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**FORGING STRONG
RELATIONSHIPS
WITH LGBTQ+
ADVOCATES AND
ORGANIZATIONS**

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1. LGBTQ+ People are Not A Monolith
2. Why Advocates Must Build Relationships with LGBTQ+ Organizations
3. Resources to Build Cultural Competency
4. Resources for Better Understanding LGBTQ+ Experiences

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**LGBTQ+
PEOPLE ARE
NOT A
MONOLITH**

LGBTQ+ people make up a broad and diverse set of communities, each with varying experiences and circumstances, and have been historically marginalized and ostracized for their

- > Sexuality
- > Gender Identity or Expression
- > Health Status
- > Family Structures
- > Nonconformance with Societal Norms
- > Existence

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LGBTQ+ PEOPLE ARE NOT A MONOLITH

The LGBTQ+ people can suffer from AND perpetuate

- > Racism
- > Misogyny
- > Ableism
- > Ageism
- > Sizeism

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LGBTQ+ PEOPLE ARE NOT A MONOLITH

Violence against LGBTQ+ people is on the rise, especially for transgender women of color who have historically faced the most violence and oppression among LGBTQ+ people.

But we are resilient (often at great personal cost), and often model mutually supportive behaviors to survive and foster community.

We experience joy.

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LGBTQ+ PEOPLE ARE NOT A MONOLITH

Black and Latinx transgender women formed the modern LGBTQ+ rights movement, yet they face the highest levels of discrimination, even within LGBTQ+ communities.



Mariah P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera

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WHY ADVOCATES MUST BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH LGBTQ+ ORGANIZATIONS

Advocates have a responsibility to do the work to understand LGBTQ+ people and gain trust from their communities in order to serve and support them .

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WHY ADVOCATES MUST BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH LGBTQ+ ORGANIZATIONS

Local LGBTQ+ organizations understand the needs of their local LGBTQ+ communities and how to connect with them .

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WHY ADVOCATES MUST BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH LGBTQ+ ORGANIZATIONS

Despite advances, LGBTQ+ rights and protections are a patchwork across states and localities.

LGBTQ+ often may not know about their rights and where to turn to .

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WHY ADVOCATES MUST BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH LGBTQ+ ORGANIZATIONS

LGBTQ+ communities are under attack, with transgender women of color most heavily targeted:

- Hate crimes against LGBTQ+ people up 16% , with transgender women of color overrepresented. (FBI)
- Nearly 250 anti-LGBTQ+ state bills introduced in 2022 alone. (ACLU)
- Well-documented efforts to overturn landmark LGBTQ+ affirming Supreme Court cases.

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WHY ADVOCATES MUST BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH LGBTQ+ ORGANIZATIONS

Understanding LGBTQ+ people and collaborating with LGBTQ+ organizations can ensure that your organization is a stabilizing, affirming, and culturally competent force in an otherwise hostile environment

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RESOURCES TO INFORM YOUR OUTREACH

Provides organizational benefits, such as:

- More diverse volunteer base
- Testers for fair housing organizations
- Connectivity across otherwise siloed advocacy communities
- Opportunities for mutual support
- Continued engagement can contribute to staying current on cultural competencies

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RESOURCES TO BUILD CULTURAL COMPETENCY

More and more research is being released that is shedding light on the ways in which LGBTQ+ people experience the world and the challenges they face.

Advocates can do the work to educate themselves and engage and build relationships with LGBTQ+ organizations.

Statistics and studies are important background but having meaningful interpersonal and professional relationships is crucial.

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RESOURCES TO BUILD CULTURAL COMPETENCY

Supporting LGBTQ+ people does not entitle you to information about lived experiences, but advocates can work to be more welcoming and build trust.

"Inviting In acknowledges that it is important for everyone to do the work required to demonstrate compassion and to increase competence such that people feel comfortable sharing in important parts of themselves when they choose"

National Black Justice Coalition
"Inviting In Toolkit"

<https://nbjc.org/resource/inviting-in-toolkit/>

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RESOURCES TO BUILD CULTURAL COMPETENCY

Language matters, and while we should always let the individual tell us who they are, advocates can learn important terms that carry significance among LGBTQ+ people.

GLAAD's Media Reference Guide is a tool that trains journalists and media creators who want to communicate with LGBTQ+ people and tell their stories fairly and accurately.

<https://www.glaad.org/reference>

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RESOURCES TO BETTER UNDERSTAND LGBTQ+ EXPERIENCES

www.nfha.us/2020/06/01/

There is an ever-growing body of research that documents or quantifies how LGBTQ+ people experience

- COVID-19
- Criminal Justice System
- Discrimination and Violence
- Economic Health and Poverty
- The Education System
- The Public Health System
- Relationships and Parenting
- Social Services and Child Welfare

The **Williams Institute** is a leading research institution that studies these and other topics.
<https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/>

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RESOURCES TO BETTER UNDERSTAND LGBTQ+ EXPERIENCES

www.nfha.us/2020/06/01/

Several national organizations and think tanks have developed tools to show where LGBTQ+ people have civil rights protections, and where anti-LGBTQ+ legislation is being introduced.

The **Movement Advancement Project's Equality Maps** show the extent of protections and policies that affect the lives of LGBTQ+ people.
<https://www.movementadvancement.org/equality-maps>

The **ACLU** has developed a tracker to monitor anti-LGBTQ+ legislation across the nation.
<https://www.aclu.org/legislation-affecting-lgbtq-rights-across-country>

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RESOURCES TO BETTER UNDERSTAND LGBTQ+ EXPERIENCES

www.nfha.us/2020/06/01/

Several organizations specifically advocate for the unique housing needs of LGBTQ+ people.

True Colors United has resources to better understand and address LGBTQ+ homelessness.
<https://truecolorsunited.org/#>

The **LGBTQ Real Estate Alliance** promotes homeownership for LGBTQ+ people, educates about how discrimination can affect one's path to homeownership.
<https://realestatealliance.org/education/>

SAGE is dedicated to advocating for the rights and needs of LGBTQ+ elders, and for the development of LGBTQ+ affirming elder housing.
<https://www.sageusa.org/>

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RESOURCES TO BETTER UNDERSTAND LGBTQ+ EXPERIENCES

Several organizations provide resources for people interested in learning about or accessing LGBTQ+ health services.

Yale University's Dean's Advisory Council on LGBTQ+ Affairs has a comprehensive directory of LGBTQ+ health organizations and resources.

<https://med.yale.edu/lgbtqi/clinicalcares/lgbtqhealthorgs/>

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RESOURCES TO BETTER UNDERSTAND LGBTQ+ EXPERIENCES

Local organizations across the country exist to provide safe spaces, programming, resources, and referral services for LGBTQ+ people.

Centerlink is a national organization and trade association for the nation's LGBTQ+ Centers. Their website helps people identify their nearest LGBTQ+ Center.

<https://www.lgbtcenters.org/LGBTCenters>

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NFHA NATIONAL FAIR HOUSING ALLIANCE

HAPPY PRIDE!

www.nationalfairhousing.org

March 14, 2022

Equity, Inclusion, and Cultural Competency

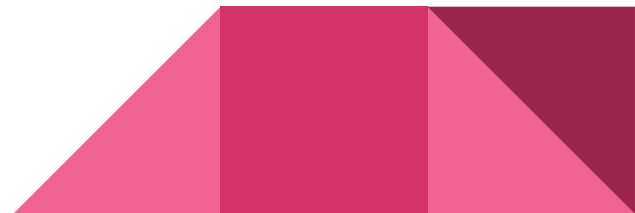
June 8, 2022

Presentation created by Ming Wong, National Center for Lesbian Rights
Event: Building a Fair Housing Bridge to the LGBTQ+ Community
by National Fair Housing Alliance

Introduction

NCLR is a national legal organization, founded in 1977, committed to advancing the civil and human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people and their families through litigation, legislation, policy, and public education.

One of our projects is to conduct trainings and provide free technical assistance to organizations seeking to deliver culturally-competent legal services to low-income LGBTQ+ clients.





Creating an Inclusive and Equitable Workplace for LGBTQ+ Employees

Beyond an Anti-Discrimination Policy

- Intersectionality
- Recruitment & Hiring
- **Benefits**
- Mentorship
- Office Culture
- Trainings
- Salary/Wage Transparency and Equity
- Valuing Cultural and Community Knowledge



Intersectionality

LGBTQ+ employees don't just have one identity or face only one form of oppression or marginalization.

Are your efforts inclusive of/centering, for example, LGBTQ people of color, LGBTQ people with disabilities, LGBTQ people with histories of trauma, formerly incarcerated LGBTQ people, currently or formerly unhoused LGBTQ people?



Recruitment & Hiring

What networks are you recruiting from?

Who does recruitment and interviewing?

Who makes the hiring decisions?

Are hiring criteria transparent and fair?

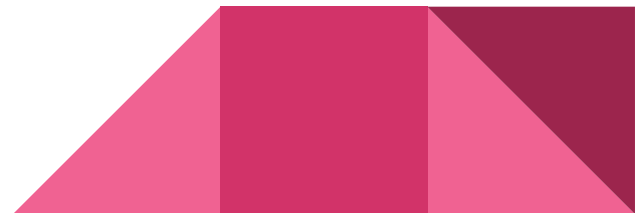
Do hiring criteria value cultural knowledge and connections to marginalized communities?



Benefits

Healthcare, Vacation, and Sick Leave:

- Inclusive of family structures other than heterosexual married couples with children biologically related to both parents?
- Include coverage for gender-affirming care? For assisted reproduction services? For surrogacy?
- (How) do employees know about these benefits?



Mentorship

Are there systems set up to foster mentorship in the organization?

Are these systems formalized and/or otherwise accessible to all employees?



Office Culture

Does management take affirmative steps to set expectations and create welcoming culture and environment?

What systems are in place to address harassment or conflict?



Trainings

Are all new staff trained or provided information on LGBTQ+ issues and the organization's efforts and policies to be an LGBTQ+ inclusive workplace?

Do existing staff receive regular trainings or information on LGBTQ+ issues?

Are other trainings (e.g., sexual harassment trainings, continuing professional education trainings) LGBTQ-inclusive and relevant?



Salary/Wage Transparency and Equity

Is there a payscale or other clear way for employees to understand how their own salaries/wages compare to others in the organization?

Automatic vs. Discretionary raises?

Does organization regularly assess pay equity across various groups (including LGBTQ+ employees)?



Valuing Cultural/Community Knowledge

Are employees supported in using work time to build connections with LGBTQ+ communities?

Are employees' relevant cultural knowledge of LGBTQ+ issues valued (e.g., through considerations for promotions, and/or increased pay or bonuses)?





Providing Culturally Competent Fair Housing Services to LGBTQ+ Clients

What is Cultural Competency?

Cultural competency refers to a practice of being respectful, responsive, adaptive and thoughtful about working with diverse populations.

It involves assessing the needs of clients from the target group and proactively responding to those needs.



Components of Cultural Competency

- Intake
- Outreach
- Welcoming environment
- Case handling
- Leadership/Vision
- Trainings & Ongoing evaluation



Intake

Key to establishing trust with potential clients & identify relevant facts of potential client's case

Use LGBTQ+ inclusive language for ALL clients



Outreach

All outreach materials should have LGBTQ-inclusive language

Community educators are comfortable with LGBTQ issues

Build a network with LGBTQ leaders and organizations in the communities you serve.

Targeted outreach



Welcoming Environment

Physical office decor and art is welcoming and inclusive of LGBTQ+ clients

Staff are familiar with and use inclusive language to talk about LGBTQ+ issues and people.

Gender neutral restrooms and policy that allows clients to choose restroom



Case handling

LGBTQ-inclusive case management systems

Importance of maintaining confidentiality

Seek assistance or expertise from outside if necessary to provide competent representation.



Leadership/Vision

Leaders and management can articulate importance of LGBTQ+ work to the organization

Organization commits resources to fully serve LGBTQ+ clients

LGBTQ+ issues considered when making organizational decisions



Trainings and Ongoing Evaluation

Specific LGBTQ cultural competency trainings for frontline & first point of contact staff

With input from community, make goals for culturally competent service delivery and conduct periodic evaluations.



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Dr. Imani Woody
Founder and CEO

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Old Age Ain't No Place
for Sissies...



Ms. Bette Davis



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The Way Things Were

- Could be arrested, fired or hospitalized
- Countless put in mental institutions
- Many married and had children to fit in
- In 1973 the AMA removed homosexuality as a mental disorder
- Sex-realignment surgery unavailable

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General Experiences That Can Lead to Social Isolation of LGBTQ/SGL Elders

- Sense of Being Different
 - Aversion to Labels
 - Deliberate Concealment of Sexual Identity and Orientation
 - Experience a higher rate of stress related to systematic discrimination.
 - Experience Minority Stress on at least 2 fronts, ageism, and sexual orientation/sexual identity.
- Sense of Grief and Loss related to aging and its effects on the quality of one's life.
 - Fear of Rejection and Loss from Biological Family and Friends.



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The Realities



- Approximately 3 million LGBTQ/SGL elders in the US.
- Lesbian and gay older adults more likely to be childless and living alone.
- LGBTQ/SGL elders have survived by scanning for clues.
- Transgender individuals face additional barriers to a safe environment and competent healthcare.
- By ignoring or avoiding LGBTQ/SGL issues, service providers contribute to isolation. 48% of older same sex couples experienced housing discrimination.
- Housing crisis facing older adults, including people with HIV



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- Visualize a shared living place where communal living feels like home, with a shared kitchen, a shared dining room and private baths.

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