
YHA

Transgender Guest Equality Policy

2018

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1. Policy Statement

YHA England and Wales (YHA) is a charitable organisation committed to promoting equality among all employees and guests. We aim to create an environment in which all individuals are free from discrimination or harassment irrespective of their background, beliefs, culture or abilities. YHA will take all reasonable steps to ensure the inclusion and fair treatment of all the users of our services.

This policy relates specifically to the protected characteristic of gender reassignment and focusses on our commitment to promoting a safe and welcoming environment for our transgender customers.

YHA is also committed to promoting inclusion for transgender people in the workplace. For information on equality and diversity for YHA staff undergoing, or proposing to undergo, gender reassignment, please contact the YHA People Team.

YHA will:

- Apply this policy to the YHA network
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that transgender customers, whilst using YHA's services, are protected from discrimination, harassment and victimization
- Consider the potential needs of transgender guests when investing in, and refurbishing, our facilities
- Promote a culture of tolerance and inclusion for transgender employees and customers within our organisation
- Take reasonable steps to provide environments and services that are inclusive
- Train staff members in their roles and responsibilities
- Take seriously all allegations of unlawful behaviour and respond to these swiftly and appropriately
- Review this policy on a regular basis
- Take action against anyone using this policy to gain access to spaces they should not legitimately be in
- Consider the needs and requirements for all our guests in line with the Equality Act 2010.

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy applies to all people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment as defined below. The policy is available to all in order to inform our customers how YHA manages bookings for its guests.

It is intended to:

- Illustrate YHA's commitment to inclusion
- Inform our customers of what they can expect from us
- Enable customers to make informed decisions regarding their choice of accommodation

3. Definitions

3.1 Gender Reassignment

The Equality Act 2010 states that:

“A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex”

The process mentioned above may include undergoing medical gender reassignment treatments, but the Act does not require someone to undergo medical treatment in order to be protected.

3.2 Transgender Person

For the purpose of this policy, a transgender person is someone who, by the definition above, has the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment.

4. Our Services

While we recognise our guests' right not to disclose private information, customers are welcome to contact a member of the Hostel Team to discuss how we may make them feel more comfortable during their stay, including discussion with them on where they would be most suitably accommodated. Any discussions which customers have with one of our Team will remain strictly confidential.

Many YHA properties have unisex toilet and shower facilities which are available for the use of all of our guests, regardless of their gender. In properties where there are no unisex toilets and showers, Transgender guests are welcome to use the facilities that reflect their identified gender.

YHA provides both single gender dormitories and private rooms for our guests; both male and female dormitories are available. Transgender guests are welcome to stay in the dormitory which corresponds to the gender with which they identify, as per the requirements later in this policy.

Private rooms of a variety of sizes are also available for families, individuals and groups where there are female and male guests in a party.

5. Exemptions under the Equality Act for Communal Accommodation

We acknowledge the exemptions in the Equality Act 2010 which relate to communal accommodation and single sex services; specifically, sleeping facilities. These exemptions allow for the provision of different services to transgender guests in certain circumstances, so long as it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

In certain circumstances we may choose to invoke these exemptions; however, this is not as a rule. An example of these circumstances is people who have been the victims of abuse. In such situations we would work with all parties to provide a solution while still ensuring access everyone has access to our services.

We invite people who meet the above criteria to get in touch with us in advance; please contact our customer care department at customercare@yha.org.uk. Individual requests will be dealt with on a case by case basis. Please be aware that these requests can take up to 14 days to process.

6. Checking in and Refusal of Service

As referenced above, this policy is in place to protect the right of guests undergoing gender reassignment to have equal access to the services that YHA provides/use the facilities which match their gender.

In line with YHA admissions policy, and booking terms and conditions, we require all guests to provide identification when staying with us. This identification must match the name of the person making the booking. However we acknowledge that some people may be in the process of reassignment and may not have updated their identification. If this is your circumstance, you can continue to make the booking of your choice, but you will need to get in touch with us if your booking does not match your taken name and gender; this will enable us to update our notes and make your check in a smoother process. You can notify us of any changes to your booking by emailing customerservices@yha.org.uk and we will contact you to discuss this.

If we are unsure if a guest has picked shared accommodation appropriate to their gender identity, we may ask if they have made the decision to enter the process of gender reassignment. In rare instances we may need to make changes to a booking; however, we will do everything we can to provide suitable alternative accommodation in such circumstances. This is to ensure that we protect genuine transgender guests from those fraudulently seeking to gain access to shared spaces.

If we find individuals are fraudulently trying to gain access to spaces they should not genuinely be in, they will be excluded from using our network. This is undertaken to ensure the safety and welfare of our customers.