

A GUIDE TO

Gender

Identity &

Affirmation

IN THE WORKPLACE

Yale University

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# Gender Identity & Affirmation

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## Introduction

Dear Users of the Gender Identity and Affirmation Guide,

Yale University is committed to supporting employees with expressing and affirming gender identity. This guide aims to provide information to employees at Yale University, with the intention of fostering work environments that are inclusive of all gender identities and expressions. Those who may find this guide useful includes but is not limited to:

- Gender diverse employees
- Human Resource Generalists and managers
- Workgroups which provide support to employees
- Allies

An inclusive workplace benefits everyone, and can positively impact the retention and recruitment of a diverse, talented and fulfilled workforce.

The goals of this guide include:

- To offer guidance on language that is respectful and inclusive
- To offer guidance on steps one might take when pursuing a gender transition
- To provide contact information for University resources, as well as for local and national resources

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## Yale University Non-Discrimination Policy

The university is committed to basing judgments concerning the admission, education, and employment of individuals upon their qualifications and abilities and affirmatively seeks to attract to its faculty, staff, and student body qualified persons of diverse backgrounds.

In accordance with this policy and as delineated by federal and Connecticut law, Yale does not discriminate in admissions, educational programs, or employment against any individual on account of that individual's sex, race, color, religion, age, disability, status as a protected veteran, or national or ethnic origin; nor does Yale discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression (Source: <http://yale.edu/nondiscrimination>).

In addition to the University's expectation of non discrimination, individuals have the right to privacy and confidentiality. Individuals may expect that personal and health information will not be unnecessarily disclosed.

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## Terms and Language Used in this Guide

It may be helpful to become familiar with the terms that are used most frequently within this document. This Guide makes several references to gender. **gender** refers to traits, often influenced by societal expectations, that classify an individual as either feminine or masculine. This Guide uses gender-neutral and inclusive language. The term **gender-neutral** can refer to individual identities, facilities such as restrooms, or as in the case of this Guide, it can refer to language. Gender-neutral means that no gender is assigned or assumed. This Guide uses the gender-neutral pronouns and possessive pronouns they, them and theirs to refer to an individual. Gender diversity is also used throughout this Guide. **Gender diversity** refers to behavior that does not correspond to expected binary of a male or female. Gender diversity may also include fluid expressions of gender. There is a more extensive list of terms in the **Glossary** section.

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## Preferred Terminology and Usage

Language is ever-evolving, as are the concepts of identity that language is asked to describe. In addition to becoming familiar with terms used in reference to gender identity and expression, it is important to know what language is not acceptable.

Preferred	Avoid
<b>transgender</b> (adj.)	transgender (n.), transgendered (adj.)
<b>Usage:</b> Transgender is used as an adjective, rather than a noun or a verb. <b>Examples:</b> “Tony is a transgender person.” “Our workplace is transgender inclusive.” “GLAAD is an organization that works for transgender advocacy”.	
<b>transition</b> (n. and v.)	sex change, pre- or post-operative
<b>Usage:</b> Transition is the accurate term when speaking of a person’s gender-affirming process. It does not fixate on surgeries, which transgender people may or may not undergo. <b>Examples:</b> “Changing their preferred name was part of their gender transition.” “She began to transition about a year ago.”	
<b>intersexed</b> (adj.), <b>intersex person</b> (n.)	hermaphrodite
<b>Usage:</b> The word “hermaphrodite” is an outdated, stigmatizing and misleading word, usually used to sensationalize intersex people.	

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## Defamatory Terminology

Gender identity is an integral part of a person's identity. Avoid using language that makes light of, questions, belittles or stigmatizes anyone's identity, including those in the gender affirmation process. Pay attention to and use the language others use for themselves—when in doubt, respectfully ask how that person would like to be addressed.

It is insulting and invalidating to use any of the following language when referencing gender diversity or gender expression: being deceptive, fooling or pretending to be a man or woman, posing as a woman or man. Further, it is dehumanizing to refer to anyone as a: *she-male*, *he-she*, *it*, *tranny*, *gender-bender*.

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## Names and Pronoun Usage

It is important to use a person's chosen or preferred name. Some transgender people may not be able to afford a legal name change or may not yet be old enough to change their name legally. They should be afforded the same respect for their preferred name as anyone else who lives by a name other than their birth name.

We should all be encouraged to ask people what pronoun they use. If it is not possible to ask for a preferred pronoun, use the pronoun that is consistent with the person's appearance and gender expression. For example, if the person wears a dress and uses the name "Susan," feminine pronouns are appropriate.

It is never appropriate to put quotation marks around either the transgender person's chosen name or the pronoun that reflects their gender identity.

Some people may use the pronoun **they** to refer to themselves. This is a gender neutral pronoun. Though they has grammatically been used to refer to the third-person plural, when used as a gender neutral pronoun, it is used as the third-person singular. Additional pronouns individuals may use, which do not identify sex are "ze", "zie" or "xe". This document will use the gender neutral pronoun "they".

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## Health Benefits for Transgender Employees

Yale University employees have access to a range of services commonly associated with the gender affirmation process through Yale Health, Aetna and Magellan. These services include (but are not limited to), mental health counseling, hormone replacement therapy, medical visits to monitor hormone replacement therapy, gender affirming surgery, short-term disability, and other programs provided as benefits to employees. The specific benefits covered and the cost of these benefits is determined based on the plan that the employee has selected.

For more information regarding what the selected plan will cover and the associated costs, or inquires related to a leave of absence, contact the employee's Human Resources (HR) Generalist. Find your HR Generalist: [your.yale.edu/human-resources-generalists-directory](https://your.yale.edu/human-resources-generalists-directory). Additionally, the Yale University Office of LGBTQ Resources, Yale Health Care Management and Yale University Human Resources can provide guidance and current information on coverage available.

### Office of LGBTQ Resources

The Office of LGBTQ Resources ([lgbtq.yale.edu](https://lgbtq.yale.edu), 203-432-0309) offers individualized guidance on navigating gender identity while working at Yale, and can provide current contacts and information on medical and other services available to employees. Contact information and office hours can be found on their website.

### Human Resources

HR Generalists receive training on university policies and processes pertaining to gender identity and gender affirmation, and are a great resource at any stage of the process. If your HR Generalist is unfamiliar with any particular topic, they can likely direct you to the proper source of information. Questions or concerns your HR Generalist is unable to address can be brought to the attention of Chief Diversity Officer Deborah Stanley-McAulay ([deborah.stanley-mcaulay@yale.edu](mailto:deborah.stanley-mcaulay@yale.edu), 203-436-4072). Find your HR Generalist: [your.yale.edu/human-resources-generalists-directory](https://your.yale.edu/human-resources-generalists-directory).

### Aetna Medical Plans

The Employee Services Center at Human Resources ([employee.services@yale.edu](mailto:employee.services@yale.edu), 203-432-5552) can provide the most current information on Aetna coverage.

## **Yale Health**

The most up-to-date coverage guidelines employed by Yale Health are available upon request from the Care Management Department (<http://yalehealth.yale.edu/caremanagement>, 436-5791) or your primary care clinician. Jennifer Brackett ([jennifer.brackett@yale.edu](mailto:jennifer.brackett@yale.edu)) is a primary point-person for gender-affirmation related policies and questions.

## **Magellan Counseling & Support Services**

Magellan Health Services administers Yale's Counseling & Support Services benefit and offers employees and family members unlimited phone support and up to six (6) in-person visits per issue for each family member at no cost. This includes consultations relating to gender identity and transitioning. For more information and to access these services and resources, call 1-800-327-9240. A guide to these services is available here: <http://your.yale.edu/yale-edu-hronline/hronline/benefits/employeeAssistance.html>.

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## Coming Out (or Not) at Work

There is no formal or correct way to tell your employer and colleagues that you are trans. However, the following tips might be helpful:

- Beginning a new job can be a good opportunity to share your gender identity with your colleagues, but this can also be a stressful time for many new employees. You make the decision about when you're comfortable coming out.
- Consider what you want to say to your colleagues. What words do you want to use to describe yourself? What is important for them to know (or not) about you?
- Before coming out to everyone, identify an individual person who you believe will be an ally to you. Ask them to support you in coming out to others.
- Pick a time and place that will be comfortable for you and whoever you decide to come out to. By choosing a time when you and your colleagues are not tired, stressed, frustrated, or distracted, you will maximize the potential for a positive conversation.
- Finally, **TransWise** is a resource offered by the Office of LGBTQ Resources available to Yale community members providing additional support and conversation on gender identity, coming out, transitioning, and more. For more information, email Seth Wallace ([seth.wallace@yale.edu](mailto:seth.wallace@yale.edu)) or visit the Office of LGBTQ Resources website ([lgbtq.yale.edu/transwise](http://lgbtq.yale.edu/transwise)).

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## Transition Support and Planning

The information on transition support provided here is intended to give examples of a process, but not to define any individual's process. There is no one route to gender affirmation; each employee's plan will be individualized and will vary on many dimensions. Employees may be at different points of their transition during their employment at Yale.

Various entities are available for consultation and guidance. Primary resources include the Office of LGBTQ Resources and the University Chief Diversity Officer (please see [Resources](#) section for contact information). It is crucial to consider every individual's right to privacy, confidentiality and choice during each stage of a transition.



A transitioning employee is encouraged to seek a supportive person in their work environment. That person may be a manager, an ally or a colleague. The supportive person may be someone who can offer assistance with continued needs around accessing services or interfacing with other University systems.

If an employee is planning a gender transition, the manager should contact the employee's HR Generalist and setup a time for the employee, manager, and HR Generalist to plan the employee's transition in the workplace.

- The employee should decide who will be key players in this transition plan and what role each person will take.
- Transitions may be gradual, but it may be helpful to select a date on which a process will become formal. This may be the day on which the entire work-group, clients and/or vendors are informed of the transition. It may also be when prefer name and gender become visible and accessible.
- If there is a transition day, the employee can think about who will be on site to facilitate the process, support the employee, ensure respectful and inclusive treatment, and make sure that work returns to normal after a few hours.
- The employee should decide how information will be communicated to colleagues. For example, there may be an email sent to a specific work group, a team meeting, or an employee may wish to have face-to-face conversations. As with all stages of a transition, the employee's consent and input are critical.
- Participation from someone in a leadership role (a manager, Human Resources Generalist, Principal Investigator, etc.) is an important component of communicating the following:
  - The employee is valued and has the University's full support in making the transition.
  - Yale University's non-discrimination policy.
  - The employee should be called by their preferred name and preferred pronoun.
  - Work will continue as normal.
  - Appropriate channels for questions and concerns.
- It is important that the leadership person lead by example by using the employee's preferred name pronoun in all official and unofficial communication.
- A person in a leadership role can assist with identifying resources that would be beneficial to the employee's team, including an in-person training or workshop which focuses on gender identity.
- An identified support person is encouraged to check in with the employee 30-60 days after the transition date.

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## Updating Your Information (Employee)

An employee can make the following updates. When an employee changes or updates their legal or preferred name and/or gender in Workday, an electronic feed with this information goes to all vendors, such as Yale Health, Aetna, EyeMed, Delta Dental, TIAA and Your Spending Account. Changes will be reflected in many University systems within 24-72 hours, but some databases are refreshed less frequently or require manual updates.

If issues arise in changing this information, contact your HR Generalist for assistance.

*Staff on Confidential Payroll:* Manager will contact the Business Manager in the President's Office to update all information described below.

### Legal Name

Must match the name found on government-issued identification such as passport or driver's license.

1. Select "My Benefits / My Pay and Info" on [your.yale.edu](http://your.yale.edu), and log in using your NetID and password.
2. In the Workday interface, select "Personal Information" and then "Legal Name".
3. On the Names sub-tab, click the "Edit" button next to the name you wish to change.
4. Enter your changes, select "Submit" and then select "Done".
5. Present the proper legal documentation at a campus I-9 Center. (A list of locations and acceptable documents are available at the Employee Services website: <http://www.yale.edu/hronline/employeeservices/>).
6. If you use Yale parking or shuttle services, inform Parking & Transit of your name change. (Email: [parking@yale.edu](mailto:parking@yale.edu), Phone 203-432-9790, Fax 203-432-9796).

### Preferred Name

This is a name used instead of the Legal First Name, for example, a nickname or the familiar form of the first name.

1. Select "My Benefits / My Pay and Info" on [your.yale.edu](http://your.yale.edu), and log in using your NetID and password.
2. In the Workday interface, select "Personal Information" and then select "Preferred Name".

## Preferred Name (Continued)

3. Uncheck the box labeled “Use Legal Name As Preferred Name”.
4. On the Names sub-tab, click the “Edit” button next to the name you wish to change.
5. Enter your changes and click “Submit”, then click “Done”.
6. If you use Yale parking or shuttle services, inform Parking & Transit of your name change. (Email: [parking@yale.edu](mailto:parking@yale.edu), Phone 203-432-9790, Fax 203-432-9796).

## Gender

Updates to gender in Workday are sent to most University systems and all vendors.

1. Select “My Benefits / My Pay and Info” on [your.yale.edu](http://your.yale.edu), and log in using your NetID and password.
2. In the Workday interface, select “Personal Information” and then select “Personal Information”, again, on the next menu.
3. Select the pencil icon in the “Gender” section to edit.
4. Make your changes, then click the check icon to save changes.
5. Select “Submit”, then “Done”.

## Email Alias (Address)

Email aliases are generally in the form of [firstname.lastname@yale.edu](mailto:firstname.lastname@yale.edu). Your alias forwards messages to your email account. Contact [email@yale.edu](mailto:email@yale.edu) with any questions.

1. Go to <http://yale.edu/start> from a campus internet connection or Yale VPN.
2. Select “Start Access for myself”.
3. Select “Access or services for myself”.
4. Look for “Email alias” under the application column and select the radio button for “add”. Scroll to the bottom of the screen and select submit.
5. Follow the instructions on the page

## NetID

Your NetID is a unique identifier used to access many University systems.

Contact your HR Generalist, who will file request with Chief Information Security Office (ITS updates NetID manually).

## University Directories Listings

The updates outlined above are usually reflected in directories within days, if not hours.

Email alias and NetID:

- Public Directory ([directory.yale.edu](http://directory.yale.edu)) and portal ([your.yale.edu](http://your.yale.edu)), are updated within 30 minutes.
- The Active Directory is updated the next business day.
- The Global Address List is updated in 2 to 3 business days.
- Google's Directory is updated in 24 hours.

## University Identification Card

To update name, bring updated government-issued ID to the Yale ID Center.

The ID Center does not yet have a defined policy regarding ID card updates to reflect preferred names for employees. Contact the ID Center (<http://idcenter.yale.edu>, 203-432-0165) for the most up-to-date information.

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## Updating Employee Information (Manager)

At an employee's request, the employee's manager will take these steps, as would be done for a new or transferred employee:

- Update name on nameplate on door/desk/cubicle/workstation.
- Update name and photo on business card, organization charts, phone lists, mailing lists, email lists, websites, and other references.
- Order a replacement uniform if the employee changes their first and/or last name. The University will provide replacement uniforms at no cost to the employee.

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## Restroom and Locker Room Access

Yale has made a commitment to providing a gender neutral restroom in all of its buildings. Before 2014, approximately 75% of buildings already had them. A 2014-2015 initiative added another 23 buildings to the list by changing the signs on an existing rest rooms. These efforts address the considerable stress people may face when having to guess which gendered rest room they should use in order not to be challenged or harassed. This initiative continues to add gender neutral restrooms throughout the University.

All employees should be comfortable using the facilities that correspond to their gender identity. Any attempt to deny access to a restroom that corresponds to ones gender identity is a form of gender-based discrimination and should be discussed with a departmental supervisor and/or Human Resources. There may be concern or discomfort expressed by colleagues of a gender-diverse person. In that case, it is recommended that the person with the concern use a single occupancy restroom. The Office of LGBTQ Resources is available to provide departmental or individual training on Yale's policies regarding the use of restroom facilities.

### All Gender Restroom Map

[LGBTQ.YALE.EDU/RESTROOMS](https://lgbtq.yale.edu/restrooms)

Most university buildings have all-gender or single-occupant restrooms – Yale is committed to offering all gender restrooms wherever possible. The Office of LGBTQ Resources maintains a mobile-friendly online All Gender Restroom Map with listings throughout most of Yale's properties.

### Payne Whitney Gym

[SPORTSANDRECREATION.YALE.EDU](https://sportsandrecreation.yale.edu)

Yale's primary athletic facilities feature unisex bathroom and changing facilities on the fourth floor, near the fitness center. The code to unlock these facilities can be easily obtained from the attendant on duty in the fitness center. Additionally, the second floor "Men's" and "Women's" locker rooms feature completely private showers within private changing stalls.

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## University Resources

### Yale University Office of LGBTQ Resources

[LGBTQ.YALE.EDU](mailto:LGBTQ.YALE.EDU) · 203-432-0309

The Office of LGBTQ Resources works to create a visible LGBTQ community that includes staff, faculty and students from all of Yale's schools and from a wide variety of life experiences. We actively network with other Yale offices that advocate in support of diversity.

### The S.H.A.R.E. Center (Sexual Harassment and Assault Resource and Education)

[SHARECENTER.YALE.EDU](mailto:SHARECENTER.YALE.EDU) · 203-432-2000

The S.H.A.R.E. (Sexual Harassment and Assault Resource and Education) Center offers information, advocacy and support to anyone at Yale who may experience any kind of sexual misconduct (sexual assault, sexual harassment, intimate partner violence and stalking).

In 2015 Yale participated in the AAU (Association of American Universities) Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Misconduct. Findings of this survey included information about the experiences of gender-diverse individuals including:

- 84.4 percent of undergraduate students who identify as gender diverse reported at least one experience of sexual harassment since arriving at Yale.
- 78 percent of graduate students who identify as gender diverse reported at least one experience of sexual harassment since entering their current program.

While this survey was administered to students, and not to employees, the disparity between reported incidents of cisgender students and other gender students suggests a trend that may be present for employees as well.

### Yale University Office of Diversity & Inclusion

[YOUR.YALE.EDU/COMMUNITY/DIVERSITY-INCLUSION](http://YOUR.YALE.EDU/COMMUNITY/DIVERSITY-INCLUSION) · 203-432-9667

The Yale University Office of Diversity & Inclusion collaborates with departments and individuals across the Yale campus to promote a respectful, accessible, and inclusive community for all Yale University employees. It provides books about transitioning for employees to borrow in its Diversity Library. The library is located at 221 Whitney Avenue on the third floor.

## **Yale University Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Affinity Group**

[YALE.EDU/LGBTQ](http://YALE.EDU/LGBTQ)

The Yale LGBTQ Affinity Group was created in 2008 to foster a more welcoming and respectful campus community for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer individuals and their allies with a primary focus on retention and edification of Yale University employees. The group is open to all Yale University staff, faculty, and postdocs, representing a diverse range of departments and interests at Yale University.

The affinity group members can provide one-on-one support to an employee transitioning at the workplace.

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## **National Resources**

### **Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders**

[GLAAD.ORG](http://GLAAD.ORG)

- **Legal Protections for Transgender People in Connecticut (with CWEALF)**  
<http://glaad.org/uploads/docs/publications/ct-trans-legal-protections.pdf>

### **Human Rights Campaign**

[HRC.ORG](http://HRC.ORG)

- **Transgender Inclusion in the Workplace, Recommended Policies and Practices**  
<http://hrc.org/resources/entry/transgender-inclusion-in-the-workplace-recommended-policies-and-practices>
- **Workplace Gender Transition Guidelines**  
<http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/workplace-gender-transition-guidelines>
- **Coming Out in the Workplace as Transgender**  
<http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/coming-out-in-the-workplace-as-transgender>

### **National Center for Transgender Equality**

[TRANSEQUALITY.ORG](http://TRANSEQUALITY.ORG)

- **Understanding Transgender**  
[http://transequality.org/Resources/NCTE\\_UnderstandingTrans.pdf](http://transequality.org/Resources/NCTE_UnderstandingTrans.pdf)

### **Out & Equal Workplace Advocates**

[OUTANDEQUAL.ORG](http://OUTANDEQUAL.ORG)

### **Southern Comfort Conference**

[SOUTHERNCOMFORTCONFERENCE.ORG](http://SOUTHERNCOMFORTCONFERENCE.ORG)

### **World Professional Association for Transgender Health**

[WPATH.ORG](http://WPATH.ORG)

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## References

### **GLAAD Transgender Glossary of Terms**

<http://archive.glaad.org/media/guide/transfocus.php>

### **Guide to being a straight ally**

<https://bolt.straightforequality.org/files/Straight%20for%20Equality%20Publications/3rd-edition-guide-to-being-a-straight-ally.pdf>

### **Guide to being a trans ally**

<https://www.pflag.org/sites/default/files/>

### **Out and Equal Workplace Gender Identity and Transition Guidelines**

<http://www.outandequal.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Out-Equal-Workplace-Transition-Guidelines-Full-Edition-WEB-V2.0.pdf>

### **Yale University 2015 AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Misconduct Executive Summary of Results**

<http://provost.yale.edu/title-ix/yale-report-aau-campus-climate-survey>

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## Acknowledgments

This guide, first introduced in 2013 and revised in August 2016, is a continuing collaborative endeavor of representatives from the Yale University LGBTQ Affinity Group for Staff, Faculty and Postdoctoral Fellows, Yale University Office of LGBTQ Resources, Yale University Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and Yale University Human Resources Information Systems.



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## Glossary

The glossary is intended to provide information about terms currently used in reference to gender identity and expression. Also included is terminology used in reference to sexual orientation. As language is ever-evolving, so are these terms. It is not expected that any one individual can be described by a list of terms, therefore, engaging in conversations with individuals remains a respectful way to learn and understand how one defines oneself.

**Affirmed gender:** The gender to which someone who is transgender has transitioned. This term is often used to replace terms like “new gender” or “chosen gender,” which imply that the current gender was not always a person’s gender or that their gender was chosen rather than simply in existence.

**Agender:** A person who does not conform to any gender.

**Ally:** A term used to describe someone who does not identify as LGBTQ but who is supportive of LGBTQ equality in its many forms and through a wide variety of different expressions, both personal and private.

**Androgynous:** A non-binary gender identity, having both male and female characteristics. Can be used to describe people’s appearances or clothing.

**Asexual:** A person who does not experience sexual attraction. This term is a self-identity.

**Assigned gender:** The gender that is given to an infant at birth based on the infant’s external genitals. This may or may not match the person’s gender identity in adulthood.

**Assigned sex:** The sex (male, female, intersex) that is assigned to an infant at birth.

**Bisexual:** An individual who is emotionally, romantically, and/or physically attracted to men and women. This is sometimes stated as “bi.” People who are bisexual need not have had equal sexual experience with both men and women and need not have had any sexual experience at all; it is attraction that determines orientation.

**Cisgender:** A term used to describe an individual whose gender identity aligns with the one typically associated with the sex assigned to them at birth. This is a term that is preferable to “non-trans,” “biological,” or “natal” man or woman.

**Coming out:** For people who are LGBTQ, the process of self-acceptance that continues throughout one’s life. People often establish an LGBTQ identity to themselves first and then may decide to reveal it to others. Coming out can also apply to the family and allies of people who are LGBTQ. There are many different degrees of being out: some may be out to friends only, some may be out publicly, and some may be out only to themselves. It’s important to remember that not everyone is in the same place when it comes to being out, and to respect where each person is in that process of self-identification. It is up to each person, individually, to decide if and when to come out or disclose. Therefore, it is important not to disclose someone’s LGBTQ identity in any context or environment in which a person may not be out.

**Cross-dresser:** Someone who wears the clothes typically worn by another gender, sometimes only in their home, or as part of sexual play, and sometimes at public functions. It can be a self-identity. This term is not interchangeable with transgender, and some

people who cross dress may consider themselves to be part of the transgender community, while others do not. (This is a newer word for the older and less preferred term “transvestite” that is sometimes still used in this context.)

**Female-to-Male (FtM):** A term that describes someone who was assigned a female sex and gender at birth and currently has a male gender identity. The individual may or may not have had surgery or taken hormones to physically alter their appearance. Affirmed male is sometimes the preferred terminology.

**Gay:** The adjective used to describe people whose emotional, romantic, and/or physical attraction is to people of the same sex (e.g., gay man, gay people). In contemporary contexts, “lesbian” is often a preferred term for women. People who are gay need not have had any sexual experience; it is attraction that helps determine orientation.

**Gender:** A set of social, psychological, or emotional traits, often influenced by societal expectations that classify an individual as either feminine or masculine.

**Gender-affirming surgery:** Surgical procedures that help people adjust their bodies in a way that more closely matches or desired gender identity. It is only one small part of a transition. Not every transgender person will desire or have resources for surgery. This should be used in place of the older and often offensive term “sex change.” It is also more affirming and can be used instead of sex-reassignment surgery (SRS).

**Gender binary:** The concept that there are only two genders, male and female, and that everyone must be one or the other.

**Gender-diverse or Gender Variance:** This is the gender expression of behavior that does not match the expected normal binary of a “typical” male or female. Most individuals, cisgender or not, may display some elements that could be considered gender “non-conforming” or diverse to typical expectations.

**Gender Dysphoria (GD):** Gender Dysphoria or GD is a psychological diagnosis recognized by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and American Medical Association (AMA). This dysphoria is marked by severe distress and discomfort caused by the conflict between one’s gender identity and one’s designated sex at birth. Not all transgender people experience gender dysphoria or are diagnosed with GD. The previous term used was Gender Identity Disorder or GID. GID is no longer used by the medical community as it was replaced by gender dysphoria in the updated DSM-5 manual.

**Gender expression:** The manner in which a person chooses to communicate their gender identity to others through external means such as clothing and/or mannerisms. This communication may be conscious or subconscious and may or may not reflect their gender identity or sexual orientation. While most people’s understandings of gender expressions relate to masculinity and femininity, there are countless combinations that may incorporate both masculine and feminine expressions – or neither – through androgynous expressions. The important thing to remember and respect is that every gender expression is valid.

**Gender fluid:** Someone who embodies characteristics of multiple genders, or shifts in gender identity. (See genderqueer.)

**Gender identity:** One's deeply held personal, internal sense of being male, female, some of both, or neither. One's gender identity does not always correspond to biological sex (i.e., a person assigned female at birth identifies as male or a person assigned male at birth identifies as female). Awareness of gender identity is often experienced in infancy, but may be discovered at later developmental stages. Gender Identity may also be fluid and change during the life course.

**Gender marker:** A legal indicator of one's gender. This can include one's gender on a passport, birth certificate, license, or insurance card.

**Gender neutral:** Not gendered. Can refer to language (including pronouns), spaces (like bathrooms), or identities (being genderqueer, for example).

**Gender nonconforming:** A person who views their gender identity as one of many possible genders beyond strictly female or male. This is an umbrella term that can encompass other terms such as "gender creative," "gender expansive," "gender variant," "genderqueer," "gender fluid," "gender neutral," "bigender," "androgynous," or "gender diverse." Such people feel that they exist psychologically between genders, as on a spectrum, or beyond the notion of the male and female binary paradigm.

**Gender norms:** Societal expectations about how people of different designated genders are supposed to act, live, and look.

**Gender policing:** Enforcing gender norms and attempting to impose gender-based behaviors on another person.

**Genderqueer:** A term that is sometimes used to describe someone who defines their gender outside the constructs of male and female. This can include having no gender (agender), being androgynous, or having elements of multiple genders.

**Gender Transition Liaison (GTL):** An individual who can serve through a company department such as Diversity and Inclusion, human resources or through an Employee Resource Group (ERG), and aids transitioning individuals in their journey through the process of coming out at work and their workplace transition. The GTL may act as an intermediary between management, HR, the ERG and others important to the transitioning employee in the workplace.

**Gender variant:** A term, often used to describe children and youth, that describes those who dress, behave, or express themselves in a way that does not confirm with dominant gender norms. Some people do not use this term because they feel it suggests these identities are abnormal. (See gender nonconforming.)

**Homosexual:** An outdated clinical term often considered derogatory and offensive, as opposed to the preferred terms, "gay" and "lesbian."

**Intersex:** Describing a person whose biological sex is ambiguous. There are many genetic, hormonal or anatomical variations which make a person's sex ambiguous (i.e., Klinefelter Syndrome, Adrenal Hyperplasia). Parents and medical professionals usually assign intersex infants a sex and perform surgical operations to conform the infant's body to that assignment. This practice has become increasingly controversial as intersex adults are speaking out against the practice, accusing doctors of genital mutilation.

**Lesbian:** A woman whose emotional, romantic, and/or physical attraction is to other women. People who are lesbians need not have had any sexual experience; it is attraction that helps determine orientation.

**Male-to-Female (MtF):** A term that describes someone who was assigned a male sex and gender at birth and currently has a female gender identity. The individual may or may not have had surgery or taken hormones to physically alter their appearance. Affirmed female is sometimes a preferred term.

**Medical transition:** The process of taking hormones or undergoing surgical procedures in order to change one's body in a way that affirms one's gender identity. Surgical procedures are sometimes discussed separately as surgical transition.

**Pansexual:** A person whose emotional, romantic, and/or physical attraction is to people of all gender identities and biological sexes. People who are pansexual need not have had any sexual experience; attraction determines orientation. Sometimes referred to as omnisexual.

**Preferred gender pronouns (PGP):** Refers to the set of pronouns that a person prefers (e.g., him, he, she, her, ze, hir, they). It is polite to ask for a person's preferred gender pronoun when meeting them for the first time.

**Queer:** A term currently used by some people – particularly youth – to describe themselves and/or their community. Some value the term for its defiance, some like it because it can be inclusive of the entire community, and others find it to be an appropriate term to describe their more fluid identities. Traditionally a negative or pejorative term for people who are gay, “queer” is disliked by some within the LGBT community, who find it offensive. Due to its varying meanings, this word should only be used when self-identifying or quoting someone who self identifies as queer (i.e., “My cousin self-identifies as queer.”)

**Questioning:** A term used to describe those who are in a process of discovery and exploration about their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or a combination thereof.

**Sex:** Refers to biological, genetic, or physical characteristics that define males and females. These can include genitalia, hormone levels, genes, or secondary sex characteristics. Sex is often compared or interchanged with gender, which is thought of as more social and less biological, though there is some considerable overlap.

**Sexual orientation:** Emotional, romantic, or sexual feelings toward other people. People who are straight experience these feelings primarily for people of the opposite sex. People who are gay or lesbian experience these feelings primarily for people of the same sex. People who are bisexual experience these feelings for people of both sexes. And people who are asexual experience no sexual attraction at all. Other terms describing sexual orientation include (but are not limited to) pansexual and polysexual. Sexual orientation is part of the human condition – while sexual behavior involves the choices one makes in acting on one's sexual orientation. One's sexual activity does not define who one is with regard to one's sexual orientation; it is attraction which determines their orientation.

**Social transition:** Transitioning in the context of everyday life and social space, without necessarily taking steps to medically transition.

**Standards of care (SOC):** Guidelines developed by the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) to assist health providers in caring for transgender people.

**Stealth:** A term used to describe transgender individuals who do not disclose their transgender status in their public lives.

**Transgender:** A term that may be used to describe people whose gender expression does not conform to the cultural norms and/or whose gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth. Transgender is also considered by some to be an “umbrella term” that encompasses a number of identities which transcend the conventional expectations of gender identity and expression, including transgender man, transgender woman, gender-queer, and gender expansive. People who identify as transgender may or may not decide to alter their bodies hormonally and/or surgically to match their gender identity. Sometimes shortened to the term Trans.

**Transition:** Altering one’s assigned sex is not a one-step procedure; it is a complex process that occurs over a period of time. Transition can include some or all of the following: social, cultural, legal and medical adjustments: telling one’s family, friends, and/or co-workers; changing one’s name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly (though not necessary) some form of surgical alteration.

**Trans man:** A transgender person who was assigned female at birth and identifies as a man.

**Transsexual (also Transexual):** An older term which originated in the medical and psychological communities. Many transgender people prefer the term “transgender” to “transsexual.” Some transsexual people still prefer to use the term to describe themselves. However, unlike transgender, transsexual is not an umbrella term, and many transgender people do not identify as transsexual. It is best to ask which term an individual prefers.

**Trans woman:** A person who is transgender who was assigned male at birth and identifies as a woman.

**TGNC:** Acronym which stands for trans and gender nonconforming. Often used when talking about groups of people with diverse gender identities.

**Third gender/third sex:** A term that incorporates genders other than male or female such as the Fa’afafine in Samoa, Kathoey or Ladyboys in Thailand, and Hijras in India and Pakistan. Some people in the United States, especially in communities of color, use the term third gender to self-identify.

**Two spirit:** A self-identity adopted by some indigenous North American people who take on a multitude of gender roles, identities, and expressions. Those who identify as Two Spirit often see themselves as embodying both masculine and feminine spirits and characteristics.

