



LGBTQI+ EP Application

Contents

- Introduction 1
- LGBTQI+ Endorsement Program Standards – Background 1
- Application Standards 2
- Application: Basic Information 3
- Application: Program Narrative 4
- Application: Documentation..... 7

Introduction

The LGBTQI+¹ Endorsement Program, announced by Governor Hochul in June 2022, is dedicated to reducing the barriers that LGBTQI+ survivors of gender-based violence face when seeking safety. This is a voluntary initiative for domestic violence programs to be endorsed as LGBTQI+ affirming and inclusive in their services, policies and practices, establishing a new commitment to the LGBTQI+ community statewide.

OPDV is grateful for the leadership of NYS OASAS in the development of their own endorsement program which OPDV used as model guidance in developing this endorsement programs for gender-based violence programs.

LGBTQI+ Endorsement Program Standards – Background

The LGBTQI+ Endorsement draft standards were created in an inter-disciplinary working group of experts that was convened by the New York City Anti-Violence Project (AVP) and OPDV. It included representation from the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NYSCADV), the New York State LGBTQI+ Intimate Partner Violence Network (which is coordinated by AVP), and the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). The working group drew from existing tools and strategies, as well as member organizations’ experience and knowledge, to create these standards and guidelines.

OPDV and AVP then brought together multiple groups of stakeholders through hosting Learning Exchanges in Fall 2022 to hear from those who serve LGBTQI+ gender-based violence (GBV) survivors, including LGBTQI+ organizations and domestic violence programs. Data and priorities gathered from these Learning Exchanges have informed every stage of the development of these standards, and ongoing feedback from stakeholders will continue to inform the pilot project and further implementation of these standards. With this input, the draft standards created for use to determine organizations who may receive an LGBTQI+ Endorsement.

OPDV conducted a pilot program to test the standards from April 1, 2023 – March 30, 2024. This application process is informed by the lessons learned in the pilot program.

¹ LGBTQI+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, and + (the plus sign holds space for the expanding and new understanding of different parts of the very diverse gender and sexual identities). The acronym that brings together many different gender and sexual identities that often face marginalization across society.

Application Standards

Programs seeking OPDV LGBTQI+ endorsement and designation as an LGBTQ-affirming gender-based violence service provider must complete this application and submit it by email to Katherine.Grant@opdv.ny.gov with the subject line “LGBTQ Endorsement Application.” Only complete applications will be reviewed.

For the purposes of this endorsement program, a gender-based violence service provider must be any or all of the following:

- OCFS licensed domestic violence residential program.
- OCFS recognized non-residential domestic violence service provider.
- DOH Certified Rape Crisis Program (RCP).
- OVS Funded Victim Assistance Program.

The standards for programs are as follows:

- 1) Demonstrate an organizational commitment to LGBTQI+ inclusive and affirming programming.
- 2) Employ LGBTQI+-affirming strategies with every program participant and colleague.
- 3) Maintain policies and procedures that are in compliance with [federal and state law](#), to ensure LGBTQI+ inclusion and affirmation.
- 4) Utilize data collection processes and forms for staff and program participants that ensure LGBTQI+ inclusion and affirmation.
- 5) Create a welcoming space for LGBTQI+ program participants and staff.
- 6) Establish relationships with local LGBTQI+ organizations and resources.
- 7) Increase and ensure diverse LGBTQI+ inclusion and representation among staff and board.
- 8) Ensure staff and program participants receive training and technical assistance to support LGBTQI+ inclusion.

To be endorsed, applicants will need to successfully submit the following which provides the information necessary for OPDV to determine if the program meets the standards for endorsement:

- 1) Application: Basic Information
- 2) Application: Program Narrative (36 Points)
- 3) Application: Documentation (28 Points)

See attached scoring sheet for information on how the applications will be reviewed.

Application: Basic Information

Agency & Program Name:

Address:

Program Type (check as many as apply):

- OCFS licensed domestic violence residential program
 - 24-hour staff shelter Yes / No
 - Safe Dwelling Yes / No
- OCFS recognized non-residential domestic violence service provider
- DOH Certified Rape Crisis Program
- OVS Funded Victim Assistance Program
- Other

Number of Agency Staff: _____

Number of Domestic Violence Program Staff: _____

Application: Program Narrative

Please use the following as a guide to describe in detail how the agency meets the 8 program standards by creating a separate document and sharing it with OPDV as a PDF.

Program Standard 1: Demonstrate an organizational commitment to LGBTQI+ inclusive and affirming programming.

Please describe in detail how the agency meets the standard, including:

- a. Describe how the agency's mission, vision, or values statement embodies inclusivity and accessibility.
- b. Describe how agency outreach and promotional efforts accurately reflect level and quality of services available to LGBTQI+ clients.
- c. Provide three examples of how your program has accommodated the individualized needs of an LGBTQI+ survivor accessing services.
- d. Provide examples to show how your program demonstrates its commitment to inclusivity.

Program Standard 2: Employ LGBTQI+-affirming strategies with every program participant and colleague.

Please describe in detail how the agency meets the standard, including:

- a. Describe how your program staff determines who is the person causing harm and who is the person experiencing abuse.
- b. Describe your agency's practices that create an affirming environment for LGBTQI+ individuals seeking and receiving services.
- c. Describe your agency's practices that create an affirming environment for LGBTQI+ individuals as employees and colleagues.
- d. Provide an example of how the agency's leadership stays informed about changes in local, state, tribal, and national policies related to gender-based survivors.

Program Standard 3: Maintain policies and procedures that comply with federal and state law, to ensure LGBTQI+ inclusion and affirmation.

Please describe in detail how the agency meets the standard, including:

- a. Describe how your agency prepares staff to respond in the moment and afterward, to acts of discrimination they witness or are made aware of.
- b. Describe how the agency communicates and distributes its nondiscrimination policies and procedures to all clients, including those with disabilities and those with a primary language other than English.
- c. Describe how the agency/program's policies and procedures are communicated to all staff.

Program Standard 4: Create data collection processes and forms for staff and program participants that ensure LGBTQI+ inclusion and affirmation.

Please describe in detail how the agency meets the standard, including:

- a. Describe your agency's hiring practices
- b. Describe your policy/procedure for staff and program participants to change their name/pronouns & SOGIE data and how this information is maintained and kept up to date.

Program Standard 5: Create a welcoming space for LGBTQI+ program participants and staff.

Please describe in detail how the agency meets the standard, including:

- a. Describe how your agency creates a welcoming space for LGBTQI+ program participants and staff.
- b. Describe how agency outreach and promotional efforts accurately reflect level and quality of services available to LGBTQI+ clients.
- c. Describe how the agency/program's policies and procedures are communicated to all staff.
- d. Describe how staff can locate resources that support them in stress management, general wellness, LGBTQI+ specific resources, or for those experiencing gender-based violence.

Program Standard 6: Establish relationships with local LGBTQI+ organizations and resources.

Please describe in detail how the agency meets the standard including:

- a. Describe how you have built and maintained meaningful collaborations with LGBTQI+ organizations or informal groups within your community.
- b. Describe the LGBTQI+ resources your organization makes available to staff and program participants.

Program Standard 7: Increase and ensure diverse LGBTQI+ inclusion and representation among staff and board.

Please describe in detail how the agency meets the standard including:

- a. Describe your agency's recruitment efforts for a diverse workforce/board and demonstrated reach of LGBTQI+ applicants.
- b. Describe your efforts to obtain voluntary disclosure of demographic data from staff or the board.
- c. Describe how your agency collects feedback and recommendations as it relates to inclusion and access.

Program Standard 8: Ensure staff and program participants receive training and technical assistance to support LGBTQI+ inclusion.

Please describe in detail how the agency meets the standard, including:

- a. Describe how the agency stays informed about changes in local, state, tribal, and national policies related to LGBTQI+ accessibility.
- b. Describe the agency's process for determining agency's staff training needs and how often this is assessed.
- c. Provide descriptions of the trainings that your agency requires staff to attend that are designed specifically to improve their skills in LGBTQI+ affirming and including services.

Application: Documentation

Applicants must submit the following documentation which will be reviewed by OPDV in comparison to the 8 program standards.

Program Standard	Documentation – to be submitted to OPDV for review.	Review Standards – to be used by OPDV in scoring applicant.
1,2,5	Brochures/outreach material	Illustrate inclusive and affirming services.
1,5	LGBTQ acceptance and décor in space (images of spaces open to clients and staff)	Create a welcoming space for LGBTQI+ program participants and staff.
2,4	Intake form	Assessments, screenings, intake and client records use inclusive language and provide for optional self-identification related to, at a minimum, name, gender, pronouns and sexual orientation. Examples of these records and forms are included with the applicant's admission.
1,2,3	Sections of the Agency's employee handbook that contains policies/procedures on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nondiscrimination, diversity, and anti-harassment in hiring, compensation, and provision of employee benefits. • Nondiscrimination, anti-bullying, and anti-harassment in the work environment. • Conflict and grievance procedures related to discrimination/harassment based on SOGIE. 	<p>LGBTQ-affirming policies and procedures for program employees are in place, enforced and included in the employee handbook, which is included with the applicant's submission.</p> <p>These policies and procedures include, but are not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nondiscrimination, diversity and anti-harassment in hiring, compensation and provision of employee benefits. • Nondiscrimination, anti-bullying and anti-harassment in the work environment. • Conflict and grievance resolution addressing discrimination/harassment based on SOGIE (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Expression) for employees. • Staff responsibility in responding to threats of violence and disrespectful language/action based on known or perceived SOGIE.
1, 2, 5	Client Bill of Rights and/or Handbook that contains policies/procedures on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nondiscrimination in the provision of services. • Confidentiality of SOGIE information. • Client's right to self-identify. • Conflict, grievance, and complaint procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGBTQ-affirming policies and procedures for clients are in place, enforced and included with admission to services. • Nondiscrimination in the provision of services. • Confidentiality of SOGIE information and the client's right to self-identify. • Conflict, grievance and complaint procedures regarding the above policies

	<p>related to these LGBTQIA+-affirming policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Code of Conduct • Disclosure statement regarding SOGIE Information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All policies and procedures related to LGBTQ client rights are included in the program's Client Bill of Rights or Client Handbook
7	Employee application and interview material	<p>Employee application²:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should allow for optional pronouns, legal and chosen name which sends a clear signal that diversity is welcome. • Transparent job applications with clear instructions. • Clearly defined role, transparent expectations, benefits available, and the use of inclusive language. <p>Interview material:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions are based on the attributes your agency is looking for in a prospective applicant- using the mission statement, program values, and diversity goals to help inform these. • Questions aim to assess prospective applicant's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.
6	Letter of Support or MOU with LGBTQI+ org/group.	<p>Formalizing partnerships with memoranda of understanding or other agreement explicitly outlining:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expedited referral processes. • Mutual training and technical assistance. • Domestic violence organizations support LGBTQIA+ culturally specific organizations to improve and enhance their responses to gender-based violence. • LGBTQIA+ culturally specific organizations support domestic violence organizations to improve and enhance their response to LGBTQIA+ survivors and co-workers. • Outreach strategies to raise awareness among LGBTQI+ GBV survivors of inclusive and affirming services available at the domestic violence organization.

² [Out & Equal Workplace Advocates. Global Toolkit for Change: Assessing your LGBTQI+ Inclusion in your Workplace.](#)



Application: Scoring Sheet

To be completed by OPDV. OPDV will utilize three OPDV team members to review applications and scores will be averaged among all scorers.

NAME OF ORGANIZATION: _____

NAME OF REVIEWER: _____

DATE REVIEWED: _____

Narrative + Documentation Total Points: ____ / 60

Scores ranging from 45 – 60 indicates the agency is achieving the 8 LGBTQ+ Endorsement Program Standards.

Narrative

Total Score: _____

Scoring	Scaling
0	No examples or stated commitment.
1	Agency has stated a commitment toward this standard and has started discussing implementation.
2	Agency has implemented at least 1 strategy. Agency is in development stage and has started planning implementation.
3	Agency has implemented 2 or more strategies/provided satisfactory examples. Agency has introduced implementation within the last 3 months, with an active, full implementation plan.
4	Agency has achieved full implementation by integrating this standard into regular agency practice.

Program Standard 1: Demonstrate an organizational commitment to LGBTQI+ inclusive and affirming programming	
Score	
Notes/Comments	

Program Standard 2: Employ LGBTQI+-affirming strategies with every program participant and colleague.	
Score	
Notes/Comments	

Program Standard 3: Maintain policies and procedures that are in compliance with federal and state law, to ensure LGBTQI+ inclusion and affirmation.	
Score	
Notes/Comments	

Program Standard 4: Create data collection processes and forms for staff and program participants that ensure LGBTQI+ inclusion and affirmation.	
Score	
Notes/Comments	

Program Standard 5: Create a welcoming space for LGBTQI+ program participants and staff.	
Score	
Notes/Comments	

Program Standard 6: Establish relationships with local LGBTQI+ organizations and resources.	
Score	
Notes/Comments	

Program Standard 7: Increase and ensure diverse LGBTQI+ inclusion and representation among staff and board.	
Score	
Notes/Comments	

Program Standard 8: Ensure staff and program participants receive training and technical assistance to support LGBTQI+ inclusion.	
Score	
Notes/Comments	

Documentation

Total Score: ____

Scoring	Scaling
0	Nothing submitted Material submitted was not what was asked for
1	Documentation submitted but did not meet review standards
2	Documentation submitted meeting at least 1 standard at minimum
3	Documentation submitted meeting 2-4 standards
4	Documentation submitted and met review standards fully

Documentation	Review Standards	Scoring
1) Brochure/Outreach Materials ³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed materials/website <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Language is gender inclusive. ○ Language clearly defines specific services tailored to LGBTQI+ survivors. ○ Materials should include images of LGBTQI+ survivors, including those who are male and/or transgender. ○ 	
2) Office Decor ⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGBTQI+ resources are in the waiting area/website. • Providing enough public restrooms, including gender-inclusive restrooms, in public spaces can make them more welcoming. • Art, lighting, and designs made by or representative of the LGBTQI+ community. 	

³ [NYS LGBTQI+ IPV Network: Service Access Assessment Toolkit](#)

⁴ [NYS LGBTQI+ IPV Network: Service Access Assessment Toolkit](#)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visible and explicit message on supporting LGBTQI+ community. • Staff space has LGBTQI+ resources present. • Waiting area or public areas should have your non-discrimination policy posted. • The agency's non-discrimination personnel policy should be available in languages other than English. 	
3) Intake Form ⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessments, screenings, intake and client records use inclusive language. • Intake allows for optional self-identification related to, at a minimum, name, gender, pronouns and sexual orientation. • Forms should avoid gender-specific terms, such as asking about "husband/wife" or "mother/father." 	
4) Employee handbook that contains policies/procedures on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nondiscrimination, diversity, and anti-harassment in hiring, compensation, and provision of employee benefits • Nondiscrimination, anti-bullying, and anti-harassment in the work environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nondiscrimination, diversity and anti-harassment in hiring, compensation and provision of employee benefits. • Nondiscrimination, anti-bullying and anti-harassment in the work environment. • Conflict and grievance resolution addressing discrimination/harassment based on SOGIE (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Expression) for employees. • Staff responsibility in responding to threats of violence and disrespectful language/action based on known or perceived SOGIE. 	
5) Client Bill of Rights and/or Handbook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nondiscrimination in the provision of services. • Confidentiality of SOGIE information and the client's right to self-identify. • Conflict, grievance and complaint procedures regarding the above policies. • All policies and procedures related to LGBTQ client rights are included in the program's Client Bill of Rights or Client Handbook. 	

⁵ [National LGBT Health Education Center. Focus on Forms and Policy: Creating and Inclusive Environment for LGBT Patients.](#)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency confidentiality policy surrounding LGBTQ+ and/or TGNCNB BIPOC survivors and the consequences for violating this policy. 	
<p>6) Employee application and interview material⁶</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender-inclusive job description removes vocabulary, terminology and structure that could be considered as biased towards one gender or another. A standard interview format with identical questions for all candidates reduces interviewer bias and promotes diversity.⁷ Question themes include the candidate’s commitment to diversity; handling uncomfortable workplace environments and situations; and collaborating with diverse colleagues.⁸ 	
<p>7) Letter of Support or MOU with LGBTQI+ org/group⁹</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of each organization is clearly defined. Ground rules for important procedures, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How decisions will be made. Who will speak to the media. What should be considered confidential. How information will be distributed The role of representatives. Any other important procedural guidelines. MOU signed within last 12 months. 	

⁶ [LinkedIn. How to Make Your Recruitment Strategy More LGBTQIA+ Inclusive](#)

⁷ [Hanover Research. Tools for Conducting and Inclusive Interview](#)

⁸ [Hanover Research. Tools for Conducting and Inclusive Interview](#)

⁹ [Caminar Latino. Transformational Collaboration: Considerations to Apply a Racial Equity Lens.](#)