



# DURANGO INCLUSIVE TOURISM PROGRAM

——— *LGBTQ+ Guide for Employees* ———





“You don’t have to be gay to be a supporter— you just have to be a human.”

*Daniel Radcliffe*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LGBTQ+ 101 .....	5
The Basics .....	6
Common Myths and Misconceptions .....	8-9
Gender vs. Sex.....	10
Terminology Guide .....	12
Common Symbols and Flags.....	14-15
Intro to Pronouns .....	16
What are Pronouns? .....	18
Gender Neutral Word Guide.....	19
Inclusion in the Workplace.....	21-24
Steps to Be Inclusive in the Workplace .....	27
Ways to Promote Inclusion in the Workplace.....	28-30
Common Mistakes and Things to Avoid.....	32
Steps to Correct a Mistake.....	33
How to Address Injustices .....	34
Additional Resources.....	36

## AN INTRODUCTION

This guide is a starting point for you to better understand how to support LGBTQ+ employees and customers to further create a culture of inclusion within your organization.

We are excited to partner with the Four Corners Alliance for Diversity and local community members to form the LGBTQ+ Inclusive Tourism Program.

We value building a community and destination that is inclusive, accessible, and welcoming to all.





# LGBTQ+ 101

# THE BASICS

Before we dive into inclusivity and creating a more welcoming workplace for you and your fellow coworkers, it's good to cover some of the basics!

The acronym LGBTQ+ refers to people who are non-heterosexual and/or non-cisgender.

## *"LGBTQ+" Stands For:*

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, AND QUEER  
(OR QUESTIONING).

As understanding of the wide range of sexual orientations and gender identities has grown, the term has evolved over time to incorporate a '+' at the end to acknowledge various identities. Don't worry, we'll explain the differences between all of these terms and why they're important in the coming pages.

In the simplest manner, these terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity. However, it's important to remember that sexuality and gender are on spectrums, of which individuals can proactively name and rename. There is no one-size-fits-all definitions for either.

Some people who identify as LGBTQ+ may not use any of these labels themselves, while others may identify with all of them.



Approximately 5–10% of the  
general population is lesbian,  
gay, bisexual or transgender.  
That's:

*16-33 Million People!*





# COMMON MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

✗ Myth: LGBTQ+ people are all the same.

✓ Fact: There is no one way to be LGBTQ+. Each person's experience is unique.

✗ Myth: LGBTQ+ people are all "out."

✓ Fact: Not all LGBTQ+ people are out to everyone in their lives. Some may choose to come out, while others may not feel safe or comfortable doing so.

✗ Myth: LGBTQ+ people can just "hide" their identity if they don't want to reveal it.

✓ Fact: No one should ever have to hide their identity in order to feel safe or accepted. LGBTQ+ people who feel the need to hide their identity often suffer from greater levels of stress and anxiety.

✗ Myth: Certain mannerisms or physical features might be used to identify LGBTQ+ people.

✓ Fact: People come in all shapes, colors, and sizes and can't be identified just based on their looks.

✗ Myth: People who are LGBTQ+ work, live, and act in only certain types of situations.

✓ Fact: People come from all walks of life, racial and ethnic groups, are members of numerous religious organizations, have a variety of mental and physical capabilities, and range in age.

✗ Myth: LGBTQ+ people can choose their sexual orientation.

✓ Fact: Sexual orientation is not a choice. It is something that someone is born with and can fluctuate over time.

✗ Myth: Allowing transgender people in bathrooms will put other people at risk of being harassed by sexual predators.

✓ Fact: A 2019 study by CNN found that there have been zero reports of transgender people assaulting anyone in a bathroom. In fact, almost all studies show that over 90% of child molestation is committed by heterosexual men. Most surprising is that transgender people are more likely to be assaulted and harassed in bathrooms than anyone else.

✗ Myth: Homosexuality is a phase and can be reversed by therapy and time.

✓ Fact: Homosexuality is not a clinical entity, and it cannot be "treated." Attempts to "fix" people through psychiatry and psychology have failed. These "therapies" not only fail but may also cause significant emotional trauma.

# GENDER VS. SEX

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It is critical to distinguish between sexual orientation and gender identity as you begin getting to know the LGBTQ+ community.

It's long been thought that there were just two genders: man and woman; and two sexes: male and female.

It's also been thought that your sexual orientation could either be: heterosexual or homosexual. And if you belonged to one of these two camps, you would express your outward appearance to the world in a prescribed way.

## WELL, THINGS HAVE CHANGED!

We now know and recognize that there are more combinations and ways to identify than before. For example, there are more than two genders (ie. transman and transwoman, gender fluid, non-binary), and there is a much wider range of sexual orientations than just heterosexual and homosexual (ie. asexual, bisexual, pansexual).

As we become more aware of these complexities, it's important to remember that everyone deserves to be treated with respect and understanding - regardless of how they identify.

The guide on the right page will break down the four ways to define gender and sex.



## SEX ASSIGNED AT BIRTH

The term "sex assigned at birth" refers to the label given to a newborn by a medical practitioner. A medical professional may describe a baby as male, female, or intersex depending on what they notice about the baby's body. For example, a baby will be designated as a girl or a boy. Some babies might have bodies or chromosomes that don't fit the typical definitions of male or female and may be labeled as intersex. Sex assigned at birth is about how someone else perceives our bodies and has nothing to do with how we truly feel.



## GENDER IDENTITY

Gender identity is a person's internal sense of being male, female, neither of these, both, or another gender. Everyone has a gender identity. A person's sex assigned at birth and their own internal concept of gender do not always match up.



## GENDER EXPRESSION

Gender expression is presentation is the outward appearance of one's gender identity, including clothes, haircuts, voices, body shapes, and other factors. Gender identity and gender expression are different but related. A person's gender identity is their internal sense of being. Their gender expression is how they choose to outwardly express their gender identity to the world. For example, a person might have a female gender identity but dress in a more masculine way.



## SEXUAL ORIENTATION/ATTRACTION

Sexual orientation is about who we are attracted to sexually, emotionally, and romantically. Our attractions may be towards people of the same gender (heterosexual or gay), another gender (bisexual or pansexual), or even more than one gender (queer)!



# TERMINOLOGY GUIDE

On the surface, the LGBTQ+ community seems to be complex with a lot of terms! In order to help you understand the differences, we've created a guide that breakdown's the terms by categories:

## Lesbian

A woman who is attracted to other women in a way that lasts beyond the physical, romantic, and/or emotional realm. Some lesbians prefer to call themselves gay or lesbian women.

## Gay

A person who is homosexual-oriented by nature, inclination, or preference and has an enduring physical, romantic, or emotive attraction to persons of the same sex.

## BiSexual

A person who has the ability to create enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attractions for people of the same gender or others of another gender.

## Transgender

An umbrella term for people who identify as a gender other than the one assigned to them at birth. A transgender identity is not determined by external appearance or surgical procedures.

## Cisgender

A cisgender person is someone who identifies with the sex they were at birth. Gender identity is referred to as cisgender. Sexual orientation, on the other hand, is referred to as straight.

## Intersex

Intersex is a blanket term that refers to a variety of conditions in which a person's reproductive or sexual anatomy does not appear to conform to typical definitions of female or male.

## Asexual

Asexuality is a sexual orientation where the person experiences little to no sexual attraction to other people.

## Pansexual

A person that is pansexual is romantically, emotionally, and/or sexually attracted to people regardless of their gender orientation or expression.

## Queer

Umbrella term to be inclusive of all identities and variations.

## Non-Binary

A person that does not relate their gender identity or expression to a man or a woman.

## Gender Fluid

A person that fluctuates their gender identity rather than committing to a single one.

## Questioning

The process of exploring and discovering one's sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression.

## COMMON SYMBOLS



MALE



FEMALE



TRANSGENDER



CIS-GENDER



BISEXUAL



LESBIAN



GAY



INTERSEX



ASEXUAL

## COMMON FLAGS



PROGRESS



TRADITIONAL



TRANSGENDER



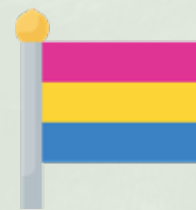
NON-BINARY



GENDER  
FLUID



BISEXUAL



PANSEXUAL



ASEXUAL



LESBIAN



# INTRO TO PRONOUNS



# WHAT ARE PRONOUNS?

Pronouns are the words used in place of a proper name. Examples of pronouns include: she/her/hers, he/him/his, they/them/theirs and others.

Just like gender identity, we don't know a person's pronouns from their appearance alone. Not all nonbinary individuals use gender-neutral pronouns, and men and women may utilize they/them or neopronouns instead of he/she/him/her/his.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO USE THE RIGHT PRONOUNS?

When someone is referred to with the incorrect gender pronoun (or "misgendered"/"mispronounced"), they may feel disrespected, discounted, ashamed, or forgotten. Trans and nonbinary individuals, on the other hand, describe feeling ecstatic, seen, valued, and validated when others refer to them using their pronouns. It's a privilege to not have to worry about which pronoun someone will use for you.

### GENDER BINARY

Subject	Object	Pronoun
She	Her	Hers
He	Him	His

### GENDER NEUTRAL

Subject	Object	Pronoun
They	Them	Their

WHEN IN DOUBT, USE THEY/THEM/THEIRS!

## GENDER NEUTRAL WORD GUIDE



*Avoid*

man  
boy/ girl  
male (human)  
female (human)  
man/woman  
he/she (as a catch-all)  
mankind  
guys/girls/ma'am/sir  
husband/wife  
boyfriend/girlfriend  
maiden name  
maternity leave  
boss man/boss lady  
manmade  
freshman  
man the booth/event  
male or female artist/musician  
actor/actress  
congressman  
salesman/saleswoman  
waiter/waitress  
businessman/businesswoman  
mailman/mailwoman  
chairman/chairwoman  
policeman/policewoman  
fireman/firewoman



*Use*

person, individual  
child/kid  
man, person  
woman, person  
employee, colleague, coworker  
you/they  
humankind/humanity  
you/y'all/everyone/friend  
spouse/partner  
significant other/partner  
family name  
parental leave  
boss, employer, colleague  
synthetic, artificial  
first-year student  
staff, attend, take care of  
artist, musician  
actor  
legislator, representative  
sales person, sales associate  
server, attendant  
business person, representative  
mail carrier, postal worker  
chair/chairperson  
police officer  
firefighter





# INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE

# IMPORTANCE OF LGBTQ+ INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE

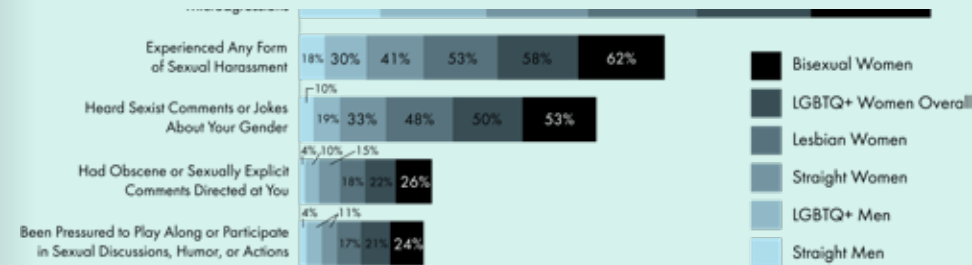
Creating a culture of inclusion in the workplace goes beyond ensuring that your fellow employees and customers are safe and following the law. Ensuring that you promote LGBTQ+ friendly business practices gives your fellow employees a better opportunity to thrive. The culture of inclusion increases employee morale, retention, and overall success in the workplace.

According to the business case “Diversity Wins, How Inclusion Matters,” released in May of 2020 by McKinsey & Company, employees who can be honest about their LGBTQ+ affiliations are happier with their careers and view their companies and managers more favorably. A welcoming and positive workplace makes it easier for employees to be honest and secure in who they are; in turn, the psychological value of being honest about who you are contributes to happiness and career satisfaction for LGBTQ+ employees.

Being inclusive to the LGBTQ+ community can also have a substantial positive impact on today’s youth. Inclusion affects employees of all ages directly and indirectly. The Trevor Project article “Facts about Suicide” reports that suicide is the second leading cause of death for those 10 to 24 years of age, and almost three times that rate in LGBTQ+ youth. LGBTQ+ inclusion in your workplace can help save the lives of our youth and community members.

LGBTQ+ women are twice as likely to experience sexual harassment in the workplace when there is a lack of inclusive culture. Half of the LGBTQ+ women hear sexist comments or jokes about their gender at work - 1.5 times more than straight women and 2.6 times more than LGBTQ+ men. This chart shows a survey called “what have you experienced at work” conducted by Women in the Workplace 2019.

Sexual Harassment in the Workplace



By changing the culture of your workplace to be LGBTQ+ inclusive, you will positively impact the well-being of other employees and your entire community.

“Coined by scholar, Kimberle Crenshaw, intersectionality is a lens through which we can examine where power, privilege, or lack thereof, is intertwined. It acknowledges that race, gender, ability, socioeconomic status, and sexuality, among other things, are simultaneously at play at any given moment. With that, building a more inclusive, accessible, and welcoming environment means also a commitment to understanding how the other identities of your fellow LGBTQ+ employees, and customers, could be impacting their experience.”



# BENEFITS OF LGBTQ+ BEST PRACTICES IN THE WORKPLACE

Despite all of the progress made in terms of LGBTQ+ equality, the workplace is one area that still sees a lot of discrimination. Millions of Americans go to work every day afraid of harassment, fear of their job security, embarrassment, or being ridiculed because of who they are or whom they love.

In fact, more than 40% of lesbian, gay, and bisexual people and almost 90% of transgender individuals have experienced discrimination, harassment, or mistreatment in the workplace.

According to the Williams Institute's study, *The Business Impact of LGBT-Supportive Workplace Policies*, people who feel the need to hide their identity at work often suffer from greater levels of stress and anxiety, which can lead to health problems and workplace issues.

Everyone should feel welcome in their workplace regardless of who they are or whom they love. There is clear evidence that businesses with inclusive policies create a more welcoming environment for their LGBTQ+ employees.

Being welcoming, compassionate, and inclusive is just the right thing to do! Actively engaging in these best practices not only create a supportive work environment, but a positive one for your customers. Additionally, these practices should not be limited to who you are at work but who you could be in the community at large.

Here are a few of the benefits of an inclusive workplace for you and your fellow LGBTQ+ employees.



**LOWER STRESS**



**LOWER ANXIETY**



**BETTER WORK FRIENDSHIPS**



**BETTER CUSTOMER SERVICE**



**LOWER TURNOVER**



**BETTER TRANSPARENCY AND OPENNESS**



**MORE WORK DEDICATION**



**HAPPIER COWORKERS**



## STEPS TO BE INCLUSIVE IN THE WORKPLACE

# IMMEDIATE WAYS TO PROMOTE INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE

By creating an inviting and supportive workplace through compassion, understanding, and a willingness to grow, there will be instant effects throughout.

Here are a few ways that you instantly help create an LGBTQ+-friendly workplace.



## LEARN THE BASICS

Read through and be familiar with this guide, and reference it when you need.



## USE PRONOUNS/GENDER-NEUTRAL WORDS

Learn and use the correct pronouns of your coworkers and integrate gender-neutral words into your workplace and workday when possible.



## DON'T ASSUME AND BE OPEN-MINDED

Don't make assumptions about people's genders, pronouns, and/or sexual orientations. Be open-minded and non-judgmental when it comes to gender identity and expression.



## ADD PRONOUNS TO YOUR EMAIL SIGNATURE

Add your pronouns to your email signature to help people to easily identify what your pronouns are, which will help to avoid any potential misgendering. When you share your pronouns, others feel safe to share theirs.



## ATTEND LOCAL-DURANGO EVENTS

Durango is home to a number of LGBTQ+ friendly events from single day to multiple day festivals.



## CHECK IN WITH OTHERS, OFTEN

Ask your coworkers how they're doing. Offer a lending hand to listen and help. Regular check-ins, no matter how small, can have enormous impacts.



## ASK FOR HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT

If you're not sure how to be an ally, or if you need help supporting an LGBTQ+ employee, colleague, or customer- ask for help or connect with some organizations in the resources section.



## HANG YOUR "ALL ARE WELCOME" STICKERS

Display your "All Are Welcome" stickers and window clings to show coworkers, management, and customers you're LGBTQ+ friendly!



## REFERENCE ICYC BLUE FOR QUESTIONS

If you don't understand something, it might be best to ask an expert. The "ICYC BLUE" (In Case You're Curious) text Line is available 24/7 for all LGBTQ+ related questions.



# LONG-TERM WAYS TO PROMOTE INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE

Working to change the culture of your workplace takes more than just putting pronouns in your email signature. Challenging gender stereotypes and promoting diversity and inclusion initiatives can be achieved through a series of programs, on-going education, and working with your management team.

Here are some long-term ways to promote inclusion in the workplace:



## EDUCATE YOUR MANAGERS/LEADERS

Educate your leaders about the importance of inclusivity and the basics of the LGBTQ+ community. Be respectful and informative, never condescending!



## VOLUNTEER

Volunteer and get involved with a local, Durango LGBTQ+ organization, event, or committee!



## BUILD FRIENDSHIPS OUTSIDE OF WORK

Seek out opportunities to build friendships with LGBTQ+ people outside of work. This will help to create a more inclusive environment at work.



## LOBBY FOR WORK-POLICY CHANGES

If you're comfortable doing so, lobby for work-policy changes that will help to promote inclusion for LGBTQ+ employees.



## LOBBY FOR A DONATION PROGRAM

Advocate for your company to create a donation program that supports LGBTQ+ nonprofits.



## DON'T ASCRIBE TO HETERNORMATIVE ROLES

Think outside of heteronormative roles in your personal life or at work. This includes things like assuming that everyone is straight, or that men are the breadwinners and women are the caretakers.



## CELEBRATE COWORKERS' DIFFERENCES

Celebrate important holidays, events, or attributes with your team- everybody likes to celebrate!



## UNLEARN BAD LANGUAGE HABITS

Unlearn any bad language habits that you may have. This includes things like using slurs or making jokes about LGBTQ+ people.





## RECOGNIZE YOUR PRIVILEGE


Acknowledge that some people don't have the same privileges that you do. Use your privilege to support LGBTQ+ rights and causes.


# COMMON MISTAKES AND THINGS TO AVOID

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 **OUTING/PRESSURING PEOPLE TO COME OUT**  
Outing someone or pressuring them to come out against their will is never acceptable. Respect their privacy and do not out them to others without their consent.


 **ASKING INVASIVE QUESTIONS**  
It is also important to remember that it is not appropriate to ask intrusive questions about someone's gender identity or sexual orientation. Remember, you can always reference the ICYC Text Line for questions!


 **BEING AN ALLY JUST TO LOOK GOOD**  
Being an ally is about supporting LGBTQ+ rights and inclusive policies, for the movement- not to get brownie points with management or a coworker.

 **FORCING LABELS AGAINST THEIR WILL**  
People should never be forced to identify as LGBTQ+ if they don't want to. Respect their identity and let them identify in their own way, on their own time.

 **BACKHANDED COMPLIMENTS**  
Backhanded compliments minimize people's struggles and are actually just disguised insults that are meant to make LGBTQ+ people feel like they are abnormal.

 **MISGENDERING YOUR COWORKERS**  
It is important to be respectful and use the correct pronouns for everyone, regardless of their gender identity or expression.


 **ASSUMING EVERYONE IS CIS-GENDER OR LGBTQ+**  
Another way to promote inclusion in the workplace is to stop assuming that everyone is straight or LGBTQ+. This includes things like using the wrong pronouns or making assumptions about someone's gender identity.

 **DEFINING LGBTQ+ AS PERSONALITY**  
Being LGBTQ+ is not a personality trait. When you reduce LGBTQ+ people to just their sexual orientation or gender identity, you are defining them by a trait that is not essential to who they are.


## STEPS TO CORRECT A MISTAKE

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 **PULL THE PERSON ASIDE**

 **APOLOGIZE WITHOUT GOING OVERBOARD**

 **ASK FOR FEEDBACK AND LISTEN**

 **MODEL THE CORRECT PRONOUNS AND LANGUAGE TO OTHERS**



# HOW TO ADDRESS INJUSTICES

If you witness or experience an injustice towards you or against an LGBTQ+ person, here are a few ways that you can address it:



## DON'T CALL OUT, CALL IN

When someone's actions or words are unacceptable, pull them aside, and have a conversation centered around respect and compassion. Focus on reflection, not reaction. *You catch more flies with honey than vinegar!*



## CONNECT WITH THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

Connect with local Durango and national organizations that support LGBTQ+ rights. These organizations may be able to offer more support and guidance on how to address the injustice.



## OFFER YOUR SUPPORT

If you witness or experience an injustice towards an LGBTQ+ person, reach out to them and offer your support. Let them know that they are not alone and that you stand with them.



## TALK WITH MANAGEMENT OR HR

If the injustice is on a larger scale, or if you are not sure how to address the situation, talking with management or HR is always an option.



Try to give your coworkers benefit of the doubt. Assume positive intent and find ways for everyone to grow.

*We're All in This Together!*

# ADDITIONAL Resources





# CONTACT

If you have additional questions, comments, or want additional training, don't hesitate to reach out!

**Durango Inclusive Tourism Program**  
inclusivetourism@durango.org

**Four Corners Alliance for Diversity**  
4calliancefordiversity@gmail.com



“

Where there is love,  
there is life.

*Mahatma Gandhi*

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## ICYC BLUE (IN CASE YOU'RE CURIOUS) TEXT LINE

For answers to any questions you may have, you can reach out to the ICYC BLUE text line - text the word blue to 57890 with your questions, and you will receive a response within 24 hours. The ICYC BLUE text line is private and confidential.



ALL OF DURANGO INCLUSIVE TOURISM PROGRAM'S DIGITAL FILES



LGBTQ+ PROGRAM'S DIGITAL FILES



A GUIDE TO LGBTQ+ TERMINOLOGY



SAFE SPACE ALLY INFORMATION



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