

Transgender & Gender Non-Conforming: A Civil Liberties Briefing



There are approximately 1.4 million transgender people in the United States, but **only 22% of Americans say they know someone who is transgender** compared to nearly 90% who know someone who is lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Why does this matter? Knowing a transgender person is a good indicator that an individual will support broad non-discrimination polices meaning they believe all LGBT persons should be protected under the law.

Who is transgender? Transgender is often used to describe people whose gender identity, expression or behavior is different from those typically associated with their assigned sex at birth. This can include people who transition from male-to-female (MTF) or female-to-male (FTM), and anyone whose gender identity or expression differs from traditional expectations of masculinity and/or femininity.



Who is gender non-conforming? This term refers to people who do not follow traditional ideas or stereotypes about how they should look or act based on the sex they were assigned at birth.

Issues Transgender & Gender Non-Conforming People Face

Physical & Mental Health Care

For many transgender and gender non-conforming people, it can be nerve-racking to simply go to the doctor's office because they do not know whether their doctor has ever worked with a transgender person, or if they will be met with intrusive and inappropriate questions and comments.

Additionally, transgender and gender non-conforming individuals often face difficulty accessing medical and mental health services partially because there is a lack of inclusive and accessible health insurance available. For example, **Ohio has no explicit policy ensuring equal coverage for transgender people**, and Medicare and Medicaid cover transition-related hormone therapy, but the specific procedures that are covered are still being determined.

Criminal Justice System

Discrimination can make it difficult to earn a living, find long-term housing, access affordable health care, and meet other basic needs. This results in transgender people being **overrepresented in homelessness and in our criminal justice system**. Unfortunately, the violence and discrimination that many transgender people experience in daily life can often be worse while incarcerated. For example, a recent survey illustrated that

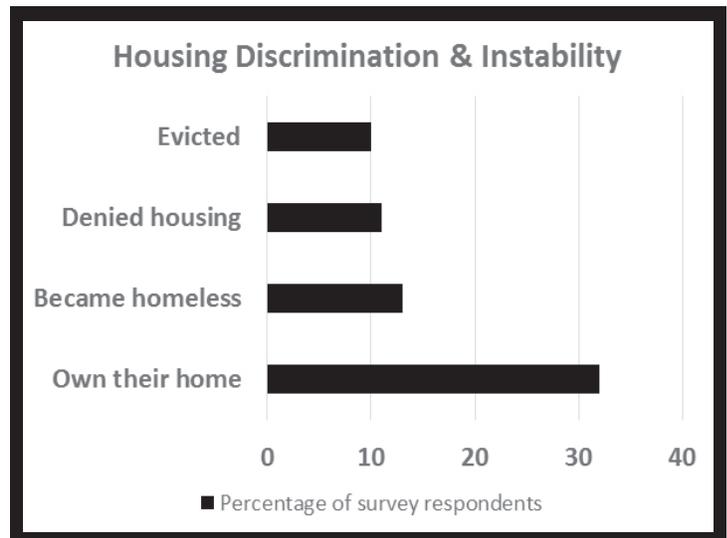
- » 16% of transgender respondents had spent time in jail or prison compared to 5% of all American adults.
- » 24% of transgender people in prisons and jails reported being sexually assaulted by another prisoner compared to 2% of all prisoners.

Did you know? Violence against transgender people rose 13% last year, while it dropped 32% overall in LGBTQ communities.

Less Legal Protections

Ohio does not have a statewide law that protects LGBT people from discrimination. This means LGBT Ohioans can be **fired from their job, denied housing, asked to leave a public facility,** or denied access to the appropriate restroom.

Public accommodations are important! This term refers to **spaces, whether owned privately or publicly, that are open to the public** such as movie theaters, hotels, restaurants, and bars. The ACLU of Ohio believes that allowing transgender individuals to use the restroom that matches their gender identity is crucial to their safety and well-being.



**Infographic statistics from the Findings of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey.*

Legal Documents

Everyone should be able to have government issued identification documents that accurately reflect their gender identity.

Unfortunately, **transgender and gender non-conforming individuals often find themselves with inconsistent gender markers on various forms of identification because the rules for changing each form of identification vary widely.** Inconsistent gender markers also destroy the right to maintain transgender status privately.

In Ohio, you CAN change:

- » Your legal name by filing a petition in court;
- » The name and gender marker on your:
 - Driver's License;
 - U.S. Passport; and
 - Social Security information.

Ohio law does not provide clear guidance on updating the gender marker on a birth certificate.