

Interim transgender search guidance introduced

- New interim transgender search guidance has been introduced.
- More thorough police searches, such as those which expose intimate body parts, should be carried out by police officers and staff of the same biological sex as the detained person. However, a trans detainee can ask to be searched by an officer of their lived gender.
- Officers will face no career detriment from declining to carry out searches, and any search not conducted in line with biological sex must have the written consent of the detainee, the officer carrying out the search as well as the authorising officer.

Colleagues,

Updated transgender search guidance has been approved, providing greater clarity around searches of members of the transgender community, as well as searches carried out by transgender police officers and staff.

Our priority was that we provide you with clear and simple guidance so that you can fulfil your role but also respect the specific needs of the transgender community and our transgender colleagues. Searches should always be conducted in line with the biological sex of those involved, however, the guidance reflects the fact that it can sometimes be more complicated and so provides advice on how you navigate these situations. The guidance explains that a trans detainee can request to be searched by an officer of their lived gender, and, on the agreement of both the officer and authorising search officer, the search can be conducted under consent.

The guidance has been developed with support from the National Police Chiefs' Council, who have sought legal advice and feedback within policing and from partners. Several scenarios will be included with the guidance, which clearly explain the process to follow and what permissions need to be sought. We do understand that this may create some concerns, but please remember that officers will face no career detriment from declining to carry out searches. Any search not conducted in line with biological sex must have the written consent of the detainee, the officer carrying out the search as well as the authorising officer.

To help explain the guidance, we will also be sharing an FAQ, example scenarios and additional information, to help officers and supervisors navigate these situations with ease.

Our aim is to ensure we are implementing the law in a pragmatic and consistent way that treats people with fairness, dignity and respect. We are confident this guidance achieves that, and we would encourage all officers to take a moment to review the processes and guidance on the intranet. Anyone with further questions should contact [REDACTED] or the LGBT Network on [REDACTED]

Thank you.

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