

# LGBT 101

An introduction to gender and sexuality



GREATER DES MOINES  
PARTNERSHIP

**oneiowa**

# Goals

- ✓ Understand the distinction between “gender” and “sex”
- ✓ Understand the unique challenges faced by LGBT and gender variant employees
- ✓ Understand relevant local, state, and federal laws regarding sexual orientation and gender identity

# The Good News

- **You don't have to be an expert on LGBT culture to be culturally competent**
- You just need:
  - Basic information
  - A willingness to learn
  - Openness to hear what someone is trying to tell you

# Defining Our Terms

- Sex
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity
- Transgender
- Cisgender

# Sex vs. Gender

- **Sex** refers to hormones, chromosomes, genital and reproductive anatomy, a biological classification
- **Gender** refers to concepts of femininity and masculinity, a socially constructed system of classification
- These may not be the same for any particular individual, i.e., a person with male anatomy may dress, speak and behave in a feminine manner.

# Sexual Orientation

- Often confused with gender identity
- Refers to primary romantic or sexual attraction towards other people
  - **Lesbian:** an identity label for women who have primary sexual, romantic and relational ties to other women
  - **Gay:** an identity label for men who have primary sexual, romantic and relational ties to other men
  - **Bisexual:** an identity label for people who partner with either men or women

# According to the American Psychological Association

## Sexual orientation is...

- ✓ not a choice
- ✓ not an illness or emotional problem
- ✓ not able to be changed by therapy
- ✓ determined by many factors, usually at a very early age
- ✓ different from sexual behavior

# Gender Identity

## **The persistent internal sense of being a man or a woman**

- We all have a gender identity
- For many of us this matches the sex we were assigned at birth. For transgender people, it does not
- Our gender identity may or may NOT match our appearance, our body, others' perceptions of us



# Transgender

**Includes (but is not limited to)  
the following:**

- ◆ **Transgender**
- ◆ **Transsexual**
- ◆ **Genderqueer**
- ◆ **Gender fluid**
- ◆ **Agender**
- ◆ **Two-spirit**
- ◆ **Bigender**
- ◆ **DSD\***

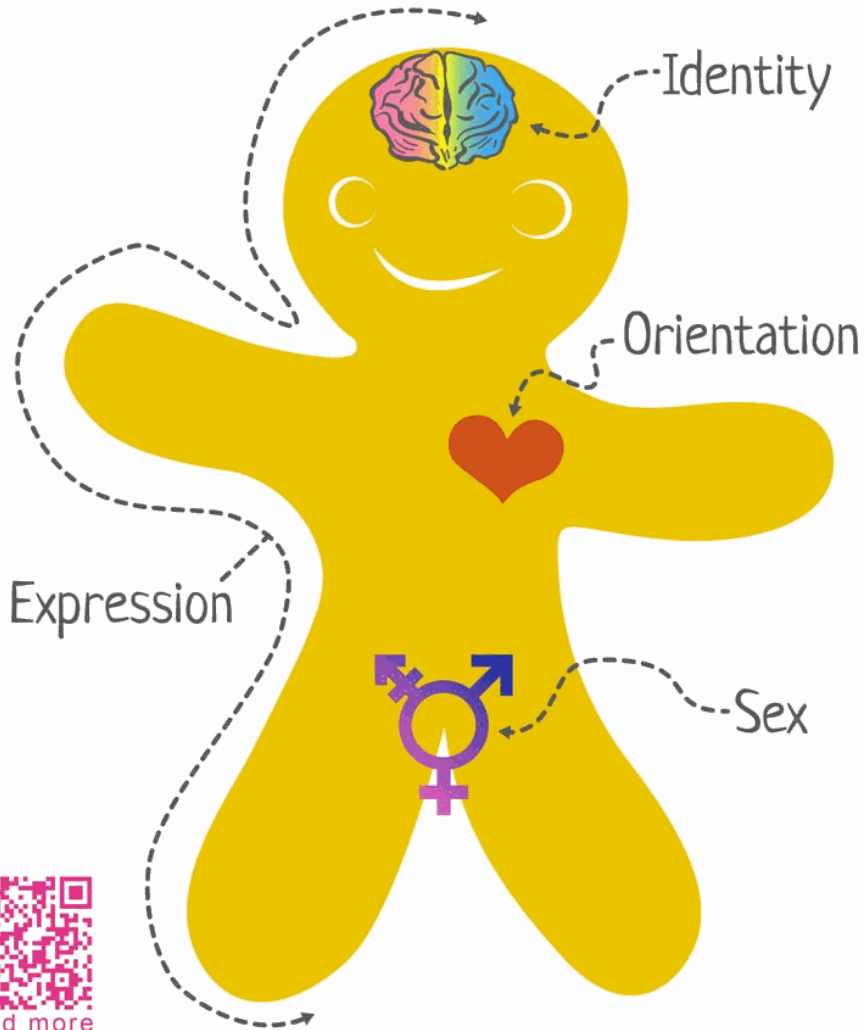


# Transgender

- Transgender people:
  - Can decide to transition at any age
  - May or may not change their names and pronouns
  - May or may not decide to use hormones or surgery
- What to do when you meet transgender people
  - Ask what they prefer to be called and use that name
  - Ask what pronoun they prefer and use accordingly
  - Avoid invasive unnecessary questions

# The Genderbread Person

by [www.ItsPronouncedMetrosexual.com](http://www.ItsPronouncedMetrosexual.com)



Gender identity is how you, in your head, think about yourself. It's the chemistry that composes you (e.g., hormonal levels) and how you interpret what that means.



Gender expression is how you demonstrate your gender (based on traditional gender roles) through the ways you act, dress, behave, and interact.



Biological sex refers to the objectively measurable organs, hormones, and chromosomes. Female = vagina, ovaries, XX chromosomes; male = penis, testes, XY chromosomes; intersex = a combination of the two.



Sexual orientation is who you are physically, spiritually, and emotionally attracted to, based on their sex/gender in relation to your own.

# George W.

- Former President of the United States
- Most powerful man in the free world
- Wore to inauguration: powdered wig, French silk stockings, Italian lace, high heeled shoes, ruffled shirt, velvet pants, and makeup.



# George W.

- Former President of the United States
- Most powerful man in the free world
- Wore to inauguration: wool suit, white dress shirt, blue striped tie



# Remember:

- It isn't always obvious who is LGBT
- It's okay to ask questions about gender, partners, preferred pronouns, etc.
- It's okay to feel awkward as you learn how to ask these questions
- There are no universals. Some LGBT people don't even like the term LGBT



# Transgender Discrimination

- Trans people face many of the same types of discrimination that LGB individuals face, but with many additional hurdles including but not limited to:
  - Government identity documents that do not reflect their gender and are prohibitively difficult to change
  - Sex-segregated restrooms and other public facilities
  - Dress codes which perpetuate traditional gender norms
  - Barriers to access appropriate healthcare

# Snapshots of transgender life

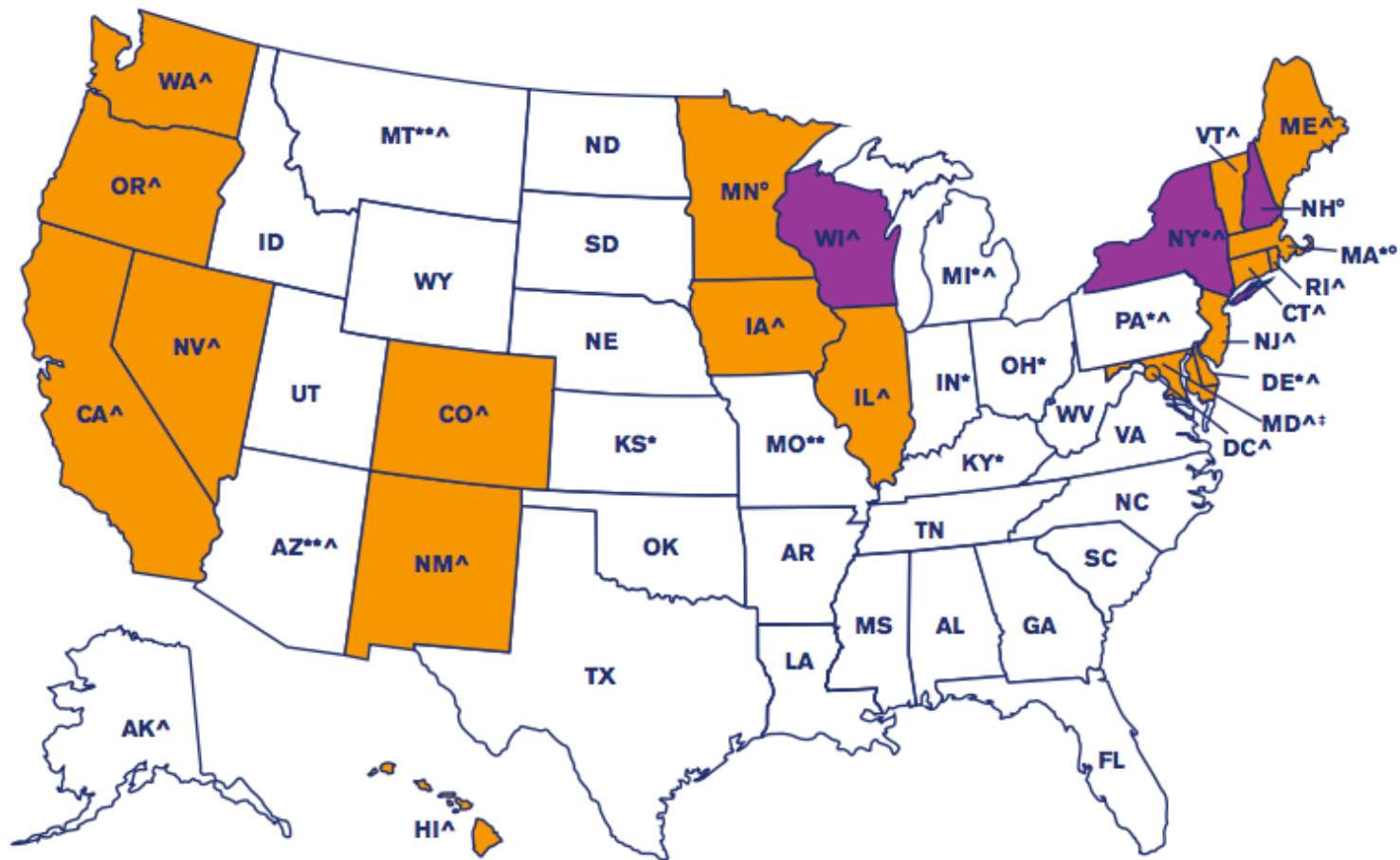
The National Transgender Center for Equality surveyed 6,450 transgender individuals in the U.S. Full results are available at [transequality.org](http://transequality.org).





# Can I be fired for being LGBT?

- Within the state of Iowa?
  - Nebraska?
  - Missouri?
  - Wisconsin?
  - Illinois?
- How will your rights change depending on what state you are traveling through?



Updated May 15, 2014



**States that prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (18 states and D.C.):**

California (1992, 2003), Colorado (2007), Connecticut (1991, 2011), Delaware (2009, 2013), District of Columbia (1977, 2006), Hawaii (1991, 2011), Illinois (2006), Iowa (2007), Maine (2005), Maryland\* (2001, 2014), Massachusetts (1989, 2012), Minnesota (1993), New Jersey (1992, 2007), New Mexico (2003), Nevada (1999, 2011), Oregon (2008), Rhode Island (1995, 2001), Vermont (1991, 2007) and Washington (2006).

- State courts, commissions, agencies, or attorney general have interpreted the existing law to include some protection against discrimination against transgender individuals in Florida and New York.
- The Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is now accepting complaints of gender identity discrimination in employment based on Title VII's prohibition against sex discrimination.



**States that prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation only (3 states):** New Hampshire (1998), New York (2003) and Wisconsin (1982).

# Discrimination is Real (and legally sanctioned)

- In **29** states it is legal to fire a worker simply for being lesbian, gay, or bisexual
- In **32** states it is legal to fire a worker based on their gender identity

**Every LGBT person in the country knows this\***

ENDA (the Employment Non-Discrimination Act), a proposed bill in the US Congress, would prohibit discrimination against employees on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. It has passed the Senate but is currently stalled in the House of Representatives.

# ...but not in Iowa

- Since the Iowa Civil Rights Code was amended in 2007:
  - 100% of the population is now protected against discrimination based on their sexual orientation
  - 100% of the population is now protected against discrimination based on their gender identity
- Federally – Title VII and Title IX provide protections for transgender students and other groups

# Suggestions

- Change your language
  - Say “...your partner, he or she...”
  - Remove gender binaries on forms (husband/wife vs. spouse)
  - Mirror language people use for themselves and their partners
- Post and enforce all anti-discrimination policies
  - It is **the law**
  - It increases morale and makes for more productive workers
- Show your openness
  - Wear or post LGBT inclusive stickers and pins
  - Assure confidentiality, make coming out safe

# For more information:

- National Center for Transgender Equality
  - [www.transequality.org](http://www.transequality.org)
- Transgender Law Center
  - [www.transgenderlawcenter.org](http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org)
- Lambda Legal
  - [www.lambdalegal.org](http://www.lambdalegal.org)
- Transformations
  - [www.facebook.com/transformationsiowa](https://www.facebook.com/transformationsiowa)



# Thank you!

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to let us know

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