

## What is an ALLY?

**An Ally** is someone who may or may not be LGBTQ themselves, but supports and defends the rights of respect and dignity of all LGBTQ individuals.

Allies have always been a critical part of equal-rights movements. During the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, white men and women stood along people of color as they fought for equal protection under the law. They did this not because they had anything to gain, but because they supported the moral principles of the movement. Organized Labor as a whole has long supported movements aimed at increasing the rights of all people in the workplace.

When you become an Ally of LGBTQ people, your actions help change the culture, making society a better, safer place for LGBTQ people and for all people who do not conform to gender expectations. Allies use the appropriate pronouns and understand the necessity for comfort and support for the LGBTQ community. Allies are secure in who they are and know the importance of supporting others as they seek to live their authentic lives.

**HEAR IT, STOP IT!** An Ally stands up to disrespectful remarks and jokes. Allies have been an important component in ALL fights for equality.

*Allies are everyday heroes.*

## LGBTQ Do's & Don'ts

**DO:** Listen to others with respect. You don't have to agree with someone to treat them with dignity and hear them.

**DON'T:** Ask a transgender person about their transition process.

**DO:** Respect their privacy, and don't discuss their journey with anyone.

**DON'T:** Make the mistake of offering backhanded compliments like "I would never have known you used to be a man/woman!" "You don't look gay/lesbian." Though well-intended, these can be cutting and detrimental to an atmosphere of respect.

**DO:** Ask questions that relate to interacting with respect, such as, "What pronoun do you prefer?"

**DON'T:** Ask more personal questions about sexuality or intimate relationships.

**DO:** Apologize if you make a mistake. Mistakes happen. Using the wrong language or pronoun is okay. Sincerely apologize and move on.

## Questions? Contact:

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## Dealing with LGBTQ Issues in the Workplace

**UFCW OUTreach** is a constituency group dedicated to building mutual support between our union's International, regional, and local Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) Community and their Allies.

OUTreach is committed to organizing for social and economic justice for all, regardless of age, race, gender, creed, color, sexual orientation, or gender identity. We are fighting to achieve equality for all members of the LGBTQ community in employment, benefits, accommodations, marriage, immigration, and wherever else inequalities exist.

***"An injury to one is an injury to all."***



**VISIT US ONLINE:**  
[www.ufcwoutreach.org](http://www.ufcwoutreach.org)  
[www.facebook.com/ufcwoutreach](https://www.facebook.com/ufcwoutreach)

## FAQs

**“Can I be discriminated against on the job by my boss?”** Discrimination is not permitted under most UFCW contracts. There are no federal protections currently in place for LGBTQ individuals. While state laws vary on which individuals have legal protections from discrimination, UFCW partners cannot be fired or punished by management except for reasons specifically detailed in their workplace contract.

**“Can I be discriminated against on the job by my coworkers?”** These same contracts also require coworkers to treat one another with respect and dignity on the job regardless of gender, race, creed, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

**“What do I do if I am targeted?”** If you believe you or someone you work with has been the victim of discrimination by a coworker, it is vital that you contact your local Union Representative to resolve this issue.

**“How do I know the right way to address a transgender person?”** The first thing you can do is listen. Generally, someone who knows the person well will refer to them with the proper name and pronoun the person prefers.

If you must ask someone, it's best to ask them, “What pronoun do you prefer?” This is a respectful way to show that you care about making them feel comfortable and respected at work.

**“There was a man/woman in the bathroom with me that looks like they belong in another bathroom. How do I deal with that?”** Remember first and foremost that there is no right or wrong way for a person to look. We shouldn't assume that a person has chosen the wrong restroom because we think we know their gender identity. Unless the person is behaving inappropriately, there is very little reason for concern.

Sadly, many transgender and other gender nonconforming individuals have been assaulted or accosted while using public restrooms even though they were doing nothing wrong. Transgender people have been using the bathroom most appropriate for their gender identity for many years. You have likely shared a bathroom with a transgender person without even knowing.

If you remain uncomfortable with sharing a bathroom with someone you think is using the wrong facility, please contact your local Union Representative to discuss the issue.

## Transgender Key Terms

**Gender Identity:** Gender is FLUID. Someone's gender does not always match their biological sex. Biological sex refers to someone's sex at the time of their birth, not their gender as an adult. An individual who identifies their gender as male or female may not have been “born” that way. The UFCW respects different gender identities and will recognize and respect the gender someone identifies with, regardless of their “biological sex.”

**Gender Expression:** Relates to an individual's characteristic and behaviors such as appearance, dress, mannerisms, speech patterns, and social interactions that are perceived as masculine or feminine.

**Transition:** The process of changing gender from one's birth-assigned gender to one's gender identity. This process can include legal steps, such as changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents. It may also include medical aspects such as hormone treatment or surgical procedures.

**Pronouns:** Refers to the gendered pronouns such as him/her or he/she. Understanding what pronoun a transgender person is most comfortable with is an important aspect of respecting their dignity.

***I am gay. I am lesbian. I am bisexual. I am transgender. I am queer. I am like you. I am human.***