Would you rather communicate directly with your supervisor? Can either of them communicate on your behalf?

- **What do I need to know?**
  - Collecting information about University policies and processes is beneficial. Having an in person meeting with your HR business partner and/or manager could be a great next step to consider. If that doesn't feel right, think of what other ways you can collect all the information that is beneficial.

- **While this guide is intended to aid in this process, no one plan works for all so it's important to consider what is best for you.**
  - How do you want people to communicate with you?
  - Are you planning to go by a different name and/or different pronouns?
  - How do you want to express yourself? Do you feel the need to make changes? Do you feel it's important to make an announcement first?

My workplace plan ●

Consider the following questions as it pertains to your identity.

Name during transition	
Name post transition	
Pronouns during transition	
Pronouns post transition	
Other (write in):	
Other (write in):	

Identify which individuals will be included in the transition plan, folks you may want to make aware of your transition, and when they will be made aware. Potential roles to consider are: leaders, colleagues, an ally who will provide you support, or external customers or business partners.

Role	Names (or N/A)	Additional information (e.g., phone number, email, etc.)
Main point of contact		
Allies		
Colleagues		
Leaders		
External customers		

During a transition, some folks may not require any time away from the office and may immediately abandon their dead-name. Other times, transition will occur over time and may be accompanied by gender affirming surgeries, requiring time away from work. Change in appearance can sometimes be immediate while other times will occur over time.

My timing and related considerations:

Utilize this list to keep track of updates for your professional as well as personal life.

Tasks	Complete
Update accurate name and/or pronouns in Wolverine Access (see page 5)	☐
Update your Directory Profile (MCommunity)	☐

Update your medical health records
  - Update legal name (TBD)
  - Update pronouns and "preferred name" via patient portal (app) (web)
	☐

Update voicemail, email signature, etc.	☐
Update pronouns in Zoom Sign in to your account then follow this resource	☐
Update your Mcard (see page 5)	☐

Update government issued documents
  - Update birth record
  - Updating your state of Michigan Identification
  - Selecting your gender marker on your passport
	☐

Other (write in):	☐
Other (write in):	☐

Remember, you are in the driver's seat with who, when, and how things are communicated. Below are some common groups that you may want to communicate with and some options for how that communication could happen. Decide what is right for your comfort and safety, but know you have support as needed.

Note: This is driven by the transitioning employee and supported by others. Not every box needs to be checked, but rather serve as a way to identify who will do what.

Who to notify	Date to communicate	HR sends on employee behalf	Manager sends on employee behalf	Employee sends their own communication	No communication provided
HR		☐	☐	☐	☐
Manager		☐	☐	☐	☐
Unit leadership		☐	☐	☐	☐
Unit colleagues		☐	☐	☐	☐
Non unit colleagues		☐	☐	☐	☐
Internal partners		☐	☐	☐	☐
External (non UofM) partners		☐	☐	☐	☐
Allies		☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (write in):		☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (write in):		☐	☐	☐	☐