

Get the Facts...

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TRANSGENDER AND GENDER DIVERSE VETERAN HEALTHCARE

Birth Sex and Gender Identity

Your Birth Sex and Gender Identity are important parts of who you are that should be shared with your healthcare provider. By sharing this information with your provider, you are helping to ensure that you receive the highest quality care. VA understands that transgender and gender diverse Veterans face increased health risks and unique challenges in healthcare, and is committed to promoting an affirming environment that is inclusive of all Veterans.

Previously, your medical record had only one place for your sex and gender. Now, you can have both your **Birth Sex** and your **Gender Identity** in your medical record. If you wish to change your Birth Sex information after talking with your health care team, this is your right in the VA system. However, it is important that you understand the safety risks of changing your Birth Sex field in your medical record.

What are the Gender Identity and Birth Sex fields?

Gender Identity is how you think about yourself. Options are male, female, transgender male, transgender female, non-binary, other or does not wish to disclose. This field will be blank until you update it and can be changed as needed.

Birth Sex is the box that was checked on your original birth certificate. Options are male or female.

How is Gender Identity used?

Gender Identity helps VA staff and providers know your identity and use respectful terms during interactions when delivering personalized care.

How is Birth Sex used?

Birth Sex is used to guide medical care. Ways this field is used include:

- The medical record system uses Birth Sex to automatically determine your lab ranges, for example hormone levels and kidney function.
- Birth Sex is used to automatically remind your provider what health screenings are due such as pap smears.
- Birth Sex along with height, weight, and age are used to determine doses for your medication(s).

For the reasons above, medical advice is that your Birth Sex should be the same as what appears on your original birth certificate.

How can I be sure the information about my Gender Identity and Birth Sex is correct?

The Gender Identity field will be blank until you provide the information and it can be updated at any time. New enrollees can provide this information during their enrollment process, and previously enrolled Veterans can add it at their local VA facility by checking with clerical staff in a clinic.

What if I already changed my Birth Sex field information?

Complete and accurate information is necessary to care for you. When you changed your Birth Sex field it changed the information that your providers receive to guide your care including computer-generated lab values on blood work and reminders for health screenings. Talk to your provider to understand how this affects your care.

What if I previously changed my Birth Sex field and now want my VA records to show the sex listed on my original birth certificate?

If you previously changed your sex assigned at birth and now want your records to show the birth sex listed on your original birth certificate, you need to complete a form with your facility VA Privacy Officer. You do not need any supporting documentation.

What if I want to change my Birth Sex field in the VA records for the first time?

To change your Birth Sex field from what was listed on your original birth certificate, you will need to complete a form with your facility VA Privacy Officer. In addition, you will need two types of supporting documents, one of which can be a letter from your provider. You may contact your local LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinator or local Patient Advocate to assist you with the process.

Does Gender Identity affect my VA benefits?

No, Gender Identity will not change service connection or benefits eligibility.