

TRANSGENDER WOMEN **ARE NOT** MEN

Unfortunate incidents have occurred in the past because some female clients of shelters have seen pre-operative transgender women using shelters as men masquerading as women, and therefore not entitled to share shelter space.

This is understandable, since many women who use shelter services have been mistreated by men and may be unwilling to share space with anyone who seems 'masculine'. It is also true that some transgendered women find it difficult to 'pass' as women, particularly in the early stages of their transition.

Transgendered women, however, could also be victims and have often been abandoned by their families (marital and parental) and persecuted by society in a variety of ways. Many lose their jobs, their homes and their friends when they realise that they have no option but to transition to the female gender role.

Transgendered women often find themselves in need of shelter and it is unreasonable, if they have moved into the new gender role full-time, to expect them to share male space. Some transgendered women will be on the path to surgical reassignment and most will be on hormone therapy.

We ask that you try and think yourself into the position of those who wish desperately to live as women — so desperately that they often give up everything to attain this change. Try and accept that these women are not a threat to your safety or security and will not risk their own accommodation needs or cause deliberate offence by intruding on your privacy or imposing an unwanted presence on you socially. If you can, be friendly. At the very least be polite and compassionate to people who have real social problems to overcome, are in no way responsible for their condition, and who may have given up everything they hold dear because they had no other choice.

If you are transgendered, understand that the mirror-image of the courtesy we are asking of our non-transgendered clients applies equally to you. Treat others as you would wish to be treated.

***All clients in a refuge have a right to equal treatment.
Consideration for others is the first step.***



Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW
T: (02) 9268 5544, 1800 670 812 (toll
free); TTY: (02) 9268 5522
www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/adb

The Gender Centre Inc.
Sydney Australia

The Gender Centre
T: (02) 9569 2366
www.gendercentre.org.au