



Poll Worker Tips:

Interacting Respectfully with Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming (GNC) People

Definitions:

- **Transgender:** Umbrella term for individuals whose self-understanding of their gender, behavior, and how they present themselves in the world is different from what society expects based on their assigned sex at birth.
- **Gender Non-Conforming (GNC):** Term for individuals whose presentation in the world is different than societal expectations regarding how they “should” present themselves.

Respectful Interaction at Poll Stations:

1. If you are greeting a transgender/GNC person, you may recognize that their identification card does not match their presentation. If all other legal requirements are met, transgender/GNC people are entitled to their right to vote.
2. Regardless of their presentation, if the name on the ID document used for voting purposes matches the name on the voter roll, the individual can vote. As with all voters, if the names do not match, provide a provisional ballot.
3. Do not assume a person is male or female.
4. NEVER use words such as “it” or “whatever” when referring to someone who is transgender/GNC.
5. When you are not sure of a person’s gender identity, or the name shown on their identification card does not appear to match the person’s gender presentation, it is OK to ask if the person has a “preferred” name and/or pronoun.
6. When you are not sure what pronoun to use, stick to the person’s first name or use the pronouns “they/them/theirs.” (i.e. “This is *John’s* ballot.” Or “This is *their* ballot.”)
7. NEVER ask a transgender/GNC person what their “real name” is.
8. If you make a pronoun mistake, acknowledge the mistake and apologize. It lets them know that you recognize them as a person exercising their right to vote and will use their preferred pronoun moving forward.
9. Being transgender is not dependent on any particular medical procedure. It is never appropriate to inquire about surgeries or any other intimate details.
10. When you learn about an individual’s transgender/GNC identity, keep it private. It is privileged information. You should never “out” people by revealing their identity to others.
11. Validate how people present themselves by treating them respectfully, just as you would everyone else.

For questions, please contact the ACLU of Ohio at 216.472.2220 or at contact@acluohio.org.