

# Tip sheet

## Pride in the workplace

According to stats.govt.nz (2022), 4.4% of Kiwis identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. That includes, but is not limited to: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, non-binary or asexual. There are several varieties of this acronym, but what unites the rainbow community is their shared experience outside the traditional heterosexual or cisgender (straight or gender-conforming) 'norm'.



### What exactly is Pride?

Pride month is celebrated in February across New Zealand, and June in most other countries. This is because – on 28 June 1969 in Manhattan, a group of LGBTQ+ activists rose up against police violence and discrimination at the Stonewall Inn. These events became known as the Stonewall Riots, sparking a global fight for equality. Pride today is a celebration of identity and community, but also a rallying cry for solidarity and a promise to keep pushing against intolerance.

### Why is Pride important?

Sadly, despite progress, LGBTQ+ people often still face discrimination at work and in their personal lives.

#### According to the same report from stats.govt.nz:

- transgender and non-binary people earn less on average than their cisgendered peers.

\* <https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/lgbt-plus-population-of-aotearoa-year-ended-june-2021/>

#### And according to 2019 data\*\*:

- 1/3 of bisexual people report poor mental wellbeing;
- gay/lesbian and bisexual people find it harder to express their identity.

\*\*<https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/new-sexual-identity-wellbeing-data-reflects-diversity-of-new-zealanders/>

All of this leads to increased levels of mental health challenges across the population.

#### Common issues include:

- low self-esteem: negative self-perception often influenced by societal attitudes;
- depression: ranging from mild low spirits to severe, life-threatening conditions;
- anxiety: persistent worry or fear, including social anxiety;
- eating disorders: issues with eating habits and thoughts about food;
- substance abuse: dependency on drugs or alcohol as a coping mechanism.

Internalised homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia exacerbate these issues, where individuals internalize negative societal messages. This is why it's so important to ensure everyone feels safe and accepted – at work and beyond.

## Inclusion in the workplace

Workplaces play a crucial role in fostering equality and inclusivity. Here are several ways to create a supportive environment during Pride Month and beyond:

### Self-education

Learn about the LGBTQ+ community beyond stereotypes and biases.

### Raise awareness

Highlight LGBTQ+ Pride Month with posters, memos or announcements.

### Respect gender identities

Avoid assumptions about sexual orientation and gender identity. Respect individuals' chosen pronouns and names.

### Use inclusive language

Understand and use gender-expansive pronouns and language. For example, 'everyone' instead of 'ladies and gentlemen', or 'people' instead of 'men and women'.

Not everyone's appearance matches their apparent gender; it's always good practice to introduce yourself with your pronouns or ask someone else for theirs. They may use she/her or he/him, they/them, a mix or otherwise.

### Address Inappropriate Behavior:

Speak up against offensive language or homophobic behavior in the workplace.

## Update policies

Ensure company policies explicitly include sexual orientation and gender identities to protect against discrimination.

## Resources

<https://pride.org.nz/>

<https://ry.org.nz/>

<https://outline.org.nz/>

<https://insideout.org.nz/>

<https://www.intersexaotearoa.org/>

<https://genderminorities.com/>

<http://www.tiwhanawhana.com/>

<https://rainbowpathnz.com/>

<https://pridepledge.co.nz/>

<https://qtopia.org.nz/>

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