

Toolkit to Obtain Support as a Trans, Two-Spirit, or Non-binary Employee

Prepared by Human Resources



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Toolkit to Obtain Support as a T2SNB Employee

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Introduction

Overview

At UBC, diversity is foundational to excellence in research, education, and engagement. UBC recognizes that respect and support for transgender, Two-Spirit, and gender diverse (T2SNB) faculty and staff are central to your success and well-being. It is our interactions at work that can help us to feel a valued member of society. Gender diversity is worthy of respect at UBC.

This resource provides considerations and steps for getting support at work, wherever you are in your journey. UBC recognizes that there are unique needs depending on whether T2SNB employees are: (a) coming to terms with one's gender; (b) disclosing one's gender identity to others at work; or (c) living as one's full selves in their gender identity. Even once living in one's gender identity, some T2SNB people may have to continue to disclose their identities, especially to correct assumptions (usually based on how they are read by others). This toolkit also recognizes the unique needs and interests of Two-Spirit employees.

This resource is a living document which will continue to evolve as issues and needs get clarified. We welcome your feedback and input to ensure it provides meaningful and timely information. Please submit your feedback via this brief, [anonymous survey](#).

Note about Language:

This toolkit uses the phrase “transgender, Two-Spirit, and non-binary” to refer to the diverse community of people whose gender is different from the gender that they were assigned at birth. Language is imperfect, and this phrase is an attempt to capture a shared experience with, and relationship to, gender, rather than specific identities. Many people use different words to talk about their gender identity – always respect and mirror the language that people use to talk about themselves. We also recognize that Two-Spirit is a cultural concept specific to Indigenous communities and its meaning extends beyond gender. This toolkit focusses on Two-Spirit people who are gender diverse, and need supports related to those experiences. Lastly, some sources (e.g., the Gender Diversity Audit) cited in this toolkit use other umbrella terms, such as “gender-diverse,” which will be used when referring to these sources along with the acronym T2SGD.

Human Rights

The workplace at UBC is governed by the BC Human Rights Code. In July 2016, “gender identity and expression” were added as protected grounds within the code. This change is also reflected in [UBC's Discrimination Policy Number SC7 \(formerly Policy #3\)](#) and [Respectful Environment Statement](#). In early 2023, human resources practitioners and managers/supervisors are being prepared and trained to provide a welcoming, inclusive, and respectful work environment for T2SNB employees.

Reconciliation

Part of improving the inclusion and support of Two-Spirit employees is acknowledging and addressing the injustices and harms of colonialism on Indigenous people, communities, and lands. Understanding the past and improving the present allow for greater wellbeing among Two-Spirit people. In particular, this work fits within the context of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action (TRC 2012). The TRC calls for educating management and staff on the history of Indigenous people (Call to Action 92) and eliminating employment gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians (Call to Action 7).

Support living in one's gender

Many T2SNB employees are already living in their gender. Even though you might be well past disclosing your gender at work, you could still face issues and challenges in the workplace. This section provides details related to answers to frequently asked questions and common resource needs.

Frequently Asked Questions

Here are answers to some frequently asked questions based on common challenges faced by T2SNB employees.

Question	Answer
What if a <u>colleague</u> is struggling with my pronouns?	If the pronoun is new to the colleague, start by providing reminders of your pronouns. Also, you can enlist the support of your manager and close colleagues to provide others with reminders. There is a period of practice and learning (i.e., usually around three months, depending on how frequent your interactions). If the mistakes persist beyond three months despite repeated reminders and/or you sense an unwillingness to make this change, please inform your manager about these issues and your actions. Alternatively, you can reach out to human resources, or if you are afraid to raise this issue, you can ask a trusted colleague to convey information about your situation on your behalf. You may also want to notify your union or association. Give some consideration to English language learners, who may have broader challenges with English pronouns.
What if a <u>student</u> is struggling with my pronouns?	If the pronoun is new to the student, start by providing reminders of your pronouns. There is a period of practice and learning (i.e., usually around three months, depending on how frequent your interactions). If the mistakes persist beyond three months despite repeated reminders, please inform your manager about these issues and your actions to determine next steps.
Who do I talk to, or how do I address if I get frequently challenged by other facility users in washrooms and/or change rooms?	There is no need to defend or justify your use of the washroom of choice. In fact, the law supports you in accessing the washroom that aligns with your gender identity. You may choose to respond to the facility user challenging your use of the washrooms with a simple: "I am in the right washroom." If the facility user persists and becomes abusive, let your supervisor or manager know if the washroom is in your workplace or notify a facilities manager if the washroom is elsewhere. Supervisors and managers are trained to educate

Question	Answer
	<p>facility users and offer alternate washroom options to those with concerns. To explore washroom options across the university, visit the Equity & Inclusion Office webpage on Inclusive Washrooms and Change rooms.</p>
<p>What do I do if I experience discrimination or harassment in the workplace because of being T2SNB?</p>	<p>Please refer to both Bullying and Harassment Prevention and Policy SC7 – Discrimination Policy.</p> <p>You can connect with the human rights advising team at the Equity and Inclusion Office, which can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consult on human-rights related discrimination and provides information and advice; - work with relevant parties to resolve concerns informally, where possible; - assist with filing a formal complaint, as appropriate.
<p>What if I encounter systems limitations (e.g., insufficient gender categories or public exposure of legal name)? Who do I talk to?</p>	<p>Across UBC, systems are being updated to create greater inclusion of gender diversity. Find out more on this Equity & Inclusion Office webpage about Gender Diversity. You and/or your manager or supervisor can reach out to the Equity and Inclusion Office at trans.inclusion@equity.ubc.ca for support in navigating or updating systems and processes.</p>
<p>Where do I find details about coverage for hormone therapy, gender-affirming procedures, therapy, and time off covered by UBC’s extended health care benefits?</p>	<p>The information below provides general information, helpful links to public health and wellness, and support, including UBC benefits provisions and resources.</p>
<p>What if as a Two-Spirit employee, I have specific time off needs related to my cultural- or land-based practices?</p>	<p>Work with your manager or supervisor to determine the details to support you in your cultural- and land-based practices. Also, you can check the HR Vacation & Leaves webpage for more details.</p>

Resource Needs

Mental Health

The UBC extended health plan provides 100% reimbursement of reasonable and customary charges for services provided by a registered psychologist, registered clinical counsellor or social worker, up to a maximum of \$3,000 per extended health plan member per year. For more information, visit the [Extended Health Plan Update webpage](#) on the UBC HR site.

Hormones

In BC, the cost of hormone therapy may be covered by the UBC Extended Health plan and/or [PharmaCare](#) (BC public drug program – the main program, Fair PharmaCare, is income-based and will cover drugs once the annual deductible has been reached.

Generally speaking, the [UBC Extended Health plan](#) will cover estrogen/progesterone and testosterone at 80% (100% for BCGEU Childcare employees); however, you must provide the Drug Identification Number (DIN) of the prescribed drug(s) for final confirmation. To confirm coverage, contact the Sun Life Call Centre at 1-800-661-7334 or 1-800-361-6212 or use the drug look-up feature on the [Sun Life Plan Member website](#) or [mobile app](#).

If the medication prescribed is not covered by [PharmaCare](#) or the [UBC Extended Health plan](#), your primary care physician can apply for [PharmaCare Special Authority](#) for coverage. For more information, visit the Provincial Health Services Authority's [Hormone Therapy page](#).

Surgery

In BC, the cost of gender-affirming surgeries are covered under the public provincial health program, [Medical Services Plan](#) (MSP). MSP will cover physician and hospital in-patient medical care services related to the surgery. For information on surgery, visit the Provincial Health Services Authority's [How to Get Surgery page](#). For more information on funding, visit the Provincial Health Services Authority's [Surgery Funding page](#).

Care

The Provincial Health Services Authority has a service called Trans Care BC. The Trans Care BC's care navigation team helps connect people in BC to gender-affirming health and wellness supports; the [website](#) provides a general outline of coverage for specific health services and supplies and contains links to available resources for you and those closest to you. A Trans Care BC Health Navigator and Primary Care Physician can give you further details about non-UBC benefits-related coverage.

Gender Affirmation Benefits

UBC extended health plan members, who are under the care of a doctor for gender transitioning, are covered for gender affirmation procedures not covered by the public provincial health program up to a \$50,000 lifetime maximum. For more details on the coverage, application and claims processes, please refer to the [Extended Health Plan](#) webpage on the UBC HR site.

Time Off

For more information on [short-term sick leave provisions](#), [medical appointments](#), and the [long-term disability](#) coverage specific to your employment group.

Coming out at work

T2SNB employees have the right to bring their full selves to work. In some instances, this may include disclosing one's gender identity in the workplace for the first time. UBC recognizes that there is no standard experience of this milestone in someone's life. This may, but does not have to, include: (a) social transition (e.g., changes to name,

pronouns, and/or dress); (b) legal transition (e.g., changing legal documents, benefits, and/or payroll); and (c) medical transition, which entails a range of gender-affirming procedures.

As with most changes, it is an adjustment for both the individual who is disclosing and for others in the workplace who need to change how they interact with the disclosing employee. It is important to understand that changes may occur gradually or rapidly and that supervisors or managers know there is no standard way to share this information.

As an employee, you may wish to keep your plans private or to let only some people in the workplace know. In other cases, you may wish to announce your transition widely. Regardless, the first step is discussing your needs with your supervisor or manager to share your wishes regarding confidentiality and desired support. If you belong to an employee group, you may want a representative from your union or association present at this or any other meeting related to your disclosure plan. You may also want to connect with a staff member at the Equity and Inclusion Office who has expertise in the area of gender diversity.

Steps

Talking to your manager

The disclosure process is employee-driven and supported by the manager or supervisor, Human Resources, and/or Equity and Inclusion Office. Having the right support network in place can assist in the disclosure process in the workplace. Involving your supervisor or manager and supportive colleagues can help ensure the process is a positive experience for you and all involved and should be the first step.

Creating a plan

Talk to your supervisor or manager to develop a plan for sharing what you think is important for others at work to know to respect you. Your manager or supervisor is being provided with tools to sort out key considerations. Human Resources and/or Equity and Inclusion Office can also support this effort alongside your supervisor or manager.

- Make a timeline – what are some specific date(s) that are part of your disclosure (e.g., by when you want to use a new name and/or pronouns, where applicable)
- Specific issues and concerns that need to be addressed at the outset
- If and how would you like your team and colleagues to learn about you (e.g., an email, face-to-face group meeting, individual discussions and/or have your manager/supervisor explain)
- How would you like your team and colleagues to support your disclosure?
 - During an education session?
 - Emails or comments of support?
- Will you need to make changes to professional licenses, qualifications, or accreditations?

Checklist

Review the following checklist before meeting with your supervisor or manager to prepare for the conversation. While there are many changes that you can initiate, it will be helpful to plan out when and who will be responsible for specific changes. Managers and human resources can help as little or as much as you would like.

The following table begins to list some of the places where updates with the new name are required. Further discussions among your manager and human resources can build out a comprehensive list.

Item to Update	Name to Update	Gender Marker	Lead Person	Deadline	Status
HR Self-Serve Record (Workday)					
UBC Card					
Security Badge					
Email Address					
Faculty Service Centre (if instructor)					
Desk/Office Door					
Voicemail and Phone Display Name					
Payroll (only once legal name + gender change made)					
Update criminal records check to new legal name (if required for UBC position)					
Extended health care and benefits					
Faculty/Staff Directory					
Business Cards					
Organization Charts					
Names and/or photos on dept/unit websites					
Professional Licenses, Qualifications, Accreditations					

Item to Update	Name to Update	Gender Marker	Lead Person	Deadline	Status
Publication Authorship					
Name on Patent(s)					
Contact/Professional Mailing Lists					
Ask Colleagues to Delete Former Contact Profiles					

Resources

The following internal and external resources available in the Lower Mainland and Kelowna are listed in alphabetical order.

Catherine White Holman Wellness Centre (CWHWC)

[CWHWC](#) provides low-barrier wellness services to T2SNB people in ways that are respectful and celebratory of clients' identity and self-expression. These services include general health care, counselling, legal resources, and a community kitchen.

Health Initiative for Men (HIM)

[HIM](#) provides health and wellbeing services to gay, bisexual, and queer men and gender diverse people.

Indigenous Resources

- [The Enchante Network](#) – Connects and supports Two-Spirit and LGBTQ+ people
- [Dancing to Eagle Spirit Society](#) - The purpose of the society is to advance Native American healing and spiritual principles (contact: info@dancingtoeaglespiritsociety.org)
- [Four Feathers Society](#): Provides wellness, cultural, spiritual wellness programs and events
- [Greater Vancouver Native Cultural Society](#): Vancouver's longest running Two-Spirit organization
- [Urban Native Youth Association, Two Spirit Collective](#) - UNYA's Two-Spirit Collective provides support, resources, and programming for Indigenous youth, ages 15 to 30, who identify as Two-Spirit or LGBTQ+ (contact: 2spirit@unya.bc.ca)
- [Trans Care BC](#): Find out what gender-affirming procedures are covered by the First Nation Health Authority and get support from Patient Navigators.
- [Transforming Embers](#): Maintain Coast Salish 2Spirit wellness on our ancestral lands and waters, and to strengthen relationships with urban Indigenous LGBTQQIA+ relatives through teachings of respect, shared responsibility, and transformation.

Kelowna Living Positive Resource Centre

[Living Positive Resource Centre](#) provide harm reduction, prevention and education resource, and supportive services that focus on individual and community health and wellness to anyone living with, affected by, or at risk of HIV, Hep C, or related health issues.

Kelowna Pride

[Kelowna Pride](#) provides opportunities for the LGBT2Q+ community in Kelowna and beyond to meet, provide support for each other, socialization, celebrate and create community in safe spaces.

Newcomer Resources

[Rainbow Refugees](#): Promotes safe equitable migration and communities of belonging for people fleeing Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression and HIV+ persecution (contact: community@rainbowrefugee.ca)

Prism Services

[Prism](#) is Vancouver Coastal Health's education, information, and referral service for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, Two-Spirit, and queer + (LGBT2Q+) community members.

QMUNITY

[QMUNITY](#) offers free, short-term counselling, support groups, and social connections where individuals can meet, share experiences, or just have fun with others.

South Asian Resources

[Sher Peer Support Group](#): Sher Vancouver is a registered charity for queer South Asians and their friends, families, and allies in Metro Vancouver (contact: info@shervancouver.com)

Trans Care BC

Several counselling services and supports are available to you for your emotional well-being. Finding the right fit with a counsellor is important, and Trans Care BC can connect you with counselling information that best suits you in your area. If Trans Care BC does not have the information for a certain area, they will find someone close to you or via Skype.

- [Find Counselling Support](#)
- [Find Mental Health and Wellness Supports](#)

Should you find a counsellor through a referral from Trans Care BC, if you are a member of the extended health benefits plan, it can provide financial reimbursement under the psychological services provision.

Trans Rights BC

[Trans Rights BC](#) aims to disseminate human rights information that is accurate, accessible, and relevant to the safety and well-being of trans and gender-diverse individuals and their supportive allies across British Columbia.

UBC Queer Faculty and Staff Collective

The [Queer Faculty and Staff Collective](#) provides a space for UBC faculty and staff who identify as members of 2SLGBTQIA+ communities to come together, make connections and build community.

UBC Equity and Inclusion Office

Gender Diversity Information Hub: <https://equity.ubc.ca/resources/gender-diversity/>

WAVAW

[WAVAW](#) is a feminist, anti-oppressive, decolonizing rape crisis centre operating on unceded Coast Salish Territories. We provide support services to survivors of sexualized violence who have shared experiences of gender marginalization: cis and trans women, Two-Spirit, trans and/or non-binary people.