LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan

2024-2028

To receive this document in another format, phone insert phone number, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or email the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion team <inclusion@health.vic.gov.au>.

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

© State of Victoria, Australia, Department of Health, June 2024 (2312685).

Except where otherwise indicated, the images in this document show models and illustrative settings only, and do not necessarily depict actual services, facilities or recipients of services. This document may contain images of deceased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. 'Indigenous' or 'Koori/Koorie' is retained when part of the title of a report, program or quotation.

ISBN - 978-1-76131-474-2 (online/PDF)

Available at the Department's website <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/lgbtiqa-workplace-inclusion-action-plan-2024-2028>

Victoria State Government | Department of Health

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The Department of Health acknowledges Victorian Traditional Owners of Country. We pay respect to their cultures and Elders, past and present. We acknowledge the diversity of Aboriginal Victorians, their communities and cultures.

We recognise the intrinsic connection of Traditional Owners to Country. We acknowledge that the impact of colonisation still exists today. We are seeking ways to correct past wrongs, including through Treaty. We are working together to create a better future for all Victorians to enable true self-determination for Aboriginal people. We recognise that Aboriginal knowledge can enrich efforts towards LGBTIQA+ equality.

We will continue to build understanding and respect of the intersection within and between Aboriginal and queer cultures, to benefit all Victorians. We will do this through the actions arising from Treaty and this plan.

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

A message from the Secretary

I am delighted to share with you the Department of Health's LGBTIQA+ Workplace Inclusion Action Plan 2024-28.

At the heart of the Action Plan is our unwavering commitment to a workplace culture defined by inclusivity, respect, and safety for all employees. And a commitment that explicitly and actively embraces staff of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity.

My belief in the power of diversity is not just a sentiment. It is a truth that animates who we are and the decisions we make. One that should be visible in our actions. Each one of us should feel safe and free to bring their authentic self to work. Through that we foster an environment where all of us can flourish and where we can be a better, more effective organisation.

As we unveil our Action Plan, I'm proud to highlight the strides we've already made in enhancing LGBTIQA+ inclusion. Our recent recognition as an Australian Workplace Equality Index Bronze employer is one external measure of

our progress. Though as I said when I announced that award, it should mark only the beginning of our journey. There is no intent to stop at Bronze. Bronze is not who we are.

Over the next four years I invite each of you – actually I need each of you, of us – to join our pursuit of a workplace that not only embraces diversity but celebrates it. Because our diversity is a cause for celebration. This isn't about tolerance or acceptance - such negative phrasing I've always thought. It's much deeper and more meaningful than that. We should all feel confident and excited about sharing who we are.

As part of our journey, it's necessary that we confront the unique challenges faced by the LGBTIQA+ community in the workplace. Even if it is uncomfortable. I believe that it is only by hearing and understanding the experiences of our LGBTIQA+ colleagues that we can progress. By trying to walk in their shoes. That way we set the stage for real and meaningful actions that empower individuals to thrive personally and professionally.

A huge thanks to our Pride Network and all those who have contributed their time, passion, and experiences to this Action Plan. Our job is to now bring the actions to life.

I look forward to working alongside each of you as we set off on the next steps of our journey together with a destination way beyond Bronze.

Aye yours.

Professor Euan Wallace AM
Secretary, Department of Health

4

A message from our LGBTIQA+ Executive Champions

We are proud to be Executive Champions of the LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan.

Our LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan is one that supports the inclusion and celebration of LGBTIQA+ diversity across the department. As the proud champions of this action plan, we are passionate about LGBTIQA+ equality and are deeply committed to modelling, guiding, and supporting the important actions of this foundational plan.

Feeling welcomed, valid, and accepted at work are intrinsic to our health and wellbeing. The implementation and actioning of this plan will bring us steps closer to being not only an employer of choice for LGBTIQA+ staff, but to being a model of how Victorian workplaces can and should support the health and wellbeing of all Victorians.

We are proud to have a higher-than-average workforce proportion identifying as LGBTIQA+ (12.9%). When we talk about celebrating difference and diversity, we also mean difference and diversity within the LGBTIQA+ community. Embedded within, and crucial to this action plan, is a recognition of the intersectionality of experience across

our workforce, and within the department's LGBTIQA+ community.

Our People Matter Survey (PMS) results clearly demonstrate there is significant difference in the overall wellbeing of LGBTIQA+ and non-LGBTIQA+ staff wellbeing at work. What the results also demonstrate is that within the LGBTIQA+ staff community, trans and gender diverse staff members have disproportionately lower wellbeing than diverse sexuality staff. This plan recognises the additional layers of discrimination experienced by trans and gender diverse employees and commits to dedicated actions that will help us work towards achieving equality

in outcomes for our trans and gender diverse colleagues.

The 4 focus points of the plan provide us with a clear framework of what the department aims to achieve over the next four years. We look forward to working with you in championing the implementation of Key actions and actions within the plan.

Katherine Whetton
Deputy Secretary, Mental Health and Wellbeing

Daen Dorazio
Deputy Secretary, Health Funding, Finance and Investment

5

A message from our Pride Network Co-Chairs

We all have the right to feel safe, included, valued and respected at work. This is particularly important for LGBTIQA+ staff and young people, who often do not feel this way in our community. There is still much to do as we strive to be an exemplar LGBTIQA+ employer. But our department's recent achievements in supporting LGBTIQA+ inclusion are a credit to us all.

It is pleasing to see community attitudes towards rainbow people are changing, and so too is the LGBTIQA+ community itself The willingness of our department's staff to learn, understand and adapt to the evolving needs of their rainbow peers is something we celebrate and admire.

On behalf of the Pride Network, we share our thanks to everyone who has contributed to this action plan.

We commend the leadership of our colleagues in bringing its outcomes to life.

Tracey Chung
Pride Network Co-Chair

Toby Sherring
Pride Network Co-Chair

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Contents

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Summary

The Rainbow Flag

Created in 1978 by Gilbert Baker, the iconic Pride Rainbow flag originally had eight stripes. The colors included pink to represent sexuality, red for healing, yellow for sun, green for serenity with nature, turquoise for art, indigo for harmony, and violet for spirit. In the years since, the flag now has six colors. It no longer has a pink stripe, and the turquoise and indigo stripes were replaced with royal blue.

Illustration © 2024 Outright International

Summary

This LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan stands as a commitment to recognising and celebrating the diversity of LGBTIQA+ identities in our workforce. It underlines our dedication to addressing the unique challenges faced by LGBTIQA+ people in various aspects of life and work. It also emphasises the need for targeted initiatives.

True progress stems from collaboration. This plan was co-created with our Pride Network and through consultation with the broader departmental workforce. Together, we have created an ambitious action plan grounded in evidence, research and best practice. This plan includes the expertise of LGBTIQA+ staff and leaders across the sector.

This action plan extends on the significant progress the department has already made including:

- maintaining an active Pride Network, with an increasing membership base including member allies

- being awarded 2022 VPS Pride Network of the year (joint with the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Pride Network)

- implementing a successful gender affirmation policy and toolkit for managers and staff

- better uptake of staff listing their pronouns in signature blocks

- being awarded Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) bronze employer status for LGBTIQA+ inclusion in December 2023.

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**
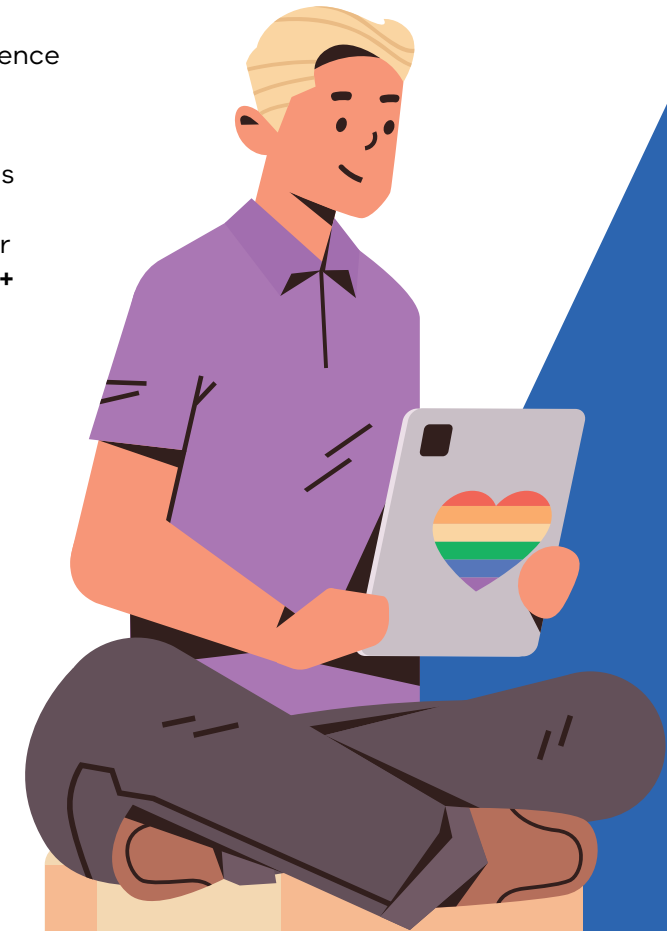
The action plan aims to:

- end homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and LGBTIQA+ inequality in our workplace

- promote LGBTIQA+ inclusion and celebrate LGBTIQA+ culture

- grow, attract and retain our LGBTIQA+ workforce and leadership

- be the best LGBTIQA+ employer in the state.

It provides us with tangible and implementable actions that will help us dismantle the systemic barriers that exclude and devalue our LGBTIQA+ staff and their experiences. The action plan has 4 key focus areas:

- **Leadership with Pride** – actively championing diversity, challenging discrimination and cultivating an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and respected and free to be themselves, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

- **LGBTIQA+ inclusive employment** – implementing a proactive LGBTIQA+ inclusive employment approach, our department will lead the way in responsive job design, recruitment and retention strategies so we can become an employer of choice for Victoria's LGBTIQA+ communities.

- **LGBTIQA+ inclusive and safe workplaces** – enabling employees to feel comfortable about sharing their identity and being their true selves at work.

- **Equitable LGBTIQA+ employee outcomes** – ensuring intersectionality is understood, celebrated and measured, and taking actions to ensure LGBTIQA+ staff experience workplace equality.

This plan serves as our roadmap for all staff, people leaders and executives across the department to be part of the change and to work together towards realising our vision: **To be Victoria's exemplar LGBTIQA+ inclusive employer.**

Our approach

Progress Pride Flag

Created in 2018 by nonbinary artist Daniel Quasar, the Progress Pride flag is based on the iconic 1978 rainbow flag. With stripes of black and brown to represent marginalized LGBTIQ+ people of color and the triad of blue, pink, and white from the trans flag, the design represents diversity and inclusion.

Illustration © 2024 Outright International

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Our approach

Vision statement

To be Victoria's exemplar LGBTIQA+ inclusive employer

Purpose

The aim of this action plan is to:

- end homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and LGBTIQA+ inequality in the workplace

- promote LGBTIQA+ inclusion and celebrate LGBTIQA+ culture

- grow, attract and retain our LGBTIQA+ workforce and leadership

- be the best LGBTIQA+ employer in the state.

Key focus and outcome areas

1. Leadership with Pride

1.1 Senior leaders and people managers model LGBTIQA+ inclusion

1.2 All staff are empowered to be LGBTIQA+ active allies

1.3 LGBTIQA+ values-based work is recognised and rewarded

1.4 Achieve Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) gold employer recognition and work towards achieving platinum

2. LGBTIQA+ inclusive employment

2.1 Achieve LGBTIQA+ employment and leadership targets

2.2 Recruitment, onboarding and induction are LGBTIQA+ inclusive

2.3 LGBTIQA+ employment entitlements are equitable

2.4 LGBTIQA+ employees are supported to develop and progress into senior leadership positions

2.5 Remove cisnormative and heteronormative bias from human resources policies, systems and processes

3. LGBTIQA+ inclusive and safe workplaces

3.1 The department proactively prevents and responds to instances of homophobia, transphobia and biphobia

3.2 Workplaces are safe and accessible for trans and gender diverse staff

3.3 Specialised LGBTIQA+ employee supports are available and accessible

3.4 LGBTIQA+ employees are free to be their authentic selves at work

4. Equitable LGBTIQA+ employee outcomes

4.1 LGBTIQA+ cultural diversity and intersectionality are understood, measured and celebrated

4.2 LGBTIQA+ women and trans, non-binary and gender diverse staff experience gender equality in the workplace

4.3 LGBTIQA+ employees experience equal outcomes in the workplace

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Evidence and call for change

LGBTIQA+ people continue to face discrimination based on their gender identity and sexual orientation. This leads to poorer physical health, mental health, economic, and social outcomes than in the broader community.

LGBTIQA+ people face higher rates of exclusion, discrimination and harassment across social environments, including in the workplace. [1]

LGBTIQA+ Victorians face increased levels of violence, harassment and discrimination, with:

- 58% of LGBTIQA+ Victorians having faced unfair treatment based on sexual orientation

- 78% of trans and gender diverse Victorians having faced unfair treatment based on their gender identity

- 33% of LGBTIQA+ Victorians from multicultural backgrounds having faced unfair treatment based on their ethnicity, cultural identity or heritage. [2]

1   DeSouza ER, Wesselmann ED and Ispas D (2017) 'Workplace discrimination against sexual minorities: subtle and not-so-subtle', Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences, 34(2):121–132.

Waite S (2020) 'Should I stay or should I go? Employment discrimination and workplace harassment against transgender and other minority employees in Canada's federal public service', Journal of Homosexuality, 68(11):1833–1859.

2   Hill AO, Bourne A, McNair R, Carman M and Lyons A (2021) Private Lives 3: The health and wellbeing of LGBTQ people in Victoria: Victoria summary report. ARCSHS Monograph Series No. 130. Melbourne, Australia: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University.

Diversity within diversity

There is significant diversity within the LGBTIQA+ community. A recent Australian study into workplace wellbeing across nuanced sexual and gender identity groups showed that some groups within the LGBTIQA+ community face increased levels of discrimination and stigma. This leads to poorer workplace wellbeing outcomes. [3] The study analysed data from the 2020 Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) employee survey of LGBTIQA+ respondents from 146 workplaces. It compared employee results from different genders and sexualities within the LGBTIQA+ responses. The study found that bisexual, pansexual, queer, asexual people and trans men employees reported much lower levels of workplace wellbeing than gay and lesbian people.

The study also found that non-binary employees experienced lower levels of workplace wellbeing than cisgender-identifying people. Other studies have shown that environments for trans and

gender-diverse people can be particularly challenging, especially for people undergoing gender affirmation in the workplace, who are more likely to experience distress, anxiety and depression. [4]

Gender inequality at work is still a significant issue for non-binary, trans and gender diverse people. Trans and gender diverse people are twice as likely to be out of work and twice as likely to experience adverse job outcomes when compared with cisgender-identifying employees. [5]

Discrimination, bullying, violence and harassment remain significant issues facing LGBTIQA+ employees in Australian workplaces. [6]

3   Donaghy M and Perales F (2022) 'Workplace wellbeing among LGBTQ+ Australians: exploring diversity within diversity', Journal of Sociology, https://doi.org/10.1177/14407833221118383.

4   Brewster ME, Velez B, DeBlaere C and Moradi B (2012) 'Transgender individuals' workplace experiences: the applicability of sexual minority measures and models', Journal of Counselling Psychology, 59(1):60–70.

5   Davidson S and Halsall J (2016) 'Gender inequality: nonbinary transgender people in the workplace', Cogent Social Sciences, 2(1); Grant JM, et al. (2011) Injustice at every turn: a report of the national transgender discrimination survey, National Centre for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce, Washington DC. Available at: https://www.thetaskforce.org/resources/injustice-every-turn-report-national-transgender-discrimination-survey/

6   Australian Human Rights Commission, Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex equality: violence, harassment and bullying and the LGBTI communities. Available at: https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/lgbtiq/lesbian-gay-bisexual-trans-and-intersex-equality#fn53; Irwin J (2002) The pink ceiling is too low: workplace experiences of lesbians, gay men and transgender people, Australian Centre for Lesbian and Gay Research.

LGBTIQA+ employee outcomes in the department

The department has a higher proportion of staff identifying as LGBTIQA+ than the broader Victorian population. This is compared with the latest Victorian population data. The department's 2023 People Matter Survey (PMS) results show that 12.1% of respondents identified as either gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual or using a different term and approximately 0.8% identified as trans, non-binary or gender diverse.

Findings from the Victorian Population Health Survey 2017 show that 5.7% of Victorians identify as being LGBTIQA+. [7]

But it is well known that the LGBTIQA+ population size is underreported. [8] This is due to issues around safety to report and limitations of data collection methods. This includes leaving out LGBTIQA+ data in the Australian Census. [9]

The PMS is the Victorian public sector's independent employee opinion survey. The survey includes questions about diverse sexualities and genders. It also has questions about employee experiences in the workplace. The department's 2023 PMS results show disparities in employee experience by diverse sexualities and genders.

7   Victorian Agency for Health Information (VAHI) (2020) The health and wellbeing of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer population in Victoria: findings from the Victorian Population Health Survey 2017, State of Victoria, Melbourne.

8   Carmen M, Farrugia C, Bourne A, Power J and Rosenberg S (2020) Research matters: How many people are LGBTIQ?, Rainbow Health Victoria, La Trobe University.

9   Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023) Statement of regret: 2021 census. Available at: https://www.abs.gov.au/media-centre/media-statements/statement-regret-2021-census; LGBTIQ+ Health Australia (2022) 2021 Census Data shows nothing for LGBTIQ+ Australians. Available at: https://www.lgbtiqhealth.org.au/2021_census_data_shows_nothing_for_lgbtiq_australians

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Disparities in diverse sexualities – 2023 PMS

Compared with heterosexual employees, in 2023, gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual employees:

- experienced less employee engagement

- had lower scores in questions about inclusion

- were less likely to say 'I can be myself at work', 'I feel culturally safe at work' and 'I feel as if I belong at this organisation'

- experienced greater 'high' to 'severe' levels of work-related stress

- experienced higher levels of bullying, violence or aggression, sexual harassment and discrimination

- were less likely to agree with the statement that 'senior leaders actively support diversity and inclusion in the workplace'.

Disparities in diverse genders – 2023 PMS

In 2023, trans, gender diverse and non-binary employees:

- experienced more bullying and sexual harassment than diverse sexuality employees and experienced much higher levels of bullying, violence/aggression, sexual harassment and discrimination compared with cisgendered employees

- indicated lower results on questions about 'inclusion in the workplace' compared with diverse sexuality and cisgendered employees

- experienced significantly lower feelings of 'belonging to the organisation' than diverse sexuality and cisgendered employees

- were less likely to agree that the organisation uses 'inclusive and respectful images and language'

- were less likely to agree with the statements 'the organisation has fair promotion processes' and 'that all employees have an equal chance at promotion' when compared with diverse sexuality and cisgendered employees

- were less likely to agree with the statement 'I feel safe to challenge inappropriate behaviour at work' when compared with diverse sexuality and cisgendered employees.

Addressing these disparities and improving LGBTIQA+ employee experience is a key focus of this plan.

Consultation process and key themes

In 2023, the department's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion team (People Branch) led consultation across the department, alongside the Pride Network.

This included focus groups with LGBTIQA+ staff and sessions with broader departmental employees. These were open to everyone. We held 3 rounds of consultation and 8 co-design workshops. These resulted in forming the key focus areas, actions and outcomes detailed in this plan.

During consultations, attendees and Pride Network members had some positive things to say. They told us the department is making great progress towards LGBTIQA+ inclusion. However, there are some areas that still need improving.

Key achievements acknowledged during the consultation included:

- an active Pride Network, with an increased membership base including member allies
- the department's Pride Network being awarded the 2022 VPS Pride Network of the year (joint with the DFFH Pride Network) and the Secretary being awarded the 2022 VPS Pride Executive Champion of the year
- the appointment of Pride Executive Champions from across the department
- increased LGBTIQA+ communications and awareness and a notable number of celebrations of LGBTIQA+ events throughout the calendar year including a fireside chat with the Secretary and Pride Network members at an all-staff forum
- increased uptake of employees using pronouns in their signature blocks
- an updated gender affirmation workplace policy and toolkit for managers and their employees affirming their gender
- our continuing partnership with Pride in Diversity (the Australian peak body for workplace LGBTIQA+ inclusion) to ensure inclusive policy and practice, and access to best practice LGBTIQA+ inclusion and trans awareness training

- being awarded the AWEI rating as a bronze employer status for LGBTIQA+ inclusion in December 2023.

Some of the key areas for improvement included:

- the need to improve LGBTIQA+ and gender diverse employee experience outcomes in PMS results
- a more rigorous approach to monitoring, reporting and analysing of LGBTIQA+ workforce and experience data to develop targeted initiatives to improve LGBTIQA+ employee outcomes
- creating a more LGBTIQA+ inclusive approach to recruitment, onboarding and induction, particularly for trans and gender diverse employees
- increased leadership and development opportunities for LGBTIQA+ staff
- increased visibility of signage and symbols to promote LGBTIQA+ inclusion
- 'all-gender bathroom' facilities improvements
- a safe and streamlined reporting process for reporting discrimination
- a greater focus on intersectionality and applying an intersectional lens in the department's work.

Focus Area 1
Leadership with Pride

Trans Flag

Conceived by Monica Helms, an openly transgender American woman, the Trans flag debuted in 1999. The light blue and light pink symbolize the traditional colors for baby girls and baby boys, respectively. Meanwhile, the white hue represents movement members who identify as intersex, gender-neutral, or transitioning. According to Helms, the flag is symmetrical, so "no matter which way you fly it, it is always correct, signifying us finding correctness in our lives."

Illustration © 2024 Outright International

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Focus Area 1
Leadership with Pride

The department is committed to leading with pride. We will foster an inclusive workplace culture where LGBTIQA+ people are not only accepted – but celebrated for their contributions. This involves:

- championing diversity
- challenging discrimination
- cultivating an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and respected.

We want our staff to feel free to be themselves, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. By driving LGBTIQA+ inclusion from the top and promoting diverse leadership, we strive to create an environment that:

- attracts top talent
- promotes innovation
- establishes our organisation as a beacon of inclusivity and progress.

Research shows that organisations that foster a strong sense of inclusion, including LGBTIQA+ inclusion, report improved perceptions of belonging, fairness, comradery and career development prospects.

These aspects all contribute to increased productivity and innovation. Most importantly, they contribute to better LGBTIQA+ employee safety and wellbeing. [10]

We have made great progress. But our staff told us to be an exemplar LGBTIQA+ employer we need to do more by:

- driving LGBTIQA+ inclusion accountability at the leadership level
- advocating for active LGBTIQA+ allyship
- supporting values-based work
- striving to attain the highest AWEI employer ranking.

Our leaders must set the tone for inclusivity. Through leading by example, our people leaders and managers will embody LGBTIQA+ inclusion in their words, actions and decisions. This will create an environment where everyone feels respected, valued and empowered to be their best.

10   Diversity Council Australia (2021) Inclusion@Work report 2021–22 edition: Mapping the state of inclusion in the Australian workforce. Available at: https://www.dca.org.au/research/project/inclusionwork-index-2021-2022; Hunt V, Prince S, Dixon-Fyle S and Yee L (2018) Delivering through diversity, McKinsey and Company. Available at: https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/delivering-through-diversity; International Labour Organisation (2022) Transforming enterprises through diversity and inclusion. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/actemp/publications/WCMS_841348/lang--en/index.htm

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Focus area 1: Leadership with Pride

Outcomes	Key actions		Accountability leads	Deliverable years	Key indicators
1.1 Senior leaders and people managers model LGBTIQA+ inclusion	1.1.1	Observe, celebrate and promote visibility of LGBTIQA+ days of significance broadly to all department employees	• Communications and Engagement Branch	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	• Manager and people leader completion rates of Foundations LGBTIQA+ inclusion eLearn training • AWEI survey results related to organisational inclusion commitment to people of diverse sexuality and/or gender • LGBTIQA+ PMS results related to senior leaders actively supporting diversity and inclusion in the workplace
	1.1.2	LGBTIQA+ Executive Champions communicate their support for LGBTIQA+ inclusion across the department each year	• LGBTIQA+ Executive Champions • Communications and Engagement Branch	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	
	1.1.3	LGBTIQA+ Executive Champions support the Pride Network and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion team to advocate for advancing LGBTIQA+ inclusion initiatives	• LGBTIQA+ Executive Champions	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	
	1.1.4	The department participates with a strong presence at the annual Melbourne Pride March, supported by senior executives	• Senior leaders • People Operations and Planning, People Branch • Communications and Engagement Branch	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	
	1.1.5	Conduct a review of existing department leadership training to incorporate diversity and inclusion leadership modules, including the challenges and opportunities of LGBTIQA+ inclusion, as part of the leadership/management training suite	• Learning and Development, Organisational Effectiveness Branch • Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Years 1, 2	
	1.1.6	Executive champions and senior leaders further their understanding of LGBTIQA+ inclusion through leadership development opportunities beyond department standard training offerings	• LGBTIQA+ Executive Champions • Senior leaders	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	
	1.1.7	Include mandatory LGBTIQA+ inclusion eLearning for managers and people leaders as part of the department's compliance training suite	• Learning and Development, Organisational Effectiveness Branch	Year 3	

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Focus area 1: Leadership with Pride

Outcomes	Key actions		Accountability leads	Deliverable years	Key indicators
1.2 All staff are empowered to be LGBTIQA+ active allies	1.2.1	Promote uptake of the department's Foundations of LGBTIQA+ Inclusion eLearn and other facilitated LGBTIQA+ inclusion training to all staff alongside department learning and development opportunities	• Learning and Development, Organisational Effectiveness Branch	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	• All staff completion rates of Foundations LGBTIQA+ inclusion eLearn training • All staff completion rates of facilitated LGBTIQA+ inclusion and trans awareness and allyship training • Number of PDPs including LGBTIQA+ inclusion goals • AWEI survey results related to being an active ally
	1.2.2	Explore options to include LGBTIQA+ inclusion eLearning in the department's compliance training for all department staff	• Learning and Development, Organisational Effectiveness Branch	Year 4	
	1.2.3	Deliver quarterly facilitated LGBTIQA+ inclusion and trans awareness and allyship training to all staff in the department. Deliver regular communications to promote uptake of training	• Learning and Development, Organisational Effectiveness Branch	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	
	1.2.4	Communicate and promote the use of Diversity and Inclusion PDP goals, including LGBTIQA+ inclusion PDP goals	• Learning and Development, Organisational Effectiveness Branch • Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	
	1.2.5	Develop and deliver a 'How to be an LGBTIQA+ Ally Guide', including how to be an active ally, and make this guide accessible to all staff via department-wide communications	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch • Communications and Engagement	Year 1	

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Focus area 1: Leadership with Pride

Outcomes	Key actions		Accountability leads	Deliverable years	Key indicators
1.3 LGBTIQA+ values-based work is recognised and rewarded	1.3.1	Explore options to fund the Pride Network to operate sustainably to support an LGBTIQA+ inclusive workplace and support LGBTIQA+ events and days of significance	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch • Deputy Secretary People, Operations, Legal and Regulation	Year 3	• AWEI survey results related to LGBTIQA+ Network visibility and promotion • Number of PDPs including diversity and inclusion goals
	1.3.2	Each year, senior leaders recognise outstanding contributions of employees for LGBTIQA+ inclusion, and communicate this across the department	• LGBTIQA+ Executive Champions • Communications and Engagement Branch	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	
	1.3.3	Include goals in the Performance Development Plan (PDP) goal library that formally recognise staff contributions to diversity and inclusion (including LGBTIQA+ inclusion), and staff network contributions. Develop manager and staff guidance material to support diversity and inclusion goal PDP planning	• Learning and Development, Organisational Effectiveness Branch • Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Year 2	

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Focus area 1: Leadership with Pride

Outcomes	Key actions		Accountability leads	Deliverable years	Key indicators
1.4 Achieve Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) gold employer recognition and work towards achieving platinum	1.4.1	Each year, the department participates in the Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) annual survey on LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion, with a minimum of 200 survey responses completed	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch • Senior Leaders	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	• Annual AWEI survey results • Department's AWEI recognition status • Department's AWEI scorecard • AWEI LGBTIQA+ inclusion awards results
	1.4.2	Each year, review the AWEI survey results to inform the implementation of this plan and to inform the development of future LGBTIQA+ inclusion initiatives where required	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	
	1.4.3	Ensure all gold standard AWEI requirements are addressed in implementing this action plan	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Years 3, 4	
	1.4.4	Review and incorporate lessons from AWEI platinum employers to ensure LGBTIQA+ inclusive best practice	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Years 3, 4	

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Focus Area 2
LGBTIQA+ inclusive employment

Intersex Flag

With a palette of yellow and purple, which are colors historically associated with intersex people, this flag was created in July 2013 by Morgan Carpenter. The flag's colors and symbols "seek to completely avoid... anything to do with gender," and the purple circle "symbolizes wholeness, completeness and our potentialities," according to Carpenter.

Illustration © 2024 Outright International

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**
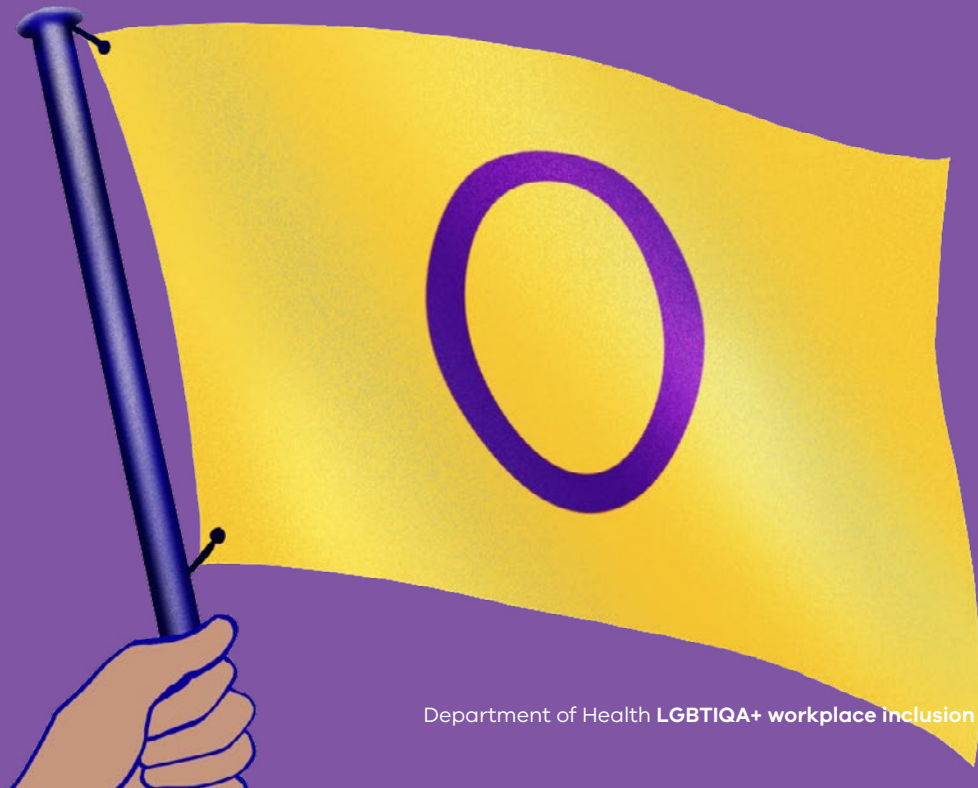
Focus Area 2 LGBTIQA+ inclusive employment

We strive to foster inclusive, equitable and supportive job opportunities for LGBTIQA+ staff. A diverse and inclusive workforce: drives innovation, improves employee wellbeing and enhances organisational performance.

LGBTIQA+ staff continue to face significant barriers to job and promotion opportunities. This is particularly the case for trans and gender diverse employees, LGBTIQA+ women and culturally diverse LGBTIQA+ staff.

LGBTIQA+ discrimination happens across occupations and workplaces and throughout the job cycle. Discrimination against LGBTIQA+ people is compounded by intersecting factors including:

- sex
- ethnicity
- race
- health status
- migrant status
- nationality
- social class
- different abilities.[11]

There are situations where LGBTIQA+ people have overcome some of these barriers. But staff can continue to face systemic discrimination within organisations through exclusionary and cisnormative and heteronormative corporate policies and practices.

Discrimination and social exclusion of LGBTIQA+ people contribute to poorer health and wellbeing outcomes for LGBTIQA+ Victorians. Our department's vision is for *Victorians to be the healthiest people in the world*. To achieve this, we need to shift the dial for LGBTIQA+ health and wellbeing. We know it's LGBTIQA+ people who know best how to do this. A focus of this plan is on recognising the important contribution our LGBTIQA+ colleagues make. It is their expertise we want in working with LGBTIQA+ communities to design and deliver inclusive and culturally safe LGBTIQA+ health and wellbeing services, policies and programs. This will improve health and wellbeing outcomes for Victoria's LGBTIQA+ communities.

---

11   International Labour Organisation (2022) Inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQA+) persons in the world of work: a learning guide. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/publication/wcms_846108.pdf

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Focus Area 2
LGBTIQA+ inclusive employment

As a department, our LGBTIQA+ workforce composition is higher than that of the broader Victorian population. This is consistent with the LGBTIQA+ workforce composition across the Victorian Public Service. It is important we continue to maintain this, ensuring equitable LGBTIQA+ employee outcomes. By implementing a proactive LGBTIQA+ inclusive employment approach, our department will lead the way in responsive job design, recruitment strategies and retention rates.

This will help us become an employer of choice for Victoria's LGBTIQA+ communities. We will do this by:

- embedding LGBTIQA+ workforce and leadership targets to maintain and exceed the Victorian public service (VPS) and the government sector

- attracting more LGBTIQA+ employees to grow LGBTIQA+ innovation, better enabling us to improve LGBTIQA+ community health outcomes

- revamping recruitment, onboarding and induction processes to ensure they recognise the needs of trans and gender diverse employees

- advocating for equitable LGBTIQA+ work entitlements

- tackling cisnormative and heteronormative bias in corporate policies, systems and processes.

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Focus area 2: LGBTIQA+ inclusive employment

Outcomes	Key actions		Accountability leads	Deliverable years	Key indicators
2.1 Achieve LGBTIQA+ employment and leadership targets	2.1.1	Embed workforce targets to maintain the LGBTIQA+ workforce composition aligned to broader VPS LGBTIQA+ workforce representation (VPS currently 12.5%)	• Deputy Secretaries (Divisional workforce planning) • Business partners, Organisational Effectiveness Branch	Years 2, 3, 4	• Headcount and FTE of LGBTIQA+ employees (when available) • Headcount and FTE of non-binary/trans/gender diverse employees • Percentage of LGBTIQA+ employees in leadership positions • Percentage of non-binary/trans/gender diverse employees in leadership positions • Number of LGBTIQA+ special measures roles
	2.1.2	Embed leadership workforce targets to grow the proportion of the LGBTIQA+ workforce composition in leadership positions, aligned to the broader LGBTIQA+ workforce representation (VPS currently 12.5%)	• Deputy Secretaries (Divisional workforce planning) • Business partners, Organisational Effectiveness Branch	Years 2, 3, 4	
	2.1.3	Allocate a VPS resource dedicated to improving workplace LGBTIQA+ inclusion and for leading the implementation and monitoring of this plan	• Deputy Secretary People, Operations, Legal and Regulation • People Branch	Year 1	
	2.1.4	Develop, publish and promote an LGBTIQA+ employer of choice attraction campaign	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch • Communications and Engagement Branch	Year 3	
	2.1.5	Promote the uptake of designated LGBTIQA+ special measures provisions when recruiting to lived experience and specialist roles. Explore options to promote prioritised LGBTIQA+ special measures roles more broadly	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch • People, Operations and Planning, People Branch	Years 2, 3, 4	
	2.1.6	Revise human resources special measures recruitment processes and workforce data capture to include LGBTIQA+ designated and prioritised special measures provisions	• People, Operations and Planning, People Branch • Common Corporate Support Branch	Year 1	

Focus area 2: LGBTIQA+ inclusive employment

Outcomes	Key actions		Accountability leads	Deliverable years	Key indicators
2.2 Recruitment, onboarding and induction are LGBTIQA+ inclusive	2.2.1	Deliver tailored, facilitated, role specific LGBTIQA+ and trans/gender diverse human resources management training to the People Branch and Organisational Effectiveness Branch	• Learning and Development, Organisational Effectiveness Branch	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	• AWEI survey results related to a positive recruitment experience for gender diverse applicants • LGBTIQA+ PMS results related to fair recruitment and promotion • Number of LGBTIQA+ applicants, including successful recruitment outcomes • Number of trans and gender diverse applicants, including successful recruitment outcomes
	2.2.2	Embed a process whereby all new recruitment/talent acquisition employees are provided with LGBTIQA+ inclusive recruitment training materials/resources and undertake Foundations of LGBTIQA+ training	• People, Operations and Planning, People Branch • Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Year 2	
	2.2.3	Develop and publish LGBTIQA+ and trans and gender diverse inclusive recruitment resources and make these accessible to hiring managers and HR specialists. Incorporate these resources into Manager Essentials training	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Year 1	
	2.2.4	Update onboarding processes and forms to ensure onboarding responds to the needs of trans and gender diverse people, including the ability to adequately record gender and sexuality diversity	• People, Operations and Planning, People Branch	Years 1, 2	
	2.2.5	Continue to promote the department's Pride Network and LGBTIQA+ and trans awareness training at induction	• Learning and Development, Organisational Effectiveness Branch	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	
	2.2.6	Establish and advertise dedicated avenues of support for trans and gender diverse applicants through the application process	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch • People, Operations and Planning, People Branch	Year 1	

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Focus area 2: LGBTIQA+ inclusive employment

Outcomes	Key actions		Accountability leads	Deliverable years	Key indicators
2.3 LGBTIQA+ employment entitlements are equitable	2.3.1	Support Pride Networks across the VPS to review gender affirmation leave and associated gender affirming treatment leave as part of future Enterprise Bargaining Agreement negotiations	• Workplace Relations, People Branch • Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Year 4	• AWEI survey results related to corporate policies' recognition of gender diversity and LGBTIQA+ inclusion
	2.3.2	Update resources and policy procedures for parents and carers to recognise the needs of LGBTIQA+ families	• Workplace Relations, People Branch • Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Years 1, 2	
	2.3.3	Update family violence resources to include recognition of the needs of LGBTIQA+ people and identify specialist LGBTIQA+ avenues for support	• Workplace Relations, People Branch	Year 1	
	2.3.4	Update travel policies and guidelines to include international travel safety advice for LGBTIQA+ employees	• Common Corporate Support Branch	Year 1	

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Focus area 2: LGBTIQA+ inclusive employment

Outcomes	Key actions		Accountability leads	Deliverable years	Key indicators
2.4 LGBTIQA+ employees are supported to develop and progress into senior leadership positions	2.4.1	Establish an LGBTIQA+ leadership development fund to identify and support high performing LGBTIQA+ employees undertake professional leadership development opportunities	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Year 4	• LGBTIQA+ PMS survey results related to career progression • Number of LGBTIQA+ employee leadership development opportunities
	2.4.2	Support LGBTIQA+ and Pride Network leaders to attend LGBTIQA+ leadership development opportunities, LGBTIQA+ inclusion conferences and networking events	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	
	2.4.3	Promote uptake for staff to identify their LGBTIQA+ status and/or LGBTIQA+ ally status as part of the department online mentor matching program	• Learning and Development, Organisational Effectiveness Branch	Years 2, 3, 4	

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Focus area 2: LGBTIQA+ inclusive employment

Outcomes	Key actions		Accountability leads	Deliverable years	Key indicators
2.5 Remove cisnormative and heteronormative bias from human resources policies, systems and processes	2.5.1	Review all remaining human resources policies, processes and training materials to ensure they are inclusive of LGBTIQA+ people, partners and families and any gender-binary and heteronormative bias is removed	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch • Workplace Relations, People Branch • Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing, People Branch • Learning and Development, Organisational Effectiveness Branch	Year 3	• AWEI survey results related to corporate policies recognition of gender diversity and LGBTIQA+ inclusion
	2.5.2	Review and update processes for employees to accurately report their gender identity, intersex and LGBTIQA+ status on department HR management systems.	• People, Operations and Planning, People Branch • Common Corporate Support Branch	Year 2	
	2.5.3	Establish a process for employees to record a name change, enabling accurate recording of an employee's name for ICT, security and other systems that reflects their gender identity	• Common Corporate Support Branch • Enterprise Technology Branch	Year 2	

Focus Area 3
LGBTIQA+ inclusive and safe workplaces

Nonbinary Flag

With a quartet of horizontal stripes of yellow, white, purple, and black, the nonbinary flag was conceptualized by Kye Rowan in 2014. The yellow stripe represents those whose genders do not exist within the binary. White and purple correspond to people identifying with all or many genders and those who may consider themselves a mix of female and male. Lastly, the black stripe accounts for those who identify as having no gender.

Illustration © 2024 Outright International

Focus Area 3

LGBTIQA+ inclusive and safe workplaces

We will build inclusive and safe workplaces where diversity and inclusion flourish. In such a workplace, every person will feel respected, valued and able to bring their authentic selves to work.

LGBTIQA+ Victorians continue to face discrimination. Fifty-eight per cent of LGBTIQA+ Victorians have faced unfair treatment based on sexual orientation. Around 78% of trans and gender diverse Victorians have faced unfair treatment based on their gender identity. And 33% of LGBTIQA+ Victorians from multicultural backgrounds have faced discrimination based on their ethnicity, cultural identity or heritage.[12]

Workplaces that drive inclusive cultures are far more likely to have more LGBTIQA+ people 'out' in the workplace. They have a more welcoming and innovative culture. Research shows that LGBTIQA+ employees who have to conceal their sexual orientation and gender identities at work have less creativity and innovation. Being 'out' at work increases confidence in sharing new ideas.[13] In a 2018 survey of 1,600 Australian LGBTIQA+ employees, 74% of respondents said it was important to them to be out at work. But only 32% were out to everyone at work.

For trans and gender diverse employees, only 22% were out to everyone at work. [14]

Workplaces that respond to the needs of LGBTIQA+ employees enable their staff to feel comfortable about sharing their identity and being their true selves. An LGBTIQA+ inclusive culture requires genuine and bold leadership. This includes the willingness to call out homophobia, transphobia and biphobia.

We recognise the unique challenges LGBTIQA+ staff face in the workplace. Through this action plan, we commit to ending homophobia, transphobia and biphobia. But we also need to better respond to the needs of LGBTIQA+ employees. We will do things differently by:

- driving a culture to end homophobia, transphobia and biphobia in the workplace
- ensuring our workplaces are safe for LGBTIQA+ staff
- ensuring there are accessible bathrooms and facilities for trans and gender diverse staff
- delivering specialised LGBTIQA+ employee supports
- building workforce capability of LGBTIQA+ inclusion.

12   Victorian Government (2022) Current outcomes for LGBTIQA+ Victorians: Pride in our future. Available at: https://www.vic.gov.au/pride-our-future-victorias-lgbtiq-strategy-2022-32/current-outcomes-lgbtiq-victorians

13   Brown C, O'Leary J, Trau R, Legg A (2018) Out at work: from prejudice and pride, RMIT University. Available at: https://www.rmit.edu.au/content/dam/rmit/documents/staff-site/our-rmit/policy/hr/DCA_Out_at_Work_Full_Report.pdf

14   Ibid.

Focus Area 3 - LGBTIQA+ inclusive and safe workplaces

Outcomes	Key actions		Accountability leads	Deliverable years	Key indicators
3.1 The department proactively prevents and responds to instances of homophobia, transphobia and biphobia	3.1.1	Update bullying and harassment policies and guidelines to include explicit examples of what is unacceptable behaviour that targets people who identify as LGBTIQA+	• Workplace Relations, People Branch • Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing, People Branch	Years 1, 2	• Instances recorded of homophobia, transphobia and biphobia • Instances of discrimination and inappropriate behaviour experienced by LGBTIQA+ employees compared to broader workforce • AWEI survey results related to experiences of discrimination and exclusion based on sexuality and gender identity • PMS results related to instances of negative behaviours including discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment, violence and aggression against LGBTIQA+ staff
	3.1.2	Update incident reporting systems to enable staff to report incidents of discrimination towards LGBTIQA+ employees. Ensure system updates include the ability to extract and report on diversity data, so that comparisons of incidents of discrimination and inappropriate behaviour can be drawn between the LGBTIQA+ workforce and the broader workforce	• Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing, People Branch	Year 1, 2	
	3.1.3	Update policies and guidance material to provide an inclusive and supportive process for employees to safely report incidents of discrimination without fear of reprisal. • Include complaints and appeals processes	• Workplace Relations, People Branch • Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing, People Branch	Years 1, 2	
	3.1.4	Develop staff wellbeing and safety resources to support LGBTIQA+ people and allies to feel empowered to speak up against homophobia, transphobia and biphobia • Develop behavioural examples of what is discrimination against LGBTIQA+ staff including homophobia, transphobia and biphobia	• Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing, People Branch • Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Year 2	
	3.1.5	Ensure grievance officers and workplace facilitators are trained in LGBTIQA+ inclusion awareness and are equipped for dealing with incidents of homophobia, transphobia and biphobia	• Workplace Relations, People Branch • Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing, People Branch	Years 2, 3, 4	

Focus Area 3 - LGBTIQA+ inclusive and safe workplaces

Outcomes	Key actions		Accountability leads	Deliverable years	Key indicators
3.2 Workplaces are safe and accessible for trans and gender diverse staff	3.2.1	Conduct a review of bathroom facilities across all department workplace sites to ensure adequate 'all gender' bathroom facilities are available and accessible for trans and gender diverse staff • Engage with the Pride Network and LGTIQA+ staff to ensure updates to facilities include best practice approach, focussed on improving accessibility and equality for trans and gender diverse staff	• Common Corporate Support Branch	Years 3, 4	• AWEI survey results related to experiences of discrimination based on gender identity • AWEI survey results related to accessibility of all-gender bathroom facilities
	3.2.2	Ensure all work-related offsite events that require venue hire provide all gender bathroom facilities, including temporary all gender bathroom facilities where fixed facilities are unavailable	• Communications and Engagement Branch	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	
	3.2.3	Work with the Victorian Public Sector Commission to support the whole-of-government project to ensure employees can easily change their name and gender throughout the employee lifecycle including in: • recruitment • identity management systems • manager and team capability systems • management and reporting systems	• People, Operations and Planning, People Branch • Common Corporate Support Branch • Enterprise Technology Branch	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	
	3.2.4	Review internal data collection and ICT systems to ensure LGBTIQA+ information is up to date, adequately captured, stored and managed and ensuring compliance with the *Privacy Act 1998 (Cth)* and the *Privacy Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)*	• Common Corporate Support Branch • Enterprise Technology Branch • People, Operations and Planning, People Branch	Years 2, 3	

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Focus Area 3 - LGBTIQA+ inclusive and safe workplaces

Outcomes	Key actions		Accountability leads	Deliverable years	Key indicators
3.3 Specialised LGBTIQA+ employee supports are available and accessible	3.3.1	Update Peer Support Network contact lists to include LGBTIQA+ identifying people and LGBTIQA+ allies who are willing to provide LGBTIQA+ peer support services	• Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing, People Branch	Years 1	• AWEI survey results related to experience of gender affirmation process in the workplace
	3.3.2	Develop and promote gender affirmation leave guidance material as part of the department's resource kit on supporting gender affirmation in the workplace	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Year 1	
	3.3.3	Work with the Pride Network to analyse intersectionality and underrepresented LGBTIQA+ people with intersecting identities to better understand the unique challenges experienced in the workplace	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Years 4	
	3.3.4	Develop learning guidance material for managers to help build LGBTIQA+ inclusive and supportive teams, including information about intersectionality and diversity of LGBTIQA+ communities. Resource to include challenges and opportunities for LGBTIQA+ inclusion in the workplace	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Year 3	

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Outcomes	Key actions		Accountability leads	Deliverable years	Key indicators
3.4 LGBTIQA+ employees are free to be their authentic selves at work	3.4.1	Promote the use of LGBTIQA+ inclusive visible symbols in the physical and virtual workplace, including during key LGBTIQA+ days of significance	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	• AWEI survey results related to being 'open'/'out' at work • AWEI survey results related to the use of pronouns • AWEI survey results related to gender diverse employees being 'out' in the workplace • LGBTIQA+ PMS results related to inclusion and feelings of 'being themself' at work
	3.4.2	Allocate a designated physical LGBTIQA+ inclusion safe space at the 50 Lonsdale Street office, that promotes LGBTIQA+ inclusion through: • visual displays and symbols • LGBTIQA+ culture and artwork • LGBTIQA+ employee support information • LGBTIQA+ inclusion and ally education material	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch • Common Corporate Support Branch	Year 2	
	3.4.3	Continue to share information and resources with all staff on how to introduce with pronouns and add pronouns to email signatures and virtual meetings software	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	
	3.4.4	Work with learning and development providers to ensure the use of pronouns at introductions at all learning and development facilitated programs	• Learning and Development, Organisational Effectiveness Branch	Year 1	

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Focus Area 4
Equitable LGBTIQA+ employee outcomes

Bisexual Flag

Created in 1998 by Michael Page, the bisexual flag features pink and royal blue with an overlapping purple stripe in the center. The pink represents attraction toward the same sex, and the royal blue stands for attraction toward the opposite sex. The purple band symbolizes attraction to all genders.

Illustration © 2024 Outright International

Focus Area 4
Equitable LGBTIQA+ employee outcomes

Our goal through this plan is to deliver equitable LGBTIQA+ employee outcomes in the department – and to be accountable for doing this.

We know from our consultations the importance of recognising intersectionality. Intersectionality refers to the different aspects of a person's identity that can expose [that person/ or group] to overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalisation. We understand the negative compounding effects intersectionality can have for many LGBTIQA+ people.

Experiences and outcomes in the workplace can vary for different sexualities and gender identities. For example, lesbian, bisexual and queer women have poorer outcomes in the workplace than heterosexual women and compared to gay and bisexual men. Lesbian, bisexual and queer women are most likely to experience microaggressions at work. They are also more than twice as likely as heterosexual women to feel they cannot talk about themselves or their life outside work. Lesbian, bisexual and queer women are more

likely than heterosexual women and gay and bisexual men to report feeling a need to prove their competence.[15] Trans and gender diverse employees can experience worse workplace inequalities due to social expectations about gender norms.[16]

Our Pride Network made a significant contribution to the department's *Gender equality action plan 2022–25* to ensure gender equality improves for LGBTIQA+ women and trans and gender diverse employees. Consultations to inform this plan reiterated this message. A key action in this LGTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan is to ensure continued focus on LGBTIQA+ and trans and gender diverse commitments in the *Gender equality action plan*.

LGBTIQA+ staff who have multiple diverse aspects of their identity can experience added layers of discrimination. These can include racism, ableism and classism. This is on top of and combined with prejudice based on gender, sexuality or sex characteristics. In a recent Pride in Diversity and Diversity Council of Australia survey, 55% of the culturally

15   Huang J, Krivkovich A, Starikova I, Yee L and Zanoschi D (2019) Women in the workplace 2019, McKinsey & Company. Available at: https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/McKinsey/Featured%20Insights/Gender%20Equality/Women%20in%20the%20Workplace%202019/Women-in-the-workplace-2019.ashx

16   Donaghy M and Perales F (2022) 'Workplace wellbeing among LGBTQ+ Australians: exploring diversity within diversity', Journal of Sociology, https://doi.org/10.1177/14407833221118383.

Focus Area 4

Equitable LGBTIQA+ employee outcomes

diverse LGBTIQA+ employees surveyed said the combination of their cultural background and LGBTIQA+ status negatively affected their workplace experience. [17]

Our employees told us we need to better understand and respond to the needs of employees who experience interacting forms of discrimination. To do this, we need to better

collect and track data on how LGBTIQA+ people identify, and their job outcomes.

With this plan, we commit to achieving equitable LGBTIQA+ employee outcomes by:

- ensuring intersectionality is understood, celebrated and measured

- taking actions to ensure lesbian, bisexual and queer women, and trans, non-binary and gender diverse staff, experience workplace gender equality

- better capturing LGBTIQA+ employee data and improving monitoring and reporting on LGBTIQA+ employee outcomes.

17   Diversity Council Australia and Pride in Diversity (2020) Intersections at work: Understanding the experiences of culturally diverse LGBTQ talent. Available at: https://www.dca. org.au/sites/default/files/intersections_at_work_online_final.pdf

40

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Focus area 4: Equitable LGBTIQA+ employee outcomes

Outcomes	Key actions		Accountability leads	Deliverable years	Key indicators
4.1 LGBTIQA+ cultural diversity and intersectionality are understood, measured and celebrated	4.1.1	Update employee workforce data management systems to ensure employee diversity data collection aligns with AWEI accreditation requirements and the Commission for Gender Equality's indicator requirements	• Common Corporate Support Branch • People, Operations and Planning, People Branch • Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Years 2, 3	• PMS results related to barriers to success are based on sex, race, sexuality, gender and cultural background • LGBTIQA+ outcomes in the Aboriginal cultural safety staff survey
	4.1.2	Develop and communicate a clear understanding of intersectionality, including information regarding the experiences of LGBTIQA+ people who experience discrimination across multiple identities, including in: • Diversity, equity and inclusion communications • Diversity, equity and inclusion SharePoint learning resources • Gender impact assessment training and resources	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Years 3, 4	
	4.1.3	Include the voice of Aboriginal LGBTIQA+ employees when developing relevant implementation initiatives under the department's Aboriginal Workforce Strategy and the Aboriginal Cultural Safety framework	• Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Division	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	
	4.1.4	Support Pride Network collaboration with other lived experience staff networks to include an intersectional approach across network activities	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Years 2, 3, 4	

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Focus area 4: Equitable LGBTIQA+ employee outcomes

Outcomes	Key actions	Accountability leads	Deliverable years	Key indicators
4.2 LGBTIQA+ women and trans, non-binary and gender diverse staff experience gender equality in the workplace	4.2.1 Review and amend current policy and reporting processes to adopt an inclusive and supportive approach for trans, non-binary and gender diverse staff when responding to instances of sexual harassment	• Workplace Relations, People Branch • Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing, People Branch	Years 1, 2	• Trans and gender diverse employee outcomes against the 7 gender equality indicators
	4.2.2 Develop targeted implementation activities under the department's Gender Equality Action plan to focus on improving outcomes for bisexual and queer women and trans and gender diverse employees	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Years 1, 2, 3, 4	
	4.2.3 Improve data capture and reporting of trans and gender diverse employee outcomes against the 7 gender equality indicators in the department's *Gender equality action plan*	• Common Corporate Support Branch • Corporate Performance and Reporting, Organisational Effectiveness • Employee Experience and Engagement, People Branch • People, Operations and Planning, People Branch • Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Years 1, 2	

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Focus area 4: Equitable LGBTIQA+ employee outcomes

Outcomes	Key actions		Accountability leads	Deliverable years	Key indicators
4.3 LGBTIQA+ employees experience equal outcomes in the workplace	4.3.1	Propose a mechanism to establish effective diversity, equity and inclusion governance. The purpose of the governance mechanism is to review the performance of the department's diversity, equity and inclusion strategies (including this action plan), and integrate the delivery of diversity, equity and inclusion strategies across the organisation's operations. Membership to include employees with lived experience and senior executives	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Year 2	• LGBTIQA+ inclusion dashboard reporting • LGBTIQA+ PMS survey results analysed every year • AWEI results analysed every year • End-point evaluation performance report
	4.3.2	Develop an interactive LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan dashboard to track progress against indicators in this plan	• Corporate Performance and Reporting, Organisational Effectiveness Branch	Year 1	
	4.3.3	Conduct an end-of-plan evaluation to determine the success of this plan and to inform its next iteration	• Corporate Performance and Reporting, Organisational Effectiveness Branch • Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Year 4	
	4.3.4	Based on evaluation findings, consultation, and research, develop the next iteration of this plan by 2028 to continue to improve workplace LGBTIQA+ inclusion and deliver on internal workplace commitments in the whole of Victorian government *Pride in our future strategy*	• Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, People Branch	Year 4	

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Implementation

Pansexual Flag

Adopted in 2010, the pansexual flag has three horizontal stripes: pink, yellow, and cyan. Most definitions claim that pink and cyan represent attraction to females and males, respectively, while yellow signifies nonbinary attraction.

Illustration © 2024 Outright International

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Implementation, monitoring and evaluation

Achieving the vision and outcomes in this action plan will mean significant effort from all parts of the department. This includes senior leaders, people managers and allies.

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion team will develop and lead an implementation plan. We have identified accountable leads for each action of this plan. Accountable leads will be responsible for specific initiatives. But delivering the actions requires all areas of the department and all staff to take responsibility for adopting these initiatives. We need new ways of working to embed these into practice.

Divisions will play a key role in championing the plan. Workforce planning and divisional plans will be key aspects of this. Some divisions may be further progressed than others. Some may adopt actions in different ways.

We will develop an interactive LGBTIQA+ inclusion dashboard to report on quarterly progress. This will support ongoing monitoring and evaluation. The dashboard will inform a continual improvement approach. It will ensure efforts are allocated where they are most required.

We aim to achieve the vision and outcomes of this plan by 2028. This timeframe spans the midway point of the lifespan of the Victorian Government's *Pride in our future* strategy. We will conduct an evaluation in the final year of delivery (2028) to inform designing the next iteration of this plan.

Governance

The department will review diversity and inclusion governance mechanisms. We will do this with the aim of developing connected and aligned governance. A governance structure will be designed to review the performance of our inclusion strategies (including this action plan). We will track improved employee outcomes leading to a more equitable and inclusive workplace. The governance mechanism will include membership of people with lived experience and senior executives. This will enable and empower people with lived experience to:

- share ideas and concerns about workplace inclusion with senior executives
- co-create initiatives to improve diversity, equity and inclusion.

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Our Pride Network

The department has a strong and active Pride Network with a large membership base. Our Pride Network works to lead, support and celebrate LGBTIQA+ inclusion, equality and participation in the workplace. It does this by increasing LGBTIQA+ visibility in the department and organisational awareness of LGBTIQA+ issues. The Pride Network creates a safe space for LGBTIQA+ staff and allies to come together in community and to have fun through social and professional networking opportunities.

We recognise and value the efforts of the Pride Network in making our department a great place to work. We appreciate the network's contribution to improving how we deliver policies, programs and services to diverse communities. The strong partnership with the Pride Network and network members' involvement throughout developing the plan, have made this plan possible.

Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion team will lead the implementation and monitoring of this plan and will keep working closely with the Pride Network to ensure the plan continues to meet the needs of LGBTIQA+ staff.

Pride in our future

Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQA+ strategy 2022–32 is a whole of Victorian government initiative which provides the vision and plan to drive equality and inclusion for Victoria's diverse LGBTIQA+ communities.

The 10-year strategy includes a range of immediate and longer-term actions and commitments. These are organised as 4 priority areas:

- Equal rights and freedoms: Ensuring laws are free from discrimination and strengthening legal protections for LGBTIQA+ Victorians

- Equitable, inclusive and accessible services: Improving safety and inclusion of services for LGBTIQA+ people across all sectors

- Visibility to inform decision making: Improving LGBTIQA+ data collection to better identify needs, improve services and inform decision making about future investments

- Safe, strong and sustainable communities: Fostering inclusive communities and increasing understanding of LGBTIQA+ diversity both in and between LGBTIQA+ communities and within the broader Victorian community.

The department supports Pride in our future through delivering two plans:

- a separate sector-focussed LGBTIQA+ health and wellbeing action plan – designed to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for LGBTIQA+ Victorians.

- this LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan – which commits us to being Victoria's exemplar LGBTIQA+ inclusive employer and improving Victorian LGBTIQA+ job outcomes.

Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQA+ strategy 2022-32
Summary

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Legislative frameworks underpinning this plan

The Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021 <https://www. legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/change-or-suppression-conversion-practices-prohibition-act-2021> makes it unlawful to change or hide someone's sexual orientation or gender identity. The Act bans change or suppression practices and provides a range of options for preventing and responding to them.

The Gender Equality Act 2020 <https://www. legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/gender-equality-act-2020> aims to improve workplace gender equality across the VPS, universities and local councils. It requires public sector entities to report on and improve gender equality in the workplace. Gender equality benefits people of all genders including trans, non-binary and gender diverse people.

The Act aims to level the playing field so Victorians can have equal:

- rights
- opportunities
- responsibilities
- outcomes.

The Equal Opportunity Act 2010 <https://www. legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/equal-opportunity-act-2010/030> protects people from discrimination based on their individual attributes in certain areas of public life. It also provides redress for people who have been discriminated against. This includes people who have been discriminated against due to their gender and sexuality. The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person because of an individual attribute. Under the Act, duty holders have a positive duty to end, as far as possible:

- discrimination
- sexual harassment
- victimisation.

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 <https://www.legislation. vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/charter-human-rights-and-responsibilities-act-2006/014> sets out the basic rights, freedoms and responsibilities of all people in Victoria. It requires public authorities and people delivering services on behalf of government to act in keeping with the human rights in the Charter.

The Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) <https:// www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2014C00002> protects people from unfair treatment on the basis of their:

- sex
- sexual orientation
- gender identity
- intersex status
- marital or relationship status
- pregnancy and breastfeeding.

It also protects workers with family responsibilities and makes sexual harassment illegal.

Department of Health **LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion action plan**

Glossary

Asexual Flag

First officially used in August 2010, the asexual pride flag consists of four horizontal stripes: black, gray, white, and purple from top to bottom. Black represents asexuality, and gray signifies the gray area between sexuality and asexuality. The white stripe denotes non-asexual partners, and the purple stripe stands for community.

Illustration © 2024 Outright International

Glossary

Asexual

Not being sexually attracted to anyone or having low or absent interest in sexual activity.

Bisexual

Describes a person who is sexually and emotionally attracted to more than one gender.

Biphobia

The fear, hatred and misunderstanding of bisexual people and their sexual desires and practices.

Brotherboy and sistergirl

Aboriginal communities use these terms to describe transgender people and their relationships. It is a way of validating and strengthening their gender identities and relationships. Non-trans but non-conforming Aboriginal people may also use these terms. For example, both lesbian and heterosexual Aboriginal women may refer to themselves as 'sistergirls', 'sisters' or 'tiddas'. This is an Aboriginal English term for the word 'sisters'. Gay Aboriginal men may also refer to themselves as sisters.

Cisgender (or cis) (pronounced 'sis')

Where a person's experiences of their own gender match the sex they were assigned at birth.

Cisnormativity

Denoting or relating to an attitude that promotes the assumption that a person's gender identity matches their biological sex.

Gay

A person whose primary emotional and sexual attraction is towards people of the same sex. The term is most commonly applied to men, although some women use this term.

Gender

Part of how you understand who you are and how you interact with other people. Many people understand their gender as being a man or woman. Some people understand their gender as a mix of these or neither. A person's gender and their expression of their gender can show up in different ways, such as through behaviour or physical appearance.

Gender diverse

Term for a range of genders expressed in different ways. Gender diverse people use many terms to describe themselves. Language in this area is dynamic, particularly among young people, who are more likely to describe themselves as non-binary.

Gender expression

The way in which a person externally expresses their gender or how others perceive them.

Gender identity

A person's deeply held internal and individual sense of gender.

Heteronormativity

Denoting or relating to an attitude that promotes heterosexuality as the normal or preferred sexual orientation.

Heterosexual

A person whose sexual orientation is primarily or exclusively towards people of the opposite sex.

Homophobia

The fear, hatred and misunderstanding of lesbians and gay men and their sexual desires and practices.

Homosexual

A person whose sexual orientation is primarily or exclusively towards people of the same sex.

Intersex

People who have genetic, hormonal or physical characteristics that are not exclusively 'male' or 'female'. A person who is intersex may identify as male, female, intersex or as being of indeterminate sex.

Intersectionality

An approach to understanding how different aspects of a person's identity that can expose [that person/ or group] to overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalisation. This creates different layers and types of discrimination or disadvantage for either an individual or group. Categories include:

- gender
- sexual orientation
- sex characteristics
- race
- ethnicity, language and faith
- class and socioeconomic status
- ability
- age.

Lesbian

A woman whose primary emotional and sexual attraction is towards other women.

Glossary

LGBTIQA+

An internationally recognised initialism used to describe lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer and questioning and asexual people collectively.

Non-binary

People who do not fall within the traditional binary notions of sex and gender, such as man and woman. This may include people:

- who identify as a gender different from their birth sex
- who identify as neither man nor woman
- whose cultures may have their own terms for gender identities outside male and female.

Non-heterosexual

People whose sexual orientation and/or identity is not heterosexual including homosexual, bisexual, pansexual and asexual people.

Pansexual

A person who is sexually and emotionally attracted to people of any sex or gender identity.

People with intersex variations

A term for people born with natural variations to sex characteristics. This includes physical features relating to sex including genitalia and other sexual and reproductive parts of the person's anatomy. It might also refer to the person's chromosomes, hormones and secondary physical features emerging as a result of puberty. Some people with intersex variations describe themselves according to their specific intersex variation or use other context-dependent language. For example, someone may say they have Klinefelter (a common variation). Most people with intersex variations are cisgender and identify as male or female.

Queer

Queer is often used as an umbrella term for diverse genders or sexualities. Some people use queer to describe their own gender or sexuality, as an identity that does not correspond to heterosexual norms. For some people, especially older people, 'queer' has negative connotations, because in the past it was used as a discriminatory term.

Sex assigned at birth

Sex recorded at birth Data collection often refers to sex recorded at birth. This is based upon a person's sex characteristics and reproductive organs observed at, or soon after, birth.

Sexuality or sexual orientation

A person's emotional or sexual attraction to another person including, among others, the following identities: heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual or same-sex attracted.

Transgender

A person whose gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth. A trans person may take steps to live permanently in their nominated sex with or without medical treatment.

Transphobia

The fear, hatred and misunderstanding felt or expressed towards people who do not conform to society's gender expectations.

Variations of sex / sex characteristics

Some people are born with a variation to physical or biological sex characteristics including chromosomes, hormones or anatomy. These are often called intersex variations. There are many different intersex variations that can be identified prenatally, at birth, puberty or adulthood. People with intersex variations use a range of different terminology to name their bodies and experiences. Some use the term 'intersex', others do not connect to the term 'intersex' or with the acronym LGBTIQA+. Intersex people can have any gender identity or sexuality.