LGBTQ2+ Inclusiveness

Toolkit for
Inclusive Municipalities
in Canada and Beyond

Canadian Commission for UNESCO

COALITION OF INCLUSIVE MUNICIPALITIES

fostering equity and diversity

UNESCO
United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

CANADIAN
COMMISSION
FOR UNESCO

With the support of the

**International Coalition
of Inclusive and
Sustainable Cities – ICCAR**

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The Canadian Commission for UNESCO helps Canadians share knowledge locally and globally in order to create better societies and build peace in the minds of everyone. To do so, the Commission facilitates cooperation in the fields of education, science, culture, communication and information to address some of the most complex challenges facing the world today. With its initiatives and networks, CCUNESCO supports the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other UNESCO priorities. The Commission operates under the authority of the Canada Council for the Arts.

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Preface

Over the past several decades, Canada has made considerable progress in recognizing the rights of the LGBTQ2+ community. Thanks to the adoption of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and many other pieces of legislation, the systemic discrimination previously experienced by this segment of Canadian society has diminished. The Senate of Canada, which ensures that bills forwarded to it from the House of Commons respect the rights of minorities, has played an important role in this regard. Indeed, the Senate recently reaffirmed and strengthened these rights during its debates on both Bill C-16, which prohibits discrimination against transgender people, and Bill C-66, which establishes a procedure to expunge certain historically-unjust convictions of members of the LGBTQ2+ community.

Despite this progress, we are aware that much remains to be done so that this community is accepted and respected throughout the country. This initiative of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO is therefore timely because it goes beyond lofty principles and provides concrete tools to municipalities so that they can uphold these rights, regardless of where the municipality is located in Canada. Municipal governments are often the public authorities that people contact first and as such are an administrative sector that has a crucial role to play in the inclusion of, and respect for, the LGBTQ2+ minority.

The involvement of municipalities is all the more essential because the profile of the LGBTQ2+ community is constantly evolving. There is now greater cultural, ethnic and religious diversity among LGBTQ2+ persons, and the influx of asylum-seekers fleeing discrimination because of their sexual orientation or their sexual or gender identity poses a major challenge for our cities and villages in terms of welcome and support. Approaches need to take account of these new realities. Fortunately, inspiring initiatives have been undertaken across the country to welcome, include and integrate the LGBTQ2+ community, as eloquently described in this document.

We are pleased to lend our names to this guide because, as Senators, we have the constitutional responsibility to protect minority rights, whether linguistic, Indigenous, ethnic or sexual. We will therefore enthusiastically promote this tool in our respective milieux, and each of us will continue to speak out in the Senate on behalf of a more inclusive society for our country's sexual minorities.

Julie Miville-Dechêne,
Independent Senator from Quebec

René Cormier,
Independent Senator from New Brunswick

Introduction

The International Coalition of Sustainable and Inclusive Cities - ICCAR was launched in March 2004 by UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). It consists of a network of cities interested in sharing their experiences in order to improve their policies against racism and all forms of discrimination, exclusion and intolerance. In response to the challenges arising from racism and discrimination and recognizing the jurisdiction of municipal authorities in Canada on many of these issues, the Canadian Commission for UNESCO and its partners invited Canadian municipalities to become part of this larger international movement by joining the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination (CCMARD), renamed Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities in 2019.

Since its founding, the Coalition has supported the work of municipalities in undertaking anti-racism and anti-discrimination work and promoting the adoption of more inclusive practices. The network of municipalities developed as a result of the Coalition's continued promotion of collaboration and the sharing of best practices and resources. This publication joins a multitude of other resources and toolkits developed to support municipalities across Canada to address human rights in their communities.

Municipalities and partners involved in lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, and Two Spirit (LGBTQ2+) issues have provided input and shared their experiences, lessons and successes in this publication in an attempt to strengthen and empower municipalities to undertake LGBTQ2+ inclusiveness initiatives. This publication is designed to provide some background information, promising practices and recommendations for municipalities. The practices and tools provided in this document are merely examples, and municipalities are encouraged to explore which ones are most appropriate and impactful for their own residents and the contexts in which they operate. This document does not pretend to present all promising examples or tools developed in Canada to advance LGBTQ2+ inclusion but rather selected examples aimed at informing the work of municipalities regardless of their size or location. Human rights are an ever-evolving field and therefore this publication represents the context of the time and constraints in which it was written.

We hope that this publication will be useful for local governments interested in improving their policies and programs to address LGBTQ2+ rights, inclusiveness, and equity. We invite them to take action to ensure that their environments are inclusive, safe, and free from discrimination.

Sébastien Goupil
Secretary-General
Canadian Commission for UNESCO

● Background

LGBTQ2+ individuals remain one of the most marginalized groups worldwide. A recent United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Report outlines widespread violence against LGBTQ2+ populations. Further, the report points to a lack of protections and continued systemic discrimination which contribute to the ongoing vulnerability of this group.[i] However, the report also indicates that there has been rapid progress toward inclusion and equality including nations adopting legal protections of sexual orientation and gender, abolishing criminal sanctions and legalizing same sex marriage.

Resource

The UN publication *Living Free and Equal* (2016) outlines how states are tackling violence and discrimination against LGBTQ2+ people.

The United Nations Agenda 2030 is a 15-year global framework centered on an ambitious set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Goal 11 of making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. At the heart of the SDGs is a commitment to ensure "no one is left behind". This principle directly relates to the realities of LGBTQ2+ people who have, on many occasions, been "left behind". Although the document reiterates principles such as inclusion of all, irrespective of sex, it does not make explicit references to sexual orientation or gender identity.

Resource

The study *Sustainable Development Goals and LGBT Inclusion* demonstrates some of the ways LGBTQ2+ equality can be achieved. It showcases some of the work that is already being done worldwide to ensure that they are fully included and have their needs met. Practical actions are also suggested.

The United Nation's New Urban Agenda, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in 2016, sets global standards of achievement in sustainable urban development, rethinking the way we build, manage, and live in cities.[ii] The document does not address or acknowledge LGBTQ2+ rights despite a push to do so from countries such as Canada, the United States, Mexico and the European Union. The inclusion of LGBTQ2+ people in a list of "vulnerable groups" who should not be discriminated against was blocked from being included in the agenda by 17 countries.[iii] Evidently, the international debate over LGBTQ2+ rights and inclusion is alive and well. In this international context, UNESCO remains committed to protecting the rights of LGBTQ2+ individuals and to fighting prejudice, violence, and inequality.

In Canada, societal shifts have taken place steadily, moving towards more acceptance of LGBTQ2+ rights mirroring a number of legislative and policy achievements for LGBTQ2+ individuals since the 1960s. In 2017, Canadian attitudes towards same sex marriage increased to 74% of Canadians being

in favour, which is up from 41% in 1997.[iv] Despite the positive shift in Canadian attitudes and legislated protection of LGBTQ2+ rights, there remains a multitude of challenges for LGBTQ2+ individuals and their families. LGBTQ2+ individuals continue to experience discrimination and bullying, are at risk for poorer health outcomes, including mental health challenges, and experience systemic barriers with relation to accessing employment, housing, healthcare and support services.

Equal Rights Coalition
The Equal Rights Coalition (ERC) protects and advances the rights of LGBTI people. With 40 member states including Canada, it also engages with civil society organizations and multilateral agencies.

Resource

UN Free and Equal is a campaign to raise awareness of homophobic and transphobic violence and discrimination and promote respect for the rights of LGBTQ2+ people.

The Role of Municipalities

Within this context, municipalities play a key role in combatting discrimination against LGBTQ2+ individuals. Fostering equality and respect for all citizens is a role that belongs to all levels of government under Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms as well as under human rights codes at various levels. Municipalities have a unique position: closely connected to residents, they can address and advance LGBTQ2+ rights by enacting policies and programs. Municipalities have a responsibility to govern service delivery in a way that is inclusive and accessible, to ensure the safety of residents and to promote a sense of belonging and inclusiveness. Furthermore, as employers, municipalities are obligated to maintain a safe and healthy work environment and are liable if harassment takes place in the workplace that the employer knew or should have known about. As changes occur both societally and legislatively, it is important for municipalities to address the ongoing challenges that LGBTQ2+ individuals face within their communities and to work to foster a safe and inclusive environment for all residents.

Benefits for Municipalities[v]

1 **Improved Economic Life**
→ Better attraction and retention of residents and employees
→ Increased productivity of employees

2 **Improved Community Life**
→ Increased civic involvement
→ More cohesive society
→ Safer community

3 **Improved Efficiency**
→ Improved service delivery
→ Fewer complaints
→ Reduced risk of liability

4 **Improved Response to Incidents of Discrimination**
→ Better prepared
→ More effective response

Resource

The Human Rights Campaign Foundation evaluates municipal LGBTQ2+ inclusiveness.

How Municipalities Can Act

- Hiring practices
- Resident protection and safety
- Inclusive infrastructure
- Workplace culture
- Community events and programs
- Employee support and engagement
- Resident consultations and engagement
- Resident support and services

LGBTQ2+ 101

● Population

Statistics on the LGBTQ2+ population remain unclear and difficult to measure; however, Statistics Canada estimates 3% of Canadians aged 18-59 identify as homosexual or bisexual.[vi] This is expected to be a gross underrepresentation and should be considered the minimum percentage of Canadians identifying as homosexual or bisexual. Other studies indicate over 5% of Canadians identify as LGBT[vii] and still others argue as many as 14% of students identify as LGBTQ.[viii] While the number of Canadians who identify as LGBTQ2+ is not certain, the contributions of LGBTQ2+ individuals to Canada are impactful. For example, LGBTQ2+ people actively contribute to Canadian society in healthcare, human rights, scientific advancement, public education, and arts and culture.

LGBTQ2+
This document uses "LGBTQ2+" to encompass many different sexualities, sexes and genders, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer and Two Spirit identities. The plus sign (+) recognizes the diverse identities not captured in the acronym. There are many possible variations of the acronym.

● Terminology

It is important when working with LGBTQ2+ issues to be cognizant of terminology and to understand key concepts related to gender and sexual orientation. The language used is constantly changing and evolving as the understanding of these concepts changes, deepens and is refined. While the diversity of sexuality, sex and gender is not new, in many societies, there has not been accurate and respectful language available to describe these diverse identities. Languages are constantly evolving, are culturally specific, and change from place to place. Many LGBTQ2+ individuals are at the forefront of choosing language that is appropriate and empowering to describe themselves. Given this rapid development and redevelopment of terms, the list of definitions in *Appendix B: Glossary* should be viewed as a general guide with the understanding that it is far from exhaustive.

Two Spirit

Many Indigenous LGBTQ+ people use the term Two Spirit instead of, or in addition to, identifying as LGBTQ+. Two Spirit is an English-language umbrella term used by many Indigenous peoples to describe their gender and/or sexual orientation identities and reclaim the pre-colonization traditional roles and traditions of Indigenous LGBTQ+ people. Many Indigenous languages have specific words to describe those who are attracted to people of the same gender and those who express their gender in different ways:[ix]

ayahkwêw (Cree) *sipiniq* (Inuktitut)

puoin (Mi'kmaq) *ogokwe* (Ojibwe)

sx'ints (Nuxalk)

Indigenous LGBTQ+

Two Spirit individuals have unique perspectives, experiences and challenges.

The Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity launched a Two-Spirit inclusion campaign that creates spaces, conversations and tools to support Two Spirit inclusiveness.

Two Spirits, One Voice (Egale Canada) supports persons who identify as both LGBTQ and Indigenous.

● Key Concepts

Organizations, including municipalities that look to foster more inclusive policies and practices, must seek to understand the impact, the systemic barriers and the complex nature of concepts such as sex, gender and sexual orientation and the ways that they intersect with other identities an individual may possess. These are often misunderstood, used incorrectly or conflated with one another.

Sexual Orientation – Attraction or lack of attraction to others. Some sexual orientations include lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, pansexual, asexual, etc. Sexual orientation may also be referred to as "attraction". Sexual orientations such as bisexuality, pansexuality and asexuality continue to be largely misunderstood and are often targets of discrimination and hate not only from outside of the LGBTQ2+ community but from within it as well. The particular experiences and victimization of these individuals must be considered when planning and implementing LGBTQ2+ inclusion initiatives.

Gender – Sense of self as a man, woman, non-binary or gender-fluid person, etc. Gender is a social construct influenced by biological characteristics and societal norms. Gender is often assigned at birth based on the sex that is assigned at birth.

Sex/Assigned Sex – A label based on biological characteristics such as genitals, chromosomes, reproductive organs and hormones. Sex is usually assigned at birth (as male or female) by a medical practitioner based on external genital characteristics. When sexual and reproductive anatomy does not fall within the medical parameters used to assign sex as either male or female, an individual may be described as intersex.

Trans and Non-Binary individuals
Trans and non-binary individuals identify as a gender different from that which they were assigned at birth. Municipalities should consider the specific challenges many trans individuals face, including safe washroom and change room facilities, respectful use of names and pronouns and support throughout a person's transition if this is the path chosen by that person.

Intersex
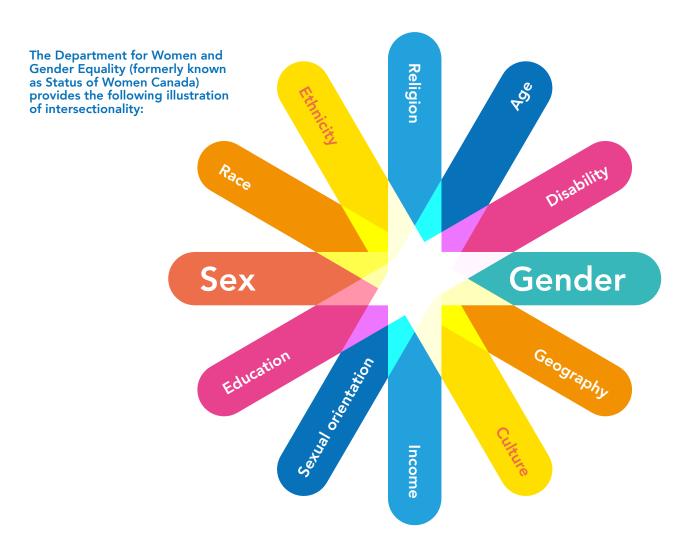Municipalities can play an important role in supporting intersex people by actively working to end the stigma and resulting shame and secrecy around the topic through awareness and public education initiatives. Further, municipalities can work with other levels of government and with not-for-profit organizations to eliminate unwanted genital surgeries, to provide patient-centered health care and other forms of support.

● Intersectionality

In addition to being LGBTQ2+, an individual's other identities, such as race or religion, can mean being at a greater risk of experiencing the effects of systems of oppression and discrimination. For example, a gay man may experience homophobia while a gay Jewish woman may experience anti-Semitism and sexism in addition to homophobia. An intersectional approach avoids focusing on one aspect of identity and instead recognizes the simultaneous and overlapping identities and experiences of privilege and oppression an individual may hold. The term "intersectionality" was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw to examine and understand the interconnectedness of race and sex in systems of oppression.

Resource

IGLYO offers a guide on intersectionality with activities, checklists and practices for municipalities.

The Department for Women and Gender Equality (formerly known as Status of Women Canada) provides the following illustration of intersectionality:

● Pronouns

Using the name and pronouns that people wish to be addressed by is respectful and important, thereby ensuring a safer and more inclusive environment for all. Individuals may use pronouns such as she/her/hers, he/him/his, them/they/theirs, ze/hir/hirs, etc. Which pronouns an individual chooses to use is up to them. Practicing pronouns that are unfamiliar to you is a great way to help you learn and incorporate them into your vocabulary. It is important to not use the phrase "preferred pronouns", as this implies that a pronoun is a "preference" rather than a necessity. It is also important to consider honorifics (Mr./Ms./Mrs.), especially when a person identifies

as non-binary — for example, "Mx" is a gender-neutral honorific. Pronouns can be added to email signatures, forms and name tags to help clarify how an individual should be addressed, in addition to providing an important symbol of inclusiveness. Municipalities may also consider auditing all policies, forms and correspondence templates for gendered language, honorifics and pronoun use. For more information, see *Appendix A*.

Pronoun Chart[x]				
Title	**Subject**	**Object**	**Pronoun**	**Pronunciation**
Ms./Mrs.	she	her	hers	as shown
Mr.	he	him	his	as shown
Mx.	they	them	their	mix, as shown
Mx.	ze	hir	hirs	mix, zhee, here, heres
Mx.	ze	zir	zirs	mix, zhee, zhere, zheres
Mx.	xe	xem	xyr	mix, zhee, zhem, zhere

Best Practices

- Add a place for pronouns on registration forms and name tags
- Ask how trans clients/residents prefer to be addressed (in case they are not "out" to others)
- In meetings, ask individuals to introduce themselves using their preferred pronouns

Quick Tip

If you don't know someone's pronouns:
- Ask "Can I confirm what name you go by and what your pronouns are?"
- Avoid using gendered language. Use "Good evening, everyone" instead.
- Avoid using pronouns. For example, say "The client requested an evening appointment."

Everyone makes mistakes! Apologize briefly and move the conversation along. Keep practicing so that you can get it right next time.

Ongoing Challenges

Municipalities play a key role in the lives of residents and oversee many of the programs and services that most impact residents' day-to-day lives. The following are areas of significant challenge regarding which LGBTQ2+ individuals often experience barriers. These are also areas that municipalities can focus on in supporting and/or implementing change that can positively impact the lives of all their residents.

● Communication

Communication with and about the LGBTQ2+ population within municipalities is an important part of acknowledging the specific challenges LGBTQ2+ individuals face. Municipal communication can work to build and maintain strong relationships with residents and organizations and support the development of adequate and appropriate services to serve all residents. Engaging and consulting with LGBTQ2+ individuals, families and support organizations is essential to addressing barriers that exist and improving inclusiveness and equity.

Adequate and appropriate data collection is also lacking, and there are often challenges in collecting and providing reliable information about the LGBTQ2+ community. One widespread problem is the use of gender binary-centric questions on forms and surveys. The vast majority of forms and surveys provide male/female options. This serves to further marginalize trans and non-binary individuals and erases them from statistics, and it leads to inaccurate data collection and under informed decision making. Further, there is often a conflation of terms such as sex and gender, and the lack of intersectional approaches to data collection makes it difficult to understand the specific and diverse experiences of LGBTQ2+ individuals. The lack of reliable data is a continued barrier to developing and implementing resources and support for LGBTQ2+ individuals.

Advisory Committees – Hamilton, ON
The City of Hamilton has an LGBTQ2+ advisory committee to evaluate the city's efforts toward LGBTQ2+ inclusiveness.

Quick Tip

Is there a legitimate reason to collect information on gender? If not, leave it out. If there is, incorporate diverse response options that include more options than simply male and female on census forms, surveys, applications, etc. Many employers are also conducting workplace inclusion surveys, thereby providing a way for employees to self-disclose and to help the organization track their progress and meet their inclusiveness goals.

▸ 75%

of LGBT respondents felt that employers should provide an opportunity for employees to self-identify or disclose information about themselves at work.[xi]

Crime and Policing

An important consideration for municipalities is protecting the safety and welfare of their residents, especially those who are at a higher risk of being victimized and marginalized. LGBTQ2+ people continue to experience systemic and interpersonal discrimination and hate in their daily lives, workplaces, social interactions, public spaces, schools and justice systems as well as when accessing services. Municipalities can work collaboratively with law enforcement to develop and implement strategies that decrease crimes targeting LGBTQ2+ individuals and support residents.

According to a 2014 Statistics Canada report, 31% of lesbian and gay individuals and 39% of bisexual individuals over 18 had experienced discrimination in the last five years. The same report found that 50% of individuals reporting discrimination said that they experienced the discrimination in their workplace.[xii] Hate crimes motivated by sexual orientation had more than doubled in 2008 over the previous year and remained the most violent of all hate crimes.[xiii] The intersectionality of identities can lead to increased risk of marginalization, discrimination, and hate. For example, LGBTQ+ individuals who are racialized or live with a disability are at a higher risk of being discriminated against. Municipalities can work closely with LGBTQ2+ residents through community engagement and consultation to address the victimization of LGBTQ2+ people, and focus on community awareness, public education and support for victims of hate crimes and incidents.

▶ **Lesbian and gay Canadians are**

2x

as likely to be victims of violent victimization.

▶ **Bisexual Canadians are nearly**

9x

more likely to be sexually assaulted.

Community–Police Relationships – Vancouver, BC
The Vancouver Police Department (VPD) LGBTQ2S+ Liaison Officer works with community agencies to improve safety for LGBTQ2S+ people. The Department recently implemented a new policy for officers who interact with transgender individuals, and produced a related training video, "Walk With Me." In 2016, it implemented the Safe Place program, an ongoing initiative that involves outreach to local businesses and institutions.

Acknowledging Mistakes – Police Apologies
Police departments in various cities (including Montreal, Calgary and Toronto) have formally apologized to LGBTQ2+ communities in recent years for raids on gay bars and bathhouses and other actions that contributed to the marginalization of LGBTQ2+ residents.

● Human Resources

As employers, municipalities have a responsibility to provide an inclusive and respectful work environment for all employees. LGBTQ2+ employees continue to experience barriers and discrimination in the workplace, including in the areas of hiring and promotions, work environment and interpersonal interactions. According to statistics, 38% of "out" LGB employees experience discrimination at work; the figure more than doubles (80%) in the case of trans individuals.[xiv] Examples of discrimination in the workplace include not accommodating an employee for gender confirmation surgery,[1] refusing to use the individual's chosen name and pronouns, not updating documents to reflect an individual's chosen name and gender, making negative comments about someone's physical characteristics or mannerisms, etc.

It is important to accommodate employees, regardless of whether or not they took gender affirming measures, such as a legal name change. Municipalities can support a more inclusive workplace by providing mandatory training for employees to increase understanding of LGBTQ2+ identities, develop empathy, increase knowledge of human rights and improve their ability to foster safer and more respectful environments for employees and residents. Additionally, municipalities should examine current hiring and promotion practices and identify areas that can be improved in order to foster more LGBTQ2+ inclusive practices.

Pride at Work Canada – Winnipeg, MB
The City of Winnipeg became a Regional Partner of Pride at Work Canada in 2012.
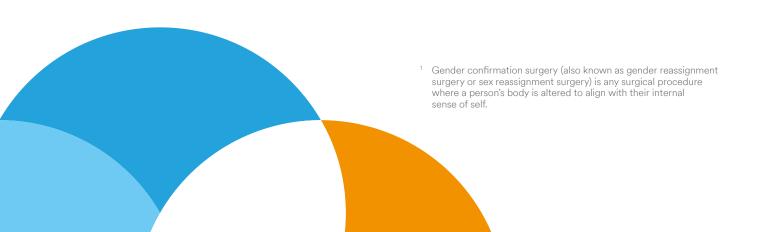
Resource

Egale Canada and the Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity (CCGSD) provide professional development training across Canada. Customized workshops increase understanding, create behavioural change and foster positive spaces.

Quick Tip

Ensure that your hiring panel is diverse and has received training on unconscious bias and gender and sexual orientation diversity.

Resource

Pride at Work's "Hiring Across All Spectrums" provides inclusive hiring and workplace practices and a practical checklist for employers.

[1] Gender confirmation surgery (also known as gender reassignment surgery or sex reassignment surgery) is any surgical procedure where a person's body is altered to align with their internal sense of self.

● Youth

LGBTQ2+ youth are at a particularly high risk, as they are exposed to high rates of bullying, discrimination and harassment in schools.[xv] They are also more at risk of experiencing cyberbullying or cyberstalking.[xvi] Homophobic violence also targets students who are wrongly perceived to be LGBT because they do not appear to conform to gender norms.[xvii] Youth often experience more barriers than adults in accessing support and resources. Such barriers include a lack of affordability, a lack of access to transportation and a lack of support from family and/ or peers. LGBTQ2+ youth are particularly at risk of experiencing rejection from their families. When it occurs, it puts LGBTQ2+ youth at a higher risk for homelessness, depression, anxiety, eating disorders, mental health issues, suicide, etc. Municipalities can help address the problem through preventative community programming and funding not-for-profit organizations that support LGBTQ2+ youth. Establishing GSAs (Gay–Straight Alliances or Gender– Sexuality Alliances) or drop-in youth programs that are LGBTQ2+ friendly, and engaging LGBTQ2+ youth through internships or advisory councils are all examples of positive steps that municipalities can support.

▸ **74%**
of trans students are verbally harassed

▸ **64%**
of LGBTQ students reported feeling unsafe at school

▸ **21%**
of LGBTQ students are physically harassed or assaulted

Quick Tip

Support Gay–Straight Alliances / Gender–Sexuality Alliances as well as parent support programs, which are important in helping prevent LGBTQ2+ youth homelessness and mental health challenges.

Action Plan for Transgender Youth – Toronto, ON
The City of Toronto developed a report on the experiences of trans individuals and how the city can better support trans youth. The report includes a recommendation to form an interdepartmental working group to develop an inclusive action plan.

Resources

UNESCO works to promote universal human rights for all, including the right to education and safety for LGBTQ2+ people. More information on UNESCO's work on homophobic and transphobic violence in education is available on the Organization's Website.

Homeless Hub provides research and educational tools on LGBTQ2+ youth homelessness. LGBTQ2+ youth experience homelessness disproportionally, and often feel existing supports are not LGBTQ2+ and/or youth friendly.

The Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre (ACLRC) provides publications, services, resources and other tools to help organizations that serve LGBTQ2+ youth.

Egale Canada commissioned a research report on what school is like for sexual and/or gender minority students.

From Redneck to Rainbow – Grande Prairie, AB
The City of Grande Prairie's Youth Council advocated for further protections for LGBTQ2+ students in Alberta and developed the documentary *From Redneck to Rainbow*.

● Seniors

Since the 1960s, legislative and policy changes, along with societal shifts in Canada, have granted more rights and freedoms to the LGBTQ+ community and enhanced acceptance of LGBTQ2+ individuals. Many younger LGBTQ2+ individuals have experienced these positive changes and have benefitted from them. However, many LGBTQ2+ seniors who have paved the way for these policy changes have not benefitted in the same way. Advocacy continues to be required because their peers have been slower to change their attitudes and behaviours.

🔍 Resource

QMunity offers recommendations in Aging Out, a resource for queer and trans seniors.

Discrimination due to sexual orientation or gender is often compounded by experiences of ageism along with other forms of discrimination (racism, sexism, etc.). Within this context, many LGBTQ2+ seniors remain in—or return to—the closet. This secrecy has led to a lack of visibility for LGBTQ2+ seniors and contributes to social isolation for many LGBTQ2+ seniors. Further, assisted living and residential care can often be areas where systemic discrimination and peer prejudice weigh heavily on LGBTQ2+ seniors. This often negatively impacts their ability or willingness to access services or results in seniors hiding their identities upon moving into care facilities, which can lead to serious consequences on their health outcomes and mental well-being.[xviii]

Municipalities can support seniors through preventative community programming, funding for not-for-profit organizations that support seniors and that use an inclusive and intersectional framework, and supporting the development of senior care infrastructure and support that are LGBTQ2+ inclusive.

Older LGBTQ – The 519, ON
The 519 offers numerous programs to support LGBTQ2+ seniors, including a drop-in program, book club, intergenerational workshops, senior pride events and a choir.

Pour que vieillir soit gai – Fondation Émergence, QC
The Fondation Émergence offers resources specific to LGBTQ2+ seniors in French.

🔍 Resources

Egale Canada provides resources for supporting LGBTQ2+ seniors, including awareness campaign posters, the LGBTQI2S Seniors Resource Map and *Crossing the Rainbow Bridge*.

🔍 The Government of Canada has published "Social isolation of seniors: A focus on LGBTQ seniors in Canada" to help organizations and service providers address LGBTQ2+ seniors' needs.

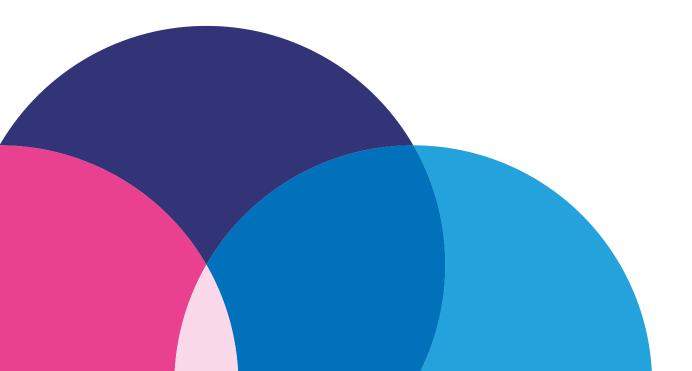# ● Infrastructure & Recreation

🔍 Resource

The UNESCO publication Colour? What Colour? Report on the fight against discrimination and racism in football includes a section that addresses homophobia. Many aspects of the document are also relevant for other sports.

Facilities should be positive environments that are safe and inclusive for all users. Unfortunately, many facilities continue to maintain binary gendered washrooms and change rooms putting trans, and non-binary individuals at a higher risk of experiencing violence, hate, and harassment. Many trans and non-binary individuals avoid these spaces for fear of being harassed, ostracized or discriminated against. In fact, 57% of trans Ontarians avoided using public washrooms due to fear for their safety and 97% of those who had experienced violence due to being trans reported avoiding public spaces.[xix] Many trans individuals do not use public washrooms and/or restrict their water intake to limit their need to use washroom facilities. These tactics can result in physical and/or mental health problems, including higher rates of urinary tract infections and other kidney-related issues.

Trans and Gender Variant Inclusion in Accessing Parks & Recreation – Vancouver, BC
After the City of Vancouver's Park Board identified a lack of inclusiveness in parks and recreation services as barriers for LGBTQ2+ individuals, the Trans* and Gender Variant Inclusion Working Group made recommendations for creating more trans-inclusive public spaces and programming. Programs include a weight room drop-in program and a set time for trans, gender-diverse and Two Spirit people to swim. During the swim period, change rooms are universal and blinds are drawn on the pool.

The Vancouver Park Board has two part-time staff who are transgender, gender-variant or Two-Spirit. They help train staff, provide information to staff and customers, collect lived experience narratives and engage with members of the trans,* gender-variant and two-spirit communities.

● Health

Sports and recreation are also areas which widely remain toxic environments for LGBTQ2+ individuals. Homophobia and transphobia in sports and recreation continues to be a prevalent issue. Many LGBTQ2+ athletes are forced to hide their identities and endure bullying and harassment. Locker rooms and change rooms in particular are spaces of vulnerability and present a high risk for LGBTQ2+ individuals. These spaces are often fraught with heteronormative[2] language and behaviour, including comments about the opposite sex and homophobic and transphobic language. Municipalities have a role to play in providing safer spaces for LGBTQ2+ individuals accessing parks, recreation and sports. Infrastructure such as gender-neutral change rooms and washrooms, along with single-stall options, are a key step to creating safer spaces for LGBTQ2+ individuals. Other forms of support include providing targeted programs and events for LGBTQ2+ residents, training and supporting all gender programming, implementing policies and procedures for recreation facilities, and educating staff to engage and support LGBTQ2+ individuals.

Municipalities can advocate for improved healthcare services for their residents as well as play a role in the promotion of health. Research consistently indicates that experiencing discrimination, prejudice and stigma create chronically high levels of stress for minority and/or marginalized groups, including LGBTQ2+ individuals. This excessive exposure to stress often leads to poorer mental and physical health outcomes.[xx] Health authorities have recognized the ill effects of homophobia and transphobia on health, leading to disparities in health outcomes for gender and sexual minorities compared to individuals who are cisgender and/or heterosexual.[xxi]

A lack of sensitive LGBTQ2+ healthcare services from knowledgeable people has been noted throughout Canada and negatively impacts health outcomes of LGBTQ2+ people. Trans individuals often struggle to access adequate and appropriate healthcare, including simple services unrelated to their trans status. Denied care, transphobia, misgendering,[3] and "trans broken arm syndrome"[4] are all challenges trans patients may face in accessing healthcare. LGBQ2+ individuals also experience challenges including homophobia and heteronormative care (particularly with regards to pregnancy and family planning). As a result, some individuals avoid seeking the healthcare they require, leading to poorer health outcomes.[xxii]

🔍 Resource

The Canadian Centre for Gender & Sexual Diversity has developed *Sports Inclusion: A Supportive Guidebook for LGBTQ2S+ Athletes and Becoming a Better Ally in the Sports World*.

Rainbow Health Ontario
Rainbow Health Ontario offers training, research, consultation services, and resources and tools to improve healthcare for LGBTQ2+ individuals and their families.

💡 Quick Tip

Make all single stall washrooms more inclusive by removing gendered signage.

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[2] Heteronormativity is the assumption that heterosexuality and binary cisgender (see glossary in Appendix B) identities are the norm. It includes a system of attitudes or bias in favour of opposite-sex attraction and binary genders (male and female).

[3] Misgendering is the use of pronouns or gendered language the individual does not use or identify with.

[4] "Trans broken arm syndrome" refers to the phenomenon of healthcare providers assuming or relating all medical needs to an individual's trans status.

While healthcare is primarily a provincial mandate, municipal governments can support the health, safety and well-being of residents by ensuring community services and programs mesh seamlessly with healthcare services and support, and vice versa. Furthermore, municipalities can implement changes to better support LGBTQ2+ residents, such as advocating for healthcare practitioners to adopt guidelines for serving the LGBTQ2+ population, advocating for training for healthcare practitioners, supporting LGBTQ2+ not-for-profit organizations, and launching public awareness campaigns to decrease prejudice and stigma that lead to poorer health outcomes.

Resource

Trans Care BC has developed *Gender-affirming Care for Trans, Two-Spirit, and Gender Diverse Patients in BC*, a toolkit for healthcare providers.

What Next?

Quick Wins

1 Provide safe access to washrooms and change rooms

- ✓ Replace signage on all single-stall washrooms to gender-neutral signs (see Appendix A)
- ✓ Communicate effectively that individuals have the right to use the washroom most comfortable for them (this may include a notice or guideline document)
- ✓ Ensure staff direct individuals to all washrooms rather than assuming which washroom an individual may use

2 Use the correct pronouns

- ✓ Add pronouns and honorifics to email signatures and name badges
- ✓ Start meetings with introductions that include pronouns
- ✓ Advise customer service and human resource staff to use non-gendered greetings

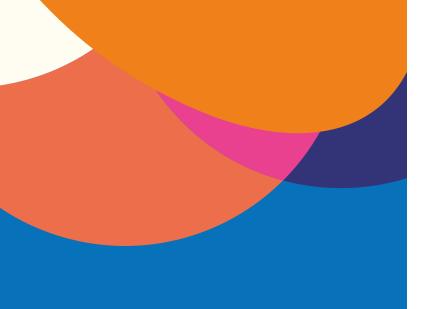### 3 Audit workplace forms, policies and procedures for gender-inclusive language

- ✓ Ensure dress codes are not set out in binary terms but rather guidelines for all individuals
- ✓ Remove questions about gender and/or sex if not needed
- ✓ Provide non-binary options when requesting information on gender and/or sex
- ✓ Use gender-neutral language throughout (i.e. use "parent" rather than "mother/father," use "child" rather than "son/daughter," use "partner" rather than "husband/wife," etc.)

4 Develop and communicate a commitment statement to diversity and inclusion

- ✓ Use the statement on all job postings
- ✓ Provide the statement on your website
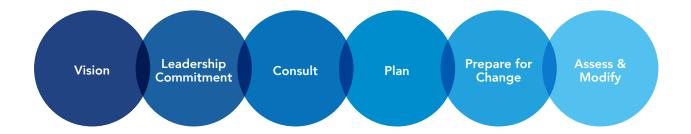- ✓ Communicate the commitment to all employees

👍 Do's

✔ Maintain confidentiality of an individual's medical and/or social history.

✔ Recognize an individual's chosen name and pronouns on all documents and in all systems.

✔ Use gender-neutral terms ("Hi everyone," "partner," "parent," "child," etc.).

✔ Educate yourself and your staff on updated terminology, human rights and inclusive practices.

✔ Ask what pronouns an individual uses.

✋ Don'ts

✖ "Out" someone without their explicit permission. Each person decides who it is safe to come out to and this decision is entirely up to them.

✖ Make remarks or jokes about someone's physical appearance or mannerisms.

✖ Misgender someone (use pronouns or gendered language the individual does not use). If you make a mistake, apologize, move on, and practice on your own so you can improve.

✖ Require medical proof unless legitimately necessary for medical leave requests

✖ Ask personal or inappropriate questions (such as about someone's anatomy or the medical procedures they've undergone) unless that person has given explicit permission for you to ask or it is legitimately required for you to know.

✖ Deadname someone (use a name someone no longer uses, often the name an individual was given at birth).

5 Support employee resource groups

✔ Encourage employees to meet and support each other

✔ Ask employee resource groups for their input in developing more inclusive practices and spaces

6 Celebrate Pride and recognize LGBTQ2+ related days of observance

✔ Financially support and participate in your community's Pride celebrations

✔ Sign a proclamation for Pride day/week/month

✔ Raise a pride flag

✔ Implement a rainbow crosswalk

● Plan for Change

| Vision | Leadership Commitment | Consult | Plan | Prepare for Change | Assess & Modify |

Before undertaking change on LGBTQ2+ inclusion measures, set a clear, shared vision on what that change should look like. Assess how the municipality is currently doing as pertains to LGBTQ2+ inclusiveness as a guardian of the public interest, as an organization with relation to the fulfillment of human rights, and as a community sharing responsibility for respecting and promoting human rights and diversity.

Develop a clear link between the vision for LGBTQ2+ inclusion measures and your organization's strategic plan, business plan and other guiding documents. Leaders at all levels of the organization should be on board and committed to the vision to ensure success. Municipalities can start to build a case for LGBTQ2+ inclusion work, including attraction and retention of talent, employee engagement, resident satisfaction, enhanced service delivery, and safety and well-being of all residents.

Some tools to help assess LGBTQ2+ inclusiveness:

🔍 Human Rights Campaign Foundation and the Equality Federation Institute's "Municipal Equality Index: A nationwide evaluation of municipal law"

🔍 Pride at Work Canada's "Hiring Across All Spectrums: A report on broadening opportunities for LGBTQ2+ jobseekers"

Some resources to help build the case for LGBTQ2+ inclusiveness:

🔍 Catalyst's "Building LGBT-Inclusive Workplaces: Engaging Organizations and Individuals in Change"

🔍 Deloitte's "Waiter, is that inclusion in my soup?: A new recipe to improve business performance"

🔍 Centre for Talent Innovation's "The Power of "Out" 2.0: LGBT in the workplace"

🔍 McKinsey's "Diversity Matters"

● Strategies to Support LGBTQ2+ Residents

Develop an LGBTQ2+ advisory committee and community and/or employee engagement sessions. Gather lived experiences, challenges, existing barriers and suggested strategies for improvement.

Some examples of existing LGBTQ2+ advisory committees:

- ✔ The City of Hamilton's LGBTQ Advisory Committee
- ✔ The City of Vancouver's LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee
- ✔ The Calgary Police Service's Sexuality and Gender Diversity Chief's Advisory Board

Based on the advisory committee and engagement session input, develop a comprehensive plan that will move your organization closer to your shared vision. Include a framework for evaluating the plan's success.
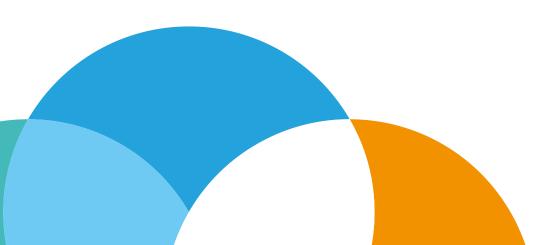
Some examples of municipal plans:

- ✔ The City of Toronto's Action Plan for Transgender Youth
- ✔ The City of Vancouver's Trans* and Gender Variant Inclusion Working Group Report

Prepare your target audience for the changes prior to implementing them through public awareness and employee engagement campaigns, and by sharing the plan on the municipality's website. Once the plan has been implemented and initiated, evaluate the progress, collect feedback from employees, residents, and the advisory committee, and modify the plan accordingly.

Diversity is often celebrated in Canadian municipalities as a positive asset of our communities; however, diversity itself does not automatically result in inclusion. Inclusion must be intentionally fostered and developed and continuously cultivated. Furthermore, there is a misconception that LGBTQ2+ people aren't present in our workplaces or don't access municipal services. This often results in low buy-in or lack of urgency in addressing LGBTQ2+ inclusion. However, a low overt presence of LGBTQ2+ people is often directly correlated with a lack of inclusion within these spaces and services. Municipalities can play a leading role in proactively assessing, anticipating and removing barriers that may prevent LGBTQ2+ individuals from equitable access, participation or opportunity. Municipalities can make positive changes towards LGBTQ2+ inclusiveness within their communities through policy changes, hiring practices, public event participation and specific LGBTQ2+ programs and services. Moreover, when a discriminatory incident or hate crime occurs or when an accommodation is requested, municipalities have a duty to respond in a timely and efficient manner that supports the LGBTQ2+ individual.

Write It Down

Municipalities of all sizes and budgets can take a positive step towards inclusiveness by ensuring their anti-discrimination, respectful workplace or equivalent policies specifically mention sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression. Making this explicit is important in ensuring all employees are aware of the municipal stance and that LGBTQ2+ individuals are protected. LGBTQ2+ individuals are more comfortable applying for jobs at an organization that has publicized LGBTQ2+ related policies like anti-discrimination policies and guidelines.[xxiii]

Inclusive Policy – Hamilton, ON
The City of Hamilton implemented a *Protocol for Gender Identity and Gender Expression; Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Persons* in 2017 to foster a more inclusive environment. It covers privacy, identification, language, administrative systems, data collection, dress code, washrooms, change facilities, employee transition and more.

Quick Tip

Ensure gender-neutral language is used throughout your policies and procedures. Keep an eye out for instances where he/she, wife/husband, son/daughter, etc. are used.

Guidelines Relating to Trans Students – Commission scolaire de Montréal, QC
The school board published *Lignes directrices relatives aux élèves transgenres*, a guide to supporting trans students. In French only.

Employee Transition Guidelines – Red Deer, AB
The City of Red Deer has developed a handbook for supporting trans employees. Based on one employee's experience with transitioning, it provides steps and resources for supporting employees who are transitioning.

The City used a collaborative approach between Human Resources, the transitioning employee, and the employee's department to ensure the employee was supported through their transition process. The process was a learning experience for all, and succeeded because the City prioritized the employee's wishes. For example, the employee decided who they wished to inform and when. As a signatory of the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities, the City offered a supportive environment. Challenges included staff or clients who were uncomfortable or held prejudiced views. These were mitigated by having the full support of the Human Resources department, being able to respond quickly to incidents, and focusing on the employee's rights and needs.

The City of Red Deer and the Alberta Human Rights Commission gave a joint presentation to the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) entitled "How to Support Transgender Employees."

Guidelines for Accommodating Gender Identity and Gender Expression – Toronto, ON
The document outlines the City's legal obligation to accommodate individuals in accordance with the City's Human Rights and Anti-Harassment/Discrimination Policy and Ontario's Human Rights Code.

Stand Behind, Not in Front

Empowering LGBTQ2+ communities to advocate for themselves through capacity building is an important component of being a good ally. Municipalities can be strong allies by helping facilitate the creation of LGBTQ2+ groups, mentor potential leaders and support learning and growth opportunities. Providing safe spaces for meetings, offering training for leaders and providing information about registering as a group are simple ways to support LGBTQ2+ groups and leaders.

Kindred – Cochrane, AB
The Town of Cochrane helped create Kindred, an organization that promotes and celebrates diversity, equality and inclusion. Kindred organizes workshops, hosts events and advocates for the LGBTQ2+ community.

Such groups can play an important role in supporting municipalities as they undertake equality efforts and continue to improve and implement practices that are inclusive. Working together to share information, resources, expertise and lived experiences is important in moving forward together as communities that are welcoming, accessible and inclusive.

Municipalities can commit to financially supporting organizations and initiatives that provide important services and resources for LGBTQ2+ individuals and families or that improve awareness of the challenges faced by LGBTQ2+ people. Advisory committees are another way for municipalities to support their LGBTQ2+ residents and can facilitate the identification of challenges and collaborative work on strategies.

Symposium on Sexual Diversity and Gender in a Rural Context – Haut-Saint-François, QC
The Community Development Corporation co-organized the first symposium on sexual and gender identity in rural Canada. Representatives from the municipality joined community organizations, educational bodies, provincial representatives and others to learn about LGBTQ2+ inclusiveness and challenges. In French only.

Quick Tip

Support the creation of employee resource groups (ERGs) that provide safer and more supportive environments for LGBTQ2+ employees and can support positive change within the organization. Consult the Toolkit for Diversity and Inclusion Practitioners developed by the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion to learn more.

Rendez-vous de la fierté Acadie Love – Caraquet, NB
The municipality of Caraquet, New-Brunswick, is a key partner of the Rendez-vous de la fierté Acadie Love festival. Held for the first time in 2017, Acadie Love promotes inclusion, solidarity and awareness of the issues faced by LGBTQ2+ communities. In French only.

Say It Loud

Public statements and proclamations from municipalities can send a strong message: that discrimination and hate will not be tolerated in the community. These statements not only show the LGBTQ2+ community that the municipality is supportive of its members, but they may also diminish the likelihood of backlash and overt discrimination from occurring. Municipalities can proclaim Pride Week in their region annually, implement an equality commitment statement that specifies sexual orientation and gender or adopt an inclusion policy.

Pride Week Proclamation – New Glasgow, NS
The Mayor of New Glasgow signs a proclamation each year recognizing Pride Week. It is publicly read at a flag-raising ceremony.

Inclusion Program – Victoria, BC
The City of Victoria Council passed a motion in 2017 entitled "Transgender, gender non-binary, and two-spirit equity and inclusion policy" and directed the administration to develop a plan to carry out recommended actions to include LGBTQ2+ people. Victoria has begun to tackle these issues by training staff on gender expression and gender identity, updating washroom signage, and reviewing and updating policies and service practices. A formal motion from the Council ensured commitment from the top down and allowed for change throughout the organization. An action plan including specific indicators of success along with a budget to implement the plan are key.

Resource

Rainbow Cities is a network of international cities committed to LGBTQ2+ inclusiveness. These cities exchange experiences, implement best practices and actively fight discrimination.

Provide Safer Spaces

LGBTQ2+ individuals accessing services experience discrimination and harassment at a significantly higher rate than their cisgender and/or straight peers. This pervasive experience of discrimination and harassment instills fear and can result in LGBTQ2+ individuals avoiding facilities and services or experiencing anxiety when accessing those things. Washrooms and change rooms in particular are often spaces where LGBTQ2+ individuals experience harassment, discrimination and even violence. This may include challenging a person's right to use that space, telling an individual to leave, verbal and/or physical assault, insisting the individual must use a single-stall washroom or forcibly removing an individual from the space. Equal access to washrooms and access to facilities without discrimination, harassment or abuse is protected under the *Canadian Human Rights Act* (Bill C-16).

Municipalities can provide safer, more inclusive spaces and services for employees and residents by providing gender-neutral washrooms, having inclusive posters and stickers that indicate the space as an inclusive one, and training employees to respond to instances of resistance and opposition to inclusive washrooms. It is important to support trans individuals' rights to use whichever washroom they feel safest using.

Gender-Neutral Washrooms – Oakville, ON
Gender-neutral signage was added to washrooms in municipal buildings and recreation centres.

Quick Tip

Change all single-stall washroom signage to gender-neutral signs. Use signs indicating what is available in the washroom (i.e. toilet, change table, wheelchair accessible, etc.) rather than gender symbols are ideal.
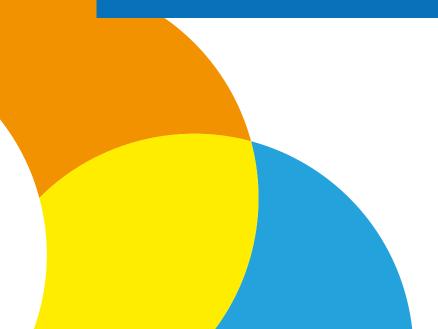
Rainbow Spaces – Wood Buffalo, AB
The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo set out to develop a Diversity & Inclusion Community Plan to strategically align its initiatives with the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities' commitments and include LGBTQ2+ voices in the development of the plan. One challenge was the lack of a visible and organized LGBTQ2+ group in the region after a hate incident occurred where a pride flag was publicly burned. The lack of an LGBTQ2+ organization, pride events and other programs had resulted in many LGBTQ2+ individuals feeling isolated, unsupported and unsafe.

The municipality supported the creation of Pride YMM, which now hosts an annual Pride celebration, drag events, LGBTQ2+ awareness training and more. As Pride YMM gained visibility and support, businesses began requesting stickers to designate their spaces as LGBTQ2+ friendly.

Through the Regional Advisory Committee on Inclusion, Diversity, and Equality, the municipality worked with Pride YMM to develop a program to help businesses develop more safe and inclusive spaces. The program, entitled "Rainbow Spaces," calls on businesses to take concrete steps like using gender-inclusive language on forms, introducing anti-discrimination policies, offering training, and implementing gender-inclusive washrooms. Businesses that complete these steps are recognized publicly with a Rainbow Spaces decal. Businesses and organizations have responded positively to the initiative.

For more information, email diversity.woodbuffalo@rmwb.ca.

Do Your Homework

Continuous learning opportunities for employees are a key component to creating more LGBTQ2+ inclusive workplaces for employees and services for residents. Online courses, webinars and in-person training can ensure that employees are up to date on inclusive terminology, are aware of human rights legislation and have strategies to create safer, more inclusive spaces for co-workers and residents.

Human Rights Training – Ottawa, ON
The City of Ottawa offers all new employees and managers mandatory training on LGBTQ2+ rights.

shOUT! – Charlottetown, PEI
PEI's shOUT! is an annual gender and sexuality awareness conference featuring workshops, presentations and discussions about issues faced by LGBTQ2+ individuals in PEI.

Resource

Egale Canada offers training opportunities.

Celebrate Together

Group identities have been shown to have protective characteristics with relation to marginalized groups, which can help individuals deal with discrimination and stigma. For example, if an individual is racialized and experiences discrimination, they most likely have family members or friends who have also experienced this form of discrimination and can receive support from them. However, many LGBTQ2+ individuals are the only individual in their family who are LGBTQ2+ and therefore do not have the same shared experience of discrimination as their family members, nor the same level of support. This can cause feelings of isolation and difficulty in forming a strong identity and sense of self. Furthermore, those who are not "out," may feel very isolated, which can be detrimental to their well-being and health outcomes.

Fête Arc-en-ciel – Québec City, QC
The City of Québec supports the annual Fête Arc-en-ciel (Quebec City Pride Festival). With musical and artistic performances, movie screenings and workshops, the celebration advocates for the rights of LGBT2+ individuals.

Programs and events such as Pride parades, LGBTQ2+ friendly programming and specific support groups, such as Gay–Straight Alliances / Gender–Sexuality Alliances, are key in combatting isolation. These events provide a safer environment for LGBTQ+ individuals to be "out" and decrease feelings of isolation and loneliness in LGBTQ+ individuals, which contributes to better health outcomes for LGBTQ+ individuals.

Access, Equity, and Human Rights Awards – Toronto, ON
The City of Toronto honours residents and organizations that make major contributions to LGBTQ2+ rights and inclusion.

Pride – Whitehorse, YK

The City of Whitehorse runs Whitehorse Pride and other events throughout the year to celebrate the contributions of the LGBTQ2+ community and recognize the ongoing challenges its members face. Pride and transgender flags are raised annually at City Hall and council members actively participate in the pride parade. The city was one of the first in Canada to paint a permanent transgender crosswalk.

Whitehorse also hosts events and initiatives like the "Bridging Gender Divides" workshops, a Queer Film Festival, Rainbow clubs, a PRISM Yukon College student group and All Genders Yukon Support Group. This visible support makes a strong statement and raises awareness of discrimination.

Resource

The City of Vancouver has developed guidelines, including a checklist, to help staff plan and run more inclusive public events, consultations and meetings.

Important Dates

March 31 – International Transgender Day of Visibility

April 10 – Day of Pink

May 17 – International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia

June – Pride Month

October 11 – National Coming Out Day

October 26 – Intersex Awareness Day

November 20 – Transgender Day of Remembrance

December 10 – Human Rights Day

Appendix A:
Templates & Resources

i. Inclusive Washrooms

The following templates are reprinted with permission from the Regional Advisory Committee on Inclusion, Diversity, and Equality (RACIDE). Contact diversity.woodbuffalo@rmwb.ca for more information.

Sample Notice

Note: A notice or guideline document such as the template below can provide front line staff with a quick tool to use if there are any questions or concerns about gender inclusive washrooms. This document may be printed and posted at information desks or any other appropriate location that is easily accessible when providing customer service support.

__(company name)__ is committed to providing safe and inclusive access to washroom facilities for all of its employees and visitors. Under the __(insert local relevant legislation)__, all persons, including trans people, are permitted to use the washroom facilities that best correspond to their gender, gender identity and/or gender expression without recourse or discrimination.

The facilities on the property are multi-occupant with lockable single-occupant stalls that provide privacy for all users. __(Insert location of single-stall washroom)__. Under the __(insert local relevant legislation)__, individuals have the right to use the facility of their choosing while remaining free from harassment of any kind. Those requiring increased privacy or who are uncomfortable using gender-inclusive washrooms for any reason may use the single-stall washroom.

Inclusive Washroom Policy

Note: Every workplace will have their own format for policies and procedures. The sample policy provided here is a basic policy and is meant to illustrate important information that should be included in an inclusive washroom policy. Organizations may wish to add additional procedural information for staff handling complaints regarding the washroom policy as well as other policies and procedures for providing support to transgender employees and visitors.

1. **Policy Statement:** __(company name)__ is committed to providing access to gender-inclusive washroom and toilet facilities for all customers, visitors, volunteers and employees.

2. **Purpose:** To support trans and non-binary employees, guests and residents of __(company name)__, parents with young children, people with disabilities that require assistance from an attendant of a different gender and people who require added privacy for a variety of reasons. This policy will allow individuals to have a safe and accessible facility to use and the option of using a washroom that best corresponds with their gender identity or gender expression.

3. **Background:** Equal access to washrooms and facilities without discrimination, harassment or abuse is protected under the <u>Alberta Human Rights Act Bill 7 Amendment (insert your provincial equivalent if applicable)</u> and the *Canadian Human Rights Act* (Bill C-16). Everyone needs a washroom, and providing safe and accessible washrooms is important. Gender inclusive washrooms are safer spaces that anyone, regardless of gender identity or gender expression, can use.

4. **Definitions:**

   4.1. **Trans and non-binary –** Umbrella terms used to refer to individuals whose gender does not match up with the sex and/or gender they were assigned at birth.

   4.2. **Gender inclusive washroom –** Facility that can be used by anyone, regardless of gender identity and/or gender expression. It may be single stall or multi-stall.

   4.3. **Employee –** Any individual hired by <u>(company name)</u>.

   4.4. **Visitor –** A customer, a client or any individual otherwise accessing the services of <u>(company name)</u>.

5. **Applications:**

   5.1. Individuals are permitted to use the washroom facilities that best correspond to their gender, gender identity and/or gender expression.

      5.1.1. No individual shall be asked about the sex they were assigned at birth, or to provide proof of the sex they were assigned at birth, the status of their medical transition, or to otherwise prove their gender when accessing washroom facilities.

   5.2. Single-stall washrooms are available for anyone to use and are clearly marked with non-gendered signage.

   5.3. No individual shall be forced by staff or other visitors to use the single-stall washroom.

   5.4. It is the responsibility of individuals requiring increased privacy or who are uncomfortable using gender-inclusive washrooms for any reason to instead use a single-stall washroom.

   5.5. Staff shall indicate where all washrooms are located regardless of the perceived gender of the individual requesting access to the washroom facilities.
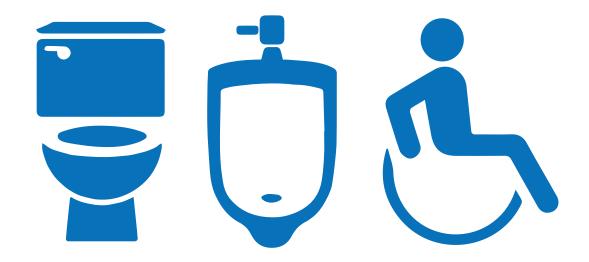
Signage

The following washroom signage templates are reprinted with permission from Pride YMM. These may be copied or reprinted as needed with credit provided to Pride YMM. Contact infoprideymm@gmail.com for more information.

RESTROOM

SINGLE-STALL

RESTROOM

MULTIPLE-STALL

WOMEN'S RESTROOM

INDIVIDUALS ARE WELCOME TO USE THE WASHROOM MOST COMFORTABLE FOR THEM.

ii. Gender-Neutral Writing Resources

✔ Gender-Inclusive Writing Correspondence: Translation Bureau

✔ Gender-Neutral Writing Part 1 The Pronoun Problem: Translation Bureau

✔ Writing Gender-Neutral Teaching Guides: Government of Québec

iii. Gender-Inclusive Survey Questions

Before questions are drafted, ensure the information being collected is required for the organization to successfully serve its clients and employees. Additionally, be sure to avoid conflating sex, gender, and sexual orientation. These are different concepts that it may or may not be necessary for you to collect. Ensure that this information is held in the strictest confidence and is stored securely.

Every effort should be made to keep information about transitioning employees confidential and it should be shared only if and when a trans individual provides explicit permission to do. The trans individual is the one who decides who is told, and when and what they are told. This is extremely important to ensure the safety of the trans person. Finally, keep in mind that many transgender individuals may prefer to identify as male or female and therefore your gender statistics may not accurately indicate the number of trans and non-binary individuals.

Helpful resources on this topic include:

✔ Transgender-inclusive measures of sex/gender for population surveys: Mixed-methods evaluation and recommendations

✔ Assessing the Feasibility of Asking About Gender Identity in the Current Population Survey: Results from Focus Groups with Members of the Transgender Population

✔ Why (and how!) to ask survey questions on sexual orientation and gender identity

Sample Open-Ended Gender-Related Question:
Gender: _____

Sample Combined (Open and Closed) Gender-Related Question:
Which gender do you most identify with?

○ Woman
○ Man
○ Non-Binary
○ Two-Spirit
○ Not Listed: _____
○ Prefer Not to Answer

Sample Closed-Ended Gender-Related Question:
Which gender do you most identify with?

○ Woman
○ Man
○ Non-Binary
○ Two-Spirit
○ Not listed
○ Prefer Not to Answer

Sample Closed-Ended Sex-Assigned-at-Birth-Related Question:
What sex were you assigned at birth, meaning on your original birth certificate?

○ Female
○ Male
○ Intersex
○ None
○ Prefer Not to Answer

iv. Commitment Statement

Note: A commitment statement may be used on job postings, websites or other materials and platforms to indicate the organization's commitment to inclusion. Such a statement should be backed by adopting inclusive strategies such as those laid out in this document.

__(company name)__ strives to be a diverse and inclusive organization that supports equality and is committed to fostering a supportive environment for all. We do not discriminate based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religious beliefs, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical or mental disability, age, marital status, family status, source of income or sexual orientation.

v. Email Signature Sample

Jane Doe
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
Executive Assistant
ABCD Company

vi. Name Tags

The following name tag templates are reprinted with permission from the Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity.

HELLO MY NAME IS...

MY PRONOUNS ARE...

HELLO MY NAME IS...

MY PRONOUNS ARE...

HELLO MY NAME IS...

MY PRONOUNS ARE...

HELLO MY NAME IS...

MY PRONOUNS ARE...

HELLO MY NAME IS...

MY PRONOUNS ARE...

HELLO MY NAME IS...

MY PRONOUNS ARE...

Appendix B:
Glossary

The following definitions have been adapted from the University of British Colombia's Positive Space Campaign[5], the National Centre for Transgender Equality and Qmunity, the Government of Canada: Gender and sexual diversity glossary[6], and the Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity.[xxiv]

Agender – A person who identifies as having no gender or as outside of gender.

Asexual – A person who experiences sexual attraction and/or desire for sex to a lesser degree than most people.

Binary – The view that there are only two totally distinct, opposite and static genders and sexes (masculine/feminine, male/female) to identify with and/or express. While many societies currently view gender and/or sex through this lens and consider it to be universal, a number of societies recognize more than two genders and/or sexes. Across all societies, there are also many people who experience gender and/or sex fluidly, identifying with different genders and/or sexes at different times.

Bisexual – A person who is attracted to people who are the same sex as them and people who are a different sex than them. Note: people commonly refer to bisexual as "attraction to both sexes," but this is incorrect, as there are more than two sexes.

Cisgender – A person who identifies as the sex and/or gender they were assigned at birth. "Cis-" is a Latin prefix meaning "on the same side [as]" or "on this side [of]."
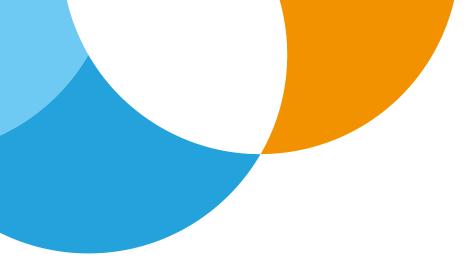
Dyadic – People who are assigned a sex that fits the rigid, medical definitions of "male" or "female." This term is rare, but generally used to express that a person is non-intersex. Because intersex people and dyadic (non-intersex) people are generally assigned as male or female, making note of this distinction is considered important.

Gender Expression – How a person presents their gender to others, often through behaviour, clothing, hairstyle, voice or body characteristics.

Gender Identity – An individual's internal sense of self in the context of gender. Some gender identities include: woman, man, genderqueer, genderfluid, non-binary, etc. Gender is an internal identity construct and is not necessarily visible or obvious to others. Note: the term "gender identity" is often used when discussing trans people, whereas the term "gender" is often used when speaking about cisgender people. Gender is always an identity and therefore the term "gender identity" is somewhat redundant. However, the term is used in Canadian legislation and therefore is used in this document.

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[5] "Terminology" The University of British Colombia: Positive Space Campaign. Retrieved from http://positivespace.ubc.ca/terminology

[6] https://www.btb.termiumplus.gc.ca/publications/diversite-diversity-eng.html

Gender Fluid – Gender fluidity conveys a wider, more flexible range of gender identity and/or expression. Gender fluid people reject common restrictive boundaries of gender identity and expression as well as stereotypical expectations of masculinity and femininity as static.

Heterosexual – Someone who is attracted to people of a different sex – in other words, women who like men or men who like women. The term "straight" is also used.

Homosexual – A person who is attracted to people of the same sex – in other words women who like women or men who like men. The terms "gay" and "lesbian" are also used.

Intersex – A person who is assigned a sex that involves reproductive or sexual anatomy and/or chromosome patterns that do not seem to fit rigid medical definitions of "male" or "female". Intersex conditions are also known as differences of sex development (DSD). Intersex persons are often subject to surgical intervention at birth (with or without the parental consent or knowledge). "Intersex" has replaced the term "hermaphrodite," which is widely considered to be outdated, inaccurate and offensive. An intersex individual may or may not identify as part of the trans community; however, the terms "intersex" and "trans" are distinct and should not be used interchangeably.

Non-binary – A person who describes themselves as fitting outside of the "man" and "woman" categories in our society. Non-binary people can identify in multiple ways such as genderqueer, bigender, agender or simply non-binary.

Pansexual – Someone who is attracted to people of all genders. "Pan-" is a Latin prefix meaning "all." "Pansexuality" is a term evolved from the history of "bisexuality," where some individuals wanted a term that specifically included people of all genders and sexes. This term is often used by those who wish to include their attraction towards trans and intersex people.

Privilege – Refers to structural social, economic and political advantages or rights held by people from some majority groups on the basis of gender, race, sexual orientation, social class, etc. For example, cisgender men often experience privilege that people of other genders and sexes do not.

Queer – An umbrella term that seeks to encompass a broad range of identities, behaviours, and expressions. It is also a personal identity that has been reclaimed because "queer" has been historically used as an inflammatory term. However, not all individuals feel the same way about the re-appropriation of this term and some individuals are still uncomfortable with it. Sometimes it is used as a short form that includes lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and transgender people. Not all trans people see trans identities as being part of the term "queer."

Trans, Transgender or Trans-Identified – A person who identifies as a gender different from the sex and/or gender they were assigned at birth. "Trans-" is a Latin prefix meaning "across." Being transgender should be understood as a relationship to one's gender rather than an actual gender. For example, a person's gender is not "trans woman": their gender is "woman" but their relationship to womanhood is "trans." "Transgender" is a broad term and "trans" is shorthand for "transgender". "Transgender" is correctly used as an adjective, not a noun. Thus, "transgender people" is appropriate but "transgenders" is disrespectful. Transgender individuals may or may not use binary language (man, woman) depending on how they identify.

Transsexual – An outdated and pejorative term that should not be used. It was used to describe people whose gender was different from their sex assigned at birth. The term was generally used to describe those who seek to undergo medical or surgical intervention to change their sexed bodies. The term is considered overly clinical and overly sexualizes trans people.

Two Spirit – A contemporary English term that was coined in a 1990 gathering in Winnipeg, Manitoba, of Indigenous LGBTQ2+ people who found that the mainstream terms (lesbian, gay, trans, etc.) were not reflective of the unique ways of being and existing that Indigenous LGBTQ+ people experienced. In many Indigenous languages, there are traditional ways of describing people who engage in same-gender relationships or who express gender differently, and some Indigenous theorists argue that the term "Two Spirit" is meant to try to explain this reality to non-Indigenous people. Generally, this term is used to express the spiritual relationship that an Indigenous person has with their sexuality and/or gendered experience. Not all Indigenous LGBTQ2+ people identify as Two Spirit. However, a person who is not Indigenous should not identify as Two Spirit.

Appendix C:
Timeline of LGBTQ2+ Rights in Canada

Pre-Colonization

The traditions of Indigenous communities often recognized the existence of sexual and gender diversity. Two Spirit individuals were often considered to be gifted and held important roles within their communities.

1861

Sodomy was punishable by sentences of 10 years to life in prison.

1948

The criminal code was amended to include the terms "criminal sexual psychopath" and "dangerous sexual offender," which were used to charge LGBTQ2+ individuals.

1969

Private sexual acts between consenting individuals over the age of 21 were decriminalized.

The Stonewall riots broke out in New York City, where police attempted to raid a popular gay bar while patrons resisted.

1978

Immigration could no longer be denied on the basis of homosexuality.

1981

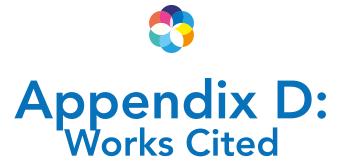Nearly 300 men were arrested by Toronto police in raids on four bathhouses. The event became known as Canada's Stonewall. Three thousand people took to the streets in protest, leading to the creation of the Lesbian and Gay Pride Day in Toronto.

1980s – early 2000s   Raids took place and individuals were charged with being "found-ins" at "bawdy-houses" or any location where "indecent acts" took place.

1996   Sexual orientation was added to the *Canadian Human Rights Act*.

2005   Same sex marriage was legalized in Canada, making it the fourth country in the world to do so.

2016   Bill C-16 was passed to amend the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and the *Criminal Code* in order to add protections concerning gender identity and gender expression.

2017   The Government of Canada announced that passports and immigration documents would have gender-neutral options.

2018   The Government of Canada formally apologized to those affected by harmful and discriminatory legislation, policies and practices, leading to the oppression of LGBTQ2+ people in Canada.

A more in-depth look at Canadian LGBTQ2+ history can be found on the Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity (CCGSD) website.

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