



General Inclusion Policy

The unique ability of sports to transcend linguistic, cultural and social barriers makes it an excellent platform for inclusion, and the Kingston Lacrosse Association (KLA) recognizes that sport can play a major role in promoting the universal inclusion of all groups in society. The KLA is committed to the principle of offering inclusive and available opportunities to everyone who wishes to play lacrosse and encourages the registration of under-represented populations across Kingston & Surrounding Area.

The sport of lacrosse is for everyone. However, discrimination is still faced, and can damage an individual or group's participation, work, mental and physical health, academic ability and/or sporting performance. Furthermore, it violates that individual or group's basic human right to be treated with respect and dignity. Because sport can provide participants with enjoyment, relaxation, income, health and social benefits, it is imperative that our members have an equal and fair opportunity to participate without facing discrimination.

To ensure a safe and positive environment in our programs and activities, within our office, at all meetings related to our business and any other operation or event that we conduct, permit or sanction, the Kingston Lacrosse Association (KLA) expects appropriate behaviour consistent with **Bill 13 of the Province of Ontario** and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms of Canada. The KLA supports equal opportunity and prohibits discrimination in all forms. Staff, volunteers, and all members of the KLA are expected to conduct themselves pursuant to this policy.

Kingston Lacrosse Association Values

In addition to striving for athletic success, participation in sport provides the opportunity for members to experience a range of values, including equality, teamwork, respect and honour. KLA's Code of Conduct prohibits any member or group from behaving or conducting themselves in a manner which dishonours or disgraces the sport of lacrosse. To this end, the KLA maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards discrimination of any kind and has an expectation that all KLA members treat participants of the game with respect at all times.

Commitment to inclusion. The Kingston Lacrosse Association is committed to the principle and practice of fair and equitable allocation of resources, opportunities and services, and pledges to encourage participation by all youth regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, colour, citizenship, creed, sex, gender, orientation, identification, disability, age or status. The KLA, through its Board of Directors, will work to ensure that inclusion and sport equity are key considerations

when developing, updating or delivering policies, governance, programs, projects and services to the membership.

Commitment to justness. Equity does not necessarily mean that all persons must be treated exactly the same; people may need to be treated differently through accommodations to be treated fairly. The Kingston Lacrosse Association resolves to incorporate principles of equity and justness in its operations, infrastructure, technical programs, activities, partnerships and action plans as necessary and make reasonable accommodations for members to participate in lacrosse while respecting membership privacy.

Commitment to confidentiality. The Kingston Lacrosse Association agrees that its Board of Directors will not, at any time, disclose information identified by any member athletes as confidential to any person, organization or third-party other than in the ordinary and usual course of implementing this policy without the prior consent of the athlete (or the athlete's parent/guardian) unless required by law.

Expectations of our leaders. KLA members in a position of authority, which include the Board of Directors, non-playing bench personnel and referees, are considered ambassadors in the game of lacrosse. Discrimination, especially homophobia and transphobia, in sport remain largely unchallenged, and our participants may find that the values of sport are not extended to them. Ambassadors are expected to lead by example, and to address situations where KLA members are found to be violating equal opportunity for the game's participants. Best practices include non-playing bench personnel and association executives addressing the topic at the beginning of the season and, if violations arise, throughout the season as necessary.

Minority Participation in Kingston Lacrosse

Instances of discrimination are often ignored because individuals do not know how to properly respond or because they believe that the language and behavior is not meant to be malicious or intentionally discriminatory. However, for the game to grow, it is important that everyone involved has the courage to address these situations directly; all non-playing bench personnel, referees and association leaders should feel confident in challenging discriminatory language and behaviour. "Doing nothing" is neither acceptable nor excusable, and language or actions that disrespect members are never "just part of the game." Addressing the behaviour when it happens is the right thing to do.

1. Women in sport. The sport of lacrosse has a long tradition of encouraging the involvement of female participants. The KLA offers programming for female athletes to play, coach, officiate and administer and govern the game of lacrosse both in co-ed and female-exclusive competition. (female-exclusive is subject to registration and ability to run a sustainable program)

2. Newcomers to Canada in sport. As Canada's national summer sport, lacrosse has a unique opportunity to represent Canada to newcomers. Lacrosse teaches teamwork, commitment, communication and perseverance – all of which are qualities that make for a successful life in Canada, and sport is increasingly being recognized for its role in knitting Canadians together. In addition to encouraging physical ability, participation in sports for Canadian immigrants and their children help to build a sense of belonging. Through our various programs, the Kingston Lacrosse Association introduces new Canadians to both the game and the heritage offered by lacrosse.

3. People with disabilities in sport. People with disabilities may face societal barriers and exclusions from community life which deprive them of opportunities which are essential to their social development, health and well-being. As part of its commitment to inclusion, the KLA requires reasonable accommodations for members with disabilities to safely participate in lacrosse.

4. LGBTQ+ people in sport. When challenging discrimination, the KLA recognizes that people in the LGBTQ+ community may face unique and fluctuating circumstances when participating in sport. There is zero tolerance concerning harassment, bullying, violence, homophobia and transphobia, which undermine the powerful potential of lacrosse to contribute to personal, social and community development.

5. Transgender people in Sport

Some definition: a person's gender *identity* is their internal and individual experience of gender; their sense of being male, female, both, neither or anywhere along the gender spectrum. A person's gender identity may or may not be the same as their birth-assigned sex, and may or may not be publicly revealed. A person's gender *expression* is how that individual publicly presents their gender. This can include both behaviour and outward appearance, including but not limited to, style of dress, hair, make-up, body language, voice, cues, chosen name and chosen pronoun. An individual may self-identify transgender (including trans, gender non-conforming, gender variant or gender queer) if their gender identity and/or expression differs from stereotypical gender norms and societal expectations.

The KLA recognizes that people in the transgender community may face complex issues while participating in sport, and aim to create an environment where people of all genders feel welcome to participate in Lacrosse.

Transitioning athletes. KLA members shall be allowed to participate in any OLA-sanctioned event in accordance with their preferred gender identity, irrespective of the sex listed on their birth certificate or any other official documentation and regardless of whether or not the athlete has undergone any medical treatment. Therefore:

- a.** Male-to-female transitioning athletes shall be regarded as female for the purposes of registration and competition;
- b.** Female-to-male transitioning athletes shall be regarded as male for the purposes of registration and competition;
- c.** Athletes who identify as neither male nor female shall be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Transgender athletes wishing to participate in KLA-sanctioned events under this policy may initiate the process by contacting the Kingston Lacrosse Association office and outlining their request to participate according to their preferred gender. The KLA may, with reasonable cause, request additional information prior to confirming registration. Upon review, the athlete will be registered according to their preferred gender, addressed according to their preferred gender pronoun, and will continue to be able to do so.

Commitment to accommodation. Wherever possible, reasonable accommodations requested by a transgender athlete related to accessible facilities are expected to be met, including the opportunity to use private changing, showering and bathroom facilities for that individual's use. In all cases, the responsibility of access to dressing rooms belongs to the hosting team, and should be met with discretion and respect for the athlete. Under no circumstances should a transgender athlete be required to use separate facilities other than by personal choice.

Taking further action

In certain cases, discriminatory language or behavior may require more serious attention. Behaviour that adversely affects the experience of our members is considered detrimental to our image and reputation, and violations will be considered for merit at the sole discretion of the KLA's Board of Directors following a complaint made in writing. To determine whether further action is necessary, incidents should be discussed within the association and should include documented incidents and the steps taken to rectify the situation. For repeat/serious offenses, the Board of Directors may be notified of a complaint in writing to determine the appropriate course of action.