

# Equality Rising:



HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
CAMPAIGN  
FOUNDATION®

LGBTQ+ Workers

and the Road Ahead



# Introduction

Since 2008, the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, through its Workplace Equality Program, has conducted four major national studies of the workplace environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) workers: [“Degrees of Equality,”](#) [“The Cost of the Closet and the Rewards of Inclusion,”](#) [“A Workplace Divided: Understanding the Climate for LGBTQ+ Workers Nationwide,”](#) and now, **“Equality Rising: LGBTQ+ Workers and the Road Ahead.”**

The report complements the Workplace Equality Program’s annual [Corporate Equality Index \(CEI\)](#), on systems-level change, primarily with major private sector employers to improve workplace policies, benefits and practices. The CEI is the national benchmarking tool measuring policies, practices and benefits in large companies that are pertinent to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) employees. The CEI is a primary driving force for the inclusion of LGBTQ+ people in the workplace. An total of 1,271 companies actively participated in the CEI 2022 Survey. In the 2022 CEI, 842 employers achieved a top score of 100 and earning the coveted title of “Best Place to Work for LGBTQ+ Equality.”

This report comes at a time when LGBTQ+ people are facing a patchwork of laws and policies which have enshrined expanded rights — and discrimination — into law. In 2020, the U.S. Supreme Court historically ruled on *Bostock v. Clayton County*, which cemented the legal interpretation that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Though *Bostock*, and other landmark legal decisions, are critical steps toward LGBTQ+ equality, they do not cover all areas of civil rights law. [The Equality Act](#) is federal legislation that codifies *Bostock*, and broadly addresses discrimination against LGBTQ+ people and improves many aspects of the existing civil rights laws.

The protections guaranteed by *Bostock* are significant because LGBTQ+ adult Americans are more likely than the general population to have experienced employment discrimination and harassment on the job. According to a [2022 survey](#) by the Center for American Progress, half of LGBTQ+ adults have experienced some form of workplace discrimination or harassment in the year prior to responding to the survey. The results of this study found that one-third of LGBTQ+ workers have heard jokes or negative comments at work about lesbian and gay people. Moreover, four in ten transgender and non-binary workers have heard jokes or negative comments at work about transgender. Anti-LGBTQ+ employment discrimination, and lack of affirming workplace climates, can have significant impact on the health, well-being, and economic security of LGBTQ+ people.

Research has also repeatedly shown that LGBTQ+ people are significantly more likely to be unemployed and living in poverty than their non-LGBTQ+ peers: Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, [one in ten](#) LGBTQ+ people were unemployed. About [one in five](#) LGBTQ+ adults in the U.S. live in poverty. Additionally, the poverty rates of transgender adults in the U.S. is 29% and tower over those of other groups; while Black transgender adults and Latinx transgender adults are more likely to live in poverty than transgender people of any other race.

At the same time, however, LGBTQ+ Americans are living in a state of emergency. LGBTQ+ people are being attacked in state legislatures across the country, with a record-breaking number of [over 500 anti-LGBTQ+ bills](#) introduced in state legislatures in the year 2023 alone, over 81 of which were enacted into law as of the writing of this report in July 2023. Currently, [28 states lack](#) comprehensive protections for LGBTQ+ people, underscoring the reality that millions of LGBTQ+ people lack several protections and basic freedoms.

This report also comes at a time when we are seeing a demographic shift in the workforce, as younger generational cohorts have entered the workforce, and are increasingly representing larger proportions of employees. As of 2021, there are [1.8 billion](#) Millennials worldwide who make up the largest living adult cohort. Gen Z is catching up. Currently, there are an estimated [2 billion](#) Gen Z people worldwide, accounting for 30% of the total population. By 2030, Gen Z and Millennials will jointly account for two-thirds of the workforce, and bring enormous economic power — with Gen Z alone estimated to

be making \$52 trillion in post-tax income. These generations bring with them new values — and new demographics — and employers and businesses will need to adjust their practices to best attract talent and consumers. Both Millennials and Gen Z are, on average, [far more likely](#) to hold pro-equality views than older generations, and many are looking to work for, and purchase from, companies that share their values. At the same time, the size of the LGBTQ+ workforce is the largest it has ever been, and it will only grow in the future: In general, LGBTQ+ people are increasingly more likely to open and out about their identity, with younger generations in particular the most likely to openly identify as LGBTQ+. And rather than be selective about who they are out to — many LGBTQ+ people want to remain out and open about their identity in all contexts, including at work.

In the current climate, however, there is still a disconnect between desire to be out — and to who and when someone actually chooses to be out. Data from [HRC's 2022 LGBTQ+ Youth Study](#) found that two-thirds of LGBTQ+ youth (age 13-18) want to be open about their LGBTQ+ identity in their future career — yet only half (53.5%) think they will be able to be out and their authentic selves when applying for jobs, and almost 7 in 10 (69.2%) fear they will be discriminated against at work. Results from the current report reveal that while the vast majority of LGBTQ+ workers are out to a colleague (81%) or supervisor (69%), less than half (48%) are out to their Human Resources (HR) departments. This suggests a trust gap between LGBTQ+ people and HR (or their employer broadly) because LGBTQ+ people are less likely to “go on the record” about their identity with HR departments. Hence, the decision to be out on the job can also be riddled with privacy concerns, discrimination or even fears of violence. These challenges associated with outness on the job are linked to the inclusivity of a workplace climate, and an inclusive workplace starts from the top.



Leaders and managers that openly mock and ridicule LGBTQ+ people and their identities can further create an unwelcoming climate and unaccepting workplace. Fortunately, very few workers report that their supervisors engage in this kind of behavior. Yet values from the top do not always translate into positive change across the workplace, and harassment and discrimination on the job can similarly lead to an unaccepting workplace. Many workers, LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ alike, hear other colleagues, not their supervisors, mock and ridicule LGBTQ+ people and their identities. This discrepancy can also lead to perception of a mismatch between an employer's stated policy, and their values and climate on the ground. For example, 67% of LGBTQ+ employees believe their workplace values differences in gender identity, yet 60% feel their workplace is accepting of sex and gender differences.

The truth is everyone suffers when workplaces are not inclusive of LGBTQ+ people. Worker morale, retention and productivity are all affected by an unaccepting workplace. One-third of LGBTQ+ employees have felt distracted at work because of unaccepting environments. One in five non-LGBTQ+ workers have stayed home from work because of a workplace that is unaccepting of LGBTQ+ people. These costs will only intensify as more LGBTQ+ people and allies enter the workforce, serving as a call to employers to lean into values of responsibility and accountability, LGBTQ+ people are less likely than non-LGBTQ+ people to think their employer does enough for the community. The time to show up for the community is now — for today's and tomorrow's generations of workers.

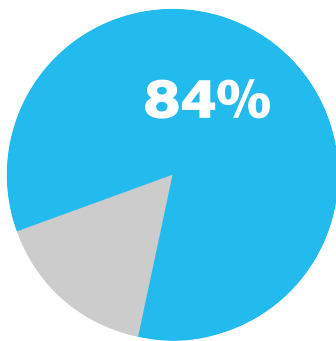
In order to better understand the current workplace climate and workplace experiences of LGBTQ+ workers, overall and relative to non-LGBTQ+ peers, HRC Foundation's Workplace Equality Program and Public Education & Research Team, conducted a survey in 2023 of 3,044 adult (age 18+) part- and full-time workers (2,002 LGBTQ+ workers; 1,042 non-LGBTQ+ workers) from across the United States. **“Equality Rising: LGBTQ+ Workers and the Road Ahead,”** reflects many of the results of this survey, which was collected via an online questionnaire administered by Community Marketing and Insight (LGBTQ+ respondents) and PSB Insights (non-LGBTQ+ respondents), and sponsored by J.P. Morgan Chase. Results are presented separately by sexual identity (lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and other non-heterosexual [LGBQ+] vs. Heterosexual workers) and gender identity (transgender, non-binary, and occasionally by race and ethnicity). Reports analyzing the results more in-depth by race, ethnicity, industry and other demographics are planned.

# Important Findings

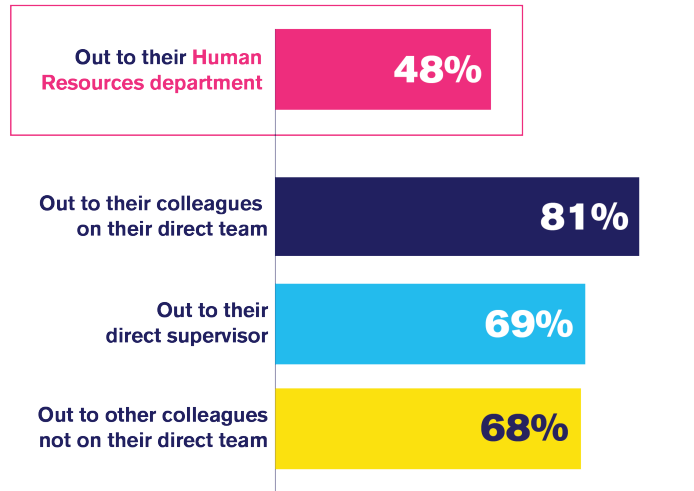
## AUTHENTICITY

- + The vast majority of LGBTQ+ workers are out to at least one person at work...

Over 8 in 10 (84%) LGBTQ+ workers said they were out to at least one person at work.



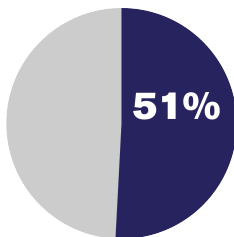
- + ...However, they are not equally out across all workplace settings, indicating a potential trust gap. LGBTQ+ workers are least likely to be out to Human Resources department, and most likely to be out to their closer colleagues



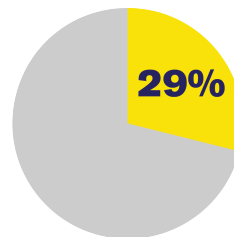
## SAFETY

- + LGBTQ+ workers may choose to hide their LGBTQ+ identities at work for various reasons, including concerns related to privacy, safety, status and discrimination.

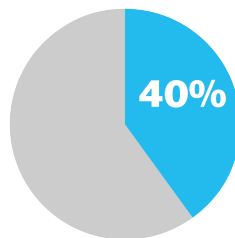
Withheld their identity at their job due to privacy concerns



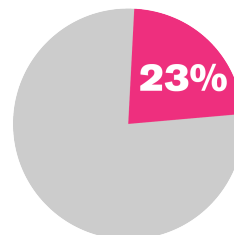
Have done so out of fear that their image and status at work will be negatively impacted



Have done so due to fear of being stigmatized or facing violence

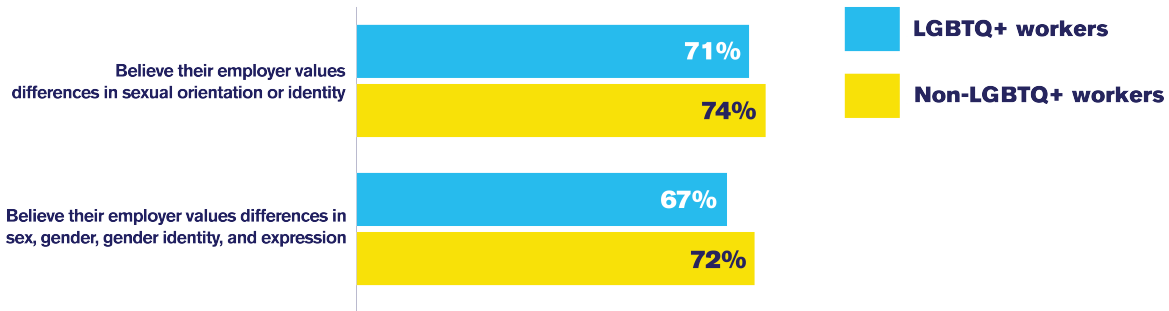


Have done so out of fear they are unprotected by their workplace's policies or will be discriminated against



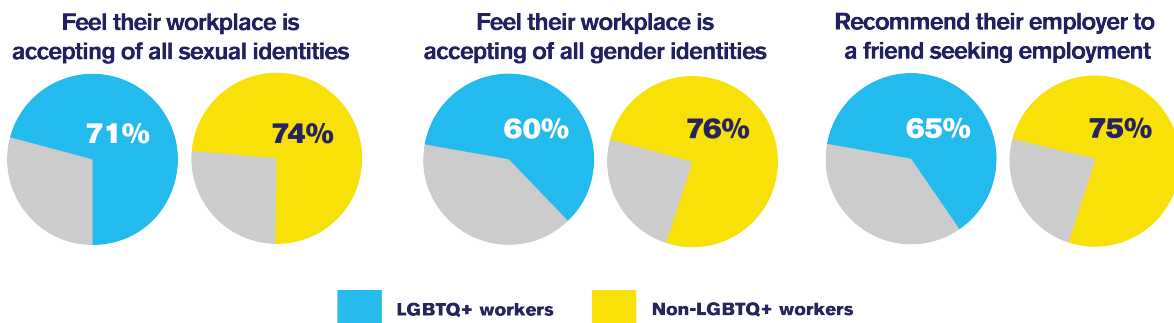
## COMPANY VALUES

- The majority of LGBTQ+ workers and non-LGBTQ+ workers alike believe their employer values diversity in sexual and gender identity. However, LGBTQ+ workers are less likely than non-LGBTQ+ workers to believe this, with the gap significantly larger when it comes to perceived values around gender and sex.



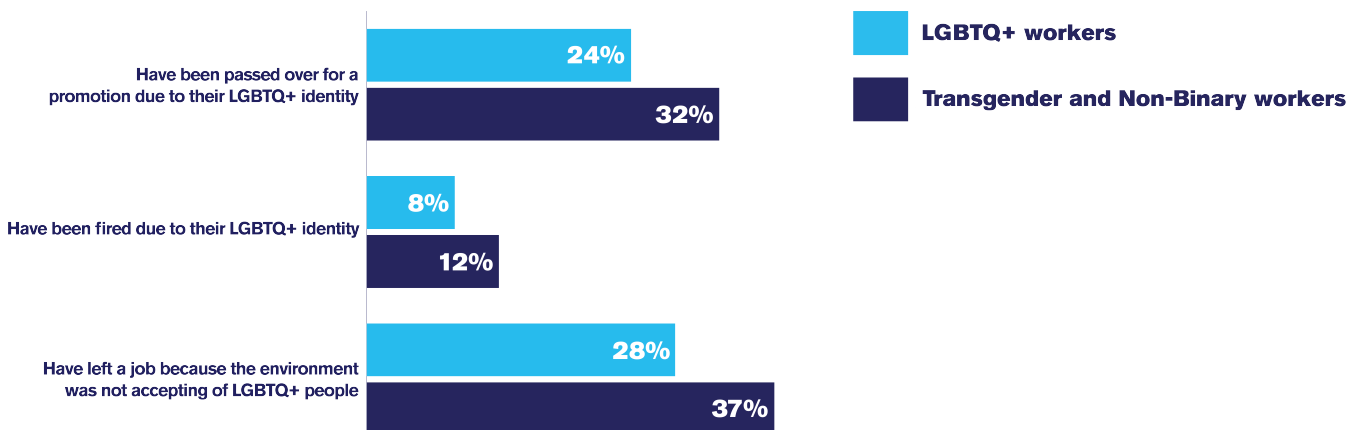
## VALUES IN ACTION

- Values do not always translate into action. LGBTQ+ workers were less likely than non-LGBTQ+ workers to view their workplace as accepting of LGBTQ+ identities, with a much bigger gap seen for perceived acceptance of gender diversity.



## WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION

- For too many LGBTQ+ workers, discrimination and unwelcoming environments have led to an inability to advance in their job, or for them to lose — or be forced to leave — their job altogether.



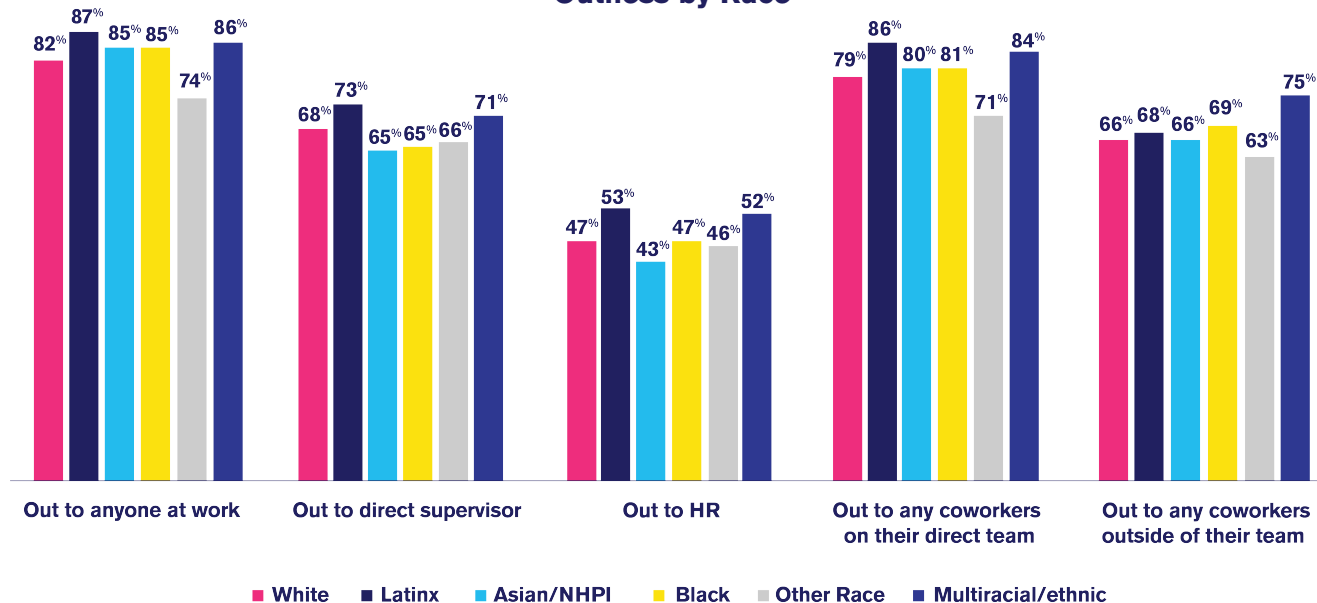
# LGBTQ+ Worker Outness in the U.S.

**Coming out to anyone at the workplace is a complex and personal decision.** Despite this, more LGBTQ+ people are out on the job than ever before, including LGBTQ+ people of color (people of color are defined in the methodology at the end of the report). To whom LGBTQ+ people disclose their identities tells a more complex story. LGBTQ+ workers were least likely to report being out to their Human Resources department. This could be the result of the varying levels of trust LGBTQ+ workers can have with their colleagues across the

workplace, with LGBTQ+ employees feeling safe to disclose to those individuals they know directly (e.g. teammates and supervisors), while still distrusting the workplace institution and fearing their LGBTQ+ identity will lead to discrimination. Human Resources departments may also not be asking the right questions — or any questions at all on LGBTQ+ identification — to employees in staff surveys or other employee records, perpetuating the lack of outness to HR.



## Outness by Race



**The road to a full, authentic work life is paved with many uncertainties and cost-benefit analyses for LGBTQ+ workers.** When deciding to be out on the job, LGBTQ+ people take many things into consideration, such as a potential loss of privacy, status, or acceptance in the workplace, or a potential increased risk of experiencing employment discrimination, stigma, or even violence. Increasingly, LGBTQ+ workers — and non-LGBTQ+ workers with LGBTQ+ spouses, children, or dependents — must also consider the legal environment in their employer's location, and whether they or their family members' employment protections,

healthcare, hobbies, or educational opportunities could be at risk due to the presence of anti-LGBTQ+ laws. 2023, the year this data was collected, reflects the worst year on record for anti-LGBTQ+ legislation, leading the Human Rights Campaign to issue a [National State of Emergency](#) in response to the more than 80 bills passing into law across over 30 states. At the end of the day, no one should have to concern themselves with these issues when they are just trying to make an honest living — yet, unfortunately, many LGBTQ+ adults still find themselves having to choose between showing up to work as their authentic selves, and their safety and security.

## PRIVACY

**Half (51%)** of LGBTQ+ workers have previously been closeted at work due to privacy concerns, including:

- **47%** of LGBTQ+ workers have done so because they believed it was “nobody's business”
- **37%** of transgender and non-binary workers have done so out of fear they would get asked personal questions about their transition status, physical appearance or body

## LOSS OF STATUS AT THE WORKPLACE

Three in ten (**29%**) of LGBTQ+ workers have previously been closeted on the job because they thought their status at work would be negatively impacted. More specifically, LGBTQ+ workers reported they were previously closeted at work because...

- They thought there was a possibility of losing connections or relationships with coworkers (**18%**)
- They thought coworkers or management will think they are not professional if they talk about their sexual orientation (**9%**) or gender identity (**19% of transgender and non-binary workers**)

## DISCRIMINATION AND LACK OF PROTECTIONS

Nearly one-quarter (**23%**) of LGBTQ+ workers have been previously closeted at work because of fears of discrimination or because there were no policies protecting LGBTQ+ people at their workplace, including:

- A lack of policies protecting LGBTQ+ people at their job (**11%**)
- Fears they would not be considered for advancement or development opportunities (**16%**)
- Fear of being fired (**8%** of all LGBTQ+ workers, **14%** of transgender and non-binary workers)

## VIOLENCE, STIGMA AND VICTIMIZATION

Four in ten (**40%**) LGBTQ+ workers have previously been closeted at work because of actual or perceived risk of violence, stigma and victimization, including:

- Fears they could make people feel uncomfortable if they were out (**25%**)
- Fears that people would assume they were attracted to them because they are an LGBTQ+ person (**19%**)
- Fears for their personal safety (**13%**)
- **8%** of LGBTQ+ workers have previously been closeted at work because they or someone they know at work has been humiliated on the job for being an LGBTQ+ person



# Level-Setting the U.S. Workplace Climate

**No one should ever have to work at a place where their sexual or gender identity is mocked or ridiculed.**

Such jokes can [perpetuate stigma against](#) the targeted group, cause those who belong to this group to feel isolated, unsafe, or unwelcome, encourage a culture of discrimination and prejudice, and create a hostile work environment.

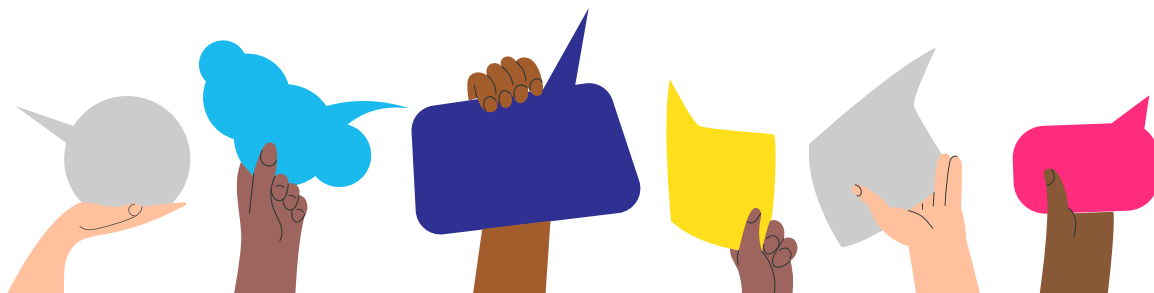
**A workplace of inclusivity starts from the top.** Employers, supervisors and every person in the workplace have an important role in combating these types of behavior in the

workplace, but it starts from leadership. If LGBTQ+ people and their identities are ridiculed and mocked by their own managers and leaders, then an exclusionary workplace culture will follow.

Fortunately, only a small percentage of workers say their direct supervisors have made jokes or negative comments about LGBTQ+ people. In addition, LGBTQ+ workers generally hear negative comments or jokes from their supervisors at similar rates to non-LGBTQ+ workers.

WORKERS WHO HAVE HEARD THEIR SUPERVISOR AT THEIR CURRENT JOB	MAKE JOKES OR NEGATIVE COMMENTS ABOUT...				
	LESBIAN OR GAY PEOPLE	BISEXUAL PEOPLE	OTHER PEOPLE WHO AREN'T STRAIGHT	TRANS-GENDER PEOPLE	NON-BINARY PEOPLE
Non-LGBTQ+ Workers	11%	9%	10%	11%	9%
LGBTQ+ Workers	9%	6%	8%	10%	9%
Transgender and Non-binary Workers	7%	4%	8%	11%	10%

**But efforts are needed to ensure all employees foster a climate of inclusion and acceptance.** Though workers rarely hear their supervisors make anti-LGBTQ+ comments, such harmful jokes and comments are far more commonly heard among colleagues and coworkers.



WORKERS WHO HAVE HEARD THEIR COLLEAGUES AT THEIR CURRENT JOB	MAKE JOKES OR NEGATIVE COMMENTS ABOUT...				
	LESBIAN OR GAY PEOPLE	BISEXUAL PEOPLE	OTHER PEOPLE WHO AREN'T STRAIGHT	TRANS-GENDER PEOPLE	NON-BINARY PEOPLE
Non-LGBTQ+ Workers	27%	20%	22%	21%	18%
LGBTQ+ Workers	35%	23%	32%	35%	30%
Transgender and Non-binary Workers	40%	25%	37%	44%	38%

**LGBTQ+ workers are more likely than their non-LGBTQ+ colleagues to report hearing negative jokes and comments.** This is possibly due to greater awareness among LGBTQ+ workers around negative comments and/or a greater likelihood that they will remember comments directed at them or the LGBTQ+ community. In other words, LGBTQ+ workers may be more likely to be hurt or feel personally targeted by such comments, and thus be more likely to notice and remember them: For example, transgender and non-binary workers are two times as likely as non-LGBTQ+ workers to report hearing jokes or negatives comments about transgender, non-binary and genderfluid people.

At the same time, fewer LGBTQ+ workers report hearing jokes or negative comments about [bi+ people](#) specifically, than about other identities. Here, paradoxically, biphobia may be emerging as protective. Workers may perceive jokes and negative comments about “same-sex” relations or behaviors to be specific only to gay and lesbian people, as bisexual people can be in relationships perceived as straight.

**Values from the top do not always translate into action and change across the workplace — a reality that is more apparent to marginalized workers.**

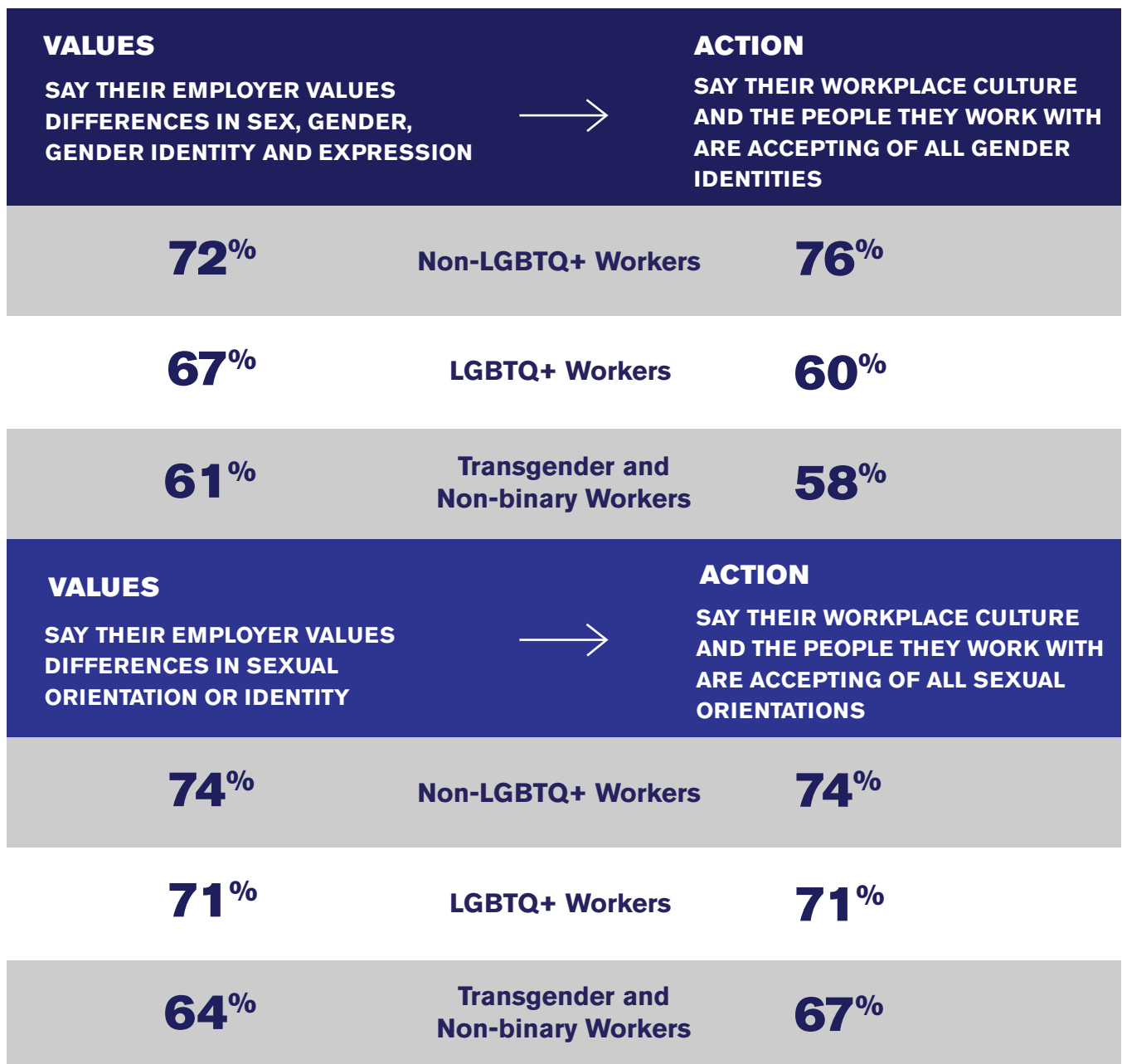


A majority of workers, LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ alike, believe their employer values LGBTQ+ inclusivity. However, LGBTQ+ workers, and transgender and non-binary workers in particular, are much less likely than non-LGBTQ+ workers to believe this. For example there is a 10-percentage point gap between non-LGBTQ+ workers (74%) and transgender and non-binary workers (64%) in belief that their employer values differences in sexual orientation or identity.

In addition, LGBTQ+ workers are less likely than non-LGBTQ+ workers to perceive their workplace climate as inclusive and affirming—and thus perceive a gap between employer values and actual inclusive workplace culture, that is not readily

apparent to non-LGBTQ+ workers. The gap between LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ workers perceptions of is significantly larger when it comes to perceived values around gender and sex, than around sexual orientation.

For example, non-LGBTQ+ workers are slightly more likely to view their workplace culture as accepting of people of all gender identities, than that their employer values differences in gender identity (76% vs. 72%, respectively). The reverse is seen for LGBTQ+ workers, 67% of whom believe their employer values differences in gender identity, versus only 60% who think their workplace culture is actually accepting of gender identity diversity.



**An inclusive workplace allows people to express themselves.** Allowing people to work in attire that is affirming is critical. Sometimes that means dressing in a style that is more masculine, feminine, or even androgynous than conventional norms for people of their gender. Telling someone they should dress more masculine or feminine to match these beliefs can make anyone, especially LGBTQ+ people, feel unaccepted

at work. This is especially true for transgender and non-binary people, who may often change their dress and expression during their gender transition. Nearly **one in five** transgender and non-binary workers say they have been told directly or indirectly that they needed to dress more masculine or feminine at work.



<sup>1</sup>The 13% of LGBTQ+ workers of color who say they have been told to dress more masculine or feminine than they were presenting includes:

- 11.7% Latinx LGBTQ+ workers
- 7.5% Asian (American), Native Hawaiian, and Other Pacific Islander (AANHPI) LGBTQ+ workers
- 10.7% Black LGBTQ+ workers
- 21.5% Multiracial/ethnic LGBTQ+ workers
- And 5.7% of Other race/ethnicity LGBTQ+ workers (including American Indian/Alaska Native, Middle Eastern/North African, and those who selected "Other" for their race).

In comparison, 13.5% white LGBTQ+ workers experienced this

# Double Standards and Double Lives

Every workplace has some level of interpersonal sharing which informs the work environment, builds important rapport among workers, and creates team cohesion. These conversations may include discussions about family and social life. LGBTQ+ workers report hearing

these kinds of conversations at work more often than non-LGBTQ+ workers. Discussions like these have the potential to out LGBTQ+ workers, so these may be conversations that the community is more aware of when they are happening.

	Non-LGBTQ+ Workers	LGBTQ+ Workers	Transgender and Non-binary Workers
HEAR CONVERSATIONS ABOUT CHILDREN AT WORK	86%	94%	93%
HEAR CONVERSATIONS ABOUT SPOUSES, RELATIONSHIPS OR DATING AT WORK	88%	97%	98%
HEAR CONVERSATIONS ABOUT SOCIAL LIFE AT WORK	92%	98%	99%





**When LGBTQ+ workers out themselves in everyday workplace conversations, they face a double standard.**

This includes conversations about a same-sex partner, pathways to parenting, or time spent at well-known LGBTQ+ friendly social spots, which all have the possibility of referring to someone's LGBTQ+ identity. The unfortunate reality is

that though LGBTQ+ workers are frequently hearing their colleagues discussing their relationships and families, they are also **five times** as likely as non-LGBTQ+ workers to say that when they personally engage in these discussions and discuss their sexual orientation and gender identity, doing so makes their colleagues uncomfortable.

**SAY THAT COWORKERS SEEM UNCOMFORTABLE WHEN THEY TALK ABOUT THEIR SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

**31%**  
of LGBTQ+ Workers

**32%**  
of Transgender and Non-binary Workers

**SAY THAT COWORKERS SEEM UNCOMFORTABLE WHEN THEY TALK ABOUT THEIR GENDER IDENTITY**

**26%**  
of LGBTQ+ Workers

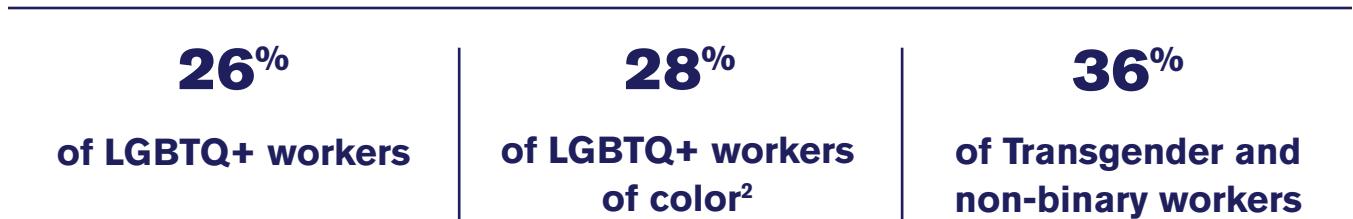
**45%**  
of Transgender and Non-binary Workers

# Impact of Unaffirming Workplace Climates on Workers

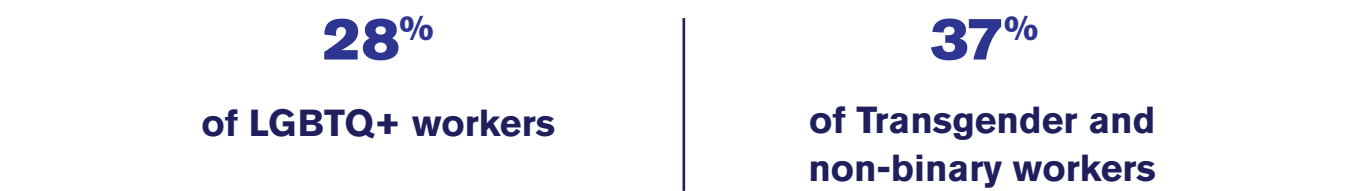
Workplace discrimination unfortunately remains all too common.



Unaffirming work environments and all the side-effects they bring can have a substantial impact on retention, attrition, and workplace productivity — for LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ workers alike.



## HAVE EVER SEARCHED FOR A DIFFERENT JOB AS A RESULT OF WORKING IN AN ENVIRONMENT THAT WAS NOT VERY ACCEPTING OF LGBTQ+ PEOPLE



## HAVE ACTUALLY LEFT A JOB BECAUSE THE ENVIRONMENT WAS NOT VERY ACCEPTING OF LGBTQ+ PEOPLE

<sup>2</sup>The 28.6% of LGBTQ+ workers of color who say they have searched for a different job includes

- 26.5% Latinx LGBTQ+ workers
- 21.8% Asian (American), Native Hawaiian, and Other Pacific Islander (AANHPI) LGBTQ+ workers
- 29.2% Black LGBTQ+ workers
- 34.1% Multiracial/ethnic LGBTQ+ workers
- And 22.9% of Other race/ethnicity LGBTQ+ workers (see above for description of this group).

In comparison, 22.9% white LGBTQ+ workers did this

**36%**

of LGBTQ+ workers

**36%**

of LGBTQ+ workers  
of color<sup>3</sup>

**48%**

of Transgender and  
non-binary workers

**HAVE FELT DISTRACTED AT WORK AS A RESULT OF  
AN UNACCEPTING ENVIRONMENT**

But unwelcoming and unaffirming environments can have major impacts that go beyond retention, and instead translate to real harm to their health and well-being.

**22%**

of LGBTQ+ workers

**41%**

of Transgender and  
non-binary workers

**FELT EXHAUSTED FROM SPENDING TIME AND ENERGY HIDING  
THEIR SEXUAL ORIENTATION ON THE JOB**

**42%**

of LGBTQ+ workers

**42%**

of LGBTQ+ workers  
of color<sup>4</sup>

**54%**

of Transgender and  
non-binary workers

**HAVE EVER FELT UNHAPPY OR DEPRESSED AT WORK AS A RESULT  
OF AN UNAFFIRMING ENVIRONMENT**

**Non-LGBTQ+ people also report finding ways to deal with unaccepting work environments.** Non-LGBTQ+ workers are more likely than LGBTQ+ workers to avoid work by staying home or taking time off. Non-LGBTQ+ workers may

be more likely than LGBTQ+ workers to use these methods to deal with an unaccepting workplace because LGBTQ+ workers often [have less access](#) to resources and benefits to take time off. LGBTQ+ people who are more likely to work in industries

<sup>3</sup>The 36.1% of LGBTQ+ workers of color who say they have felt distracted at work includes

- 33.3% Latinx LGBTQ+ workers
- 31.8% Asian (American), Native Hawaiian, and Other Pacific Islander (AANHPI) LGBTQ+ workers
- 33.6% Black LGBTQ+ workers
- 45.5% Multiracial/ethnic LGBTQ+ workers
- And 31.4% of Other race/ethnicity LGBTQ+ workers (see above for description of this group).

In comparison, 34.8% white LGBTQ+ workers did this

<sup>4</sup>The 42.1% of LGBTQ+ workers of color who say they have felt unhappy or depressed at work includes

- 39.3% Latinx LGBTQ+ workers
- 41.8% Asian (American), Native Hawaiian, and Other Pacific Islander (AANHPI) LGBTQ+ workers
- 37.7% Black LGBTQ+ workers
- 49.6% Multiracial/ethnic LGBTQ+ workers
- And 51.4% of Other race/ethnicity LGBTQ+ workers (see above for description of this group).

In comparison, 42.1% white LGBTQ+ workers felt this way



that lack paid time off (PTO) and vacation benefits, thus are faced with choosing between foregoing wages, or showing up and encountering discrimination, leading them to have to adopt alternate coping strategies. **Conversely, LGBTQ+ people are simply more likely to lie about their personal life.**

	Non-LGBTQ+ Workers	LGBTQ+ Workers	Transgender and Non-binary Workers
HAVE STAYED HOME FROM WORK TO AVOID UNACCEPTING WORKPLACE CLIMATES	20%	13%	21%
HAD TO LIE ABOUT THEIR PERSONAL LIFE AT WORK BECAUSE THE ENVIRONMENT WAS UNACCEPTING	16%	32%	40%



# Employer Social Responsibility and Accountability

**Employers and workplaces have made great strides over the last several years, but there is still room for growth.**

LGBTQ+ workers are less likely than non-LGBTQ+ workers to think their employer is “doing the right amount” for LGBTQ+ people, with gaps biggest for perceived employer efforts around transgender and non-binary people. Except for employer

efforts for lesbian or gay people, and other people who are not straight, LGBTQ+ workers are also more likely to think their employer does “too little or nothing at all” for LGBTQ+ people, rather than think their employer is doing the right amount. The reverse is true for non-LGBTQ+ workers, who consistently are more likely to report their employer is doing the right amount, rather than too little.

HOW MUCH THEIR EMPLOYER DOES FOR...	Non-LGBTQ+ Workers	LGBTQ+ Workers	Transgender and Non-binary Workers
<b>LESBIAN OR GAY PEOPLE</b>			
too little or nothing at all	<b>30%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>44%</b>
the right amount	<b>50%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>BISEXUAL PEOPLE</b>			
too little or nothing at all	<b>32%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>53%</b>
the right amount	<b>47%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>PEOPLE WHO AREN'T STRAIGHT</b>			
too little or nothing at all	<b>31%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>46%</b>
the right amount	<b>50%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>46%</b>

HOW MUCH THEIR EMPLOYER DOES FOR...	Non-LGBTQ+ Workers	LGBTQ+ Workers	Transgender and Non-binary Workers
<b>TRANSGENDER PEOPLE</b>			
too little or nothing at all	<b>35%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>61%</b>
the right amount	<b>42%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>NON-BINARY PEOPLE</b>			
too little or nothing at all	<b>36%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>62%</b>
the right amount	<b>41%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>32%</b>

## The Road Ahead

An inclusive workplace allows all employees, including LGBTQ+ workers, to feel a sense of belonging and fairness. LGBTQ+ people and their allies represent a significant segment of the global economy, and their numbers are only growing. Inclusion starts from the top, and for many LGBTQ+ people there may be a lack of trust between them and their HR department (or employer broadly) to even be open on the job. However, workplaces and their leaders are clear on their values of inclusion, and their employees see it.

Companies may have a bit of a blind spot when it comes to the efficacy of their efforts towards inclusion for LGBTQ+ people. New or different approaches are needed in order to ensure that inclusion efforts are reaching their target audiences. Businesses who are looking for ways to better support their LGBTQ+ employees and customers must be sure to establish and consult their LGBTQ+ ERGs when assessing internal efforts. In addition, employers are encouraged to participate in the [HRC Corporate Equality Index](#), and use data gathered from the 20+ year history of this benchmarking tool to determine best practices to adopt.

It is important that companies work to translate their values from the top to everyone across the workplace. Unaccepting environments have negative impacts on employee retention and productivity. However, businesses do better when they adopt corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts targeted at promoting inclusive and affirming environments where all employees feel like they can show up — and thrive — at work as their authentic selves. When employees feel accepted and included, they are [happier at work, more productive and invested in their jobs, and are less likely to leave](#) for another company. Increasingly, [LGBTQ+](#) and [non-LGBTQ+](#) consumers and employees alike are also looking to both [buy from, and work for](#), companies that demonstrate a commitment to marginalized groups — and to LGBTQ+ people in particular. And this commitment must be consistent across all aspects of the company, starting from how they support their LGBTQ+ employees.

## REMEDIES: USING THIS REPORT TO START A CONVERSATION

- What is the most surprising finding? What is the least?
- Which teams at your organization do you think most need to hear these results?
- Would your organization (or Employee Resource Group or Diversity & Inclusion teams) consider adopting a climate survey to assess your workplace for LGBTQ+ experiences?
- How does your organization deal with unconscious or subtle bias in the workplace?
- Read more about the future of inclusion and the LGBTQ+ workplace in [“Future-Proofing Business: Embracing Today and Tomorrow’s LGBTQ+ Workers and Customers.”](#)

## WHAT'S NEXT: MAKING INCLUSION MORE VISIBLE AT EVERY LEVEL

### ***For Senior Leaders***

- Review and/or participate in the [Corporate Equality Index](#), the national benchmarking tool measuring policies, practices and benefits pertinent to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) employees.
- Evaluate personal comfort level speaking specifically and directly to LGBTQ+ inclusion
- Reflect upon obligation to organization when it comes to recognizing LGBTQ+ inclusion
- Assess tools leadership has to communicate about corporate inclusion values — address knowledge gaps in the evolving vocabulary of LGBTQ+ inclusion and utilize partners to bolster comfort

### ***For Mid-level Managers***

- Proactively lead conversations about unconscious bias
- Equip teams with a vocabulary around spotting unconscious bias and talking to each other and you as their manager around experiences of unconscious bias
- Be intentional with team-building activities to ensure inclusion (i.e. ensure that they are not over-reliant on one point of bonding such as parenting, happy hours, etc.)

### ***For Individuals***

- Ask yourself what informed your earliest impressions and beliefs about LGBTQ+ identity and how you express that at work
- Define respect for yourself and others and how you demonstrate that in workplace
- Practice mirroring – if your colleague asks about your weekend, ask about theirs

# Acknowledgements

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*This report was sponsored by JPMorgan Chase & Co*

## JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.

JPMorgan Chase has long been a supporter of equality in all forms, including for the LGBTQ+ community. Our Office of LGBTQ+ Affairs is a full-time, global team dedicated to driving equity and inclusion for LGBTQ+ employees, clients, partners and communities around the world.

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### **HRC Foundation**

The HRC Foundation — a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization — envisions a world where all LGBTQ+ people can participate fully in the systems that shape our daily lives. Through public education, research, and policy and practice change, the Foundation's impact can be felt in schools, on factory floors and corporate suites, and in places of worship. It touches LGBTQ+ lives from childhood through end-of-life, people of all races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities, abilities and religious beliefs, in big cities and small towns, in the United States and across the globe.

### **The Workplace Equality Program**

The Corporate Equality Index is a project of the Workplace Equality Program at the Human Rights Campaign Foundation. In addition to the CEI, the Workplace Equality Program researches, develops, and advocates for greater equity and inclusion for LGBTQ+ workers at the federal, state, and local levels, and provides support to employers seeking to enhance LGBTQ+ inclusion through education, training, policy, and consulting assistance.

### **The Public Education & Research Program**

The HRC Foundation's Public Education & Research Program spearheads a wide variety of LGBTQ+ advocacy and outreach campaigns, working to ensure that the HRC Foundation's resources and programs are timely, impactful and inclusive. In addition to publishing resource guides, informational materials and reports, the team conducts original quantitative and qualitative research exploring the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ people. The program also collaborates with experts and provides guidance to other HRC initiatives in support of efforts to advance LGBTQ+ equality and well-being.

# Methodology

## ABOUT THE DATA

Data come from a nonprobability sample of 3,044 adults workers in the United States. The sample includes 2,002 LGBTQ+ workers and 1,042 non-LGBTQ+ workers who are part-time and full-time employees. The LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ workers were collected in different samples by Community Marketing and Insights (the LGBTQ+ sample) and PSB Insights (the non-LGBTQ+ sample).

### LGBTQ+ Sample Recruitment

Community Marketing & Insights (CMI) has been conducting LGBTQ community research since 1992. CMI's practice includes online surveys, in-depth interviews, on-site and virtual focus groups, and LGBTQ recruitment assistance supporting LGBTQ research initiatives. Over the decades, CMI has completed more than 300 LGBTQ-specific research projects in support of businesses, corporations, universities, non-profits, government agencies, and other research groups. CMI maintains our own panel of 50,000 diverse, community-representative LGBTQ research participants living in the United States. Many of CMI's panel members have been active for over two decades. For this study, Community Marketing & Insights (CMI) recruited LGBTQ participants through a random sample of its own internal panel. Participants were recruited through an initial email invitation, and follow-up invitations were sent to harder-to-reach demographic groups as needed.

### Non-LGBTQ+ Sample Recruitment

In partnership with HRC, PSB Insights fielded a survey with 1,042 non-LGBTQ+ identifying Gen Pop consumers from April 20th through May 3rd. To ensure the survey sample reflected the demographic distribution of general population in the U.S., PSB set representative sampling quotas for respondents' race, age, income, education level, and gender. PSB Insights, LLC is a modern global insights consultancy. PSB provides a unique integration of innovative research methodologies and strategic counsel to help solve our clients' most complex challenges. With full-spectrum capabilities from ethnographic qualitative research to sophisticated predictive modeling, we take a multi-modal approach to unearthing insights. At PSB, we bring together the experience of former CMOs, communications specialists, brand stewards, advertising professionals, moderators, statisticians, political campaign advisers and market strategists to tackle our clients' most pressing business challenges through a wide range of expertise.

## Sample Characteristics

Unadjusted Sample		Unadjusted Proportion	N
Sexual Identity & Gender Identity	Non-LGBTQ	34%	1,042
	LGBTQ+	66%	2,002
	Transgender and Non-binary	14%	424
Race & Ethnicity	White	45%	1,357
	Nonwhite	55%	1,687
Age	18-24	11%	342
	25-34	24%	721
	35-44	23%	688
	45-54	19%	571
	55-64	17%	503
	65 and older	7%	219
Urbanicity	Rural	7%	213
	Small city or town	14%	437
	Suburban	24%	689
	Medium city or town	17%	506
	Urban or large city	39%	1,178

### Estimation Strategy

The analysis reports unadjusted percentages and age-adjusted odds-ratios. A percentage in the report, such as “50%”, refers to an unadjusted percentage. Results that refer to an odd, such as “two times as likely” refer to age-adjusted odds-ratio. Odds-ratios were calculated using logistic regression and robust standard errors.

**Variable definitions LGBTQ+ Identity Groups:** In this analysis, results are primarily presented stratified by sexual identity and gender identity, but also include some stratified by race and ethnicity. Variables were created to indicate non-LGBTQ+ respondents, LGBTQ+ respondents, transgender and non-binary respondents and respondents of color. Respondents who answer “something else” for sexual identity, gender or race and ethnicity are categorized as LGBTQ+, transgender and non-binary and people of color, respectively.



A total of 2% (N=70) of respondents selected “something else” as their sexual identity, 1% (N=38) selected “something else” as their gender and 1% (N=28) selected “something else” as their race or ethnicity. Non-LGBTQ+ respondents are cisgender and heterosexual. LGBTQ+ respondents are noncisgender and heterosexual individuals. People of color refer to any respondent who selected any race or ethnicity other than “white.” White people are those who exclusively identify as white. Operationalization strategy for “LGBTQ+,”

“non-LGBTQ+,” “transgender and non-binary,” and “people of color” are presented in the below table.

**Race/ethnicity:** A larger report is forthcoming which explores results across race/ethnicity. For the present report, however, results are presented in a few places where relevant, specifically for non-white people of color (defined as reporting a race/ethnicity other than exclusively white/non-Hispanic/Latinx).

Operationalization Strategies for Sexual Identity, Gender Identity and Race/Ethnicity		
	Survey Question	Operationalization
<b>Non-LGBTQ+</b>	(Qsexuality) Which of the following best describes you personally?	<b>=1/Non-LGBTQ+ if</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Qsexuality = 1, AND</li> <li>▪ Qgender = 1 or 2, AND</li> <li>▪ Qtransgender = 0</li> </ul> <b>= 0 /LGBTQ+ otherwise</b>
<b>LGBTQ+</b>	1 Heterosexual or straight 2 Gay 3 Lesbian 4 Bisexual 5 Queer 8 Something else (SPECIFY)	<b>=1/LGBTQ+ if</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Qsexuality = 2, 3, 4, 5, or 8, AND/OR</li> <li>▪ Qgender = 3, 8, AND/OR</li> <li>▪ Qtransgender = 1</li> <li>▪ OR Qsexuality=1 and Qtransgender==1 /Qgender==3</li> </ul> <b>=0 /Non-LGBTQ+ otherwise</b>
<b>Transgender and non-binary</b>	(Qgender) Which best describes you personally? 1 Man 2 Woman 3 Non-binary 8 Something else (SPECIFY)  (Qtransgender) Do you personally consider yourself to be transgender?  0 No 1 Yes	<b>=1 /Transgender and non-binary if</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Qgender = 3 or 8, AND/OR</li> <li>▪ Qtransgender =1, AND/OR</li> <li>▪ Qgender=1 or 2 and Qtransgender=1</li> </ul> <b>=0/Cisgender otherwise</b>

	Survey Question	Operationalization
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>	<p>(Qrace) Which of the following best describes you personally? Please select all that apply.</p> <p>1 Asian  2 Black  3 Latino/a/e/x or Hispanic  4 Native Alaskan or Native American  5 Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander  6 Middle Eastern or North African  7 White  8 Something else: _____</p>	<p><b>Race/ethnicity</b> was constructed as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Combining qrace=1 (Asian) and qrace=5 (NHPI) into single category due to sample size</li> <li>2. Combining qrace=6 and qrace =8 into a single category due to sample size</li> <li>3. Counting the number of race/ethnicities a person selected, and creating a new category, "multiracial/ethnic" if selected 2+</li> </ol> <p>Resulting in final categorical variable coded as <b>raceeth</b></p> <p>1 = Latino/a/e/x or Hispanic, only  2 = Non-Hispanic (NH), AANHPI only  3 = NH-Black only  4 = NH- Other race only</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Includes Middle Eastern/North African and those who selected qrace=8/something else</li> </ul> <p>5 = NH-White race only  6= Multiracial/ethnic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Includes Latinx/Hispanic as well</li> </ul>
<b>People of color</b>		<p>=1/person of color if <i>raceeth</i>=1,2,3,4, or 6</p> <p>=0/not a person of color if <i>raceeth</i>=5/  NH-White</p>



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