Trans, Gender Non-Conforming & Intersex (TGNCI) Terminology Glossary

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Term (abbreviation)	Quick Definition	Notes / Tips
Cisgender (also often abbreviated as “cis”)	An adjective to describe people who are not transgender.	Example: Someone who was assigned male at birth and whose gender identity is also male, or someone who was assigned female at birth and whose gender identity is also female.
Deadname (also called “birth name”)	The former name that a transgender person no longer uses.	You should use someone’s chosen name and avoid using their deadname.
Gender-Affirming Care (also abbreviated as “GAC”)	“Gender-affirming care” refers to more than just medical care. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), it can include any single or combination of social, psychological, behavioral, or medical (including hormonal treatment or surgery) interventions designed to support and affirm a person’s gender identity.	See the AAMC’s website for more information: https://www.aamc.org/news/what-gender-affirming-care-your-questions-answered
Gender Dysphoria	The diagnosis or diagnostic term for the clinically significant distress resulting from the lack of congruence between a person’s gender identity and the sex assigned to them at birth.	Gender dysphoria is a clinical diagnosis that is highly treatable. As with other medical and mental health conditions, health care providers follow a well-established standard of care when working with patients with gender dysphoria. *On its own, being transgender is not considered a medical condition.*

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Gender Identity	A person's internal, deeply held knowledge of their own gender.	Everyone has a gender identity! A person's gender identity is not a personal decision, preference, or belief. It cannot be altered through medical intervention or psychological therapy.
Gender Non-Conforming (also abbreviated as "GNC")	A term used to describe people whose gender expression differs from conventional expectations of masculinity and femininity.	Note that many cisgender (i.e., not transgender) people have gender expressions that are gender non-conforming. Simply having a non-conforming gender expression does not make someone trans or nonbinary. And not all transgender people are gender non-conforming.
Gender Transition (or often simply "transition")	The process a trans person undergoes to bring every aspect of their life into closer alignment with their gender identity. This process may include social, legal, and/or medical steps. • **Social transition:** Telling family, friends, and coworkers; using a different name; using different pronouns; dressing differently; etc. • **Legal transition:** Changing your name and/or gender marker on legal documents. • **Medical transition:** Hormone replacement therapy ("HRT") and/or one or more surgical procedures (e.g., "top surgery" for trans men/trans masc people).	There is no one right or wrong way to transition. The steps someone takes (and the order in which they take them) can depend on many external factors, such as access to supportive family/networks, cost, where they live, their culture and/or religion, the impact on their employment, education, and/or safety in public spaces, etc. Example: Legal transition is not possible for everyone because state laws and policies restrict trans people's ability to update the gender marker on state IDs, and the federal ban on updating gender markers on U.S. passports, among other barriers.

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Intersex	Intersex refers to someone with one or more innate sex characteristics, including genitals, internal reproductive organs, and chromosomes, that fall outside of traditional conceptions of male or female bodies.	Some intersex people also describe themselves as trans, but others do not. **Sample ways to describe the fact that someone is intersex:** • Sam is an intersex person/ woman/man. • Sam is intersex. • Intersex people are... • People who are intersex...
Misgender	The act of referring to someone in a way that does not accurately reflect that person's gender identity.	Examples of misgendering: Using the incorrect pronouns, calling someone by their old name (i.e., deadname), or using the incorrect prefix (e.g., Mr., Ms., ma'am, sir). If you mistakenly misgender someone, quickly apologize and move on! The most important thing is your intention and avoiding the same mistake in the future.
Nonbinary or sometimes spelled as "non-binary" (also abbreviated as "Enby" or "NB")	An adjective used by people who experience their gender identity and/or gender expression as falling outside the binary gender categories of "man" and "woman."	Some nonbinary people also call themselves transgender, but others do not. There is no one right or wrong way to be nonbinary, just like there is no right or wrong way to be transgender.

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Sex Assigned at Birth (e.g., “AFAB” = assigned female at birth; “AMAB” = assigned male at birth)	Refers to the “sex” marker recorded on a person’s birth certificate at the time of birth. Typically, infants are assigned a sex at birth, “male” or “female,” based on the appearance of their external anatomy.	Some also refer to this as “Gender Assigned at Birth.”
Sexual Orientation	A person’s enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction to another person.	Avoid conflating “sexual orientation” with “gender identity.” Like everyone else, trans people have sexual orientations. They may be straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, pansexual, etc. For example, a trans man can have a wife, a husband, or a nonbinary partner.
Transgender (also abbreviated as “trans”)	Someone who identifies as a gender other than the one assigned at birth.	For transgender people, the sex they were assigned at birth and their own internal gender identity do not match.
Transgender Man (also abbreviated as “trans man”)	Someone whose sex assigned at birth was female, but who has a male gender identity.	Trans men are men. Singling them out from other men is harmful.
Trans Masculine (also abbreviated as “trans masc”)	Someone whose sex assigned at birth was female, but who has a gender identity that is more on the masculine side of the gender spectrum.	Trans masculine is an umbrella term that can cover trans men as well as nonbinary and genderfluid people who were assigned female at birth and identify with masculinity.

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Transgender Woman (also abbreviated as “trans woman”)	Someone whose sex assigned at birth was male, but who has a female gender identity.	Trans women are women. Singling them out from other women is harmful.
Trans Feminine (also abbreviated as “trans femme”)	Someone whose sex assigned at birth was male, but who has a gender identity that is more on the feminine side of the gender spectrum.	Trans feminine is an umbrella term that can cover trans women as well as nonbinary and genderfluid people who were assigned male at birth and identify with femininity. It’s best to use the term people choose for themselves.

Visit the ACLU of Missouri’s **Show-Me My Rights Guide** for more information about the legal rights of TGNCI (transgender, nonbinary, gender non-conforming, and intersex) Missourians and how allies can support the community.

Scan the QR code of visit the link below:

https://www.aclu-mo.org/know-your-rights/your-rights-as-a-trans-person

For any questions or suggestions, email us at:

showmemyrights@aclu-mo.org

This information is not intended as legal advice.