**Rendez-Vous dance Ltd Trans Equality Policy: July 2023**

**Commitment to Trans Equality**
Rendez-Vous dance Ltd is committed to promoting equality, diversity, inclusion and representation in all our activities – as champions of LGBTQIA+ culture and communities, as a provider and commissioner of services and as an employer.

Rendez-Vous dance Ltd is committed to equality of opportunity for trans people throughout recruitment and employment, including supporting trans employees/contractors through any transitioning process.

Rendez-Vous dance Ltd will not tolerate discrimination, victimisation or harassment on the basis of a person’s gender identity, gender expression or transstatus. Rendez-Vous dance Ltd seeks to provide a supportive environment for trans staff and to create a culture and environment where trans staff are able to thrive and are well supported during any process of transition.

The purpose of this guidance is to assist core staff, associate artists, contracted freelancers and volunteers who engage with Rendez-Vous dance Ltd with practical information on workplace support.

**Definitions**‘Trans’ or ‘transgender’ describes people whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth. They are umbrella terms covering people who:

* are intending to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone gender reassignment at any stage;
* identify as having a gender different from that which they were assigned at birth and are planning or have had medical interventions such as hormones or surgery;
* identify as having a gender different from that which they were assigned at birth, but who are not planning any medical intervention; and/or,
* are non-binary – that is, they are not solely male or female. They may define themselves as both, neither or something entirely different. They may or may not have medical interventions to align their body with their non-binary gender identity.

These are not mutually exclusive alternatives.

‘Transitioning’ is the process undertaken by a trans person in order to bring their gender presentation into alignment with their gender identity. This often involves dressing differently, using a different name and pronouns (eg she, he or they) and changing official documentation. It may involve various types of medical or surgical treatment, although this is not the case for all trans people.

Rendez-Vous dance Ltd recognises there is no right or wrong way to transition and is committed to supporting each individual in their decisions.

**Transitioning at work**If an employee/contracted freelancer/associate artist states that they are intending to transition whilst under engagement with Rendez-Vous dance Ltd, the Executive Director in conjunction with other appropriate colleagues, will aim to make this process as smooth as possible.

Rendez-Vous dance Ltd is committed to reassuring all staff that they will be supported and respected and recognises that the transition process is led by the individual concerned.

**Communicating with colleagues**The Executive Director will discuss with the individual their preferences in relation to informing others, including other colleagues, service users and other relevant contacts. They will agree whether the individual will do this, whether they would prefer the Producer or a work colleague to do this, or a mixture of these options. They will also get express written agreement from the individual about when and how this will happen, including the details of the message and who it will be shared with. Levels of disclosure may vary in detail for different types of contacts and will be agreed in advance.

**Uniforms and dress codes**Rendez-Vous dance Ltd provides a gender-neutral uniform to staff on event delivery days and during festivals. Trans staff have the right to comply with any dress codes in a way that reflects their gender identity and gender expression.

**Changing facilities, toilets and other single sex facilities at partner venues**Trans people are entitled to use single sex facilities in accordance with their gender. For non-binary people, this might mean using gender-neutral or accessible facilities or using a combination of different facilities. However, trans people will never be required to use accessible toilets unless they wish to do so.

If they do not already have gender neutral facilities in place, partner venues who host Rendez-Vous dance Ltd events are encouraged to introduce them for Rendez-Vous dance Ltd programmed events.

**Updating records**Electronic records will be updated in a timely manner, to coincide with the date on which an individual’s transition begins. Care will be taken to ensure that records do not link back to their former name – this may entail creating a whole new email address rather than simply changing the name on the existing one, for instance. The Executive Director and individual will work together to ensure that nothing is missed.

Paper records will be updated where possible. Those which cannot be updated – for instance, paper copies of references relating to the individual’s recruitment –will be stored in a secure place, and clearly marked as only to be looked at by named persons.

**Community/Participant facing roles**Rendez-Vous dance Ltd is committed to supporting all engaged staff who are transitioning to carry out community/participant facing roles. However, some people might prefer a period of redeployment during transition, or as a permanent change. The Producer with the support of the board will work with the trans person to find a solution that meets the needs of both the individual and the organisation.

**Attendance at appointments and time needed for treatment and surgery**Rendez-Vous dance Ltd knows that trans people may have to attend appointments and treatment, whether or not they are currently transitioning. If work absences must occur, these will not be considered for performance monitoring.

Rendez-Vous dance Ltd recognises that many people must travel a long distance for appointments, and these may be given at short notice. People may need reduced hours or duties, or other changes to usual working arrangements, for a temporary period following some treatments. Rendez-Vous dance Ltdwill be as flexible as possible to accommodate this.

**Discrimination and abuse**Rendez-Vous dance Ltd has a zero-tolerance approach towards discrimination and harassment based on gender identity, gender expression or gender history. Inappropriate behavior or language may constitute discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation. Discrimination including harassment, third party harassment and victimisation are covered by the Equality Act 2010. The Executive Director and Board are responsible for taking timely action where misconduct occurs on the grounds of an individual’s gender identity. This will be monitored and followed up.

**External support available**

Mermaids - Trans and gender-diverse support for children, young people and families.
<https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/about-us/>

Be: Trans support and Community in the North East
<https://be-north.org.uk/contact-us/>

Mesmac Newcastle - Gender Identity Support Service: 15-25
<https://mesmacnewcastle.com/lgbt-groups/trans-gender/>

ARCUS LGBT counselling
<https://arcuslgbt.com/counselling/>

Switchboard LGBT+ Helpline
<https://switchboard.lgbt>

**Legal protection for trans people**

**Gender Recognition Act 2004**The UK Gender Recognition Act (GRA) enables people aged over eighteen to gain full legal recognition for the gender in which they live. Applications are considered by the Gender Recognition Panel. Once a person receives a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC), they are legally of that gender for every purpose and have all the rights and responsibilities associated with that gender.

Employment rights do not depend on whether a person has a Gender Recognition Certificate. Employers should not ask for a person’s GRC and it should never be a precondition for transitioning at work. To make an application for a GRC, a person needs to show they have been living – and working - in that gender for at least two years. So being asked to show a GRC as a condition of changing employment details is like being asked to show a full driving license before you can apply for a provisional one.

The Gender Recognition Act gives anyone applying for or holding a Gender Recognition Certificate particular privacy rights. It is a criminal offense to pass on information acquired ‘in the course of official duties’ about someone’s gender recognition, without the consent of the individual affected. ‘Official duties’ include employment, trade union representation or supply of business or professional services.

**Equality Act 2010**The Equality Act 2010 (England, Scotland and Wales) protects against discrimination because of gender reassignment in employment and service delivery. It bans direct and indirect discrimination and victimisation. There is similar protection in Northern Ireland under the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations (NI) 1999.

The Act makes clear that it is not necessary for people to have any medical diagnosis or treatment to gain this protection; it is a personal process of moving away from the gender assigned at birth to the correct gender.

People discriminated against because they are wrongly perceived to be trans, or who are discriminated against because of their association with trans people or issues, are also protected.

**Recruitment**

Performers recruitment opportunities may be exclusively open to a certain demographic in response to the artistic project howevergender identity is not a relevant criterion in selection during recruitment process. During application process, diversity will be monitored through anonymous EDI forms.People who have already transitioned have no obligation to disclose their gender history. Neither is there any obligation for a transgender person to disclose this as a condition of employment. If they choose to disclose, this is not in itself a reason for not offering employment, and non-disclosure or subsequent disclosure is not grounds for dismissal. Appointing officers who become aware that an applicant is trans will maintain full confidentiality in relation to this.

**References**Where a reference request is received for an individual who has transitioned, Rendez-Vous dance Ltd will respect the employee’s privacy and only respond using the employee’s correct name and gender in the reference.

Disclosure on sickness absence will not include time taken off for medical appointments related to transition. This information is strictly confidential and managers must be very careful of any record keeping in this.

When Rendez-Vous dance Ltd requests a reference, we will make the request using the prospective employee’s correct name and gender since transitioning. We will not mention previous names or gender identity, unless specifically asked to do so (in writing) by the trans person.

**Criminal record checks/disclosure and barring**If the appointment requires criminal record checks, we will highlight to all applicants the confidential procedure available to trans people.

DBS Confidential Checking Service
Sensitive Applications Team

Telephone: 0151 676 1452
Email: sensitive@dbs.gov.uk.

**Qualification certificates**Rendez-Vous dance Ltd recognises that it can be difficult and expensive for a trans person to change their qualification certificates. If these are in a former name then where possible a record will be made that the certification has been seen, but a copy will not be taken. If it is absolutely necessary for Rendez-Vous dance Ltd to store a copy, they will be stored securely and only accessed by named persons.

**Pensions and national insurance**Rendez-Vous dance Ltd engages self-employed freelancers and is therefore not responsible for pension contributions or national insurance payments.

**Roles and responsibilities**

**Employee**Engaging with managers around the logistics of transitioning in the workplace.
Reporting any instances of harassment, victimisation or discrimination.

**Executive Director and Board**Ensuring that colleagues are informed about the individual’s transition in a manner that best suits the individual.
Maintaining confidentiality at all times
Thoroughly investigating any instances of harassment, victimisation or discrimination
Supporting the employee in any way that is necessary and appropriate
Ensuring that this policy is followed at all times
Discussing and agreeing to any changes to this policy.

**Rendez-Vous dance Ltd core staff**Maintaining confidentiality, including securing paper documents and files
Changing names, titles and pronouns on email and other systems
Supporting the employee if they experience harassment, victimisation or discrimination

**Support for employees with a family member who is transitioning**If someone engaged with Rendez-Vous dance Ltd is supporting a family member who is transitioning, they may need to take time off to attend appointments and treatment or give assistance following surgical procedures. Some of these may be at short notice and may involve traveling a long distance. Rendez-Vous dance ltd will be as flexible as possible to accommodate this.

**Promotion of trans equality**As well as ensuring that trans staff are fully supported, Rendez-Vous dance Ltd will demonstrate our commitment to trans equality in the following ways:

Ensuring that all training courses that are delivered are fully inclusive of trans people – this includes both face-to-face training and e-learning.

Marking important dates for the trans community, such as Trans Day of Visibility (31st March) and Transgender Day of Remembrance (20th November)

Including trans people in publicity and marketing materials

Ensuring that all forms and surveys are inclusive of trans people, including non-binary people for both staff, artists and audiences.

Including trans equality as a core part of the organisation’s equality agenda and objectives

Investigating fully all complaints of harassment, victimisation or discrimination on the grounds of gender identity, gender history, trans status or gender expression

Monitoring the implementation of this policy.

**Glossary**

**Gender identity:** a person’s deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned to them at birth

**Gender expression**: a person’s external gender-related behaviour and appearance, including clothing

**Transgender or trans person**: a person whose gender identity does not conform to the sex they were assigned at birth. These are inclusive, umbrella terms, including people who describe themselves as transsexual, cross dressing people, and people who have a more complex sense of their own gender than either 100% female or 100% male

**Gender binary**: the classification of sex and gender into two distinct and disconnected forms of masculine and feminine

**Gender variance**: gender expression that does not match society’s norms of female and male

**Non binary person**: a person who does not identify as solely male or female. They may identify as both, neither or something entirely different

**Gender fluid:** having agender identity which varies over time

**Transsexual person**: legal/medical term for someone who lives (or wishes to live) permanently in the ‘opposite’ gender to that assigned at birth

**Gender dysphoria**: medical term for deep-rooted and serious **discomfort or distress because of a mismatch between a person’s biological sex and gender identity;** overwhelming desire to live in a different gender to that assigned at birth

**Gender reassignment**: the process of transitioning from the gender assigned at birth to the correct gender. This may (or may not) involve medical and surgical procedures.

**Legal sex**: The sex recorded on your birth certificate. Rarely relevant at work. Currently binary in the UK. Changed by applying to the Gender Recognition Panel.

**Gender Recognition Certificate**: issued by the Gender Recognition Panel – signifies full legal rights in acquired gender and allows the issuing of a replacement birth certificate.