



Style Guide



TUCSON LGBT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE STYLE GUIDE

Tucson LGBT Chamber of Commerce

P.O. Box 14312 | Tucson, AZ 85732 | 520.615.6436
tucsonlgbtchamber.org | info@tucsonlgbtchamber.org



Language is ever evolving therefore context and empathy is key to understanding. This Style Guide is not a blanket permission to use these terms - what is acceptable can change from setting to setting, person to person.

If you are corrected, this is the perfect opportunity to practice a good and sincere apology. Apologies are the remedy for microaggressions and we need to recognize others' feelings and how we have hurt them.

Be authentic and genuine. Give space and grace and be willing to learn.



Of Special Note

Community:

- When referring to the broader community, "queer" (as in "queer people" or "LGBTQ" as in "LGBTQ people") is appropriate. "Gay" is not. "LGBTQ" is only appropriate when referring to the broader community or groups of people, not when referring to individuals.

Discrimination:

- Opt for "anti-gay" rather than "homophobic"; "anti-trans" rather than "transphobic."
- In place of "homophobia," use "anti-trans/anti-gay/anti-LGBTQ prejudice /discrimination/bias," etc.



Of Special Note Continued

Identification:

- Unless you already know based on research, it should be standard to ask how people identify themselves: gay, bi, genderqueer, queer, trans, etc.
- A person can be trans WITHOUT also being gay or lesbian. Don't assume.
- Use "cisgender" (rather than "non-trans") to refer to a person who is not transgender. "Cis" is also acceptable shorthand.
- "Trans" and "transgender" are generally interchangeable

Marriage:

- Use "marriage equality" and "marriage for same-sex couples" rather than "gay marriage." Avoid "gay marriage" and "same-sex marriage" — as GLAAD notes, these terms "can suggest marriage for same-sex couples is somehow different than other marriages."

"Openly" vs. "Out"

- "Openly" is preferred over "out" as a modifying phrase, e.g., "openly gay" or "openly trans," but the terms can be used interchangeably if a writer or subject prefers. Be mindful, however, of whether a modifier is necessary given a story's or sentence's context; using it may be redundant.

Pride:

- Capitalize "Pride" in reference to Pride Month and as shorthand for a proper name or event after first full reference. Examples: The NYC Pride Parade is Sunday. We went to Pride on Sunday. There are several Pride events this weekend.
- Use "pride flag" instead of "rainbow flag" or "rainbow pride flag."



Of Special Note Continued

Pronouns:

- Always defer to the pronouns a person uses for themselves. (It's not rude to ask. In fact, it's encouraged to ask, "What pronouns do you use?")
- If it is unclear what pronoun a person uses and it's not possible to ask them, use "they"/"themselves."
- Instead of saying "preferred pronoun," describe the pronoun with which someone identifies in neutral terms, e.g., "Sam Smith uses 'they'/'them' pronouns."

Transgender Terms: Some of these are adapted from the [GLAAD Transgender Glossary of Terms](#)

- Transgender: An umbrella term (adj.) for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. People under the transgender umbrella may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, so use the descriptive term preferred by the person. Transgender people may or maynot decide to alter their bodies hormonally and/or surgically.
- Transsexual: An older term (NOT an umbrella term), which originated in the medical and psychological communities. Use as an adjective and only if preferred by an individual.
- Cross-dressing: To occasionally wear clothes traditionally associated with people of the other sex. "Cross-dresser" should NOT be used to describe someone who has transitioned to live full time as the other sex or who intendsto do so in the future.
- Always use a transgender person's chosen name. It is never appropriate to put quotation marks around either a transgender person's chosen name or the pronoun that reflects that person's gender identity.

Of Special Note Continued

- Deadnaming: The preferred term in the community for using a trans person's assigned name at birth. Generally avoid the practice of deadnaming in stories, unless it is preferred by the subject.
- Please use the correct term or terms to describe gender identity. For example, a person who transitions to become female is a transgender woman, whereas a person who transitions to become male is a transgender man.
- Avoid pronoun confusion when examining the stories and backgrounds of transgender people prior to their transition. It is usually best to report on transgender people's stories from the present day instead of narrating them from some point or multiple points in the past.
- Use "anti-transgender bathroom bill" ("anti-LGBTQ bathroom bill" is OK in a hed or where space is limited) to describe legislation geared at banning transgender/nonbinary people from using bathrooms that correspond to their gender identity.
- Use sex reassignment surgery (SRS) or gender affirmation surgery.

