Basic LGBTQ+ Terms

Sexual Orientation

Asexual people: Individuals who generally do not experience sexual attraction to others of any gender. Some do experience romantic attractions. Asexuality differs from celibacy in that celibates have a sexual attraction but choose to abstain from sex.

Bisexual people: Individuals who experience sexual, romantic, and/or emotional attractions to people of more than one gender or people who are attracted to genders similar to their own and to genders different from their own.

Gay men: Men who experience sexual, romantic, and/or emotional attractions to other men.

Lesbians: Women who experience sexual, romantic, and/or emotional attractions to other women.

Pansexual people: Individuals who are attracted to others regardless of their gender identity or biological sex.

Queer people: An umbrella term to refer to all LGBTQ+ people. It is also a specific identity of individuals whose sexuality is fluid or does not fit into traditional sexual orientation categories.

Questioning or unsure people: Individuals who are in the process of deciding on their sexual orientation.

Same-gender loving people: Individuals who experience same-gender attraction. The term originated within communities of color as an alternative to “lesbian” and “gay,” which they feel does not speak to their cultural heritages.

Straight or heterosexual people: Men who experience sexual, romantic, and/or emotional attractions to women, and women who experience sexual, romantic, and/or emotional attractions to men.

Gender Identity

Agender people: Individuals who identify as not having a gender. Some describe themselves as genderless, while others see themselves as gender neutral.
**Cisgender men:** Men who were assigned male at birth (i.e., men who are not trans).

**Cisgender women:** Women who were assigned female at birth (i.e., women who are not trans).

**Gender fluid people:** Individuals whose gender varies over time. A gender fluid person may at any time identify as male, female, agender, or any other nonbinary gender identity, or as some combination of gender identities.

**Genderqueer people:** Individuals who identify as neither male nor female (but as another gender), as somewhere in between or beyond genders, or as a combination of genders.

**Nonbinary people:** An umbrella term and a specific identity for individuals who do not fit into traditional “male” and “female” gender categories.

**Questioning or unsure people:** Individuals who are in the process of deciding on their gender identity.

**Trans men:** Men who were assigned female at birth.

**Trans women:** Women who were assigned male at birth.