

Navigating Safety at Pride in 2025

With rising waves of anti-trans legislation across the US, there is evidence that anti-LGBTQ (and specifically anti-trans) rhetoric emboldens people to promote and act out violence. Over the past several years, trans and nonbinary communities have been faced with increasing threats of violence and attacks in community spaces, like the Colorado Springs shooting at Club Q, bomb threats against healthcare clinics offering gender-affirming care, and anti-LGBTQ protests outside of drag events and even schools.



Pride month may bring up emotions that are difficult to navigate, as the desire to celebrate our communities and stand up in resistance to hatred are intermingled with fears about safety in public spaces.

Folks who are attending pride events, or staying home instead of going out, may be carrying fear that extends beyond what's going on in our hometowns.

These fears often come from both a place of awareness about real risks, and past experiences of harm. There are many actions we can take to help us manage these fears and feel (and be) more safe.

1. Plan ahead. Communicate with someone you trust about where you'll be, when you plan to get home, and what they should do if they aren't able to contact you. You may want to plan to meet up with a friend after attending a big event to decompress and process. Familiarizing yourself with the venue, including its policies, layout, exits and easily-identifiable landmarks can be helpful for feeling more prepared if something goes wrong.

2. Be aware of local legislation. Anti-trans legislation, along with laws targeting other marginalized groups (like immigrants, people of color, and people with disabilities) is always changing. If you live in a state with anti-LGBT policies in place, familiarize yourself with what these laws actually mean, and how they might impact you. Check in

with your local community to see if folks have on-the-ground knowledge about how these policies are being enforced (or not).

3. Lean on community knowledge. In response to uncertainty about anti-trans legislation, some people are:

- Avoiding public bathrooms or being strategic about which bathrooms to use.
- Showing up in groups to protect one another / using a “buddy system”
- Presenting gender in a more conforming way that feels safer in specific situations
- Being louder and bolder about identity in a way that feels empowering
- Learning self-defense tactics, both in groups and alone
- And more...

There is no one perfect strategy that will work for everyone, but leaning on our communities and prioritizing our sense of safety can help to reduce fear/anxiety when going out. Remember that our communities have developed and used these kinds of protective tactics across multiple generations!

4. Prepare like you're going to a protest. Some pride events are more action-oriented than others. Whether you're going to a party or a riot or something in between, resources developed for understanding your rights at a protest can be useful. [This article](#) covers essential topics for interacting with law enforcement, like:

- What are some things I can do in advance to prepare for the possibility of getting arrested at a protest/event?
- How do I know whether I'm being detained or if I'm free to go?
- What will happen if I am arrested?
- What do I do if I suspect a friend/loved one has been arrested?

[This guide](#) from the [National Center for Transgender Equality](#) and the [Sylvia Rivera Law Project](#) addresses some trans-specific concerns about participating in direct action, including:

- Risks to be aware of if you are an immigrant, have been arrested in the past, if you are living in a shelter, or if you have disabilities
- What to bring with you to direct action
- How to respond if you are stopped or questioned by the police

If there is a possibility of being arrested, write the number for your local chapter of the [National Lawyers Guild](#) on your arm, or another place on your body where it won't be rubbed off, in case you don't have access to your phone.

Additional resources:

- [Interacting with law enforcement as a transgender person](#)
- [Advice for LGBTQ+ youth attending protests](#)
- [The LGBTQ Freedom Fund](#) pays pretrial bail in Florida and immigration bond in any U.S. state, focusing on LGBTQ individuals. [Find a list of other bail funds here](#)
- [Legal advice for immigrants convicted of crimes](#)
- [Reporting police abuse or misconduct](#)
- [Lambda Legal's Help Desk](#)
- [Trans Legal Services Network Directory](#)

5. Take action to reduce gun violence. In response to anti-trans violence, some folks have started to carry firearms or other weapons to protect themselves. Keep in mind that guns often result in more harm than good, especially in places like at home when there is an abusive partner or family member, and in crowds in public.

Here are some things you can do to reduce gun violence:

- [Learn the stats about trans people and gun violence](#).
- Get guns out of your home. [This article](#) gives seven ways you can safely dispose of guns.
- Read about what [police reform and/or abolition](#) looks like and [which states are taking on police reform](#).

The threats to trans and nonbinary people's safety are very real, and feeling the need to take action to prevent violence is well-founded. However, having a gun in the home does not make trans and nonbinary people safer. When coupled with the [high rates of suicides](#) in trans and nonbinary communities, and the [increased risk of police violence](#) and [intimate partner violence](#), this means that owning a gun can make us more likely to experience harm instead of being safer from it.

In summary:

There are many ways to celebrate pride. We all deserve to celebrate (or not) in ways that feel safest to us—mentally, emotionally, and physically. For some people, this may be dancing to music at a crowded pride event with a group of friends. For others, this may be having a small get-together or doing something creative. And for others, this may be spending time on quiet reflection, and honoring the very real fears and grief we are holding.