

# The NYC Department of Correction Supports the LGBTQ+ Community

The NYC Department of Correction is committed to protecting the rights, dignity, and safety of LGBTQ+ people who reside and work in its facilities. The Department has pursued an aggressive reform agenda informed by experts in the field, the LGBTQ+ community, currently and formerly incarcerated LGBTQ+ individuals, and LGBTQ+ members of service.



## Safety and Protection

The Department established a formal nondiscriminatory policy for the treatment and safety of LGBTI-GNB-GNC individuals that:

- Directs staff to use appropriate and respectful terminology
- Prohibits discrimination of LGBTQ+ individuals
- Outlines housing policies
- Protects individuals who are at a high-risk for sexual victimization
- Establishes safety protocols

The Department is dedicated enforcing the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA).

## LGBTQ+ Support & Advocacy-Based Services

The Department is in the process of or has established a host of support services for the LGBTQ+ community including:

- A LGBTQ+ re-entry resource guide
- LGBTQ+ support/advocacy groups, including a trans masculine group, a trans feminine group, an LGBTQ+ general group, and an LGBTQ+ book group
- A series of LGBTQ+ resource fairs
- Chaplains sensitive to LGBTQ+ individuals' needs to provide spiritual support

The Director of LGBTQ+ Initiatives makes regular tours of the facilities spreading awareness of available services.



## Healthcare

- The Department actively works with its health partners to ensure the medical needs of the LGBTQ+ community are addressed within the facilities and upon release.
- Hormone therapy is available to all individuals regardless of whether or not it was started initially in the community.
- There is a direct referral service line for trans individuals leaving custody that assists with securing follow-up care.
- Social work services and advocacy hotlines are available to LGBTQ+ individuals who have experienced sexual assault.

## Community Partnerships



- The Department meets regularly with LGBTQ+ advocates from community-based organizations to receive feedback and recommendations on LGBTQ+ policy, programing, and training initiatives from experts and those with lived experiences.
- In partnership with NYGOAL, the Department offers social events as well as supportive events for LGBTQ+ identifying staff members at the DOC.

## Classification and Housing

- In classification and housing assignments, the Department takes into account risk factors that can lead to individuals becoming the target of harassment, violence, or sexual victimization.
- The NYC Department of Correction began housing people in custody according to their gender identity in the fall of 2018, making it one of the first correctional institutions to adopt such a policy.
- The Department established a Special Considerations Unit designed to safely house transgender, gender non-binary, and intersex people in custody who desire to be housed in an LGBTQ+ community setting rather than the general population.



## Education and Training

- Created a Director of LGBTQ+ Initiatives position to provide strategic support and programming to LGBTQ+ staff and individuals in custody.
- Redesigning our LGBTQ+ training for all current staff and new recruits to provide an in depth, experiential learning experience.
- Collaborated with LGBTQ+ organizations and advocates to develop a full-day training institute on incarceration and the LGBTQ+ Community, presented at the Creating Change Conference.

The Department continues to support its LGBTQ+ community during this pride month and every month and looks forward to developing new services and initiatives.