

A photograph of a Black man with long dreadlocks and glasses, smiling broadly. He is wearing a denim vest over a dark shirt and a necklace of red and pink beads. He is holding a small rainbow flag on a white stick. In the background, a woman with blonde hair is visible, though slightly out of focus.

# Gender & Sexual Identity Inclusivity

Fraser & Hoyt  
**INCENTIVES**

FOR COLLABORATIVE TEAMS  
& ALL CLIENT EXPERIENCES



# inclusivity

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*noun*

The practice or policy of including people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as those who have physical or mental disabilities and members of minority groups.



## what is the impact?

While the population of visibly gay, lesbian, gender non-conforming, and transgender persons in the workplace is growing steadily, it may surprise you to learn that nearly half of North American LGBTQ+ identifying employees remain closeted in their workplaces for fear of harassment, bias, exclusion, or being overlooked for promotions.

This leaves many of these LGBTQ+ identifying workers feeling often distracted, depressed, and exhausted as they venture to hide their authentic identities during working hours.

In a survey conducted by the **HRC Foundation** (United States of America) the following was uncovered:

- ➡ **one in five** LGBTQ workers report having been told, or had coworkers imply, that they should dress in a more feminine or masculine manner;
- ➡ **fifty-three percent** of LGBTQ workers report hearing jokes about lesbian or gay people at least once in a while;
- ➡ **thirty-one percent** of LGBTQ workers say they have felt unhappy or depressed at work;

And the top reason LGBTQ+ workers don't report negative comments they hear about LGBTQ+ people to a supervisor or human resources?

***They don't think anything would be done about it, and they don't want to hurt their relationships with coworkers***

While overt racism, sexism, and homophobia are no longer as prevalent in workplace culture as they were a decade or two ago, workplace diversity has yet to translate into a culture of true inclusiveness.

As diversity is about ensuring the representation of different backgrounds and experiences in your workplace, **inclusiveness is about creating a workplace environment where these differences of experience are viewed as a workplace advantage**. It is about creating a space where all employees are made to feel valued, supported, and safe to be their authentic selves.

To create a more clear understanding of how the LGBTQ+ workplace experience effects those in Canada a survey was created and statistics were gathered from across the country. The findings are found over the last four pages of this document





# understanding identity

## common workplace issues faced by LGBTQ+ employees

- ➔ Lack of **legal protection** in the workplace
- ➔ High levels of **discrimination** in job interviews
- ➔ Remaining closeted at work for **fear of losing co-worker connections**, or opportunities for development and advancement
- ➔ Talented LGBTQ+ employees leave their workplaces because they **do not feel welcomed**. More than one third of these employees lie about their personal lives at work as a result.
- ➔ Compared to other LGBTQ+ employees, transgender people face more employment issues including: 2-3x the unemployment rate, with approximately 90% of transgender people experiencing **mistreatment** on the job.

## identity terms: understanding the acronym

Identity terms are a constant evolution as we create more awareness and inclusion in society for all forms of gender and sexual identity expression. As a business who serves a wide variety of clients, it is important that you understand as a team how you can best honour and acknowledge all persons in the way that makes them feel most comfortable.

It is important to acknowledge that the definitions of some of these terms are still being modified and growing, and as such, may update in the future.

Most are familiar with the acronym **LGBT**, as in the early years these four letters were all that was used to encompass gender and sexual minorities:

As the 20th Century rolled into the 21st Century we saw the addition of **Q** to the list which in its onset was interpreted to equate to **Questioning** (uncertain of their sexual or gender identity) or **Queer** (a catch-all term).

In recent years the acronym has expanded to also include **Intersex (I)**, **Asexual (A)**, **Agender (A)**, **Two Spirited (2S)**, **Pansexual (P)**, and more **(+)**.



### **Lesbian**

Women who are primarily attracted romantically, erotically, and/or emotionally to other women.

### **Gay**

Experiencing attraction solely (or primarily) to some members of the same gender. Can be used to refer to men who are attracted to other men and women who are attracted to other women

### **Bisexual**

**1:** a person who experiences attraction to some men and women.  
**2:** a person who experiences attraction to some people of their gender and another gender. Bisexual attraction does not have to be equally split, or indicate a level of interest that is the same across the genders an individual may be attracted to.

### **Transgender**

**1:** a gender description for someone who has transitioned (or is transitioning) from living as one gender to another. **2:** an umbrella term for anyone whose sex assigned at birth and gender identity do not correspond in the expected way (e.g., someone who was assigned male at birth, but does not identify as a man).

Most often you will see this acronym shown as **2SLGBTQIAP+** or **LGBTQQIAP2SAA+**

## what do all of these terms mean?

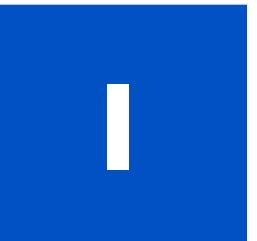
The more that we understand the vocabulary used for **gender identity** and **sexual identity** the better we can relate to our co-workers, clients, and the broader society we live among.

Having rudimentary understanding of these gender and sexual identities can go a long way in creating safer spaces for all of us to express ourselves without fear of judgment or discrimination.



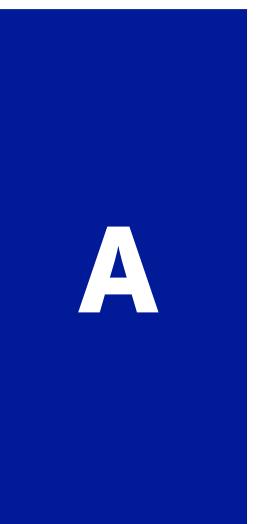
### **Queer**

**1:** An umbrella term to describe individuals who don't identify as straight and/or cisgender. **2:** A slur used to refer to someone who isn't straight and/or cisgender. Due to its historical use as a derogatory term and how it is still used as a slur many communities, it is not embraced or used by all LGBTQ+ people. The term **queer** can often be used interchangeably with LGBTQ+ (e.g., **queer people** instead of LGBTQ+ people).



### **Intersex**

A term for a combination of chromosomes, gonads, hormones, internal sex organs, and genitals that differs from the two expected patterns of male or female. Formerly known as hermaphrodite (or hermaphroditic), but these terms are now outdated and derogatory.



### **Asexual (Ace)**

Experiencing little or no sexual attraction to others and/or a lack of interest in sexual relationships/behavior. Asexuality exists on a continuum from people who experience no sexual attraction or have any desire for sex, to those who experience low levels, or sexual attraction only under specific conditions. Many of these different places on the continuum have their own identity labels (such as **demisexual**)



### **Agender**

Denoting or relating to a person who does not identify themselves as having a particular gender.

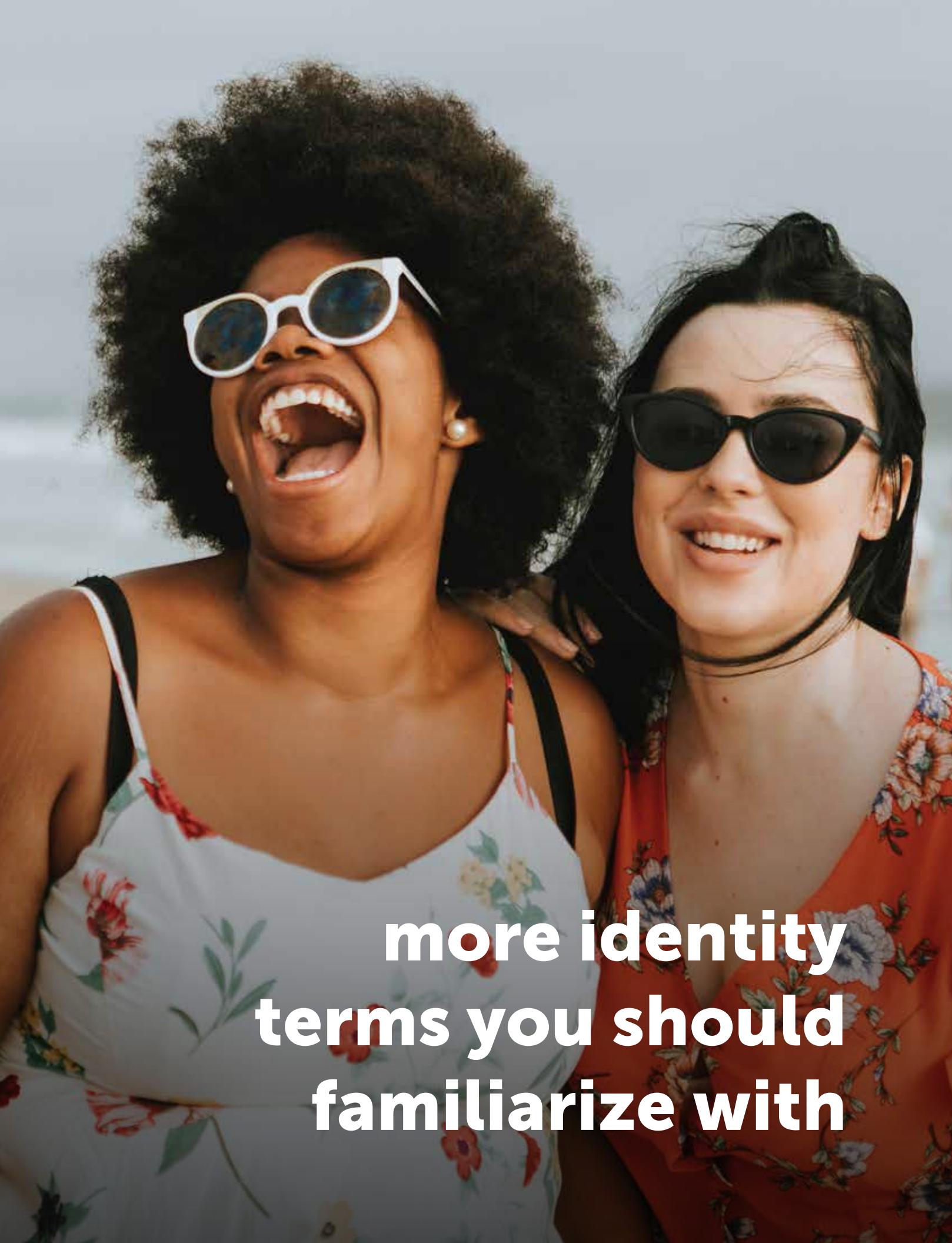


### **Two Spirited**

An umbrella term traditionally within Indigenous communities to recognize individuals who possess qualities or fulfill roles of both feminine and masculine genders.

### **Pansexual**

A person who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction for members of all gender identities/expressions. Often shortened to **pan**.



# more identity terms you should familiarize with

## **Non-binary**

A person who identifies as neither male nor female and sees themselves outside the gender binary. This is sometimes shortened to **N.B.** or **enby**.

*It is important to note that N.B. is not utilized widely as historically it has indicated "Non-Black" and is considered racially insensitive.*

## **Gender Non-Conforming (GNC)**

**1:** A gender expression descriptor that indicates a non-traditional gender presentation (masculine woman\* or feminine man\*). **2:** A gender identity label that indicates a person who identifies outside of the gender binary. Often abbreviated as **GNC**.

## **Trans\***

An umbrella term covering a range of identities that transgress socially-defined gender norms. **Trans\*** with an asterisk is often used in written forms (not spoken) to indicate that you are referring to the larger group nature of the term, and specifically including **non-binary** identities, as well as transgender men (**transmen**) and transgender women (**transwomen**).

## **QPOC/QTPOC**

Initialisms that stand for **Queer People of Color** and **Queer and/or Trans People of Color**.

## **Cisgender**

A gender description for when someone's sex assigned at birth and gender identity correspond in the expected way

## **AMAB**

Assigned male at birth

## **AFAB**

Assigned female at birth



# **sexual identity, gender identity & gender congruence**

## **sexual orientation**

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A person's sexual identity in relation to the gender to which they are attracted; the fact of being heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual (et.al.).

Gender is personal (how we see ourselves), while sexual orientation is interpersonal (who we are physically, emotionally and/or romantically attracted to).

## gender identity

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Gender identity is our internal experience and naming of our gender. It can correspond to or differ from the sex we were assigned at birth.

Gender identity is an inherent aspect of a person's make-up. Individuals do not choose their gender, nor can they be made to change it. However, ***the words someone uses to communicate their gender identity may change over time***; naming one's gender can be a complex and evolving matter over time.

The two gender identities most people are familiar with are boy and girl (or man and woman), and often people think that these are the only two gender identities. This idea that there are only two genders—and that each individual must be either one or the other—is called the ***Gender Binary***.

However, throughout human history we know that many societies have seen, and continue to see, gender as a spectrum, and not limited to just two possibilities. In addition to these two identities, other identities are now commonplace.



## gender expression

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Gender expression is the external appearance of one's gender identity. Usually it is expressed through behavior, clothing, haircut or voice, and which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.

Because expectations around gender are so rigid, we frequently assume that what someone wears, or how they move, talk, or express themselves, tells us something about their gender identity. But **expression is distinct from identity**—we can't assume a person's gender identity based on their gender expression.

For example, a male may like to wear skirts or dresses. His choice in clothing doesn't define his gender identity; it simply means that he prefers (at least some of the time) to wear clothes that society has typically associated with females.

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How we interpret a person's gender and the assumptions we make about them is related to our personal understanding of gender and the norms and stereotypes we have integrated around both—it isn't about the person at all.

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## gender congruence

Gender congruence is the feeling of harmony in our gender:

- ➡ experiencing comfort in our body as it relates to our gender;
- ➡ naming of our gender that adequately corresponds with our internal sense of who we are;
- ➡ expressing ourselves through clothing, mannerisms, interests and activities;
- ➡ being seen consistently by others as we see ourselves.

Finding congruence is an ongoing process throughout each of our lives as we continue to grow and gain insight into ourselves. It is most often found through exploration. For some, finding congruence is fairly simple; for others, it is a much more complex process. But the fundamental need to find gender congruence is true for us all, and any degree to which we don't experience it can be distressing.

**Transitioning** is a term commonly used to refer to the steps a **transgender, agender, or non-binary** person takes in order to find congruence in their gender. But this term can be misleading as it implies that the person's gender identity is changing and that there is a moment in time when this takes place. More typically, it is others' understanding of the person's gender that shifts.

Instead of **transitioning**, a more apt phrase is **pursuing congruence measures**. A person can seek harmony in many ways:

### **social congruence measures**

Changes of social identifiers such as clothing, hairstyle, gender identity, name and/or pronouns

### **hormonal congruence measures**

The use of medical approaches such as hormone blockers or hormone therapy to promote physical, mental, and/or emotional alignment

### **surgical congruence measures**

The addition, removal, or modification of gender-related physical traits

### **legal congruence measures**

Changing identification documents such as one's birth certificate, driver's license, or passport's gender identifiers.





## gender indicators

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The pronouns we use may change over time. There are many instances of people going into questioning periods surrounding their gender identities and a gender identity changing or evolving over time.

It is important to note that **a person's gender expression may not be an indicator of their gender identity**. As such, we can never assume the pronouns of any person we interact with personally or professionally.

When interacting with those who classify in non-binary identities there are many instances of a person identifying outside of the gender binary but continuing to utilize binary pronouns, or a combination such as "she/they". We must remember that our gender identity and gender indicators may not always be in alignment with outside expectations.

**common pronouns  
generally include:**

- ➡ he/him
- ➡ she/her
- ➡ they/their

**other pronouns can include,  
but are not limited to:**

- ➡ ve/ver
- ➡ xe/xem
- ➡ per/per

While there are many benefits to organizations and individuals sharing their personal pronouns in email signatures, social profiles, and more it is important to also note that for those who are questioning or not yet publicly out about their gender identity this can be challenging and potentially harmful.



## how can we make our workplaces more inclusive?

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### **Put it in Writing**

Tackling workplace inclusivity can begin with the addition of a **formal anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policy** outlining your organization's position and the expected associate behaviour of all those employed within the company in the Policy Manual.

### **Use Gender Neutral Language**

When updating any company documents or policies be mindful of using gender neutral language. Instead of using **he** or **she** it is more acceptable to use **they** as a singular gender neutral pronoun.

### **Updating Dress-Code Requirements**

Many corporate workplaces hold dress code standards that are reflective of the gender binary: female/male. Instead of having separate female and male dress codes **consider a single dress-code outlining that employees should dress to meet professional standards** so as not to alienate any gender queer, non-binary, agender or gender non-conforming persons within the organization.

# a more inclusive experience for all



## identity & employment status survey

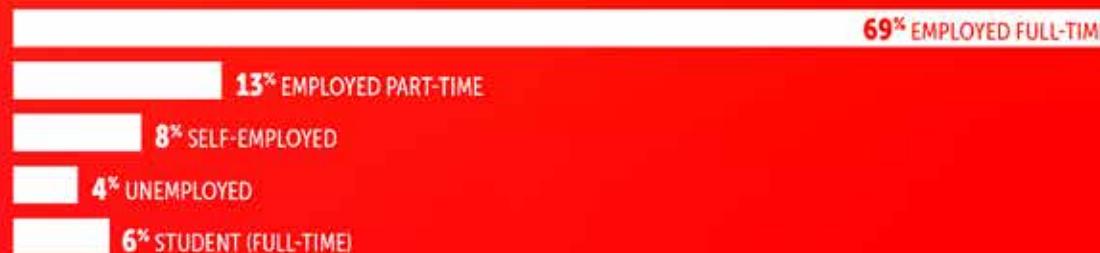
The following four pages include the results of our **Canadian Identity & Employment Status Survey** conducted in 2019.

All data collected was from 2SLGBTQIA+ identifying persons coast to coast.

## IDENTITY & EMPLOYMENT STATUS



MY  
EMPLOYMENT  
STATUS IS:



## WORKPLACE INCLUSIVENESS

### GENDER IDENTITY

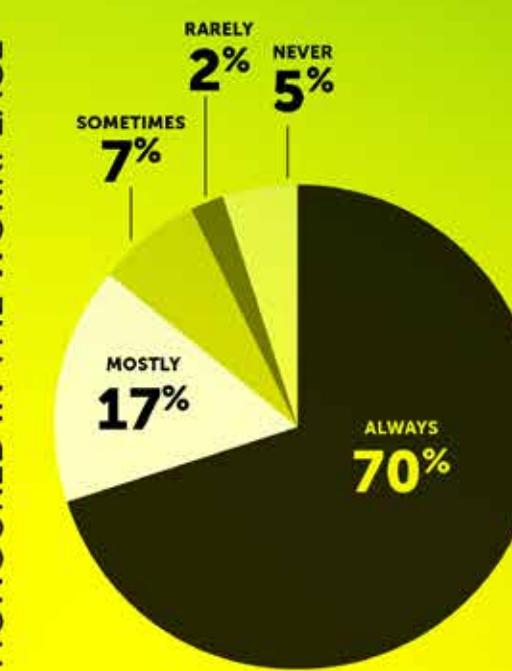
91%

NINETY-ONE PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS  
ARE "OUT" REGARDING THEIR GENDER  
IDENTITY AT WORK

EMAIL SIGNATURES, NAME TAGS,  
OR OTHER IDENTIFYING COLLATERAL  
INCLUDES GENDER PRONOUNS IN  
MY WORKPLACE



GENDER PRONOUNS  
HONOURED IN THE WORKPLACE



25%

1 IN 4 RESPONDENTS HAVE EXPERIENCED  
DISCRIMINATION IN THEIR WORKPLACE  
DUE TO THEIR GENDER IDENTITY



1 / 5

TWENTY PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS  
HAVE BEEN OVERLOOKED FOR A JOB,  
PROMOTION, OR WORK OPPORTUNITY  
BECAUSE OF THEIR GENDER IDENTITY.

## WORKPLACE INCLUSIVENESS

### SEXUALITY

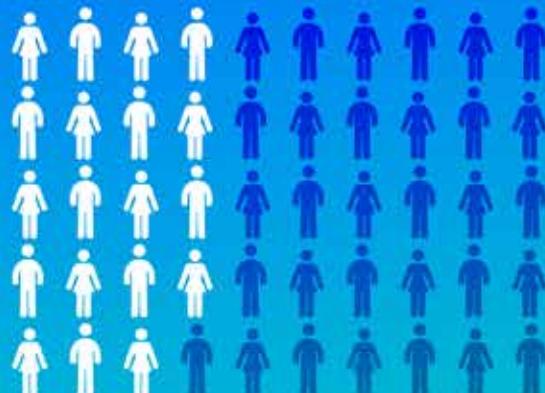
**82%**

EIGHTY-TWO PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS  
ARE "OUT" REGARDING THEIR SEXUALITY  
AT WORK

NO

YES

TWENTY-ONE PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS HAVE BEEN OVERLOOKED  
FOR A JOB, PROMOTION, OR WORK OPPORTUNITY DUE TO THEIR SEXUALITY



**38%**

THIRTY-EIGHT PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS  
HAVE EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION IN THEIR  
WORKPLACE DUE TO THEIR SEXUALITY

I HAVE WITNESSED GENDER IDENTITY  
OR SEXUALITY BASED DISCRIMINATION  
AGAINST ANOTHER EMPLOYEE IN MY  
WORKPLACE BEFORE:

**YES**

**NO**

**51%**

**49%**

MY WORKPLACE HAS DIVERSE  
REPRESENTATION OF  
2SLGBTQIA+ EMPLOYEES:



## WORKPLACE INCLUSIVENESS

### WORK ENVIRONMENT

ALMOST ONE-THIRD OF RESPONDENTS HAVE LEFT A PLACE  
OF EMPLOYMENT BEFORE DUE TO LACK OF INCLUSION  
OR A FEELING OF BEING UNWELCOME

**32%**



MY WORKPLACE HAS  
INCLUSIVE 2SLGBTQIA+  
POLICIES IN PLACE:

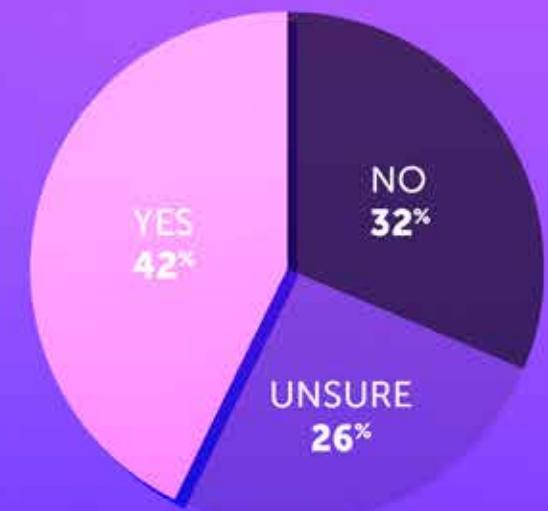
**61%**



**14%**



**25%**



**58%**

HAVE ACCESS TO GENDER NEUTRAL  
WASHROOMS IN THEIR WORKPLACE

THE LANGUAGE IN PAPERWORK,  
POLICY, DRESS CODE, ETC. IS  
ALL-GENDERS INCLUSIVE  
IN MY WORKPLACE.



**research for  
this document  
credited to the  
following:**

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[genderspectrum.org](http://genderspectrum.org)

[lgbt.umd.edu](http://lgbt.umd.edu)

[prideatwork.ca](http://prideatwork.ca)

[hrc.org](http://hrc.org)

[outandequal.org](http://outandequal.org)

[huffpost.com](http://huffpost.com)

**canadian  
statistics  
gathered,  
formatted and  
authored by:**

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*Halifax, Nova Scotia, 2019*