

## LGBTQ Terminology

**Ally** – (noun) a (typically straight- or cis-identified) person who supports, and respects members of the LGBTQ community. While the word doesn't necessitate action, we consider people to be active allies who take action upon this support and respect, this also indicates to others that you are an ally.

**Asexual** – (adj) having a lack of (or low level of) sexual attraction to others and/or a lack of interest or desire for sex or sexual partners.

**Biological Sex** – (noun) a medical term used to refer to the chromosomal, hormonal and anatomical characteristics that are used to classify an individual as female or male or intersex. Often referred to as simply “sex,” “physical sex,” “anatomical sex,” or specifically as “sex assigned [or designated] at birth.”

**Bisexual** – (adj) a person emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to male/men and females/women. Other individuals may use this to indicate an attraction to individuals who identify outside of the gender binary as well and may use bisexual as a way to indicate an interest in more than one gender or sex (i.e. men and genderqueer people). This attraction does not have to be equally split or indicate a level of interest that is the same across the genders or sexes an individual may be attracted to.

**Cisgender** – (adj; pronounced “siss-jendur”) a person whose gender identity and biological sex assigned at birth align (e.g., man and male-assigned). A simple way to think about it is if a person is not trans\*, they are cisgender.

**Gay** – (adj) (1) a term used to describe individuals who are primarily emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to members of the same sex and/or gender. (2) An umbrella term used to refer to the queer community as a whole, or as an individual identity label for anyone who does not identify as heterosexual.

**Gender Expression** – (noun) the external display of one's gender, through a combination of dress, demeanor, social behavior, and other factors, generally measured on scales of masculinity and femininity. Also referred to as “gender presentation.”

**Gender Identity** – (noun) the internal perception of an one's gender, and how they label themselves, based on how much they align or don't align with what they understand their options for gender to be. Common identity labels include man, woman, genderqueer, trans, and more.

**Homosexual** – (adj) a [medical] term used to describe a person primarily emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to members of the same sex/gender. This term is

considered stigmatizing due to its history as a category of mental illness, and is discouraged for common use (use gay or lesbian instead).

**Intersex** – (adj) someone whose combination of chromosomes, gonads, hormones, internal sex organs, and genitals differs from the two expected patterns of male or female. In the medical care of infants the initialism DSD (“Differing/Disorders of Sex Development”). Formerly known as hermaphrodite (or hermaphroditic), but these terms are now considered outdated and derogatory.

**Lesbian** – (noun/adj) a term used to describe females/women-identified people attracted romantically, erotically, and/or emotionally to other females/women -identified people.

**Nonbinary** is a term that refers to people whose gender is not completely and exclusively male or female. They can identify with not having gender at all, with both binary genders, with a third identity, or an identity which can change over time.

**Pansexual** – (adj) a person who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction for members of all gender identities/expressions.

**Queer** – (adj) used as an umbrella term to describe individuals who don’t identify as straight. Also used to describe people who have non-normative gender identity or as a political affiliation. Due to its historical use as a derogatory term, it is not embraced or used by all members of the LGBTQ community. The term queer can often be use interchangeably with LGBTQ.

**Questioning** - (verb & adjective) an individual who or when someone is unsure about or is exploring their own sexual orientation or gender identity.

**Sexual Orientation** – (noun) the type of sexual, romantic, emotional/spiritual attraction one feels for others, often labeled based on the gender relationship between the person and the people they are attracted to (often mistakenly referred to as sexual preference).

**Straight** – (adj) a person primarily emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to people who are not their same sex/gender. A more colloquial term for the word heterosexual.

**Trans\*/Transgender** – (adj) (1) An umbrella term covering a range of identities that differ from socially defined gender norms. Trans with an \* is often used to indicate that

you are referring to the larger group nature of the term. (2) A person who lives as a member of a gender other than that expected based on anatomical sex.

**Transphobia** – (noun) the fear of, discrimination against, or hatred of trans\* people, the trans\* community, or gender ambiguity. Transphobia can be seen within the queer community, as well as in general society. Transphobia is often manifested in violent and deadly means. While the exact numbers and percentages aren't incredibly solid on this, it's safe to say that trans\* people are far more likely than their cisgender peers (including LGB people) to be the victims of violent crimes and murder.