Improving Relations with LGBTQ+ Communities:

A Guide for Law Enforcement

JANUARY 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the National Resource Center for Reaching Victims

Funded by the federal Office for Victims of Crime, the National Resource Center for Reaching Victims (NRC) is a one-stop shop for victim service providers, culturally specific organizations, justice system professionals, and policymakers to get information and expert guidance to enhance their capacity to identify, reach, and serve all victims, especially those from communities that are underrepresented in healing services and avenues to justice. The NRC is working to increase the number of victims who receive healing supports by understanding who is underrepresented and why some people access services while others don't, designing and implementing best practices for connecting people to the services they need, and empowering and equipping organizations to provide the most useful and effective services possible to crime victims.

The NRC is a collaboration among Caminar Latino, Casa de Esperanza, Common Justice, FORGE, the National Children's Advocacy Center, the National Center for Victims of Crime, the National Clearinghouse on Abuse Later in Life, Women of Color Network, Inc., and the Vera Institute of Justice.

The NRC's vision is that victim services are accessible, culturally appropriate and relevant, and trauma-informed, and that the overwhelming majority of victims access and benefit from these services. To learn more about

the National Resource Center for Reaching Victims, visit
ReachingVictims.org.

About FORGE

FORGE is the nation's leading organization focused on violence against transgender/non-binary individuals, founded in 1994. Since 2009, FORGE has held multiple federal contracts to provide direct services nationwide to transgender/non-binary victims of crime and to provide training and technical assistance to the victim service providers who work with transgender/non-binary victims and loved ones.

FORGE provides professionals with a wide range of support, including one-to-one technical assistance, virtual trainings, presentations at conferences, customized in-person intensives, and si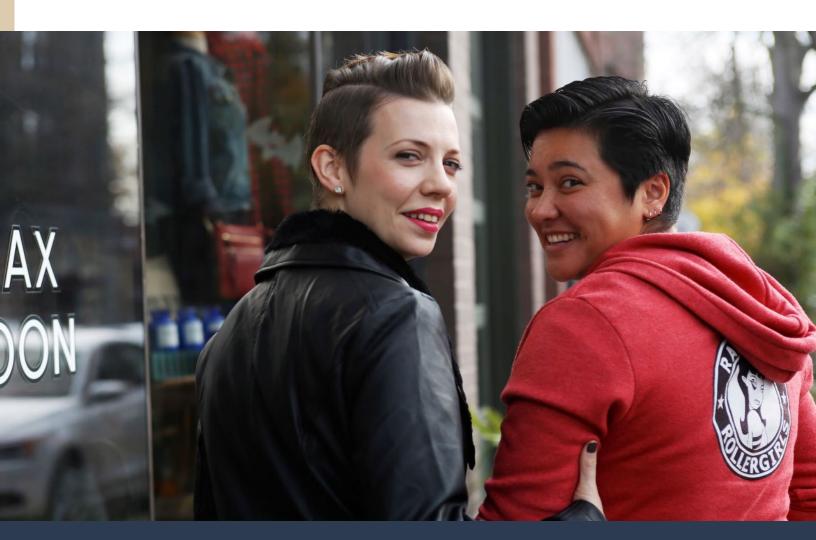te visits to increase cultural competency. In addition to recorded trainings, FORGE has created and hosts a large, free, online library of publications, fact sheets, and other printable resources for providers.

FORGE's mission is to create a world where all voices, people, and bodies are valued, respected, honored, and celebrated and where every individual feels safe, supported, respected, and empowered. FORGE's work focuses around the following four central beliefs: (1) trans people

and loved ones are resilient (but may still benefit from some reminders and skills); (2) service providers have the profession-specific skills they need to serve trans people, but simply need additional trans-specific knowledge and confidence; (3) every person is valuable and has a great deal to contribute to society; and (4) binary systems and thinking create arbitrary lines between people and communities, which damage spirits and resilience.

FORGE is the lead collaborative partner with the National Resource Center for Reaching Victims, focusing on LGBTQ+ populations. To learn more about FORGE, please visit **forge-forward.org**.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Authors

Gratitude and Appreciations

have worked to improve their departments' responses to LGBTQ+ individuals. Your compassionate, thoughtful, and forward-thinking actions have not only improved the lives and well-being of LGBTQ+ individuals but has made the law enforcement profession better.

Thank you to the Vera Institute of Justice who carefully coordinates and lifts up the many underserved communities represented under the National Resource Center for Reaching Victims.

Funding Appreciation

INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

FORGE and its contributing authors are pleased to present *Improving Relations with LGBTQ+ Communities: A Guide for Law Enforcement*. This document is intended for use by police departments and other law enforcement agencies looking to create, build, maintain, or restore trust with members of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+)[1] communities. The recommendations detailed throughout can serve as a compendium of practical suggestions, ideas for consideration, or a checklist for evaluating current departmental undertakings.

Over the past 20+ years, much important work has been done to advance and improve relations between law enforcement and LGBTQ+ communities. Historically fraught, this relationship has often been marked by prejudice, discrimination, harassment, and violence. The legacy of discriminatory practices is one that departments must face and reconcile. Fortunately, in examining problems of the past including harmful policing practices against LGBTQ+ populations, many departments have begun taking steps to build community trust. These efforts are laudable and have yielded encouraging results; yet there is more work to be done, especially in developing trust between the law enforcement and LGBTQ+ communities of color and youth. This guide builds on the successful innovations,

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1   Although "LGBTQ" is the more commonly used, succinct term, the letters do not include all who identify with this diverse community. The addition of "+" throughout this guide helps ensure that all those whose sexual orientations and gender identities (or lack thereof) do not conform to societal norms are represented. For a list of terms, identities, and definitions, please see the glossary of terms at the end of this document.

recommendations, and best practices of trailblazers in the field to help motivated departments continue the work. As community leaders, law enforcement not only have a responsibility to help LGBTQ+ communities access their share of safety and justice, but they also have a real opportunity to support full equality for all citizens.

The recommendations presented here are a starting point. Although they are not comprehensive, they can act as a barometer for departments to examine efforts they have already undertaken. Where possible, resources and links are provided to exemplary work from jurisdictions around the country.

Police departments and law enforcement agencies that have been successful in successfully building stronger accountable relations with LGBTQ+ communities are often ones that have committed to robust community policing principles, including an emphasis on collaboration and outreach. Local community groups are much better situated to provide information and assistance regarding the unique needs of their members. Connecting with and creating ongoing collaborations with local organizations to develop best practices specific to that community will yield high-quality results for years to come.

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About this Guide

As part of the *Vision 21 National Resource Center for Reaching Victims* project of the Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice, FORGE conducted an extensive needs assessment related to challenges and barriers faced by LGBTQ+ crime victims. For many victims, law enforcement (and the resulting response after an incident) is often the first step, or "front door," to services and resources in the aftermath of a crime. Yet FORGE's needs assessment showed that poor, negative, or oppositional relationships with law enforcement were barriers to reporting for LGBTQ+ crime victims. In FORGE's national work with service providers, victim advocates, and law enforcement, many of these stakeholders expressed interest in learning more about how to improve police response and enhance the relationship between law enforcement and LGBTQ+ individuals.

FORGE identified two consultants with experience working in this arena: (1) a sergeant from a large city police department with years of investigative and policing training work and (2) a former victim advocate and training specialist who has worked with dozens of police departments across the country to help them improve their responses to crime victims. These specialists (the authors of this document) conducted a number of site visits in various jurisdictions throughout the country, interviewing officers, administrators, community partners, and allied professionals.

Throughout the interviews, several common themes emerged on how police departments and other law enforcement agencies can best demonstrate their desire to improve community relations.

These included:

- ❯ The importance of law enforcement being **proactive and visible** in LGBTQ+ community efforts and events

- ❯ The importance of **policy and procedure review** and implementation

- ❯ A commitment to **restoring strained and fractured relationships** throughout all ranks (with buy-in stemming from leadership)

- ❯ A willingness to **cultivate new relationships** and collaborations—even with entities that might have had a fractured relationship with law enforcement

- ❯ Acknowledging the real and perceived **harms of past policing** of this community

- ❯ Being vocal on specific issues related to **safety for this community**

The departments selected for site visits were just a few of the many that have taken proactive steps to create effective policies and procedures to improve relations with their local LGBTQ+ community. Their successes, challenges, and lessons learned are reflected throughout this compendium.

WHY SHOULD DEPARTMENTS FOCUS ON LGBTQ+ ISSUES?

LGBTQ+ individuals are a part of every community in America, including among law enforcement. Some communities may contain more LGBTQ+ people than others because the environment is more conducive for them to live and express themselves openly, but no community is void of them. According to the latest estimate from **Gallup**,[i] 4.5% of American adults, more than 11 million, identify as LGBTQ+.[ii] Of the different age groups listed, 8.1% of Millennials (born between 1980 and 1995) identify as LGBTQ+. **One study** showed that only 47% of "Gen Z" respondents (those born between 1995 and 2012) identify as "exclusively heterosexual"; Gen Z respondents reported being far more gender fluid than respondents from previous generations.[iii] Law enforcement will continue to increasingly engage

LGBTQ+ communities, and needs the tools to do so in a way that builds mutual trust and respect.

Recent studies also show that some segments of LGBTQ+ communities have higher rates of victimization than other marginalized communities, especially LGBTQ+ communities of color.[iv] Yet many LGBTQ+ individuals are reluctant to come forward when they have been victimized or have witnessed a crime, due to a lack of trust in the criminal justice system and historically poor relationships with law enforcement. Some feel they will not be believed when they have been the victim of crime, especially in intimate partner or sexual violence investigations. Some worry they will become the subject of the investigation instead. Some fear that by contacting law enforcement they will be "outed" as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer, and it may not be safe for this information to be made public. This lack of trust in law enforcement allows perpetrators to go free without being held accountable, victims to feel they have not received justice, and the public's confidence in law enforcement professionals to diminish.

Nothing destroys a community's faith in its law enforcement and the criminal justice system more than for community members to feel they cannot access this system when they are in need. If any community feels they will not be seen, believed, or understood, or if they feel they will not be treated with the same dignity and respect as others, they will not report when they have been the victim of, or a witness to, a crime. This gap creates an environment where law enforcement no longer protects and serves every member of the community, perpetuating an "us versus them" narrative that damages the very essence of community policing. The

end result is an erosion in trust that makes it both harder and more dangerous for law enforcement professionals to do their jobs.

LGBTQ+ communities are very diverse, and there are LGBTQ+ individuals within all other communities—people of many different races, ethnicities, faiths, gender identities, abilities, body types, nationalities, sexual orientations, education levels, ages, and income levels. Failure to establish a strong, respectful, trusting relationship with the LGBTQ+ community risks law enforcements' legitimacy with society as a whole.

Just as communities change while remaining diverse and vibrant, societal institutions must change as well—a tenant that undergirds community and relational policing. Starting is simple: it begins with acknowledging the mistakes of the past and vowing to do better. Then engage the community in honest, open, and meaningful conversation around how to make improvements. These two initial steps are the foundation of mutual trust and respect, the two ingredients necessary to foster a positive and lasting relationship with LGBTQ+ communities.

To understand the current distrust of law enforcement by LGBTQ+ communities, it's important to consider law enforcement's historical actions with this particular community. When law enforcement began selectively enforcing state and local laws that criminalized being LGBTQ+, it effectively became a tool of oppression against LGBTQ+ people—for example, selectively enforcing anti-sodomy laws, as well as punishing public displays of affection by same-sex couples. During the mid-20th century, law enforcement routinely engaged in raids that targeted LGBTQ+ establishments. While law enforcement did not write or pass legislation that targeted LGBTQ+ individuals, law enforcement was the mechanism for enforcing these discriminatory practices, sometimes violently.

Throughout the history of the United States, local, state, and national governments—backed by medical and mental health fields—have criminalized being LGBTQ+ in myriad ways. Examples include listing homosexuality as a mental disorder by the American Psychiatric Association, anti-sodomy laws that prohibited same-sex sexual acts, and the federal government's purging of out and suspected homosexuals[2] from federal work, fearing them to be "**security risks**."[v]

In an effort to identify and remove LGBTQ+ people from the federal government and any federally funded private contractor, the FBI engaged state and local police officers to supply arrest records of thousands of individuals picked up

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2   Note: the use of the word "homosexual" here is time-bound and was the language of this time in history.

for "morality" charges, irrespective of convictions.[vi] During the 1950s alone, more than 12 million workers, or slightly more than 20% of the U.S. labor force, faced loyalty-security investigations. Anti-homosexual policies spread from the federal government to all levels of employment in the United States. During this time and even up until the present day, many LGBTQ+ individuals did not feel safe and certainly did not feel that law enforcement or the criminal justice system was there to protect them.

On June 28, 1968, the police raided the Stonewall Inn under the pretext of enforcing liquor-licensing infractions. The patrons of the Stonewall Inn, like many other LGBTQ+ patrons at bars across the country, were accustomed to police raids, and were fed up with the oppressive tactics of police targeting establishments simply because they were frequented by LGBTQ+ individuals. The patrons resisted the police in an effort to protest the oppressive conduct and started a riot. While there were other, smaller responses and rejection of police and government oppression of LGBTQ+ people during the 1950s and 60s, the Stonewall Riot was a watershed moment and marks the beginning of the modern LGBTQ+ rights movement. Many Pride celebrations—going back to the first parade in 1970—are held on June 28 each year to commemorate this event.

Although the American Psychiatric Association reversed their decision on homosexuality in 1973 and holds the position that there is no rational basis, scientific or otherwise, to discriminate against or punish LGBTQ+ individuals, the damage had already been done.[vii] Many people in law enforcement, the criminal justice system, and government continued to persecute LGBTQ+ individuals

throughout the remainder of the 20th century. New laws and policies were put in place to continue to oppress LGBTQ+ communities, including "Don't Ask Don't Tell" in 1992 and the "Defense of Marriage Act" in 1996.

Although many states either overturned or stopped enforcing anti-sodomy laws by the later part of the 20th century, it was not until 2003 that the U.S. Supreme Court declared in *Lawrence v. Texas* (539 U.S. 558) that state statutes prohibiting sexual acts between consenting same-sex individuals are unconstitutional. Despite this ruling, several states still have sodomy laws listed in their penal codes. Not purging these laws sends a message to all members of the community that these states do not value LGBTQ+ people as fully equal residents, thereby continuing the reluctance of LGBTQ+ individuals to trust government.

Throughout the rest of the first two decades of the 21st century, strides continued toward LGBTQ+ equality. The Defense of Marriage Act was ruled unconstitutional, Don't Ask Don't Tell was repealed, and in 2015 same-sex marriage was made legal in the case of *Obergefell v. Hodges*. In 2012, the American Psychiatric Association made a major announcement supporting transgender individuals by stating:

"Being transgender or gender variant implies no impairment in judgment, stability, reliability, or general social or vocational capabilities; however, these individuals often experience discrimination due to a lack of civil rights protections for their gender identity or expression. Transgender and gender variant persons are frequently harassed and discriminated against when seeking housing or applying to jobs or schools, are often victims of violent

hate crimes, and face challenges in marriage, adoption and parenting rights."[viii]

Unfortunately, in today's culture, law enforcement continues to have a reputation of being disrespectful and even physically threatening to LGBTQ+ people, particularly transgender individuals. Similarly, officers report interactions with transgender people as one of the most challenging LGBTQ+ issues they face. By focusing reparative efforts on transgender community relations, law enforcement has the opportunity to create great gains in LGBTQ+ trust.

Implementing policies and procedures is important, but understanding the history, acknowledging mistakes, and sincerely vowing never to repeat them not only creates cultural competency but establishes legitimacy with the community as a law enforcement entity. It's as simple as respect.

Impact of History on LGBTQ+ and Law Enforcement Relations Today

National studies demonstrate ongoing distrust between LGBTQ+ communities and law enforcement. A [2012 national survey](#) conducted by Lambda Legal (the nation's oldest and largest LGBTQ+ nonprofit legal organization) found that 14% of more than 2,300 LGBTQ+ respondents had been verbally harassed or mistreated by a police officer in the previous five years. Two percent reported physical assault and 3% reported sexual harassment by law enforcement officers.[ix]

A [2015 national survey](#) of transgender individuals (conducted by the National Center for Transgender Equality, with over 27,000 respondents) demonstrated widespread distrust of law enforcement.[x] Of respondents who interacted with LE officers who thought or knew they were transgender in the past year, 57% said they were never or only sometimes treated respectfully. Further, 58% reported some form of mistreatment, such as being repeatedly referred to as the wrong gender, verbally harassed, or physically or sexually assaulted.

A [2015 report](#) published by the Williams Institute showed that, of 73% of respondents who had face-to-face contact with the police in the previous five years:

- 21% reported encountering hostile attitudes from officers

- 14% reported verbal assault by the police

- 3% reported sexual harassment police

- 2% reported physical assault by law enforcement officers[xi]

Abuse, mistreatment, and misconduct by law enforcement were consistently reported at higher frequencies by respondents of color and transgender and gender non-conforming respondents.[xii]

LGBTQ+ individuals often report that law enforcement discrimination and prejudice remains a significant issue for their communities. A 2017 national study on LGBTQ+ discrimination showed that nearly 1 in 6 LGBTQ+ people reported being discriminated against when interacting with law enforcement. This number was much higher for LGBTQ+ individuals of color.[xiii] In the same survey, 26% of respondents reported that an LGBTQ+ friend or family member had been treated or stopped unfairly by the law enforcement due to their LGBTQ+ identity. When asked specifically about interactions with law enforcement in their local communities, 25% of respondents said lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals often experienced discrimination during police interactions; and 32% of respondents reported that transgender people experienced police discrimination. LGBTQ+ victims of crime are less likely to seek services or assistance from police when they need it: 15% of LGBTQ+ respondents opted not to call the police when in need because they feared that they would be discriminated against by police; and LGBTQ+ people of color were six times more likely than white LGBTQ+ people to avoid calling the police when in need of police services. LGBTQ+ people of color consistently report more negative experiences than do white LGBTQ+ individuals.

> **"LGBTQ+ victims of crime are less likely to seek services or assistance from police when they need it."**

Although each police department cannot singularly bear the brunt or responsibility of decades of police mistreatment of LGBTQ+ individuals, there are practical, proactive steps that departments can take to help heal the wounds of the past and advance toward a more equitable experience for all community members. A commitment to change, and a willingness to engage in the process of positive relational policing, will have a great impact. The rest of this document outlines suggested activities for departments to consider undertaking and implementing.

> **"LGBTQ+ people of color were six times more likely than white LGBTQ+ people to avoid calling the police when in need of police services."**

10 WAYS TO BUILD STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS WITH LGBTQ+ COMMUNITIES

While many departments and agency leaders may realize a need to improve relations with LGBTQ+ community members, some departments may be unsure where or how to start. The following "top 10" list outlines programming that departments should consider implementing. The recommendations include both internal, "inward-facing" agency work as well as external community relations work. They are not meant to imply a linear process, nor are they presented in order of importance or significance. In fact, many actions outlined here could be completed simultaneously.

These recommendations are also designed as starting points for departments, rather than a comprehensive list of tasks to accomplish. Not all departments will be able to incorporate all steps. Agencies will need to consider how best to allocate resources in order to implement the recommendations. As mentioned previously, agency leaders are strongly encouraged to reach out to community partners for assistance and input about what is most needed. Collaboration with community groups on any of these efforts can only enhance the process and make resulting programming more effective and robust. Much of the suggested work outlined here can be tailored and adapted for best local implementation.

> **Collaboration with community groups on any of these efforts can only enhance the process and make resulting programming more effective and robust.**

The 10 suggested recommendations below can be split into two categories: (1) internal/inter-departmental work within agencies and (2) external, public-facing activities.

INTERNAL DEPARTMENTAL WORK INCLUDES:

- Agency assessments and inventories

- Cultural awareness and inclusivity training on LGBTQ+ communities

- Data collection on LGBTQ+ community relations and incidents

- Recruitment strategies inclusive of LGBTQ+ individuals

- Policy and procedure review, creation, and implementation

- External-facing work includes:

- Communication and outreach strategies for better LGBTQ+ relations

- Establishment of LGBTQ+ liaison programming

- Establishment of community/law enforcement advisory boards or feedback forums

- Participation and Visible Support for LGBTQ+ Community Events and Celebrations

- Special initiatives that support LGBTQ+ communities

Internal Department Work

1) Agency Assessments and Internal Inventories

Before beginning new programs or implementing policy changes, it may be helpful to conduct an agency self-audit. Determine what is already working well with respect to LGBTQ+ community relations, as well as known problems or areas of conflict. Use the following as a checklist of items to consider:

- ✓ What programs addressing community–law enforcement relations already exist?

- ✓ What feedback (positive and negative) has the agency received pertaining to LGBTQ+ community relations?

- ✓ Does the department have a glossary or guidance on appropriate terms to use when interacting with LGBTQ+ community members?

- ✓ What best practice models have you seen other departments adopt that you have considered for the department?

- ✓ What community groups does the agency already consult with who could help support this work (LGBTQ+ specific, human/equal rights organizations, civil rights organizations, etc.)?

- ✓ How often do agency members receive training on LGBTQ+ issues?

✓ Does the department have self-identified or out LGBTQ+ members on the police force and/or law enforcement staff?

✓ How are LGBTQ+ personnel supported and protected from discrimination from within the department?

✓ Does the department conduct policy and procedures review related to interactions with LGBTQ+ people?

✓ What mechanisms for measurement and accountability are in place?

✓ How does the agency track complaints of anti-LBGTQ+ bias or mistreatment from officers?

Having a sense of where the department already is will help identify and determine how to reach the long-term goals.

2) Cultural Awareness and Inclusivity Training on LGBTQ+ Communities

The importance and value of training all agency members across ranks and disciplines on LGBTQ+ community relations cannot be overstated. While departmental trainings often include general information on broad cultural sensitivity, a specific focus on issues that uniquely affect LGBTQ+ communities is worthwhile. Certain crimes have unique or specific attributes and the way they impact communities can vary.

WHAT TOPICS SHOULD TRAINING COVER?

Sexual orientation and gender identity topics should be incorporated into new and existing training on a variety of broader topics. However, some LGBTQ+ specific training is also highly recommended. Training on these topics should be ongoing but conducted at least yearly due to the evolving nature of language and terminology. While the following list of topics is not exhaustive, it can help point departments in the right direction:

- **Terminology:** Training on respectful language that agency personnel should use when working with LGBTQ+ populations. Personnel's use of current and proper terminology denotes respect; addressing community members the way they want to be treated and addressed is important. Terms people use to describe their identities evolve, and while no one will remember all terms, a willingness to try goes a long way toward building relationships. Moreover, the benefits of using proper terminology and forms of address extend beyond trust-building—the right words can help personnel avoid escalation of incidents, increasing staff and community safety.

- **Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming, and Non-Binary Individuals:** Training on working with transgender individuals and other people whose gender identities or gender expression differ from societal norms.

- **LGBTQ+ Youth-Specific Topics:** Subjects include homelessness, delinquency, suicidality, and trafficking, among others.

- **Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Assault:** Reporting, documenting, outing, access to shelter and other services. LGBTQ+ victims of these crimes have unique needs and studies have shown that they often do not receive as thorough of a response from law enforcement, as other victims of the same crimes do (but perceptions and responses are changing and improving with more awareness).[xiv] Collaborating with national and local organizations is important in producing effective and accurate trainings, consider starting with these resources: International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and National LGBTQ Institute on IPV.

- **Cultural Competency and Sensitivity:** Understanding how LGBTQ+ people's experience may differ based on race, ethnicity, housing access, economic realities, religion, disability, age, and other attributes.

- **Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV):** Training for law enforcement about HIV transmission and the realities of individuals living with HIV today, as well as guidelines for law enforcement handling matters of alleged HIV (and other sexually transmitted infections) non-disclosure. While important for any department, training on HIV is particularly relevant for departments in jurisdictions with HIV-specific criminal exposure laws.

- **Bias-Motivated and Hate Crimes:** Some states have hate crime laws that are meant to protect LGBTQ+ individuals with regard to both sexual orientation and gender identity. Some such state laws only include sexual orientation protections; some do not include either. Several states have no hate crimes legislation for any

bias motivator.[xv] While some jurisdictions may be limited in their response because of state penal codes, agency personnel should be aware of and familiar with federal hate crime protections. Moreover, even states that do not have hate crimes legislation can still report incidents of bias-motivated acts to the FBI for better federal reporting and publication of these incidents. Staff can also refer victims of LGBTQ+ bias-motivated incidents to the local U.S. Attorney's Office Victim/Witness Assistance Program.

WHO SHOULD RECEIVE LGBTQ+ CULTURAL TRAINING?

Trainings on this population should be department-wide, including officers of all ranks, dispatch, and any employed non-sworn personnel. Certainly, training on these subjects should be part of recruit and academy training, but also should be provided for veteran officers and other personnel, with lessons incorporated into ongoing professional development. Training should be tailored to specific needs of various personnel; specific and tailored advance training on specialized topics should be provided for detectives and investigators and those who will be working with LGBTQ+ populations in specific ways. For instance, special victims' investigators and detectives (such as domestic violence or sex crimes) should receive enhanced training on the unique realities of how those crimes have a distinct impact on LGBTQ+ individuals. First-line personnel should be sure to receive training on respectful terminology and proper procedures for working with transgender/ non-binary individuals.

> **Trainings on this population should be department-wide, include officers of all ranks, dispatch, and any employed non-sworn personnel. … Training should be tailored to specific needs of various personnel; specific and tailored advance training on specialized topics should be provided for detectives and investigators and those who will be working with LGBTQ+ populations in specific ways.**

Training related to these issues should be ongoing, as departments face turnover and officer reassignments and deployments. Concise training bulletins could be provided at roll call and other meetings.

WHO COULD BEST DEVELOP/WRITE THE TRAINING?

The inclusion of subject matter experts from the local community will greatly enhance and enrich training. Consider organizations with experience designing public education modules and training for diverse groups of people, especially organizations with their own expertise or established consultant relationships.

WHAT TYPE OF TRAINING IS BEST?

Trainings that emphasize attention to adult learning styles are most effective. Trainings should incorporate relevant, practical information about working with LGBTQ+ populations that is directly relatable to the experiences of personnel. Research on law enforcement training shows that officers respond well to and learn best from incident-based trainings that use case scenarios and role plays. These types of **training techniques** emphasize learning modules that are

easily applied to on-the-ground conditions.[xvi] Some examples of case scenarios and incidents regarding the unique ways in which officers might interact with and have contact with LGBTQ+ populations include: incidents of intimate partner violence, homeless youth, reports of bias or hate crimes, and how to respond to calls regarding people using the "wrong" restroom or locker room. Trainings can be evaluated by conducting both participant satisfaction surveys with the training but also pre- and post-tests to measure learning.

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WHO SHOULD CONDUCT THE TRAINING?

Some departments "outsource" all special populations training to community groups, such as local or statewide equal rights organizations, local LGBTQ+ specific agencies, or university or campus-based organizations. Other departments keep things "in-house" and only have officers provide trainings. Agencies are strongly encouraged to use a co-facilitation model that includes and incorporates input and perspectives of community members in both the design and delivery of the trainings. Trainings should always include law enforcement personnel, as officers learn best from other officers. However, collaborations with community allies can provide direct community examples, round out perspectives, and foster community partnerships.

Eileen Donahoe
U.S. Ambassador to the Human Rights Council

Brett Parson
Head of the LGBT Liaison Unit of
the Washington DC Police

Some departments have found it helpful to establish a training working group. Such a group, comprised of community members and law enforcement personnel, can outline learning objectives, set expectations, and work together to provide a well-rounded training. Law enforcement trainers can ensure the material covered speaks directly to the officers' learning needs. Community members can speak directly to their experiences and may also be aware of existing training materials that could be beneficial for departments. Community members can assist in the training by being part of role plays, facilitating case scenarios, sharing their own experiences, and ensuring that messages about LGBTQ+ people are accurate and respectful.

The inclusion and involvement of supervisors, leadership, or administrators in the training design can validate the importance of the information. Oversight by and

involvement of superior personnel can also help ensure the implementation of an adherence to procedures and policies resulting from the training.

If the department already conducts LGBTQ+ sensitivity and inclusivity training, consider consulting with local LGBTQ+ community organizations for feedback about how the trainings can be improved and enhanced. Additionally, consider regularly reviewing new legislation and case law with local state or district attorney's offices to ensure that the material presented to agency members is accurate and up-to-date.

A few training resources can be found here:

❯ To request a training to be hosted in your area, and/or for assistance in designing a training for your department, please contact **FORGE**, **Sergeant Michael Crumrine**, or **Rebecca Dreke**.

❯ **Out to Protect** provides LGBT Awareness for Law Enforcement, as well as hosting an online **training platform**.

❯ **The U.S. Department of Justice's Community Relations Service (CRS)** produced a **training video** for law enforcement which provides information, tools, and techniques to help ensure that interactions with members of the transgender community are respectful, professional, and safe for all involved.

> The Seattle Police Department **SPD Partners With Transgender Community on Policyproduced a training video** in partnership with members of the transgender community, highlighting the steps officers will take to ensure transgender individuals are treated with dignity and respect during all contacts with police. The video includes personal stories from transgender individuals in the community.

3) Data Collection on LGBTQ+ Community Relations and Incidents

Many departments already compile a variety of local statistical reports. These reports include data about specific, reported crimes and are often shared annually with federal and other reporting partners. Departments that are not already doing so may want to consider tracking hate or bias-motivated incidents against LGBTQ+ people, including incidents motivated by victims' actual or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Tracking these points of data may foster accountability and lead to better problem solving in policing efforts with these communities.

Departments could also consider tracking the number of interactions with self-identified LGBTQ+ community members. For instance, departments could record the number of individuals detained and searched who self-identify as transgender or non-binary. Additionally, if complainants of domestic or sexual violence self-identify as LGBTQ+ (or share that their identity was a factor in their abuse or assault), this disclosure should be recorded

by agencies. Data can be important for departmental assessment but also for community accountability.[3]

Departments should also review their forms and demographic tools to ensure that there are multiple options for gender. Although a person's legal gender may be required for some fields, data collection should also include gender options for how an individual identifies, which might be male or female, but may also be another gender. Offering additional options, such as "transgender," "non-binary," or providing "another gender" with a write-in option will allow individuals to feel their identity is validated and acknowledged.

The FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) bias-motivated incident codes have been modified to better capture incidents against LGBTQ+ people, including the addition of specific codes related to anti-transgender and anti-gender-nonconforming individuals. Although state penal codes may not include crime classifications for incidents motivated by bias against LGBTQ+ individuals, departments should still consider developing a mechanism to track these incidents, and consider reporting them to the FBI to be included in the Uniform Crime Reporting program (UCR). Hate and bias-motivated incidents against LGBTQ+ people (and other marginalized individuals) are highly underreported, and capturing better data is essential for creating more equitable criminal justice, policy, and victim service responses nationwide. Collection and publication

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3   Unless an individual specifically states that they are part of the LGBTQ+ community, or the officer asks as part of relevant information-gathering during an investigation, a person's identity should not be assumed or guessed at solely for tracking purposes.

of local LGBTQ+ bias data, regardless of state or federal mandates, can also help build transparency and trust with the community.

> **The FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) bias-motivated incident codes have been modified to better capture incidents against LGBTQ+ people, including the addition of specific codes related to anti-transgender and anti-gender-nonconforming individuals.**

4) Recruitment Strategies Inclusive of LGBTQ+ Individuals

Many law enforcement departments have taken steps to better understand and demographically reflect the communities they serve. Recruiting and proactively hiring a diverse pool of individuals, including LGBTQ+ people, as law enforcement officers and other agency personnel can help meet that goal.

IN REVIEWING RECRUITMENT EFFORTS, CONSIDER:

❯ Does the department specifically advertise to LGBTQ+ populations?

❯ Do recruitment efforts specifically mention the department being welcoming to LGBTQ+ personnel?

❯ How might the department indicate to potential new recruits that they will be welcomed and valued?

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR POSITIVE RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES INCLUDE:

- ❯ Advertise in publications read by the LGBTQ+ community, with input from community members and organizations.

- ❯ Consult with LGBTQ+ organizations to make them aware of the agency's recruitment efforts.

- ❯ Reach out to LGBTQ+ community groups.

- ❯ Reach out to partnering agencies.

- ❯ Emphasize inclusion of LGBTQ+ people in all publicized materials.

- ❯ Establish LGBTQ+ officer working groups as part of recruitment efforts. These officers can assist with suggestions both for improved outreach and recruitment efforts, and for thinking through how to best solve issues that may arise with transgender officers who transition on the job.[xvii]

- ❯ Use applications, testing, and other hiring practices that are gender neutral.[4]

In addition to recruitment efforts, emphasize the department's commitment to inclusion by incorporating it as a metric for promotion. Promotion decisions can include an

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4   The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department provides a guide for transgender and gender non-conforming employees. See Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, "An LASD Guide: Transgender & Gender Non-Conforming Employees" (2014), available at http://www.sxpolitics.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/lasd-transgender-employee-guide.pdf

examination of officers' interpersonal and professional skills and whether they work effectively and collaboratively with diverse communities.

Some positive examples of LGBTQ+ police recruiting efforts include those of the **Baltimore Police Department**, the **Dallas Police Department**, and the **San Jose Police Department**.

5) Policy and Procedure Review, Creation, and Implementation

Well-written, clear policies can help ensure both transparency and the provision of proper service to LGBTQ+ community members. Departments should both review existing policies and procedures related to interactions with LGBTQ+ individuals and also consider what new policies need to be created and implemented.

A **review of existing procedures** to determine which need to be updated and revised should include policies related to:

❯ Traffic stops (with variance on state identification documents)

❯ Search and seizure policies, including polices related to sex work/prostitution

❯ Arrest processing/LGBTQ+ individuals in custody, including access to restrooms, medical treatment, and medications while in custody

❯ Response protocols for LGBTQ+ complaints of intimate partner violence or sexual assault

- Response protocols for LGBTQ+ complaints of hate and bias-motivated incidents

- Response protocols for solicitation, public lewdness, loitering, vagrancy, and disorderly conduct to identify any possible LGBTQ+ bias, especially regarding selective enforcement

Drafting and implementing new policies related to interactions with LGBTQ+ individuals can be an important step toward improving community relations. A few areas of policy development to consider are:

- **Non-discrimination** and zero tolerance for LGBTQ+ harassment or bias

- Explicit and specific procedures for the **respectful treatment of transgender people** (including information related to documenting gender identity, searches, arrest, custody procedures, and the explicit prohibition of searches conducted for the purpose of assigning gender based on anatomical attributes and features)

- A "quick tips" or simple glossary for officers and other agency personnel on **appropriate language** for engaging with LGBTQ+ individuals (this guide should be easily accessible by all staff, so that personnel are not required to search through pages of procedure manuals, and local LGBTQ+ organizations should be consulted broadly with to complete this task)

- Procedures regarding "early warning systems" to address and retrain/discipline/reassign officers who engage in **insensitive or abusive behavior**

- Explicit prohibition of **sexual harassment, assault, and misconduct** by officers and other personnel against LGBTQ+ community members

- **Appropriate documentation** of sexual orientation and gender identity in public reports and affidavits

- In addition to male and female, **gender options on forms** and paperwork should be available for individuals to self-identify

- Procedures for responding to incidents with elements of **LGBTQ+ hate or bias motivations**

Considering how to implement new policies, as well as how to ensure adherence, is also critical. Policies, however well written, are only effective when well implemented. Moreover, agency member training and buy-in is also important.

CONSIDER:

- How will agency members receive training on the policy?

- How will new policies be evaluated for effectiveness?

- How will the department receive feedback from community members who are affected by the policies or procedures?

- What types of supervisory enforcement mechanisms exist?

- How will policy violations be addressed?

- How will violations be documented?

Finally, departments should consider making policies transparent and publicly accessible on departmental websites. This simple step can communicate the agency's commitment to fostering public trust.

- For examples of publicly available policies from several departments regarding interactions with transgender individuals, please see:

    - Philadelphia Police Department **Directive 4.15**

    - Hartford Police Department **Departmental Directive DD 17-01**

    - San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit Police Department **Policy Recommendation - Interactions with Individuals Identifying as Transgender**

- For sample policy language to adapt regarding interactions with transgender individuals, please see the **Police Department Model Policy on Interactions with Transgender People** written by the National Center for Transgender Equality.

- For direct, technical assistance in crafting new policy related to LGBTQ+ community interactions, please contact **FORGE**.

> **As a general rule, any newly created policy should be cross-referenced with other Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), patrol guides, and general or standing orders, to ensure consistency across written materials and safeguard against contradictory information being presented to officers and agency personnel.**

"Taking the time to write policies is definitely important. But getting community partners involved in the process is key. Having their involvement can help establish buy-in and give community members some "ownership" over the policies being written—that are about them! When you get them to weigh-in on policies, it shows you are going to be accountable to them."

— SGT. DENISE JONES, CLARK COUNTY, OHIO, SHERIFF'S OFFICE

External-Facing Work: Community Relations Work with LGBTQ+ Communities

6) Communication and outreach strategies for better LGBTQ+ relations

Developing strong outreach strategies, crafting public messaging, and maintaining open dialogue with LGBTQ+ community members help foster positive relations. As was discussed previously, many LGBTQ+ individuals feel underserved and under-protected by law enforcement. Departments are sometimes perceived by the public as inaccessible and reluctant to serve LGBTQ+ communities. Therefore, taking proactive steps to remind the local LGBTQ+ community that the department exists to serve and protect everyone is crucial.

Improved and open communication will also expand law enforcement's collaboration with and access to these communities. To improve dialogue, departments can leverage existing relationships, use key public information officers, and tailor outreach with specific objectives in mind. For instance, does the department want to encourage reporting of crimes against LGBTQ+ victims? Does the agency want to show support for particular community events (e.g., during Pride month)? Does the department want to establish a safe zone project and seek community input?

The following outreach suggestions are examples from real departments and should be tailored to best fit the needs of the agency.

❯ Capitalize on the versatility of social media to cast a wide net. Communications can take several different forms:

> Craft social media campaigns and messaging around specific issues and events. For example, law enforcement agencies/departments can post, or repost, information about LGBTQ+ community events, specific issues that impact LGBTQ+ populations, or LGBTQ+ individuals during other awareness months (such as LGBTQ+ domestic violence facts during Domestic Violence Awareness month in October).

> Be creative and innovative with public information messaging, and engage in current trends and campaigns. For instance, many law enforcement agencies/departments participated in the widely popular "It Gets Better" project.

> Use social media marketing tools to reach LGBTQ+ individuals and remind the public that the department serves and protects everyone in the community.

> Be present on emerging social media platforms, as these are more widely used by younger generations.

❯ Use Public Information Officers but also liasons, district representatives, and others to carry the messages.

❯ Write a column for a local newspaper about an LGBTQ+ topic; use media to spread the word about efforts your department is taking to improve LGBTQ+ relations.

❯ Invite community members to the department for a sit-down, or host an open house with the chief or other leaders.

❯ Participate with exhibits and tables at local events targeted to the local LGBTQ+ community.

- Partner with other law enforcement agencies (municipal, county, state, and even federal) in organizing support for an LGBTQ+ issue or participate collectively in events.

- Invite leaders from LGBTQ+ organizations to your department and ask them how you can demonstrate to their community that you are an inclusive department.

- Attend other community meetings and events, when invited or appropriate.

> **"As with any healthy relationship, communication is the key element for success."**
>
> — **OFFICER JIM RITTER, SEATTLE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

7) LGBTQ+ Liaison Programming

The designation of an LGBTQ+ liaison is one example of an increasingly common departmental practice that fosters improved community relations. Liaisons can help build trust, respect, and understanding between law enforcement and the local LGBTQ+ community.

LGBTQ+ liaisons serve as a point of contact for the LGBTQ+ community. Often liaisons are spokespeople for the department on local LGBTQ+ issues. These individuals can play advisory roles, represent the interests of the department to the community, and be community outreach coordinators. Some department liaisons monitor statistical information regarding crimes committed against LGBTQ+ individuals. If the agency has a Student Resource Officer

(SRO) program, the LGBTQ+ liaison officer (or unit) should also be involved with work in the schools regarding LGBTQ+ student issues.

> **LGBTQ+ liaisons serve as a point of contact for the LGBTQ+ community. Often liaisons are spokespeople for the department on local LGBTQ+ issues. These individuals can play advisory roles, represent the interests of the department to the community, and be community outreach coordinators.**

LIAISONS CAN:

- Assist in developing policy regarding LGBTQ+ interactions

- Assist with enacting policies and procedures related to the department's diversity and equity goals

- Coordinate among various jurisdictional departments, agencies, and offices to improve LGBTQ+ individuals' safety and access to services

- Provide education to the department about the needs of the local LGBTQ+ community

- Attend community events and conduct outreach

- Take incident/criminal reports from community members and conduct follow-up on these reports

- Provide feedback to the department regarding ongoing LGBTQ+ community concerns or complaints

FOR AGENCIES CONSIDERING ESTABLISHING AN LGBTQ+ LIAISON, HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS:

❯ Ensure liaisons are active and responsive to the local LGBTQ+ community

❯ Ensure liaisons are overseeing LGBTQ+ and law enforcement interactions, as well as providing resources

❯ Ensure liaisons have access to the chief or senior leadership

❯ Ensure there is an established liaison role for providing input into policy and decision-making

❯ Ensure liaison duties go beyond simply serving as a repository for community grievances and concerns

❯ Ensure that a department-wide Standard Operating Procedure outlines the roles and responsibilities of liaisons

❯ Understand that it may take time to build trust, particularly if trust has been absent or broken in the past, and that it is important to stick with the program and obtain feedback from the community throughout the process

COMMON AGENCY QUESTIONS INCLUDE:

❯ ***Do liaisons have to be LGBTQ+ identified?*** Liaisons do not have to specifically identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer. However, a commitment to LGBTQ+ equality, understanding of the issues facing the community, and superior interpersonal skills are important qualities for anyone serving in this role.

> ❯ ***Does the liaison have to be one individual or could be a unit?*** Some departments select an individual officer to serve in this role and others establish a unit of officers of varying ranks and assignments. The composition of the department's liaison unit should be determined based on agency size, community need, and available resource allocation.

> ❯ ***Are liaison units expensive?*** Aside from personnel or staff time, liaison units do not need to be cost-prohibitive to departments. Adjusting an officer's work duties to include these efforts can be an effective solution.

> ❯ ***How does a department let the community know it is assigning a liaison?*** In addition to press releases and social media announcements, consult and collaborate with local LGBTQ+ community organizations. Solicit feedback about what is most needed to help improve the relationship with community members. Ask them to help shape the roles and requirements of this position.

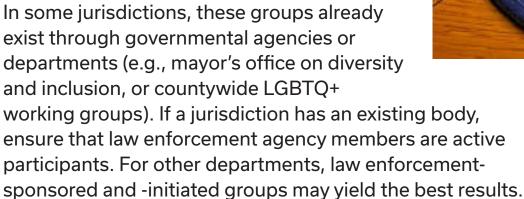Specific and successful LGBTQ+ liaison programs have been implemented by Washington DC's Metropolitan Police Department, the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department, the Gainesville Police Department, and the Annapolis Police Department.

Out to Protect also notes some important items to consider for liaison programs.[xviii]

8) Community/Law Enforcement Advisory Boards or Feedback Forums

To best solicit input and ensure feedback from LGBTQ+ community members, some departments may need to establish a formal feedback mechanism. Feedback structures could include advisory boards, feedback forums, listening sessions, or working groups.

In some jurisdictions, these groups already exist through governmental agencies or departments (e.g., mayor's office on diversity and inclusion, or countywide LGBTQ+ working groups). If a jurisdiction has an existing body, ensure that law enforcement agency members are active participants. For other departments, law enforcement-sponsored and -initiated groups may yield the best results.

These groups can allow law enforcement agencies to learn more about current issues affecting the community and can be tailored to best meets the needs of the local area. Some groups convene only to work on certain issues (e.g., hate crimes reporting), only during certain times (e.g., in advance of and planning for Pride month), or with particular communities (e.g., LGBTQ+ youth).

Other forums may be established to allow for civilian advice and oversight, which may include LGBTQ+ people or other individuals. These advisory boards should have diverse representation from within LGBTQ+ communities, including individuals or organizations representing LGBTQ+ people of color, transgender/non-binary individuals, youth, people with disabilities, and people experiencing homelessness.

The groups can be formal, with set meetings and agendas, or informal (but still regularly scheduled and consistent) such as "Coffee with a Cop."

Jurisdictions that have organized civilian complaint review boards should be sure to recruit and include adjudicators specifically trained to address the complaints and incidents experienced by LGBTQ+ people.

Surveying the community to solicit feedback is also a promising practice. Departments can publish community surveys on department websites and promote them on social media. If you have a university or college in your jurisdiction, consider working with researchers there to help an agency design the survey.

9) Participation and Visible Support for LGBTQ+ Community Events and Celebrations

Departments should ensure they have a supportive presence at any public events that are important to LGBTQ+ communities. For many communities, this opportunity is during Pride marches. Law enforcement presence at these events serves to both provide security and, equally important, to demonstrate support for the community. Engagement with these community-wide events can also support LGBTQ+ identified agency members, prospective recruits, and agency members' family and friends.

While departments should check with community organizers to ensure that law enforcement presence is welcome, it is important that departments make the effort to reach out. In addition to Pride parades, there are usually many community events during Pride month; networking with

and collaborating with community groups to learn how to best participate will help foster trust and ongoing communication.

Many departments make special efforts to show their support of LGBTQ+ communities, especially during Pride month. Departments may choose to create special uniform polos, patches, or pins; change social media banners to display the rainbow colors of Pride; organize public events to recognize LGBTQ+ members of the department; or issue statements in support of Pride that acknowledge, and even apologize for, mistreatment of LGBTQ+ communities by law enforcement in the past.

Visibility is important to LGBTQ+ communities. Finding opportunities to visible support LGBTQ+ community members will enhance their perception of the department as a welcoming and affirming establishment.

> **"What happened should not have happened. … The actions taken by the NYPD were wrong, plain and simple. The actions and the laws were discriminatory and oppressive, and for that, I apologize."**
>
> **— NY POLICE COMMISSIONER NAME O'NEILL, DURING A SAFETY BRIEFING[xix]**

10) Special Initiatives that Support LGBTQ+ Communities

Law enforcement's participation in initiatives specifically designed to address harms against, and develop positive responses to, LGBTQ+ communities can be an important way for departments to demonstrate their support and build trust.

While there are many types of initiatives, the following examples are well-established programs, with comprehensive instruction manuals, training, and technical assistance support.

❯ The **Seattle Police Department (SPD) Safe Place** is a program initiated and managed by the SPD with input from community members and government collaborators. The program was created to address the lack of reported anti-LGBTQ+ bias crimes and bullying incidents. The SPD partnered with hundreds of local businesses and schools. These establishments place a **rainbow sticker decal** at the entrance of their building to indicate that any individual who is the victim of a bias-motivated incident may ask that business or school to call law enforcement on their behalf, and they may stay safe in that premise until law enforcement responds. This initiative has been replicated by several departments across the country. Because it was designed by **law enforcement** and supported by community members, this program is a promising practice.

❯ To encourage LGBTQ+ youth to report, **Safe Zone Project** and **Safe Space GLSEN** curricula are designed to help school resource officers know how to best be allies for LGBTQ+ youth. Also, physical spaces can signal

to youth that they are safe to be out: by maintaining a separate physical space in your department for youth to report incidents, and by posting outward signs of LGBTQ+ support (stickers, decals, posters), youth can feel more comfortable reaching out for help.

❯ Other departments collaborate with local LGBTQ+ centers to facilitate reporting and complaints to the department. As LGBTQ+ victims are often reluctant to call law enforcement or go to the police department to report a bias-motivated incident or other crime, community centers can serve as "neutral" meeting grounds, where staff workers and advocates can call trusted liaison officers to take reports. Leveraging the trust of these established relationships ensures a more accurate and timely report, and also serves as an affirming process for the victim, as they are able to stay in a location where they feel safe. Designing and establishing these types of collaborative initiatives are low cost to departments but can yield high community goodwill.

The development of special initiatives is only as limited as imagination and resources allow. Reaching out to local organizations and community groups to hear their thoughts and ideas is the most effective first step.

CLOSING NOTE FROM THE AUTHORS

The authors of this guide hope that it will serve not only as a road map for how to improve relations with LGBTQ+ communities, but also encourage you and your agency to go on a journey. A journey where every member of the community you have the privilege of serving feels they are seen, heard, respected, trusted, appreciated, and most importantly safe. Go meet your community, get to know them, have coffee with them or buy them a taco and chat. Let the local LGBTQ+ community help you be a better officer, deputy, constable, agent, and agency. Learn from each other and see what kind of amazing experiences you can create. By no means is this guide a definitive list of the only avenues to use in improving relations with LGBTQ+ communities. As agencies work with their communities, they will find additional ways to build strong, positive relations with LGBTQ+ individuals and communities. This guide is a map for how to achieve better relations, but it is up to each person and agency to take the next step.

> **"Over my many years of being a police officer, there's been a strange juxtaposition: I have watched a profession that I love exhibit exclusionary and hurtful practices against the other community to which I love and belong (the LGBTQ+ community). But I have been honored to be part of the evolution towards positive change. The LGBTQ+ community is extremely resilient, as is the field of law enforcement. We can change, we can adapt, and we can find the right, fair, and just path to best protect all members of our community."**
>
> — SGT. MIKE CRUMRINE

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Language that people within LGBTQ+ communities use to refer to themselves, and others, is constantly evolving. The glossary here presents some commonly used terms.

Ally: A person who considers themself a friend to the LGBTQ+ community.

Asexual: The lack of sexual attraction to anyone, or low or absent interest in sexual activity. Sometimes referred to as Ace.

Assigned male at birth, assigned female at birth: See **sex assigned at birth**.

Biphobia: Prejudice, fear, or hatred directed toward bisexual people.

Bisexual: A sexual orientation of a person who is romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of more than one gender (though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way, or to the same degree).

Cisgender: A term used to describe a person whose gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth, or a person who is not transgender.

Coming out: The process during which a person acknowledges, accepts, and appreciates their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, and/or shares this information with others.

Documentation markers: The name and/or gender listed on a person's various identification documents, such as driver's license, birth certificate, Social Security card, passport/visa, and so forth. Some documents are more easily changed, others can be impossible. Transgender people often have documents that don't all match each other, and/or don't match the name and gender that they present in the world.

Gay: A sexual orientation that means a person who is romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of the same gender. Gay is often used to describe men who are attracted to other men, but women who are attracted to other women may also refer to themselves as gay. Sometimes "gay" is used to describe the entire LGBTQ+ population.

Gender expression: The ways in which a person expresses their gender through clothing, grooming, speech, likes and dislikes, body language, social interactions, and other behaviors. Gender expression (also known as gender cues) may intentionally or unintentionally communicate gender to others, and may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.

Gender identity: A person's internal sense of self as being male, female, both, or neither. One's gender identity is not necessarily visible to others. One's gender identity can be the same or different from one's sex assigned at birth.

Gender neutral: A term that describes something (such as a bathroom or clothing) that is not designed for or restricted to people of a specific gender. Some people also identify as gender neutral (or agender, or neutrois) in terms of gender identity, meaning they do not have an internal sense of themselves as a particular gender.

Gender Non-conforming: A broad term referring to people who do not behave in a way that conforms to the traditional expectations of their gender, or whose gender expression does not fit neatly into a category.

Homophobia: The fear and hatred of or discomfort with people who are attracted to members of the same sex.

Intersex: A general term used to describe people who, for a variety of reasons, have biological attributes that don't fit the typical definitions of female or male.

Lesbian: A sexual orientation that describes a woman who is romantically and/or sexually attracted to women.

Mis-gendering: The accidental or deliberate use of a name or gender pronouns that do not reflect the gender with which an individual identifies.

Non-binary or gender non-binary: An umbrella term for gender identities other than male/man or female/woman.

Some non-binary people identify as both woman and man (e.g., bigender people), some identify as a different gender entirely (e.g., genderqueer people), and some do not identify with any gender (e.g., agender people). Non-binary people may or may not identify as transgender.

Outing: Exposing someone's LGBTQ+ identity to others without their permission. Outing someone can have serious repercussions on employment, economic stability, personal safety, or religious or family situations.

Pansexual: A sexual orientation that describes romantic and/or sexual attraction toward people regardless of gender. Many pansexual people feel that gender is insignificant or irrelevant in their attraction to others.

Pronouns (personal pronouns): A word that is substituted for a person or a person's name; the most common personal pronouns are she/her/hers and he/him/his. Other personal pronouns include they/them/theirs (singular), ze/hir/hirs, ze/zim/zirs, and per/per/pers. For more on pronouns, see FORGE's pronoun conjugation chart.

Queer: Queer was originally used pejoratively against LGBTQ+ people but, beginning in the late-1980s, queer scholars, activists, and community members began to reclaim the word. It is now used as an umbrella term for people who are not heterosexual and/or cisgender, and as a specific identity with respect to sexual orientation and/or gender.

Questioning: The questioning of one's gender identity and/or sexual orientation is a process of exploration by people who may be unsure, still exploring, and/or concerned about applying a social label to themselves for various reasons.

Sex assigned at birth: The determination that a newborn is male or female, usually based solely on the appearance of the genitals. The sex assigned at birth is what is recorded on an individual's birth certificate.

Sexual orientation: A term describing a person's inherent or immutable emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction (or none) to other people. Common sexual orientations are straight (heterosexual), gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, pansexual, and asexual. *Transgender* is not a sexual orientation; transgender people can be straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, pansexual, asexual, or any other sexual orientation.

Transgender or trans: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity or expression is different from cultural expectations associated with their sex assigned at birth. Transgender is an adjective, not a noun; thus, "transgender people" is appropriate but "transgenders" is disrespectful. Being transgender does not imply any particular sexual orientation; transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, or any other sexual orientation.

Transgender man or trans man: A person who identifies as male, a boy, or a man, and who was assigned female at birth. Sometimes also referred to as FTM, or female-to-male.

Transgender woman or trans woman: A person who identifies as female, a girl, or a woman, and who was

assigned male at birth. Sometimes also referred to as MTF, or male-to-female.

Transphobia: The fear and hatred of, or discomfort with, transgender people.

Transition: The process a transgender/non-binary person goes through to authentically and intentionally live into their gender identity. Transition can include one or more of these components:

> Social transition: The process of sharing one's true gender identity with others and being perceived and referred to authentically by family, friends, and/or other important people in one's life. Often includes asking people to use a new name and/or pronouns.

> Legal transition: The process of changing one's legal documentation to align with one's gender identity. Often includes legally changing one's name and/or gender markers.

> Medical transition: A process of aligning one's body with one's gender identity. Often includes the use of hormones and/or gender-affirming surgery(ies). Not all transgender people have a desire or the resources to medically transition.

Two-Spirit: A contemporary term used by some Indigenous, Native North Americans to honor their heritage and provide an alternative to the Western labels of gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender. It is not a respectful term for non-Native people to use as an identifier.

i   Frank Newport, "In U.S., Estimate of LGBT Population Rises to 4.5%," *Gallup*, May 22, 2018, available at **https://news.gallup.com/poll/234863/ estimate-lgbt-population-rises.aspx**

ii   Frank Newport, "In U.S., Estimate of LGBT Population Rises to 4.5%," *Gallup*, May 22, 2018, available at **https://news.gallup.com/poll/234863/ estimate-lgbt-population-rises.aspx**

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viii   American Psychological Association, *APA Resolution on Transgender, Gender Identity, and Gender Expression Non-Discrimination* (2008), available at https://www.apa.org/about/policy/resolution-gender-identity.pdf

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xi   Christy Mallory and others, *Discrimination and Harassment by Law Enforcement Officers in the LGBT Community* (San Francisco, CA: Williams Institute, 2015), available at https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/LGBT-Discrimination-and-Harassment-in-Law-Enforcement-March-2015.pdf

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