

Alternative to Incarceration & Reentry Services for the LGBTGNBQI+ Community in NYC:

Research Findings, Best Practices, and Recommendations for the Field



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About the Authors

The Legal Action Center (LAC) uses legal and policy strategies to fight discrimination, build health equity, and restore opportunity for people with criminal records, substance use disorders, and HIV or AIDS. LAC envisions a society that upholds the civil rights of all individuals, regardless of their history of justice involvement or medical condition. LAC aims to dismantle the historic and persistent impact of systemic racism that has fueled mass incarceration and disparate community health systems.

The NYC LGBTQI ATI/Reentry Working Group, convened by the Legal Action Center, is a coalition of advocates working to increase and expand crucial reentry supports specifically for justice-involved LGBTQI people in New York City. The working group is committed to increasing the cultural competency of New York City ATI/Reentry service providers, informing the development of a well-resourced, well-coordinated and culturally competent reentry service delivery network, making more visible the constellation of reentry services that currently exist, and piloting provider/consumer network gatherings to foster community-building, collective conversations, information-sharing, networking and organically-formed collaborations.

TakeRoot Justice was engaged by LAC to conduct this research. TakeRoot provides legal, participatory research and policy support to strengthen the work of grassroots and community-based groups in New York City to dismantle racial, economic and social oppression. TakeRoot's Research and Policy Initiative partners with and provides strategic support to grassroots community organizations to build the power of their organizing and advocacy work. We utilize a participatory action research model in which low-income and excluded communities are central to the design and development of research and policy.

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Executive Summary

Introduction

In order to assess the cultural competency of ATI and reentry services specific to the LGBTGNQNBQI+ population in New York City, a participatory action research project was conducted in the fall of 2020. This project was conceived of by the Legal Action Center and the New York ATI/Reentry Coalition. TakeRoot Justice provided substantive professional support in partnership with a leadership team of formerly incarcerated LGBTGNQNBQI+ individuals.

New York City and State are nationally known for their highly effective network of ATI and reentry programs, which have been critical to the State's success in simultaneously reducing crime and the prison population and saving taxpayers millions of dollars. However, while New York has substantially reduced the number of people behind bars, it continues to incarcerate many thousands of individuals who could benefit from alternative to incarceration programs which, when targeted appropriately, are more effective than prison in reducing recidivism and are ultimately less costly than incarceration.

Our research shows that, despite the robust range of reentry services available, existing ATI and reentry programs are limited both in their LGBTGNQNBQI+ cultural competency and ability to meet the specific service needs of LGBTGNQNBQI+ people, resulting in this broad and diverse community being significantly underserved by current programs. In addition to results from the survey, profiles of various members of the formerly incarcerated LGBTGNQNBQI+ community in New York City are also included in the report. With this information, we were able to find out more about what service providers in New York City are currently doing and where they need more support - and to also begin to identify and direct them to resources that can help.

LGBTGNQNBQI+ people leaving incarceration and returning home to any of the five boroughs need the supports of ATI and reentry service programs that understand and can address their specific needs. This report aims to help providers identify and address areas of deficiency, as well as success, within their organizations, as they strive to offer comprehensive, welcoming, culturally competent, high-standard, accessible services to LGBTGNQNBQI+ participants.

The Survey and Key Findings

Surveys were disseminated to and completed electronically by 40 ATI and reentry service provider organizations in New York City. The topics covered in the survey included: outreach materials and efforts; intake materials and process; service provision, partnership, and referrals; physical office; and internal organizational practices.

Below are select research findings that highlight areas in which organizations have been successful in engaging and supporting the LGBTGNQNBQI+ community, as well as areas where there is room for improvement.

In presenting these findings, we seek to amplify the efforts that organizations are already making to competently and sensitively serve the LGBTGNQNBQI+ community, and to identify opportunities for growth among our organizational community.

Positive Measures to Amplify

- The large majority of organizations said that their staff were trained to use language inclusive of multiple genders when conducting outreach in sex-segregated facilities (86%).
- Nearly two-thirds of organizations said that their program materials specify that the program is open to transgender and gender nonconforming people (64%).
- Nine out of ten organizations' intake forms provide some way for people to self-identify as LGBTGNCNBQI+ (92%). The large majority of organizations also provide a space for people to list a name that is different from that on their identifying documents (85%).
- The large majority of organizations have group agreements which include respect for gender identity and sexual orientation (84%).
- Most organizations provide an all-gender restroom (92%), usually a single stall restroom (75%), and more than half of organizations have some visible marker of LGBTGNCNBQI+ visibility in their offices (59%).
- Three-quarters of organizations provided LGBTGNCNBQI+ competency training to at least some staff (76%).

Opportunities for Growth

- Organizations reported that they commonly refer LGBTGNCNBQI+ people out for numerous services, and of those which use referral lists, the majority had referral lists specifically for LGBTGNCNBQI+ needs (68%), however a quarter of organizations did not yet have such a referral list (24%).
- Of organizations in buildings in which photo ID is required, only a little more than one third reported that they knew of a protocol in place for people who have IDs that do not match their name or gender identity (38%).
- One third of organizations do not yet include language indicating they serve the LGBTGNCNBQI+ community in their mission, vision, or values statements (33%).
- Fewer than half of organizations reported that their board actively recruits LGBTGNCNBQI+ members or has done so in the past (41%). Many organizations reported that they did not know the answer to this question (41%), which indicated a need for more board transparency and active communication about this issue.
- More than a quarter of organizations said they do not provide staff training about employment rights at the city, state, and federal level as they apply to LGBTGNCNBQI+ people (28%).

Select Recommendations for the Field

Informed by the survey findings and input from a leadership group of formerly incarcerated LGBTGNBQI+ people the report contains recommendations designed to help providers take their efforts to the next level, and ultimately to help the LGBTGNBQI+ individuals they serve.

The recommendations cover the following areas: organizational values, planning and learning; training; client interaction, programming and service provision; referrals; physical office; board and staff composition and recruitment; and additional internal workplace policies and practices.

There are also recommendations specifically for funders of the ATI and reentry service infrastructure included in the report.

Below are select recommendations for providers. We encourage providers to view our full report for comprehensive recommendations and resources.

- Affirm and implement a core organizational value of broad inclusivity. Recognize the LGBTGNBQI+ community as part of the community served. Plan for inclusion proactively and holistically.
- Solicit feedback from clients/program participants at various stages of engagement with the organization, and have mechanisms in place to digest that feedback and incorporate it into planning.
- Initiate and celebrate deep organizational learning and culture shifts, to move organizations towards embracing LGBTGNBQI+ people at all levels.
- Facilitate cross-organizational learning, resource-sharing and cultivating cultural humility in areas ranging from service provision, to referrals, to internal staff support.
- Provide high-quality training to all staff in the organization, tailored to job roles, and facilitated or vetted by experts. Training is critically important for the successful implementation of many of the recommendations.
- Take advantage of the intake process as a key opportunity to communicate LGBTGNBQI+ competence and affirmation.
- Develop a dynamic referral system inclusive of LGBTGNBQI+ needs, drawing on existing community resources, and with dedicated staff to vet accuracy and cultural competency of referral organizations.
- Develop leadership pathways, such as trainings or credentialing programs that enable LGBTGNBQI+ community members to become staff and board members at your organization or others.

Introduction

New York City and State are nationally known for their highly effective network of alternative to incarceration (ATI) and reentry programs. These programs have been critical to the State's success in simultaneously reducing crime, reducing the prison population and saving taxpayers millions of dollars.ⁱ However, while New York has substantially reduced the number of people behind bars, it continues to incarcerate many thousands of individuals who could benefit from alternative to incarceration programs which, when targeted appropriately, are more effective than prison in reducing recidivism and, as an added benefit, are less costly.

While New York City has robust reentry services, there are no ATI/reentry programs specifically serving the LGBTGNCNBQI+ community in the city. Moreover, existing ATI and reentry programs have gaps in LGBTGNCNBQI+ cultural competency and limited ability to meet the specific service needs of LGBTGNCNBQI+ people. This broad and diverse community is significantly underserved by existing ATI and reentry programs.

LGBTGNCNBQI+ people are overrepresented but underserved in the criminal justice system. While there is a need for more comprehensive data, existing research reveals disproportionate criminal justice system involvement for people who identify as LGBTGNCNBQI+. Nationally, adults who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual are incarcerated at more than three times their share of the general population.ⁱⁱ And transgender and gender non-conforming people, particularly transgender women, indicate they have spent time in jail or prison at levels that are much higher than the general adult population.ⁱⁱⁱ Intersecting systemic oppressions, discriminatory laws and law enforcement, and policing tactics contribute to disproportionate criminalization for LGBTGNCNBQI+ people who are people of color, people with HIV, poor people, people who identify as women, young people, and transgender people.^{iv} Once incarcerated, LGBTGNCNBQI+ people face increased disciplinary segregation or solitary confinement, harsh punishment, and sexual and physical violence.^v

LGBTGNCNBQI+ people also face discrimination, exclusion and disparate access when it comes to accessing reentry services. Reentry planning programs within the federal and state prisons system, as well as the probation and parole systems, lack the cultural competency to adequately serve LGBTGNCNBQI+ people.^{vi} And the broad network of private agencies dedicated to ATI and reentry services find themselves insufficiently equipped to serve this population as well.

Faced with a criminal justice system that targets them for criminalization and incarceration, and facing discrimination in seeking employment, housing, healthcare and other basic needs, many

In this report, we use the acronym "LGBTGNCNBQI+." LGBTGNCNBQI stands for Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming, Non-Binary, Queer, and Intersex. The plus sign indicates our intention to be inclusive of other gender identities and sexual orientations that are not listed.

Our research shows that, while organizations are making strides in their service to the LGBTGNCNBQI+ community, more can and should be done.

LGBTGNCNBQI+ people are likely to need the support of ATI and reentry service programs to avoid incarceration or reincarceration and advocate for welcoming, high-standard accessible services. But those very programs lack LGBTGNCNBQI+ cultural competency and knowledge of specific service needs for these communities.

The Legal Action Center partnered with TakeRoot Justice to conduct a participatory action research project to document the current state of service delivery and gaps in LGBTQI+ cultural competency and service provision among ATI and reentry service providers in New York City, convening a leadership team of formerly incarcerated LGBTGNCNBQI+ people to guide the project. We developed a survey with input from formerly incarcerated LGBTGNCNBQI+ people who had experience seeking reentry services. Our survey was administered online to 40 service providers.

The research findings on the following pages explore organizational outreach, intake processes, service provision, referrals, physical office space and internal organizational practices. In each of these categories, we seek to celebrate and amplify the efforts that organizations are already making to ensure their services are LGBTGNCNBQI+ affirming and inclusive. We also highlight places where our community of organizations can grow and change. Our research shows that, while organizations are making strides in their service to the LGBTGNCNBQI+ community, more can and should be done.

Our recommendation section is designed to offer practical, actionable steps that organizations can take to better serve the LGBTGNCNBQI+ community. Recommendations for organizations, derived from our research, are offered in several categories: organizational values, planning and learning; training; client interaction, programming and service provision; referrals; physical office space; board and staff composition and recruitment; and internal workplace policies and practices. We include templates, sample documents and scripts which organizations can use as they implement the recommendations. These recommendations and materials will help organizations identify the areas in which they can take next steps to change their organizational culture and service provision. In a national political moment in which some states are seeking to roll back or further restrict TGNC rights, these recommendations are particularly salient. We also offer recommendations for the funding community to support organizations in these efforts.

About Alternative to Incarceration and Reentry Services

Alternative to Incarceration (ATI) providers offer services designed to reduce the use of incarceration or pretrial detention, allowing people to remain in their communities. It is important to note that people must plead guilty in order to access ATI programming. While in some cases a guilty plea may be dismissed with the completion of ATI programming, the plea still registers for immigration purposes, and the act of pleading guilty can impact a person's relationships and sense of self. As defined by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services,^{vii} ATI services may include the following:

- Pretrial release services, designed “to avoid unnecessary detention of defendants who are unable to post bail.”
- Mental health services for qualifying community members who are diagnosed with a serious mental illness.
- Drug and alcohol treatment programs, including New York State's Treatment Accountability for Safer Communities (TASC) program, offers treatment alternatives to incarceration for qualifying community members.
- Specialized programs geared towards specific demographics such as youth or women.
- Community service, defined as “unpaid supervised work” with the goal of providing “service to the community as ‘payment’ for the harm caused.”
- Defender Based Advocacy programs, which seek to create a “client-specific plan for community based orders and conditions of release.”

In New York City, the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ) funds 15 non-profit organizations to run 24 Alternative to Incarceration programs in the city. According to MOCJ, these services include “mental health and substance use treatment, vocational and educational supports, and trauma-informed individual and group counseling tailored to participants' needs, as well as supervision and regular reporting to the court.”^{viii} These programs have compliance standards and reporting requirements dictated by MOCJ that can make adherence to the program difficult for participants. For example, if someone newly released gets lost on their way to their program and doesn't make it on time, they can be reported non-compliant to parole.

Reentry Services are those designed to support people returning home to their communities after incarceration. Such services include support with securing housing, employment, mental health support, mentor services, substance abuse prevention and more. These programs and services are designed to reduce recidivism, and to equip returning community members to thrive.^{ix} While there is a large network of such services in New York City, there are no directives, minimum standards or other mandated guidelines for the NYC jails when it comes to reentry planning. The jail system does have a discharge directive, but it is not accessible to the public to date.

Methodology

We used the following methods for this participatory research project:

Survey

A survey was developed in collaboration between a leadership team of formerly incarcerated LGBTGNCNBQI+ community members, the Legal Action Center, The NYC LGBTQI ATI/Reentry Working Group and TakeRoot. A list of more than 80 ATI and reentry service providers was developed based on existing resource lists, online research and the knowledge of those involved with the project. Outreach was conducted by phone and email to the organizations on the list. The survey was also distributed via relevant online listservs, and the working group list. Formerly incarcerated LGBTGNCNBQI+ community members supported the outreach and engagement for the surveying effort. The survey specified that it should be completed by staff at the program director or executive level. The survey was completed electronically by 40 alternative to incarceration and reentry groups.

Methodological note on surveying: There were 10 instances of duplicate survey entries for our project, meaning that two or more surveys were submitted by a single organization. This is likely a result of our broad outreach, and the fact that multiple staff people in the organization received and completed the survey without knowing that another person had. For purposes of analysis, a single database entry was created for organizations which originally had duplicates. For all answers in which the duplicate versions of the survey for a given question matched exactly, the answers were kept. In instances in which one (or more) survey was marked “I don’t know” and the other survey had a substantive response, the substantive response was used. For other instances in which answer options differed, those answers were eliminated from the organization’s response, as they could not be reconciled.

Semi Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with formerly incarcerated LGBTGNCNBQI+ community members to inform the profiles in this report.

Literature Review and Background Research

TakeRoot researchers conducted a literature review and background research on alternative to incarceration and reentry services in New York City.

Research Limitations

Our research findings are based on self-reported data from staff at alternative to incarceration and reentry service organizations. While effective for our purposes, such self-reported data limits our ability to conduct independent evaluations of some factors that may be subjective. For example, if an organization reported that their outreach materials were welcoming to the LGBTGNCNBQI+ community, we did not then review those materials with our own criteria for evaluating the degree to which they were welcoming. We hope that organizations will connect with one another to do that kind of work in a supportive and generative manner: sharing materials, giving feedback, and continuing to develop. We also note that additional data derived from research with program participants rather than staff alone, would add critical additional information to the landscape. We encourage such research in the future.

Research Findings

Our findings derive from surveys completed electronically by 40 Alternative to Incarceration and Reentry service providers in New York City.

Half of the surveyed organizations reported that they serve currently incarcerated people (54%) and 84% of organizations reported that they serve previously incarcerated people. Many organizations serve both.

In presenting these findings, we seek to amplify the efforts that organizations are already making to competently and sensitively serve the LGBTGNCNBQI+ community, and to identify areas where there is opportunity for growth in our organizational community. Our organizational community has made strides in New York, bolstered by ongoing advocacy within and outside of organizations. Our recommendations are designed to help organizations take these efforts to the next level. As we made clear to our survey participants, we do not expect that any one organization has accomplished everything already. All organizations have the opportunity to improve, and we seek to identify and communicate those areas in a supportive and motivating way. Our goal in presenting these findings, and the accompanying recommendations, is to present organizations the opportunity to reflect and take concrete steps within their organizations to improve the culture and services.

Outreach Materials and Outreach Efforts

Finding 1: The large majority of organizations said that their staff were trained to use language inclusive of multiple genders when conducting outreach in sex-segregated facilities (86%). While we are encouraged by this finding, such training should be universal.

- 11% of surveyed organizations said their staff are not trained to use inclusive language in this way.

Finding 2: Most organizations said that at least some of their outreach materials identify their program as welcoming to LGBTGNCNBQI+ people. Only one in three organizations said that all of their outreach materials were welcoming.

- 79% of organizations reported that at least some outreach materials identify their program as welcoming to the LGBTGNCNBQI+ people.
 - One third of organizations surveyed said that all of their outreach materials identified their program as welcoming to LGBTGNCNBQI+ people (33%).
 - About half of organizations said that some of their materials identify their program as welcoming to LGBTGNCNBQI+ people (46%).
- 15% of organizations said that none of their outreach materials identified their program as welcoming to LGBTGNCNBQI+ people; an additional 5% were not sure.

Finding 3: Nearly two-thirds of organizations said that their program materials specify that the program is open to transgender and gender nonconforming people. One-third of organizations said that their program materials do not yet include that specification.

- 64% of organizations said that their program materials specify that the program is open to transgender and gender non-conforming people.

- 33% of organizations said that their program materials do not specify that the program is open to transgender and gender nonconforming people. An additional 3% were not sure.

Intake Materials and Intake Processes

Finding 4: Nine-out of ten organizations' intake forms provide some way for people to self-identify as LGBTGNCNBQI+. The large majority of organizations also provide a space for people to list a name that is different from that on their identifying documents. While many organizations also provided space for people to list their gender pronouns, this was a less consistent practice.

- 92% of organizations reported that their intake forms gave people the opportunity to self-identify as LGBTGNCNBQI+.
- 85% of organizations provided a space for people to list a name that is different from that on their driver's license or other identifying documents.
 - 15% of organizations did not provide such opportunity.
- 68% of organizations provide a space for people to list their gender pronouns.
 - 19% did not
 - 14% were not sure

Finding 5: Nearly three-quarters of organizations train their intake staff to ask people's gender pronouns during introductory conversations. Nearly a quarter of organizations do not yet train their staff in this way.

- 73% of organizations reported training their intake staff to ask people's gender pronouns during introductory conversations.
 - Nearly a quarter of organizations did not train their staff in this way (24%).
- 3% were not sure.

Service Provision, Partnerships and Referrals

Finding 6: Among those organizations who run groups designated just for "women" or for "men" nearly three-quarters have policies or guidance for how those groups should include transgender and gender nonconforming people. One quarter of organizations do not yet have such policies or guidance.

- 71% of organizations said they have policies or guidance for how these groups should include transgender and gender nonconforming people.
- 24% of organizations said they did not have policies for how these groups should include transgender and gender nonconforming people.
- 3% were not sure.

Finding 7: The large majority of organizations have group agreements that include respect for gender identity and sexual orientation. This should be a universal practice.

- 84% of organizations have group agreements that include respect for gender identity and sexual orientation.

- 6% of organizations do not have group agreements that include this.
- 9% were not sure.

Finding 8: Of those organizations that use referral lists, the majority had a list specifically for LGBTGNCNBQI+ needs. One quarter of organizations did not yet have such a referral list.

- 68% of organizations did have a referral list for LGBTGNCNBQI+ needs.
- 24% of organizations did not have such a referral list.
- 9% of organizations were not sure.

Finding 9: Organizations reported that they commonly refer LGBTGNCNBQI+ people out for numerous services.

Our survey asked organizations which of the following services were common referrals for LGBTGNCNBQI+ people:

- LBTGNCNBQI+ specific support groups (53% of organizations)
- Name changes (50% of organizations)
- Gender-specific medical care (such as hormones or gender affirming surgeries) (45%)
- Mental health services (42%)
- General medical care (40%)
- Food pantries (40%)
- Filing 1983 actions (Lawsuits against someone employed by the government for legally recognized civil rights violations) (37%)
- Employment services (34%)
- Public benefits (34%)
- Educational support (32%)

While this gives us information about the most common referrals, we note that this is not necessarily an indicator of the greatest needs in the community, which is an area for additional research. We also note that several organizations wrote in “housing” which was not among our list of enumerated options.

Physical Office

Finding 10: Most organizations provide an all-gender restroom, usually a single stall restroom.

- 75% of organizations reported a single stall/one person all-gender restroom.
- 17% reported a multi-stall all-gender restroom.
- 6% reported they do not have all-gender restrooms.

Finding 11: More than half of organizations have some visible marker of LGBTGNCNBQI+ visibility in their offices, though 41% report they did not have any visible marker of inclusion.

- 59% of organizations had at least one visible marker of inclusion in their office, including:
 - 38% of organizations had a posted statement of inclusion that includes

LGBTGNCNBQI+ community.

- 32% had a rainbow flag posted in a prominent location.
- 27% had a transgender flag posted in a prominent location.
- 22% had a different marker of inclusion
- 41% of organizations reported they did not have any marker of inclusion visible in their office.

Finding 12: Of organizations in buildings in which photo ID is required, only a little more than one third reported that they knew of a protocol in place for people who have IDs that do not match their name or gender identity.

- 38% of offices did have a protocol in place.
- 31% of offices did not have a protocol in place.
- 31% said they were not sure.

Finding 13: Of organizations in buildings with security staff, nearly half of the organizations had met with security staff or building management to discuss LGBTGNCNBQI+ competency and entry protocols. More than one third had not yet had such a meeting.

- 46% said their organization has met with security staff about LGBTGNCNBQI+ competency and entry protocols.
- 39% had not met with security staff about such protocols.
- An additional 15% were not sure.

Internal Organizational Practices

Finding 14: More than half of organizations include service to the LGBTGNCNBQI+ community in their mission statement, vision and values statements. One third of organizations do not yet include this.

- 59% of organizations said that their mission, vision and values statements included serving the LGBTGNCNBQI+ community.
- 33% said they do not have language about serving the LGBTGNCNBQI+ community.
- An additional 8% were not sure.

Finding 15: Three-quarters of organizations provided LGBTGNCNBQI+ competency training to at least some staff (76%), but nearly one in five organizations provided no competency training.

- 62% of organizations provided LGBTGNCNBQI+ competency training to all staff.
- 14% of organizations provided competency training to some staff.
- 19% of organizations did not provide any LGBTGNCNBQI+ competency training.
- An additional 5% were not sure.

Finding 16: While many organizations encouraged or required their staff to include gender pronouns in their email signatures, at least a quarter of organizations did not have a policy encouraging this practice.

- 29% of organizations reported a policy that required staff members to put gender pronouns in their email signatures.
- 40% had a policy that encouraged this practice.
- For 26% of organizations, adding pronouns remained discretionary.
- An additional 5% of organizations were not sure.

Finding 17: Fewer than half of organizations reported that their board actively recruits LGBTGNCNBQI+ members, or has done so in the past.

Many organizations reported that they did not know the answer to this question. As the survey was intended for completion by executives and program directors, this indicates an opportunity for more discussion between these roles and the board about these issues.

- 41% of organizations said their board actively recruits members from the LGBTGNCNBQI+ community, or has done so in the past.
- 18% of organizations said their board does not recruit in this way.
- 41% of organizations said they did not know.

Finding 18: More than a quarter of organizations said they do not provide staff training about employment rights at the city, state and federal level as they apply to LGBTGNCNBQI+ people.

- 61% of organizations said they do provide this training.
- 28% said they do not provide this training.
- 11% were not sure.

Finding 19: Organizations could do more to support LGBTGNCNBQI+ staff. Only about two-thirds of organizations had a workplace procedure for staff experiencing homophobia or transphobia, and many fewer organizations had other supports in place.

- 68% of organizations have a workplace procedure or protocol for staff experiencing homophobia or transphobia in the workplace.
- 43% of organizations cultivate a LGBTGNCNBQI+ affinity space(s) for staff.
- 38% of organizations have a mechanism for respectfully obtaining staff's gender and name prior to the onboarding process, as they may not be correctly reflected in legal/HR documents.
- 18% provide funds to support legal name changes for staff.
- 5% provide funds for gender-affirming hormone treatment.
- 5% provide funds for gender-affirming surgeries.

Lived Experiences: LGBTGNCNBQI+ and Reentry

“A ‘no’ does not mean no to me. It means opportunities.”



Kim Watson
Pronouns: She/Her

Originally from Barbados, Kim Watson came to New York in 1986 to attend school at the Fashion Institute of Technology. Since that time, she has built a remarkable advocacy career. She is the co-founder and Executive Director of CK Life, which “was designed to expand economic opportunities and build resilience for and with the transgender community in the South Bronx.” Kim also serves as the LGBTQI Liaison for the Office of the NYC Public Advocate.

Thinking back on her experience coming home after incarceration in the 1990’s Kim reflects: “It was really hard to seek reentry services. When I left the facility all they gave me was a metro card. And that was it. I had to try to find insurance, try to find benefits. Nothing was set up for reentry for me.”

Her experience with parole was also fraught. “Being on parole was like walking on egg shells,” she says. “However, I was very determined to get off parole and try to figure out where my life was going to go.” Kim says that, in navigating services “I went the cis, heteronormative route. I am female, and I am a woman. And that’s what it is, point blank, period, nothing more, nothing less.” In the parole system Kim encountered friction: “There was a name issue, a pronoun issue and all these things. All these barriers that came up at the time. I had to live with it. I had to face that.”

Kim also knows that returning home can be isolating. “I came home to nothing,” she says. Her struggles with addiction at the time felt particularly difficult. “I had no one that trusted me. I was fresh out, trying to reconnect, and I lost a lot of people who trusted me at the time. So coming home, there was nothing to come home to but myself, and trying to start all over again.” Kim now celebrates 23 years of sobriety.

Kim’s personal resilience and perseverance informed her approach to advocacy. “It has taught me that every time you hear the word ‘no’ or you feel a door slam in your face...I make sure and go knock the other door. So a ‘no’ does not mean no to me. It means opportunities.” Kim’s advocacy has included local, state-level, national and international work.

If Kim could design her own reentry program for LGBTGNCNBQI+ people, it would look very different from the system she experienced. “Before you ever leave from that State facility or that City facility you should be hooked up enough to go to a transitional housing,” Kim says. “You should know where you’re going to lay your head. You should know where your next meal is coming from. You should know which will be your next medical appointment. You should have all your documents and paperwork. That is what reentry is all about. Substantial resources. The reason we have a revolving door is because individuals are coming out and they don’t have the proper reentry procedures or accommodations happening for them.”



Donald R. Powell, Mhs Pronouns: He/Him/His

Donald Powell has been in New York City since 1986. His family is in Chicago, having migrated there from the South. While Donald has been home from prison for 28 years, he knows from his work with formerly incarcerated people that many of his experiences from decades ago are similar to the experiences of people who have come home more recently. “In so many ways, things have remained the same,” he says. Donald recalls the discrimination he faced seeking post-incarceration services as an out Black gay man. “I think there were other queer folks [in groups],” Donald says, “But they they blended in and that was not my capability or desire. While the clinicians were quite skilled in treatment strategies, in groups I would mention

things relevant to me as a Black gay man, and people would groan or say ‘ewww’ and there was no intervention by the facilitator.” He faced homophobia in the systems of parole and community supervision as well. “I had an African American parole officer who was extremely homophobic,” he says. “I would report weekly, and he would take others who came in after me first. He never called me by my name-- he referred to me as ‘Cupcake.’” Such treatment compounded the isolation of returning home from prison. “Prison was traumatic,” Donald says. “I had a lot of fear about going back. I stayed away from my friends, didn’t go to the village, didn’t do anything that might put me back in prison.”

The systemic and interpersonal discrimination that Donald faced when returning home galvanized his self-advocacy and community advocacy. “I would regularly have conversations and draft memos related to the lack of services tailored specifically for LGBTQI community members,” he says. “People started calling me Martin Luther Queen.”

“I realize that my story is the exception rather than the rule, and I want to do everything I can to change that.”

Donald was eventually offered a position in a new HIV program that Fortune Society was starting. He points out the burden that LGBTGNCNBQI+ community members sometimes take on in such roles. “While I appreciated the opportunity,” he says, “it was also challenging to realize I had become something of a ‘gay whisperer’ having any gay-identified client referred to me.” Donald identifies that this dynamic not only risks burdening community members, but also lets others in the organization off the hook in terms of their own skill building cultural competency: “There was an assumption that gay mean should work together, which obviates the need for other staff to increase cultural responsiveness.”

Organizational culture change must include those at the top, Donald says. “Having the right individuals in leadership and decision-making roles” is necessary. And organizations must adapt. Currently, Donald says, “Agencies basically say, ‘You can access our services as long as you do it our way.’ This has to change.”

Donald is dedicated to changing the alternative to incarceration and reentry landscape, and to supporting LGBTGNCNBQI+ people returning home. He knows that his successful advocacy career and supportive family are things that are out of reach for all too many people returning home. “I realize that my story is the exception to the rule,” he says. “I want to do everything I can to change that.”



Helen "Skip" Skipper Pronouns: She/Her/Queen

Skip is a New Yorker, born and raised in Hollis Queens. She has deep lived experience with the criminal justice system and other service systems in New York City. "I've been in and out of the system since the age of 17," Skip says. "I grew up on Rikers Island and put the first brick in Rose M. Singer. By that I mean that I have experienced every system in New York--homeless services, the shelter system, drug programs, MICA, the women's prisons upstate." Returning home in 2007 was a turning point for Skip. "I was dragging my baggage about my mental health and substance abuse issues," she says. "This last bid, I took a look at what I was doing and got into an Alternative to Incarceration program. I have been clean since 2007."

Skip has channeled her experiences into an impactful advocacy and peer support career. She now works for the NYC Criminal Justice Agency, and has New York State certifications as a Peer Specialist, Recovery Coach and Recovery Peer advocate.

Skip recalls the ways in which post-incarceration programs and services failed to understand her gender identity and presentation, and discriminated against her. "I am a masculine identified woman," Skip says. "I don't wear dresses, make-up, heels and stuff like that. In programs, they would always try to get me to conform because I was not dressed like everyone else." These institutional biases limited the services she could receive as well. "When there were clothing donations, I was looking at the guys' stuff and they would steer me to the girls' clothes. Once I needed a coat and there were men's coats, but I was given a dress," she recalls. "The world has changed with more trainings and education, but when I came home there was not any of that."

Skip experienced employment discrimination as well: "At another program, there was a job working a front desk position. Men in the position would have to wear a suit and women would have to wear a dress. I was willing to wear a suit, but they would not allow it and I was denied the job."

Skip also recalls discriminatory treatment in the parole system and reentry services. "The most difficult thing about reentry was being authentically me with parole, in drug treatment and at the shelters," Skip says. "Once I had to provide urine for drug testing and I had boxers on," she recalls. "The female parole officer said 'Oh, I guess I need to go and get you a man.' It was difficult to be authentically me when there was so much emphasis on the gender binary, even in programming. Parole is supposed to support and assist. There needs to be education so parole won't be so offensive."

Skip advocates for an alternative to incarceration and reentry services landscape that is holistic and inclusive. She envisions an ideal program that can competently provide an array of services to LGBTGNBQI+ community members. "If I could design a program, there would be no assumptions," she says. "I would need you to tell me what you need, and I'd have everything available for people. All members and staff would be affiliated with our community-- vendors, medical, mental health, counselors, staff. If you want to make something truly inclusive, that is how you have to start." Skip knows that the referral process is also a potential point of discrimination and retraumatization. "Before referring people out, I would vet so that there are no referrals to places or people that would put a person back in

"All members and staff would be affiliated with our community--vendors, medical, mental health,counselor. If you want to make something truly inclusive, that is how you have to start."

that dark place,” she says. “Everything that touched my agency would be inclusive. I would make sure everyone is trained.” Skip imagines a program in which the type of gender policing she experienced would not exist. “I would not assign tasks and programs according to gender because there would be no binaries,” she says. “It would be open and inclusive to everyone who came in the front door.”



Jazzy Mason
Pronouns: She/Her/They

“I’m a 54-year-old native New Yorker,” Jazzy says, “Born in Harlem and raised between Harlem and Suffolk County.” Jazzy’s first interaction with the criminal justice system was at the age of 17, and she describes herself as having a “lengthy criminal record.” “I’ve been in and out of the system since age 17,” Jazzy says, “due to unaddressed trauma and anger issues” compounded by the racism of the system. “I would get arrested for stuff I didn’t do,” Jazzy describes. “In Suffolk County, if you are Black, you are blackballed.”

Jazzy describes recent transformative personal work.

“I came home last July from my most recent upstate bid,” she says. “While I was in prison this last time, I dealt with my core issues and shed some layers. When you are older, it’s harder.”

“They want to put you in the same places with the same people and expect you to become a different person. That’s like putting a kid in a candy shop and expecting them to eat their fruits and vegetables.”

Jazzy is a trade carpenter, and is in the trade union. She’s currently working as a custodian at a social justice nonprofit. This decision is informed in part by the treatment she has received in other settings due to her sexual orientation. “I’m gay,” Jazzy says. “At work, because I’m employed at a social justice non-profit that works with the transgender community, I’m good. If I was in a blue collar job I’m sure I would have issues. I can go back to work [as a carpenter] and make a lot more money, but I love the non-profit social justice work.” Jazzy is also a community advocate. “I’m doing some jail reform work,” she says, “Including bail reform and connecting people with resources.”

Jazzy has a vision for reentry programming that better supports people. The current system falls short, she says. “You can be in programs from 9am to 4pm, getting urine tested and in drug addiction classes—but that’s not reentry to me. Reentry should be giving somebody a trade, showing them how to invest money, how to live and work in society next to your counterparts, giving people the tools they need to be a part of society on equal footing.” She also notes ways in which reentry services must better serve the LGBTQI community. “If programming is going to be mandatory,” Jazzy says, “then LGBTQI people need motivational groups and housing that is specifically for us and not just mental health housing. There is nothing wrong with us.”

Recommendations for the Field

We offer these recommendations to strengthen the work of alternative to incarceration and reentry services providers in New York City. We encourage organizations to embrace the goal of serving LGBTGNCNBQI+ community members seamlessly as part of their communities served.

In order to establish an environment where LGBTGNCNBQI+ staff and participants feel welcome and accepted, organizations should establish programs designed to strengthen the cultural humility¹ of employees and the organization through staff trainings, organizational policy guidelines which promote awareness and inclusivity, and structures for accountability with clear actionable steps and outcomes. Organizational policies and procedures must be developed that provide staff with guidance on intolerance and inappropriate behavior. It is critical to establish a quality assurance team within your organization that will meet on a regular basis to review the effectiveness of the systems that have been put in place, and to determine whether additional trainings, technical assistance or capacity building will be required to improve results and create a welcoming, supportive and safe environment for LGBTGNCNBQI+ participants.

We envision these recommendations not as boxes to be checked off, but as ingredients for a culture shift among our organizational community.

We seek to establish and maintain spaces where we can learn, grow, share resources and hold ourselves accountable to serving LGBTGNCNBQI+ New Yorkers.

Recommendations for ATI & Reentry Service Providers

Organizational Values, Planning and Learning

- **Affirm and implement a core organizational value of broad inclusivity.** Recognize the LGBTGNCNBQI+ community as part of the community served. Embrace an understanding that services must be provided equitably and competently to LGBTGNCNBQI+ community members.
- **Plan for inclusion proactively and holistically.** While acute changes will need to be made, and should be done so as quickly as possible, holistic thinking about LGBTGNCNBQI+ inclusion is also essential.
- **LGBTGNCNBQI+ inclusion when conducting strategic plans,** evaluating service provision, and in other organizational planning strategies.
- **Solicit feedback from clients/program participants at various stages of engagement** with the organization, and have mechanisms in place to digest that feedback and incorporate it into planning.
- **Initiate and celebrate deep organizational learning and culture shifts, which move organizations towards embracing LGBTGNCNBQI+ people at all levels.** Such organizational culture shifts must occur at the executive level, as well as all other levels of the organizations. Organizational culture shifts can manifest in many ways, with an emphasis on inclusion, understanding, humility and compassion for LGBTGNCNBQI+ communities. This includes:

¹ Please see our Resource Appendix for explanation and guidance related to the concept of cultural humility.

Such organizational culture shifts must occur at the executive level, as well as all other levels of the organizations

- **Understanding learning as dynamic and ongoing.** Creating supportive environments for learning to take place over time and in a variety of spaces.
- **Actively challenging the concept of the gender binary**, and doing so in ways that allow both staff and program participants to have robust and nuanced conversations centered on genuine learning.
- **Seeking out and attending events and presentations by and about the LGBTGNQBI+ community.** This includes encouraging staff to attend webinars, lectures, trainings and other community meetings that center LGBTGNQBI+ communities, and to seek out information specific to their area of work (for example, staff who work at an intimate partner violence agency can seek out trainings on working with LGBTGNQBI+ intimate partner violence survivors).
- **Hosting events by and for the LGBTGNQBI+ community.**
- **Facilitate cross-organizational learning, resource sharing and cultivating cultural humility²** in areas ranging from service provision, to referrals, to internal staff support. Embrace the fact that such learning is dynamic and ongoing.

Training

- **Provide high-quality training to all staff in the organization, tailored to job roles, and facilitated or vetted by experts.** Training is critically important for the successful implementation of many of the following recommendations. For example, if an intake staff person is tasked with asking about gender identity, they need to be familiar with inclusive language, understanding responses, and approaching the interaction from a trauma-informed perspective. It is important that reception, finance, maintenance, and security staff also be trained. Regular trainings should be mandatory.
 - Consult with expert individuals and organizations to identify or, if needed, design culturally competent training on LGBTGNQBI+ identities.
 - Consider a foundation of self-administered online trainings when needed, but prioritize interactive trainings whenever possible.
 - Trainings should cover issues and competencies such as:
 - Understanding, identifying and problematizing heteronormativity.
 - Understanding gender identity and sexual orientation.

² Please see our Resource Appendix for explanation and guidance related to the concept of cultural humility.

- Thinking beyond the gender binary.
- Using culturally appropriate language, including trainings on culturally appropriate language in non-English languages used by the organization.
- Acknowledging the impact of stigma and discrimination, and best practices for creating affirming spaces.
- Trauma-informed practice, including the trauma experienced by LGBTGNCNBQI+ people during incarceration.
- Practical and advocacy-oriented legal know your rights trainings, which cover not just the letter of the law, but ensure that people understand the spirit of the laws and the possibilities for exercising and advocating for LGBTGNCNBQI+ rights, for themselves as employees and for their clients.
- Trainings for justice-involved community members.
- Intersectionality between LGBTGNCNBQI+ identities and other identities such as race and ethnicity, immigration status, ability and more.
- **Regularly scheduled organizational trainings on best practices, service provision, anti-oppression and other issues should include sexual orientation and gender identity**, so that LGBTGNCNBQI+ issues are not siloed as exclusively stand-alone trainings.

Client Interaction, Programming and Service Provision

- **Recognize the responsibility to meaningfully include LGBTGNCNBQI+ people and other marginalized identities in all programming.**
 - Organizations should serve everyone who walks in the door. LGBTGNCNBQI+ clients may have unique needs, but this does not mean they should be referred out for all services. Rather, organizations should adapt or develop aspects of programming to be responsive to LGBTGNCNBQI+ needs. This includes ensuring inclusion in existing services (including gendered services) as well as building new areas of service provision. This may require building relationships with other organizations and individuals to support those efforts.
 - Acknowledge that extra effort is required to create safe environments for communities that likely have been repeatedly mistreated by experiences at other organizations and institutions, including jails or prisons.
- **Review and revise organizational outreach materials to ensure they appropriately indicate the program is LGBTGNCNBQI+ welcoming.**
 - Use inclusive language such as: *“Open to all women, including cisgender, transgender women, as well as to gender nonconforming individuals.”*
 - Ensure any photos or graphics used in outreach materials are diverse and representative.
 - While inclusive materials are important, it is imperative that they be accompanied by robust staff training and the culture shifts discussed in our other recommendations. Otherwise, offices risk re-traumatizing LGBTGNCNBQI+ program participants who read inclusive outreach materials but then encounter a program that is not affirming.

- **Ensure that welcoming language appears in organizational mission, vision and/or values statements, or the materials that accompany them. This makes visible the fact that your organization embraces and is a resource for the community.**
 - While mission statements may be long-standing and hard to revise in some organizations, there should be an accompanying vision or values statement that is a living document: adaptable, responsive, and culturally competent, to allow the organization to be responsive to social justice issues and evolving language.
- **Take advantage of the intake process as a key opportunity to communicate LGBTGNBQI+ competence and affirmation.** Intake is often the first meaningful interaction a prospective client or member has with the organization. Intake should be welcoming and affirming, signaling implicitly and explicitly the ways in which the program values LGBTGNBQI+ community members.
 - Adopt a practice of inviting staff to share pronouns at every intake, and asking an individual which pronouns they use. Make clear that everyone is asked the question (so that people who are or are perceived to be TGNCNB don't feel singled out), and make a statement of how this aligns with the organizational values.
 - Adopt a practice of asking what name people use, asking questions such as: *"What do you prefer to be called?" "What name do you want me to call you?"* or *"What name do you go by?"* Make clear that everyone is asked the question (so that people who are or are perceived to be TGNCNB don't feel singled out), and make a statement of how this aligns with the organizational values.
 - Update all intake paperwork to allow participants to indicate whether their name or gender differs from that on their ID. Be explicit that these questions are asked because the organization values self-determination, and wants to ensure that everyone is called by the correct name and pronoun.
 - In the intake process, pose open-ended, inviting questions about identity, including gender identity. Ensure that these questions are broad and inclusive. For example: *"How do you identify your gender? How do you identify your sexual orientation?"* Emphasize the understanding that sex assigned at birth does not necessarily correspond to current gender identity and, if needed, ask, *"What was your sex assigned at birth?"*
- **For groups or other programming designated as for "women" or "men," ensure that accompanying program materials are inclusive of TGNCNB identities, and that all participants are aware of this.** While organizations are encouraged to challenge binary thinking of gender, we understand that some organizations, especially in the short term, will feel it necessary at times to designate as "women's" or "men's" groups. If this is the case, it is crucial to ensure that these groups are inclusive of TGNCNB identities.
 - Use language such as: *"Open to all women, including cisgender women and transgender women, as well as to gender nonconforming individuals."*
 - Prepare all program participants to be in groups that value the participation of TGNCNB people.
 - Adjust program content to be inclusive of TGNCNB identities.

- **Develop group agreements or ground rules for all groups, with the input of participants. Ensure that respect for all identities is included.**
- **Offer appointment hours outside of 9am-5pm, to ensure inclusivity.** For example, some program participants may need to go home after work to have a safe space to change into affirming clothing and then attend a group.
- **Adopt and model a standard practice of inviting people to share pronouns during introductions in groups and other programming settings.** This practice should be routine, and should not be reserved for participants who are known or perceived to be TGNCNB.

Referrals

- **Develop a dynamic referral system inclusive of LGBTGNCNBQI+ needs, drawing on existing community resources, and with dedicated staff to vet accuracy and cultural competency of referral organizations:**
 - Utilize existing referral resources such as those developed by the New York, Brooklyn and Queens Public Libraries, the Comptroller's Office and the Anti Violence Project. (See our resource appendix for more information about these referral resources).
 - Develop additional resources, and vet them for both accuracy (such as accurate address and hours of service) as well as for LGBTGNCNBQI+ competency.
 - Employ staff dedicated to developing, vetting and maintaining referral lists, making tailored referrals that are responsive to individual needs, and soliciting and utilizing feedback.
 - Ensure that LGBTGNCNBQI+ people are not being referred out for services that your organization can competently provide, due to lack of cultural humility. (See recommendation Organizational Values above)
 - In MOU's and linkage agreements, include language that affirms a commitment on the part of both agencies to collaborate in the culture of change to better serve the LGBTGNCNBQI+ community.
 - Adopt a practice of regularly soliciting feedback from participants about how referrals have gone: ask if the referral was successful and inclusive and whether the organization should refer others.
 - Participate in cross-organization conversations about referrals that include sharing knowledge of specific referrals, best practices and other resources. Think of the referral process as collaborative across organizations, rather than competitive.

Physical Office

- **Create a welcoming physical office environment that actively and visibly accounts for and celebrates LGBTGNCNBQI+ identities** (such as signs, magazines, information pamphlets and posters).
- **Display visible office-place indicators of LGBTGNCNBQI+ competency and**

affirmation. While such visual indicators are encouraged, it is noted that they must be accompanied by robust staff training and the culture shifts previously discussed. Otherwise, offices risk re-traumatizing LGBTGNCNBQI+ program participants who see visual indicators of inclusion but then encounter a program that is not affirming. Examples of visual indicators include:

- Rainbow flag images (posters, decals, flags, etc.).
 - Transgender flag images (posters, decals, flags, etc.).
 - Visibly posted statements of inclusion that include the LGBTGNCNBQI+ community.
 - If magazines, pamphlets or other materials are displayed in waiting areas, ensure that some are visibly LGBTGNCNBQI+ affirming.
- **Establish as many all-gender restrooms as possible.**
 - All offices should strive to have as many of their restrooms as possible be all-gender (sometimes also called “gender neutral”). This means that the restroom is not designated as “men’s” or “women’s.”
 - If an office has single-occupancy restrooms, they should all be designated as all-gender.
 - If an office has the capacity, it is encouraged to have a multi-stall all-gender restroom in addition to a single-use option. Such multi-stall restrooms should be outfitted with floor-to-ceiling stall doors and walls, to allow maximum privacy. Urinals should be covered or removed in such restrooms, so that all guests use restroom stalls.
 - All-gender restrooms should have signage that explains the bathroom is all gender.
 - Any multi-stall restrooms that remain segregated as “Men’s” or “Women’s” restrooms should include signage affirming that anyone may use restrooms that are most closely aligned with their gender identity.
 - Ensure that any staff directing people to restrooms explain how the restrooms are set up, and inform people they will be using an all gender restroom.
 - **Develop and implement policies and practices for navigating situations in which people’s ID card does not reflect their name or gender.** In offices which require ID to enter the building, such practices should be developed. Please see our resource appendix for detailed tips for creating safe, equitable and affirming access to offices. These include:
 - In all communications in which people are invited to the office, tell them beforehand that ID is required, and invite them to reach out in advance if that poses potential challenges.
 - Ask security staff to ask visitors for “anything with a name and photo” rather than asking for a government or official ID.
 - Post signs at the entrance or on the desk that lists what type of identification documentation is needed. The list of potential IDs should be as broad as possible, including items like NYC ID, School ID, Work ID, or “Anything with a name and photo.”

- Train staff to politely navigate situations in which visitors give a name, or have a name on an ID, that differs from that which is in the visitor's log.
- Meet with security staff to provide LGBTGNCNBQI+ competency information (and, if possible, formal training).
- Arrange to meet and escort people through security if their ID does not reflect their name or gender, ideally in such a way that bypasses the ID requirement.

Board and Staff Composition and Recruitment

- **Promote open dialogue between executive staff and the board about LGBTGNCNBQI+ inclusion on the board, as well as other aspects of board diversity.** Include a values-based discussion, as well as discussion of the ways in which limited board diversity may limit funding opportunities.
- **Actively recruit LGBTGNCNBQI+ board members.**
- **Train the board on LGBTGNCNBQI+ competency,** using high quality training materials developed or vetted by experts.
- **Establish an equity and inclusion committee or point person on the board.**
- **Ensure that job postings for all positions indicate that LGBTGNCNBQI+ applicants are encouraged to apply.**
- **Cultivate affirming application processes,** including inviting people to share pronouns in all application meetings, and developing a mechanism in which applicants can note whether they use a name or pronouns that differs from that on their resume or other official documents.
- **Develop leadership pathways, such as trainings or credentialing programs that enable LGBTGNCNBQI+ community members to become staff and board members at your organization or others.**

Additional Internal Workplace Policies and Practices

- **Ensure organizational literacy about workplace protections for LGBTGNCNBQI+ people.**
 - Ensure that all staff are aware of relevant anti-discrimination and harassment laws, and that HR and executive staff in particular understand the importance of legal compliance.
 - Ensure that all staff are trained about employment rights at the city, state and federal level as they apply to LGBTGNCNBQI+ people.
 - Utilize the New York City Human Rights Commission as an informational resource.
 - Establish clear mechanisms for reporting homophobia, transphobia or other bias in the workplace (and/or make clear which existing mechanisms are appropriate to use for this purpose).
- **Actively support LGBTGNCNBQI+ staff.** Consider such support to be a fundamental responsibility of the employer. Supporting LGBTGNCNBQI+ also has broader programmatic implications, as staff feeling safe and affirmed is

necessary for program participants to feel safe and affirmed.

- Ensure that any resources provided to staff, such as an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) are LGBTGNCNBQI+ competent.
- Cultivate staff affinity spaces, including LGBTGNCNBQI+ affinity space(s).
- Strive to provide health insurance from companies that help staff navigate TGNCNB- specific care. While insurers cannot have blanket bans on some treatments, they can still remain very difficult for people to understand and access coverage. Some insurers have trans health care navigators that can make the process much easier for staff.
- Dedicate organizational funds to support costs associated with gender-related care or name changes that are not covered or not sufficiently covered by insurance. This includes:
 - Provide funds for staff name changes.
 - Provide funds for gender-affirming hormone treatment if not sufficiently covered by insurance.
 - Provide funds for gender-affirming surgeries if not sufficiently covered by insurance.
 - Provide funds for assisted reproductive services, surrogacy and adoption.
- **Develop a mechanism for respectfully obtaining staff's gender and name prior to any onboarding processes**, with the knowledge that name and gender may not be correctly reflected in legal documents presented to HR.
- **Establish and model a practice of inviting people to share pronouns during introductions in meetings**, such as staff meetings, hiring interviews, and external stakeholder meetings.
 - People should be invited to share pronouns regularly during introductions in meetings even when all staff know one another. This both routinizes the practice, and gives people the opportunity to share pronouns that have changed.
- **Establish policies and practices that support staff who transition to so do with ease.** Work with staff to update emails, websites or any digital publications where they see fit to change their name.
- **Encourage staff to put their pronouns in their email signatures.** Executive leadership should model this practice. Such a practice is important both for individual staff to have the opportunity to self-identify, and as a signal to the recipients of the email that the organization values this kind of self-identification. While this practice is important, it is noted that they must be accompanied by robust staff training and the culture shifts previously discussed. Otherwise, offices risk re-traumatizing LGBTGNCNBQI+ email recipients who see an indicator of inclusion but then encounter a program that is not affirming.

Recommendations for the Funding Community

- **Convene and sustain a “Center of Excellence,” composed of groups and individuals with demonstrated LGBTGNCNBQI+ community ties and expertise.** Such groups should be funded to provide capacity building support, technical expertise, consulting, and strategic advice to Alternative to Incarceration and Reentry organizations. Funds should also be dedicated to cultivate spaces for organizations to meet, discuss and share resources. Examples of work could include:
 - Vetting organizational outreach materials.
 - Identifying, vetting, designing and/or providing trainings.
 - Supporting organizations in sustained discussion of how to deepen their cultural competency.
 - Space for sharing referrals, discussing how they have been vetted.
 - Space for sharing best practices, concerns.
 - Supporting community advocacy efforts.
 - Supporting organizations to collect and report more inclusive data.
- **Encourage LGBTGNCNBQI+ inclusivity among provider agencies.** Set expectations for grantees to provide robust services to LGBTGNCNBQI+ as part of their overall service provision expectations, and make sure that that LGBTGNCNBQI+ staff are hired and valued as part of cultural diversity metrics. This could include:
 - Inquiries about how grantees indicate their outreach materials are inclusive.
 - Inquires about how grantees are working to make their programming inclusive.
 - Inquiries about how grantees are working to make their internal workplace policies and practices LGBTGNCNBQI+ affirming.
 - Inquiries about how grantees are assessing their work, including what mechanisms they have developed to gauge satisfaction from the LGBTGNCNBQI+ community.

Next Steps for Change

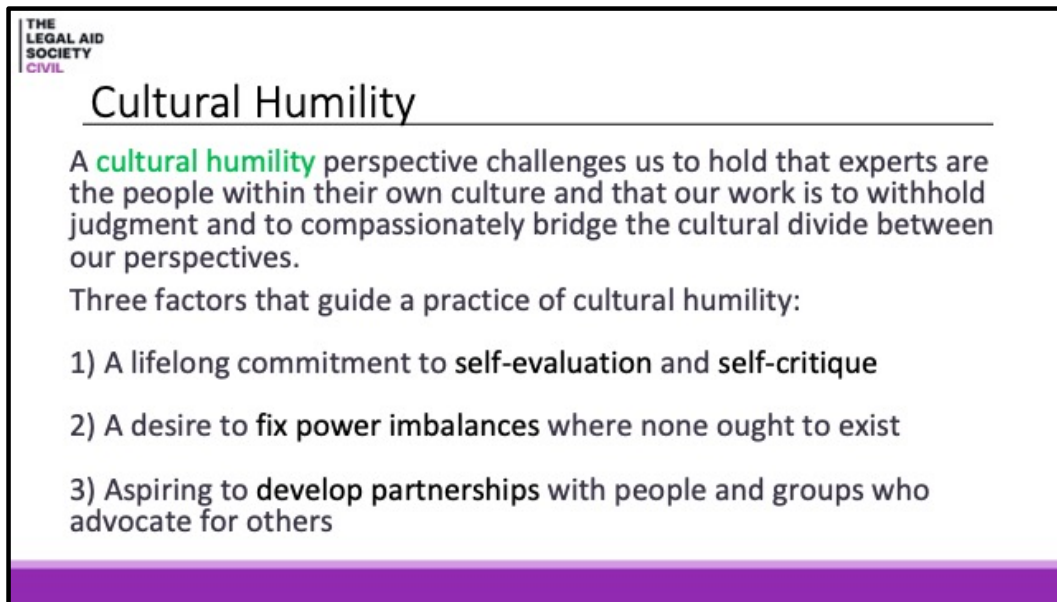
Alternative to incarceration and reentry services are crucial for New Yorkers. Our research shows that, while providers have taken strides to serve the LGBTGNCNBQI+ community, more remains to be done. We offer this report as both a research document and a resource for action. We encourage alternative to incarceration and reentry service providers to review our recommendations and create an action plan for their own organizations.

Resources Appendix

The following resources are intended to supplement our recommendations. While by no means an exhaustive list, we hope these resources will help organizations as they take steps to cultivate an environment where LGBTGNCNBQI+ staff and participants feel welcome and accepted.

Understanding the Cultural Humility Perspective

Please see this resource from the Legal Aid Society:



Sample Inclusive Language for Program Outreach Materials

- Use language that is broad and inclusive, such as: *“Open to all women, including cisgender, transgender women, as well as to gender nonconforming individuals.”*

Resources for the Intake Process

- The [“Waiting Room Activity”](#)^x from the Center of Excellence for Transgender Health at UCSF can be useful in assessing your current waiting area and places you might make changes.
- If appropriate for the data collection needs of your organization, you may ask simply: *“What is your gender identity”* followed by a blank space for writing in the response. You may also add: *“What was your sex assigned at birth”* if needed.
- If your organization needs check-box options for asking about gender identity and/or sexual orientation, we suggest this [presentation](#) by the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute Reporting System.^{xi} We suggest adding the language *“cisgender”* where applicable. We encourage you to add introductory text tailored to your organization, such as: *“Please choose the responses which best apply to you. Please check as many options as apply. We embrace the diverse identities of our participants.”*

Sample Restroom Signage

Sample all gender restroom sign:



Sample language for text to accompany restroom signs:

- Short statement:
"Restroom Open to All"
- Longer explanatory text:
"Why do we have an all-gender bathroom? Trans people and other people who don't fit gender stereotypes are often targets of harassment and violence in "women's" and "men's" bathrooms. Lots of people don't fit neatly into our culture's rigid two-gender system, and bathrooms become a location of enforcement of that system. We hope that more and more organizations and institutions will de-gender their bathrooms to ensure everyone's right to use these facilities comfortably and safely. We hope that visitors feel comfortable and supported expressing their gender however they see fit."

Know Your Rights Materials to Post and Distribute in Offices

LGBTQ Health Care Bill Of Rights

- Available to download as [poster](#) or [wallet size](#).^{xii}

Protections Against Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, from the NYC Commission on Human Rights.

- Available to download as a [brochure](#).^{xiii}

Tips and Script for Sharing Pronouns in Meetings

The following suggestions can be modified for use in your organization:

- Set up the introductions:
"We're going to go around the room for introductions. You're invited to share your name, the pronouns you use, and your favorite Karaoke song!"
- Explain pronouns, if new group or new participants:
"For anyone who isn't familiar with sharing pronouns: you can think about how you'd want someone to refer to you if they were telling a story about you. You might want them to use "he and him" "she and her" "they and them" a different pronoun, or just your name. Some people use multiple pronouns. We invite people to share pronouns in our meetings so that none of us need to make assumptions, and all of us have the opportunity to self identify."
- Model:
"I'll go first. My name is [Name], the pronouns I use are [Pronouns] and my Karaoke song is [song]."

Sample Email Signature with Pronouns

Pronouns can be included below the name line in an email signature:

Name

Pronouns: [She/Her/Hers]

Title

Organization

Contact Information

Consider creating a page on your organization's website explaining pronouns, to which staff can link in their email signature. You could model such a page on that of the [LGBT Community Center](#)^{xiv}, [GLSEN](#)^{xv} or other organizations.

Sample Email Text for Obtaining Staff Name and Gender Prior to Onboarding

This suggested email text can be modified for your organization:

"Hi, we are so excited to have you join our team. We value our employees of every gender, and it is important to us that we do our best to make our transgender, gender non-confirming, and non-binary staff feel welcome and included. As such, we like to create this opportunity in the on-boarding process to ask every new employee if there are any names that may differ from documents submitted, and/or pronouns the employee would like to share. If you like, we can set up your email and accounts to reflect the name you are most comfortable with, and please note that this can be changed at any time to reflect any updated name down the line."

Referral and Resource Lists

Please see our recommendations above for additional suggestions related to developing a dynamic referral system inclusive of LGBTGNCNBQI+ needs. Existing resource lists include:

- [Connections](#)^{xvi}, a publication from the New York Public Library (which includes an LGBTQI+ chapter) as well as their general LGBTGNCNBQI+ [resources](#).^{xvii}
- Brooklyn Public Library reentry services [webpage](#)^{xviii} as well as their general LGBTGNCNBQI+ [resources](#).^{xix}
- Queens Public Library [reentry resources guide](#)^{xx} as well as general LGBTGNCNBQI+ [resources](#).^{xxi}
- The New York City Comptroller's [LGBTQ Resource Guide](#).^{xxii}
- The New York City Anti-Violence Project [Resource Guide](#).^{xxiii}
- New York State Office of Children and Family Services: <https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/youth/lgbtq/resources-youth.php>

Additional Materials for Organizational Assessment and Planning

We encourage organizations to review the following for additional resources in internal planning:

- "All Children- All Families: Benchmarks of LGBTQ Inclusion" from the Human Rights' Campaign Foundation which can be accessed [here](#).^{xxiv}
- This is accompanied by the "All Children- All Families: Agency Self-Assessment" which can be accessed [here](#).^{xxv}

Tips for Safe, Equitable and Affirming Access to Offices³

The entrance of the building not only serves as a point of access to a service or organization but often a security point for safety of the building's inhabitants. While safety is important, security protocols can be an alienating and trauma-filled experience for some people. It is particularly important for security personnel to recognize the difficulties many people face in obtaining accurate government-issued identification, particularly those people with limited financial resources. 15% of adults earning less than \$35,000 per year do not have valid government-issued identification. Transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary people are disproportionately impacted by identification requirements because of the expense and difficulty in getting documentation that accurately identifies one's name and gender.

The following are tips to help building management assess if building policies are fair, equitable, and accessible to all incomers regardless of race, gender, gender expression, age, ethnicity, class, religion, immigration status.

For the above reasons, we strongly urge security not to require Identification (ID), but instead (a) ask visitors to sign in and out or (b) cross-check the name verbally provided by a visitor with a list generated by the Legal Aid Society. If ID is absolutely necessary:

1. Ask security staff to ask visitors for “anything with a name and photo” rather than asking for an ID or government or official ID.
2. Post signs at entrance or on the desk that lists what type of identification documentation is needed for example “State ID, Driver's License, NYC ID, school ID, work ID, a bill with your name on it, or anything with a name and photo.” The list of potential ID should be as broad as possible.
3. Talk to staff about the possibility that some visitors' IDs may not match their current name, picture, or gender expression. IDs are expensive and sometimes people are not able to update their IDs to reflect their actual name or gender.
 - Train staff that they should not get suspicious or refuse entry to a visitor that gives a name different than the one on their ID or whose appearance does not match the picture or gender marker on their ID.
 - Staff can politely ask the visitor who they are visiting at the Legal Aid Society and contact that person.
 - Policies and training should explain that non-confrontational methods of asking follow up questions should be applied to all visitors.

³ These tips are adapted from a working document from the Legal Aid Society. The recommendations are in development and are shared here in their current form. We encourage organizations to tailor these recommendations to their specific office context and need.

4. If there is a visitors log that lists the name of visitors:
 - Train staff that they should not get suspicious or refuse entry to a visitor that gives a name different than the one on their ID or whose appearance does not match the picture or gender marker on their ID.
 - Staff can politely ask the visitor what organization they are here to visit and check the list for the name that they give.
 - If a name on a ID doesn't appear on a visitors log, ask if there is another name that may be on the visitors log or ask additional questions such as who they are here to see and what time they are expected.
 - Don't refuse entry or otherwise be discourteous to the visitor.

Other Best Practices

5. If individuals with deliveries have to enter through a different entrance:
 - Consider changing this policy because it is reminiscent of servant's quarters and segregation based on career and class status.
 - If the policy is in place, train staff to wait until visitors say that they are making a delivery before sending them to a different entrance. Unfortunately, there have been past instances where security staff have made assumptions that people were making deliveries when they were not.
6. If security staff are trained to call the police:
 - Assess what the policy says about when to call the police.
 - Consider having staff attend de-escalation training.
 - Have a list of alternative resources such as local emergency psychiatric treatment teams or Mobile Crisis units.
 - Get a list of Legal Aid Society staff trained in de-escalation and or conflict resolution techniques.
7. If security staff are trained to call the ICE:
 - We strongly recommend that you consider removing this policy.

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