



## Transgender Inclusion Policy

The Metro D.C. Synod does not discriminate in any way on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. This policy is designed to create a safe and productive environment for all synod employees and for all persons who attend events hosted by the Metro D.C. Synod.

### Definitions:

Gender identity means a person's internal, deeply-felt sense of being male, female, or something other or in-between, regardless of the sex they were assigned at birth. Everyone has a gender identity.

Gender expression means an individual's characteristics and behaviors (such as appearance, dress, mannerisms, speech patterns, and social interactions) that may be perceived as masculine or feminine.

Sexual orientation is a person's physical or emotional attraction to people of the same and/or other gender. Straight, gay, and bisexual are some ways to describe sexual orientation. It is important to note that sexual orientation is distinct from gender identity and expression. Transgender people can be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or straight, just like cisgender people.

Transgender is an umbrella term that can be used to describe people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from their sex assigned at birth.

- A person whose sex assigned at birth was female but who identifies as male is a transgender man.
- A person whose sex assigned at birth was male but who identifies as female is a transgender woman.
- Some people described by this definition don't consider themselves transgender – they may use other words, or may identify simply as a man or woman. A person does not need to identify as transgender in order for nondiscrimination policies to apply to them.
- A person whose publicly acknowledged gender identity does not match their sex as assigned at birth is said to have transitioned socially; the gender that they acknowledge in public is known as their Affirmed Gender. A person need not transition to be transgender.

Cisgender refers to a person whose gender identity corresponds with the sex registered for them at birth; not transgender.



### **Privacy:**

Transgender employees and all those who engage with the Metro D.C. Synod have the right to discuss their gender identity or expression openly, or to keep that information private. The transgender individual gets to decide when, with whom, and how much to share their private information. Information about an employee's transgender status (such as the sex they were assigned at birth) can constitute confidential medical information under privacy laws like HIPAA. The Metro D.C. Synod also recognizes that people may choose to use different names/pronouns in different spaces, and one should defer to what a person says in that moment even if it is different than a previous encounter.

Metro D.C. Synod staff should not disclose information that may reveal another's transgender status or gender non-conforming presentation to others. That kind of personal or confidential information may only be shared with the transgender employee's consent and with those who truly need to know to do their jobs.

### **Restroom Accessibility:**

At events hosted by the Metro D.C. Synod, all persons shall be entitled to use the restroom that corresponds to their gender identity, regardless of their sex assigned at birth. The decision shall be left to each individual to determine the most appropriate and safest restroom to use.

When the Metro D.C. Synod is the host of an event, the Synod shall take steps to ensure that all individuals have access to a restroom corresponding to their gender identity or that there is a single-occupant restroom available for use. When planning an event, synod staff shall prioritize event locations where single-occupant restrooms and/or all-gender restrooms are available. In the event such a location is not secured, the Synod staff shall designate at least one available restroom on site as an all-gender restroom and/or single-occupant restroom for the duration of the event (inclusive of set-up and tear-down time).

### **Names and Pronouns:**

At events hosted by the Metro D.C. Synod, individuals will be given the option to identify their preferred name and pronouns, which shall be placed in the dominant position on all identification markings of the event. It is the expectation that all attendees of a Synod event will make their best, good-faith effort to address each individual by the pronouns and name the individual has identified. Willful failure to do so could rise to the level of harassment and will not be tolerated by the Synod.