

# Know Your Rights, Protect Our Rights

## Glossary of Important LGBTQ Rights Terms

**Asexual:** An adjective used to describe people who do not experience sexual attraction (e.g., asexual person). A person can also be aromantic, meaning they do not experience romantic attraction. ([GLAAD.org](http://GLAAD.org))

**Gay:** The adjective used to describe people whose enduring physical, romantic, and/ or emotional attractions are to people of the same sex (e.g., *gay man, gay people*). Sometimes *lesbian* (*n.* or *adj.*) is the preferred term for women. Avoid identifying gay people as “homosexuals” an outdated term considered derogatory and offensive to many lesbian and gay people. ([GLAAD.org](http://GLAAD.org))

**Gender Identity:** An individual’s internal sense of being male, female, or something else. Since gender identity is internal, one’s gender identity is not necessarily visible to others. ([National Center for Transgender Equality](http://NationalCenterforTransgenderEquality.org))

**Gender Expression:** How a person represents or expresses one’s gender identity to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, voice or body characteristics. ([National Center for Transgender Equality](http://NationalCenterforTransgenderEquality.org))

**Gender Non-conforming:** A term for individuals whose gender expression is different from societal expectations related to gender. ([National Center for Transgender Equality](http://NationalCenterforTransgenderEquality.org))

**Genderqueer:** A term used by some individuals who identify as neither entirely male nor entirely female. ([National Center for Transgender Equality](http://NationalCenterforTransgenderEquality.org))

**Hate Crime:** A criminal offense against a person or property motivated in whole or in part by an offender’s bias against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity. ([FBI Website](http://FBIWebsite.org))

**Hate Speech:** Speech that is intended to insult, offend, or intimidate a person because of some trait (as race, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability)... Under the First Amendment, individuals do have a right to speech that... is offensive and hateful. ([American Bar Association](http://AmericanBarAssociation.org))

**Human Rights Partisans:** As human rights advocates, we are not aligned with any political party; we actively support and protect universal human rights. (HRWSTF)

**Intersex:** A term used for people who are born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy and/or chromosome pattern that does not seem to fit typical definitions of male or female. Intersex conditions are also known as differences of sex development (DSD). ([National Center for Transgender Equality](http://NationalCenterforTransgenderEquality.org))

**LGBTQIA:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual. ([GLAAD.org](http://GLAAD.org))

**Queer:** A term used to refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual and, often also transgender, people. Some use queer as an alternative to "gay" in an effort to be more inclusive. Depending on the user, the term has either a derogatory or an affirming connotation, as many have sought to reclaim the term that was once widely used in a negative way. ([National Center for Transgender Equality](http://NationalCenterforTransgenderEquality.org))

**Sexual Orientation:** A term describing a person’s attraction to members of the same sex and/or a different sex, usually defined as lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, or asexual. ([National Center for Transgender Equality](http://NationalCenterforTransgenderEquality.org))

**Transgender:** A term for people whose gender identity, expression or behavior is different from those typically associated with their assigned sex at birth. Transgender is a broad term and is good for non-transgender people to use. "Trans" is shorthand for "transgender." (Note: Transgender is correctly used as an adjective, not a noun, thus "transgender people" is appropriate but "transgenders" is often viewed as disrespectful.) ([National Center for Transgender Equality](http://NationalCenterforTransgenderEquality.org))