



MSU Extension Guide for Inclusion of Individuals of All Gender Identities, Gender Expressions, Sexual Orientations & Sexes

INTRODUCTION

Michigan State University and MSU Extension (including Michigan 4-H Youth Development) are inclusive and welcoming of all forms of diversity. One of MSU Extension’s shared value statements (<https://bit.ly/3eklwdQ>) reads:

We will welcome everyone. We will foster inclusivity across our organization, in our programming, through our community partnerships, and in our hearts. We will nurture an environment that respects and values human differences as we continuously work to expand our reach to diverse audiences.

MSU Extension policy prohibits discrimination against or harassment of anyone in any of its programs, events, or activities. While this MSU Extension policy isn’t new, staff members often have questions and ask for advice about implementing it. This guide is designed to address common questions about creating safe, welcoming environments for people of all sexes, gender identities, gender expressions, and sexual orientations at MSU Extension programs, activities, and events around the state.

The MSU Extension anti-discrimination statement lists many areas where prejudicial treatment is not tolerated:

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, committed to achieving excellence through a diverse workforce and inclusive culture that encourages all people to reach their full potential. *MSU Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, or veteran status* [emphasis added]. Issued in furtherance of MSU Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Quentin Tyler, Director, MSU Extension, East Lansing, MI 48824. This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned.

For more information on the MSU Extension anti-discrimination policy, visit the “Compliance Resources” page on the MSU Extension Civil Rights website (<https://bit.ly/3tHAYbO>).

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Important Note About This Guide

Language, best practices for inclusion, and our understanding of identity are constantly evolving, and this guide must align with these changes. Therefore, the guide will be reviewed and updated regularly.



THE MSU ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Michigan State University Anti-Discrimination Policy (<https://bit.ly/3tAoJh6>) prohibits discrimination and harassment against any community member(s) based on characteristics protected under federal and state law, as well as additional protections based on MSU community standards, including “on the basis of age, color, gender, gender identity, disability, height, marital status, national origin, political persuasion,

race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or weight” (Michigan State University, 2015).

For more information about the MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy and related topics, visit the dedicated page on the MSU Human Resources site (<https://bit.ly/3tAoJh6>) and the MSU Office for Civil Rights and Title IX Education and Compliance “Policies” page (<https://bit.ly/3v6PEBo>).

A GLOSSARY OF IMPORTANT TERMS

The language used to describe human identities is constantly evolving and often varies by region. This section introduces and gives current definitions for key terms used in this guide. See the “References and Resources” section of this guide for links to a variety of related educational resources.

The terms and definitions in this section are reprinted or adapted with permission from the MSU Gender and Sexuality Campus Center (GSCC): Glossary page (<https://bit.ly/3f9z2DU>).

Birth-Assigned Sex or Sex the designation that refers to a person’s biological, morphological, hormonal, and genetic composition. One’s sex is typically assigned at birth and classified as either male or female. “Assigned at birth” implies that sex assignment takes place without the agency of the individual. (**Note:** “Sex” will be used throughout the rest of this guide.)

Gender expression how a person presents their gender to others. This can include many factors; examples include but are not limited to: how someone dresses, styles their hair, or speaks.

Gender identity the way in which a person conceptualizes themselves as a gendered being or the language a person uses to describe their internal understanding of their gender. Also, one’s innate and personal experience of gender. This may or may not align with one’s gender expression or gender attribution.

Intersex a general term used for a variety of conditions in which an individual’s reproductive or sexual anatomy (including genitals, secondary sex characteristics, chromosomes, and hormone levels) do not fit into the medical or societal definition of male or female. Some members of the intersex community prefer to use person-first language to describe themselves (for example, “a person with intersex condition”) and conceptualize their condition as one of medical diagnosis. Others (re)claim intersex as an identity. Some people with intersex conditions do not consider themselves to be members of the LGBTQA+ community and some do.

LGBTQ a common abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning people. The acronym is used as an umbrella term when talking about non-heterosexual and non-cisgender identities and does not always reflect members of the community. The acronym may be expanded to **LGBTQIA+** to include intersex individuals, asexual individuals, and two-spirit individuals, or shortened to **LGBQ** when discussing only sexual identity. The plus (+) indicates other identities not included in the abbreviation and recognizes that words and identities change over time. (**Note:** The inclusive abbreviation LGBTQIA+ is used throughout this guide.)

Nonbinary a gender identity term for a person who identifies outside of the gender binary.

Sexual orientation or identity the language a person uses to describe themselves as a sexual being. Sexual identity is the preferred term. One’s sexual identity may or may not align with one’s sexual behavior or



or sexual attractions. A few common sexual identity terms include:

- **Asexual** a sexual identity term for people who do not feel sexual attraction, experience little sexual attraction to others, or do not feel desire for a sexual partner or partners. Asexuality can be conceptualized as a continuum with identities along it possessing their own identity labels. Some asexual individuals may still experience romantic attractions. Asexuality is distinct from “celibacy” because celibacy is a choice. Not all asexual people are aromantic.
- **Bisexual** a sexual identity term that most often refers to a person who is attracted to people of multiple genders. Some people conceptualize bisexuality to mean attraction to two genders, usually men and women. However, many others feel this definition is reductive and not inclusive of transgender, nonbinary, and genderqueer identities. Some consider bisexual to be an umbrella term that encompasses all non-monosexual identities. Commonly shortened to “bi.”
- **Gay** a sexual identity term that most often refers to a person who is sexually attracted to a person of a similar gender; for example, men who are attracted to men.
- **Lesbian** a sexual identity term for women who are attracted to women.

- **Pansexual** a sexual identity term that most often refers to a person who experiences sexual attraction to people of all or many gender identities and expressions. Commonly shortened to “pan.”

Sex see *Birth-assigned sex*.

Transition/Transitioning the process a transgender (“trans,” for short) or nonbinary person goes through as they begin to live as their gender identity. Transitioning means very different things to different people. It may include steps such as changing one’s name, taking hormones, having surgery, and altering legal documents. There is no right way to transition and each trans person has their own path. In general, there are three types of transition:

- **Legal** changing the gender marker on legal documents such as one’s birth certificate, driver’s license, social security card, insurance papers, and passport. Legal barriers in the U.S. and many other countries make legal transitions complicated and expensive.
- **Medical** may include hormone replacement therapy (HRT), gender affirmation surgeries, or both.
- **Social** changing mannerisms, dress, hair, pronouns, name, and other elements that are not necessarily medical or legal.

CREATING SAFE, WELCOMING ENVIRONMENTS

MSU Extension events, including those designed specifically for children and youth, should be welcoming and feel safe for everyone—including people who are transgender, intersex, or nonbinary—to participate. Though it might be a new experience for you, transgender, intersex, and nonbinary youth, adults, faculty, staff, and volunteers have always participated in MSU Extension programming. As we plan, evaluate, and report on our efforts and programs, our work should be guided by the MSU Extension anti-discrimination policy. (See the full anti-discrimination statement in the “Introduction” section of this guide.)

In short, we should lead with the commitment to making our programs open to all.

MSU Extension’s anti-discrimination policy, supported with intentional practices, will help make MSU Extension programming a great experience for everyone. Read on for more information and resources.

Share your program practices for inclusion with the entire community. Do not focus discussions about inclusion at events on a particular individual because this violates their privacy and may create an unsafe environment for them. If questions or concerns arise, be sure to keep the discussion focused on MSU Extension’s commitments, practices, and policies, rather than on a particular individual’s participation. The rest of this document will provide more information about inclusion practices. Here are a few ideas to get you started:



- Include a copy of the MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy in the event registration information along with a statement that all individuals are welcome to participate in MSU Extension programming.
- For longer programs, have a conversation recognizing the value of differences and of diversity, equity, and inclusion during orientation or the first day of your program.
- For youth participants, it may be helpful to spark dialogue and build understanding with open-ended questions, such as:
 - What are some things all people have in common?
 - What is something that makes you happy? Did someone else here say the same thing?
 - If you had a superpower, what would it be and why?
 - What might make it harder for you to be successful in a program if you don't feel like you are included?

Train your program staff and volunteers about inclusivity. Be sure the training includes a discussion about sex, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, as well as coaching on how to answer participants' and families' questions and address harassment and bullying. Local community resource centers may offer in-person training or additional resources. If you need help setting up a training, please contact Dionardo Pizaña, MSU Extension diversity, equity, and inclusion specialist (phone 517-432-2666, email pizanad@msu.edu). MSU also offers a variety of free online resources, including:

- The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Resources (<https://bit.ly/3auFT8i>) page on MSU Extension's Organizational Development site has Michigan-related multicultural information and guides.
 - The Gender and Sexuality Campus Center (GSCC; <https://gsc.msu.edu/>) offers a free online and face-to-face training program called Quest: Building Capacity for LGBTQIA+ Inclusion (<https://bit.ly/3sGrXhH>). Quest is available through D2L to all staff with an MSU NetID. The center also provides educational tools (such as a glossary) and resources related to being an ally; important LGBTQIA+ dates; intersecting identities; the importance of using the personal pronouns a person gives you (<https://bit.ly/3xatlMY>); campus, state, and federal resources; MSU's policy for reporting discrimination; and consultation services.
- Offer transgender, intersex, and nonbinary participants a tour of the event facilities.** Discuss the options that are available for sleeping, using the bathroom, and showering. Make it clear that MSU Extension defers to participants' gender identities.
- Foster an environment where people feel comfortable sharing their pronouns and names and commit to using those pronouns and names.** It is important to use the name a participant has provided, which may be different from their legal name. Using a participant's legal name may unintentionally compromise their safety and comfort during an event. Model the appropriate behavior for participants by introducing yourself with your pronouns and encouraging others to do the same.
- It's important keep participants' legal names separate from the name they want to be called. This will help avoid confusion about which name to use, maintain participant privacy, and ensure participants are addressed as they want to be.
 - When starting a program, allow participants to introduce themselves instead of calling names from a registration list. This not only allows people to say what name and pronouns they want used during the program; it also helps make sure their name is pronounced correctly.
 - Following up with a conversation recognizing the participant's name and pronouns is a great way to kick off their experience and ensure they feel welcomed. MSU Extension will honor the name and pronoun use that participants provide. Be sure that preprinted name tags reflect participants' pronouns and names or allow participants to complete their own name tags. Consider preparing a short piece about pronoun use and how this supports diversity, equity, and inclusion at MSU Extension events. Two examples of how to include pronouns in your introduction follow.



- *Welcome to the ____ MSU Extension program. My name is _____. My pronouns are _____.*
- *Welcome to the ____ MSU Extension program. My name is _____ and my pronouns are _____. I'm excited to have everyone at the program today. Let's take a moment to introduce ourselves, names and pronouns if you like, and one thing you hope to learn from this session.*

If your program has overnight housing, find out who participants would prefer to share a room with. Try to honor roommate requests as appropriate. Share with participants that roommate requests are not guaranteed and encourage participants to reach out to the event coordinator to discuss the best options.

Avoid segregating and categorizing people by gender. For example, in youth programming, discourage forming a boys' line and a girls' line or having two different teams divided into male and female participants; instead, consider alternative grouping methods such as by:

- Having participants count off based on the number of groups needed
- Birth month
- First or last initial
- Color or pattern of shirt or shoes

When greeting participants, avoid gendered language like "ladies and gentlemen" or "boys and girls." Consider alternatives such as: "everyone," "folks," "participants," "farmers," "colleagues," "friends," or "first graders."

Ask participants to share with you any concerns they have about participating in this program. If you aren't sure how to respond, reassure the participants and let them know that you will get more information for them and get back to them soon. Be sure to follow up with the participant and share what you have learned with them.

For urgent matters involving youth, work with your immediate supervisor and contact the director or associate director of MSU Extension's Children and Youth Institute.

Check in with all participants during and at the end of programming to see how things are going. Watch for non-verbal responses or cues that may indicate a person's comfort level and check in with participants who may need more support.

Recognize that we will make mistakes in doing this work. When that happens, we need to follow the ACT model: **A**pologize for the error, **C**orrect the error, and **T**ry again.

For more information on how to integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion into your MSU Extension programs, see *DEI in Action: Developing, Planning, and Facilitating Educational Programs and Events Guide* (<https://bit.ly/3nDwxNV>).



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This section of the guide answers some questions related to including and welcoming people of all sexes, gender identities (gender expressions), and sexual identities or orientations to MSU Extension programming. The first part focuses on questions that

apply to all areas of MSU Extension programming. The second part addresses questions focusing on 4-H and youth, and the third on questions related to programming that includes overnight stays (such as camps, workshops, and conferences).

All-Extension FAQ

1. How do we verify that an individual is intersex, transgender, or nonbinary?

Verification is neither necessary nor appropriate. MSU Extension does not require a medical diagnosis, treatment, or identification documents that reflect an individual's gender identity (gender expression) or sexual orientation. No one acting on behalf of MSU Extension may ask for verification.

Participants are not required or expected to notify MSU Extension or the 4-H community that they are intersex, transgender, or nonbinary. When someone lets us know how they identify, however, MSU Extension will treat them consistent with their gender identity (gender expression).

2. Can we notify participants or the parents/guardians of participants that a transgender, intersex, or nonbinary participant will be attending an MSU Extension event?

No. Gender identity (gender expression), sex, and sexual orientation are considered personally identifiable information, which must not be disclosed. Gender identity and sexual orientation are protected categories under the MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy (<https://bit.ly/3v6PEBo>). Protecting transgender, intersex, and nonbinary people's privacy is critical to maintaining their safety and well-being, ensuring that they are treated consistent with their gender identity (gender expression), and preventing harm.

A footnote to Article III, paragraph 2 of the MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy reads:

For the purposes of this Policy, the reference to "gender identity" shall be interpreted to include protection against gender stereotyping based on a person's gender expression. In other words, gender stereotyping is impermissible discrimination or harassment based on a failure to conform to stereotypical gender norms.

It is important that you inform all MSU Extension program participants about our inclusive environment and commitment to non-discrimination. If participants or the parents/guardians of participants are uncomfortable with these policies, they may decide to limit their own or their children's participation in MSU Extension programming.

3. Can we notify MSU Extension staff and volunteers that a transgender, intersex, or nonbinary participant will be attending the event?

Personally identifiable information such as gender identity, gender expression, sex, and sexual orientation must be kept private and only be disclosed to MSU Extension staff and volunteers with a legitimate programmatic need for it. For example, an MSU Extension staff member or volunteer may need the information so they can fulfill specific participant requests (such as for room assignments). A participant simply identifying as transgender, intersex, or nonbinary does not constitute a legitimate programmatic need.



MSU Extension staff and volunteers who do not have a legitimate programmatic need for the information must not be informed of it. Even if a person has disclosed their gender identity (gender expression) to some members of the MSU Extension community, MSU Extension must not disclose this information to others.

In the limited cases when there is a legitimate programmatic need for such information, the best option is to ask the following open-ended question on registration materials: *What is your gender or gender identity?* _____

If you will be collecting too much information to read each response to such an open-ended question, use this one:

*What is your gender or gender identity?
(Select one or more options)*

- Female*
- Male*
- Gender identity not listed above*
[NOTE: if space allows, leave a line to indicate their gender identity.]
- Prefer not to answer*

4. A participant wants to know why MSU Extension is putting the rights of LGBTQIA+ people over their rights. How should we respond?

MSU Extension provides an equal opportunity for everyone to participate in programming. Ensuring full participation for LGBTQIA+ participants does not infringe on the rights or opportunities of other participants. While a participant may decide to limit their own participation in programming, MSU Extension will not allow discrimination against any individual, despite objections or concerns from staff members, youth or adult participants, volunteers, families, or other community members. If someone continues to raise objections to the MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy, encourage them to contact the MSU Extension director (phone 517-355-0118, email msuedir@msu.edu).

Anyone who objects to the MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy and decides to participate in MSU Extension events anyway should be reminded that harassment or discrimination are direct violations of the MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy.

5. We have received a report that a participant is being harassed because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression. How should we respond?

Reporting discrimination or harassment: Whether this report comes directly from the participant being harassed or from another participant, an appropriate response as outlined in *University Reporting Protocol: Relationship Violence, Sexual Misconduct, and Stalking* (<https://bit.ly/3GJxziU>) is required. All MSU Extension programming must provide a safe environment that is free of discrimination. If discrimination or harassment has or is perceived to have occurred, you should intervene immediately. Intervention involves ensuring that everyone—youth, adults, faculty, and staff members—is safe. Then notify the MSU Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) (<https://oie.msu.edu>), your supervisor and district director, and if the incident involves youth, the state 4-H leader (phone 517-432-7575, email msue4h@msu.edu). The discussion of any incident should include a review of the event handbook, local policies, and (if applicable) the 4-H Youth Code of Conduct, as well as the MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy. Failing to treat individuals consistent with their gender identity (gender expression)—for example, by using incorrect names and pronouns for them—may constitute discrimination or harassment.

Any person may file a complaint: the alleged victim of the incident or someone filing on the victim's behalf. MSU strongly encourages community members (including all program participants and volunteers) who are engaged in MSU programming to take an active role in reporting discrimination, harassment, and hate crimes to help ensure an inclusive and welcoming environment for all.



Reporting discrimination or harassment: To report a bias incident or to ask questions about a possible incident that you or another person experienced, witnessed, or were informed about, please contact the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) at 517-353-3922 or at oie@msu.edu and notify your supervisor, district director, institute director, and if the case involves youth, the state 4-H leader. Using the OIE website link allows immediate submission of information.

According to the OIE, that office is required to notify the MSU Police Department (MSUPD) of all reports it receives regarding sexual assaults, relationship violence, and stalking. The reporting protocol follows:

Responsible employees and volunteers who are not otherwise exempt must promptly report incidents of relationship violence, sexual misconduct, and stalking that:

1. They observe or learn about in their working or professional capacity; and
2. Involve a member of the University community or which occurred at a University-sponsored event or on University property.

If there is a safety concern, crime occurring, or an emergency medical concern, call 911.

All incidents of relationship violence, sexual misconduct, stalking, and retaliation must be promptly reported to the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE):

408 W. Circle Drive, Room 5
East Lansing, MI 48824
517-353-3922

oie@msu.edu

www.oie.msu.edu

<https://msu.publicincidentreporting.com/>

Incidents of relationship violence, sexual violence (including sexual assault), stalking, and sexual exploitation must also be reported to the MSU Police Department (MSUPD):

1120 Red Cedar Road
East Lansing, MI 48824
517-355-2221

Responsible employees and volunteers should not investigate or attempt to determine if alleged conduct occurred. Notwithstanding, responsible employees and volunteers must report all details known to them about the incident, including what happened, who was involved, when the incident occurred, and where the incident occurred.

The MSU Police Department reports all incidents to OIE. The department shares information about ongoing investigations with the OIE to the extent that sharing such information will not interfere with law enforcement proceedings.

Civil Rights Commitment: The MSU Extension Civil Rights website (<https://bit.ly/3tHAYbO>) states that the organization “believes fully in the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion because we know that human differences enrich our lives, work, and community. We embrace our responsibility to be a resource for all, considering differences across cultural, ethnic, economic, and other backgrounds.”

As [part of] a land-grant university, “MSU Extension is also required to comply with federal civil rights laws and policies that prohibit discrimination in federally assisted programs and in employment practices.” Although there are differences between diversity, equity, and inclusion concepts and compliance concepts, there are similarities, too. The similarities include that our actions reflect what MSU Extension believes and what is expected of the organization. The mechanisms used to demonstrate those actions are known as *civil rights compliance*.

6. Someone in our program wants to file a complaint related to the inclusion of LGBTQIA+ participants in MSU Extension programming. What should I do?

Please share the MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy with the person and direct them to share their concerns with your immediate supervisor and district director. If the incident involves youth, also have them contact the state 4-H leader (phone 517-432-7575, email msue4h@msu.edu).



Inform the person that the MSU Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) reviews concerns related to discrimination and harassment based on sex, gender, gender identity, race, national origin, religion, disability status, and other protected categories under the MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy (<https://bit.ly/3tAoJh6>) and the MSU Policy on Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct (<https://bit.ly/3bv1e20>).

If the person wishes to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), they must do so within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory incident. The address is:

Director
Office of Civil Rights
USDA
Washington, DC, 20250

Mandatory Reporting: MSU Extension staff members and volunteers are required to report incidents related to discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, and stalking to the MSU OIE. The office accepts reports in person, by phone at 517-353-3922, by email at oie@msu.edu, and online at <https://bit.ly/3yuNU7D>. You will also need to immediately notify your supervisor, district director, institute director and, if the incident involves youth, the state 4-H leader.

According to the OIE, that office is required to notify the MSUPD of all reports it receives regarding sexual assaults, relationship violence, and stalking. The university reporting protocol that follows is from the *University Reporting Protocol: Relationship Violence, Sexual Misconduct, and Stalking* (<https://bit.ly/3GJxziU>).

Responsible employees and volunteers who are not otherwise exempt must promptly report incidents of relationship violence, sexual misconduct, and stalking that:

1. They observe or learn about in their working or professional capacity; and
2. Involve a member of the University community or which occurred at a University-sponsored event or on University property.

If there is a safety concern, crime occurring, or an emergency medical concern, call 911.

All incidents of relationship violence, sexual misconduct, stalking, and retaliation must be promptly reported to the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE):

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1120 Red Cedar Road
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Responsible employees and volunteers should not investigate or attempt to determine if alleged conduct occurred. Notwithstanding, responsible employees and volunteers must report all details known to them about the incident, including what happened, who was involved, when the incident occurred, and where the incident occurred.

MSU Police Department reports all incidents to OIE. The MSU Police Department shares information about ongoing investigations with the OIE to the extent that sharing such information will not interfere with law enforcement proceedings.

Also, all MSU faculty, staff, student employees, and volunteers—in the context of their role with the university—are required to report any perceived, disclosed, or observed harm to a child, as defined by Michigan law, to the MSUPD at 517-355-2222. This requirement applies whether the harm is committed by a parent, teacher, or someone else. When a report is made, the MSUPD will collaborate with local law enforcement to determine next steps.



It is important to note that this requirement does not change the definitions or requirements of mandated reporters. The term “mandated reporter” refers to a specific list of professionals who are required by law to file reports of suspected child abuse or child neglect directly with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), Child Protective Services. Any employee unsure of whether they are a mandated reporter should contact the MSUPD. (For more information see the *University Reporting Protocol: Child Abuse and Other Harm to Children* at <https://bit.ly/2VBvsLx>.)



4-H & Youth Programming-Focused FAQ

1. The parents/guardians of one of our 4-H'ers don't approve of their child's gender identity (gender expression). What should we do?

Michigan 4-H and other MSU Extension programs will treat all participants according to their gender identity (gender expression), even if a youth member's parents/guardians object. While the parents/guardians may choose not to allow their child to participate in 4-H, Michigan 4-H will not discriminate against the member to accommodate the parent's/guardians' objections.

2. Our 4-H program sometimes offers swim sessions where swimsuits are required. What should we do if a participant wears a swimsuit that is revealing of their sexual or reproductive anatomy?

This is an example of a need to respond to a person's behavior, not their identity. First, include the following guidelines on appropriate clothing, including swimsuits, in all promotional materials for the swim sessions.

Michigan 4-H Clothing Guidelines

Participants at 4-H programs, activities, and events must wear:

- Appropriate clothing and footwear for the scheduled activities.
- Shoes at all times (except when swimming and showering).
- Shirt and shoes in the dining hall.
- Swimsuits only for swimming and not as regular clothing.

Participants at 4-H programs, activities, and events may not wear clothing that:

- Conveys violent, offensive, or obscene messages or images.
- Promotes use of illegal substances.
- Exposes undergarments or excessively exposes the body.

If a 4-H participant is violating these guidelines, you or another MSU Extension staff member or volunteer should:

A. Remind the participant of the clothing and footwear guidelines.

B. Ask the participant in a non-judgmental way to change out of the inappropriate clothing.

It is important to hold all 4-H participants to the same standards of dress. Be careful to avoid selective enforcement of clothing guidelines, because targeting individuals of certain sexes, gender identities, gender expressions, or sexual orientations would be discriminatory.

3. A female 4-H'er has told us she plans to wear a suit and bring a female partner to our local 4-H awards and scholarship evening, which is a formal event. How should we respond?

Michigan 4-H prohibits discrimination based on gender identity (gender expression) and sexual orientation. This means that a young person's participation in 4-H events like this one may not be limited because they appear or act in a manner that:

- Is consistent with their sexual orientation or gender identity (gender expression).
- Does not conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity.

If 4-H'ers are allowed to bring partners to the local 4-H awards and scholarship evening, then they must be allowed to do so without regard to gender, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation.

4. What tips do you have for addressing questions and comments from 4-H'ers about people who are transgender?

It is important to take advantage of opportunities for positive discussions and educational moments as they arise. It is also necessary to protect individual privacy. So talk with the 4-H'ers in your program about gender identity (gender expression) and sexual orientation, but keep the discussions generic by referring to "people" rather than to a specific person.



With younger participants, keep the discussion simple.
For example:

Participant: Why does that boy dress like a girl?

You: You know, we often think there is one way to dress like a girl and one way to dress like a boy. But really, people can dress in lots of different ways. In Michigan 4-H, we want people to be comfortable dressing like themselves. What do you like to wear?

Older participants may appreciate more information.
For example:

Participant: Last year, that person stayed with us in the girls' room. Why is she staying in the boys' room this year?

You: Sometimes a person is defined as male or female when they're born but they realize as they grow up that they feel differently. People can feel lots of different ways about who they are. At MSU Extension and Michigan 4-H, we want everyone to feel comfortable being themselves.

5. The parent/guardian of a 4-H member called and wants to know why MSU Extension is “putting the rights of children who are transgender over the rights of their child.” How should we respond?

Remind the parent/guardian that MSU Extension provides an equal opportunity for all youth and families to participate in 4-H programming. Ensuring full participation for transgender participants does not infringe on the rights or opportunities of other participants. While a youth or family may decide to limit their own participation in 4-H programming, we will not allow discrimination against any individual, despite objections or concerns from staff members, youth or adult participants, volunteers, families, or other community members. If someone continues to raise objections to the MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy, encourage them to contact the state 4-H leader (phone 517-432-7575, email msue4h@msu.edu) and the MSU Extension director (phone 517-355-0118, email msuedir@msu.edu).

Families who object to the MSU and MSU Extension anti-discrimination policies and decide to participate in events anyway also should be reminded that harassment and discrimination are direct violations of the MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy (<https://bit.ly/3tAoJh6>) and the Michigan 4-H Youth Development Youth Code of Conduct (see p. 13).



MICHIGAN 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT YOUTH CODE OF CONDUCT

The opportunity to participate in or attend 4-H activities is a privilege. All 4-H participants—youth, families, volunteers, and Extension staff—who participate in or attend any activity or event sponsored by the Michigan State University Extension 4-H Youth Development Program are expected to uphold the values of the Michigan 4-H program.

All 4-H youth participants must conduct themselves according to the following standards that apply to all Michigan 4-H programs, including virtual programs, and interactions such as social media and internet engagement:

1. Create a Welcoming Environment for All.

Encourage everyone to fully participate in 4-H. Recognize that all people have skills and talents that can help others and improve the community. Though we will not always agree, we must disagree respectfully. When we disagree, try to understand why. Our first priority is to create a safe, inclusive space for learning, sharing, and collaboration that is welcoming to people from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives. Diversity includes, but is not limited to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, or veteran status.

2. Bring Your Best Self. Conduct yourself in a manner that reflects honesty, integrity, self-control, and self-direction. Accept the results and outcomes of 4-H activities and programs with grace and empathy for other participants. Accept the final opinions of judges and evaluators. Be open to new ideas, suggestions, and opinions of others.

3. Obey the Law. Obey the laws of the locality, state, and nation and Michigan State University and Extension policies and guidelines. Commit no illegal acts. Do not possess, offer to others, or use alcohol, illegal drugs, marijuana, or tobacco products, which include e-pens,

e-pipes, e-hookah, e-cigars, JUULs, vapes, vape pens, or other electronic nicotine delivery systems. Do not attend 4-H activities under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances. Do not possess or use weapons or firearms except as expressly permitted as part of supervised 4-H shooting sports programming. This includes dangerous or unauthorized materials such as explosives or similar items.

4. Honor Diversity—Yours and Others’. Respect and uphold the rights and dignity of all persons with whom you interact as part of Michigan 4-H.

5. Create a Safe Environment. Be kind and compassionate toward others. Be considerate and courteous of all persons and their property. Do not carelessly or intentionally harm or intimidate anyone in any way (verbally, mentally, physically, or emotionally). Do not insult, harass, or bully others or engage in other hostile behaviors, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, or sexual abuse. Abstain from sexual behavior and intimate physical/sexual contact in either public or private situations at an MSU Extension youth 4-H activity or event.

6. Be a Team Player. Work cooperatively with all individuals involved in 4-H programs and activities. Be responsive to the reasonable requests of the person in charge such as volunteers and staff. Respect the integrity of the group and the group’s decisions.

7. Humane Treatment of Animals. Treat animals humanely and provide appropriate animal care.

8. Participate Fully. Participate in and contribute to planned programs, be on time, and follow through on assigned tasks/responsibilities in a manner that fosters the safety, well-being, and quality of the educational experience for self and others. Have fun!



Overnight Programming-Focused FAQ

1. Our overnight event has a female housing section and a male housing section. Where should people who are transgender, intersex, or nonbinary sleep, use the restroom, and shower?

At gender-segregated facilities and activities, people who are transgender, intersex, or nonbinary must be allowed to sleep, use the restroom, shower, and participate in alignment with their gender identity (gender expression). If transgender, intersex, or nonbinary people feel more comfortable participating in alignment with their sex, that is okay, too. Regardless of their sexual identity and gender identity (gender expression), people are often most comfortable in shared sleeping spaces when they are given the chance to select their own roommates. Find out who participants would prefer to share a room with and try to honor such roommate requests, as appropriate. Share with participants that roommate requests are not guaranteed and encourage participants to contact the event coordinator to discuss the best options.

Do not require a person who is transgender, intersex, or binary to use single-person facilities (sleeping, restroom, or shower) unless all participants are required to do so. Singling out one individual because they have a different gender identity (gender expression) or are intersex or nonbinary can be alienating and, despite good intentions, may be harmful to the individual. At the same time, many people, no matter what their gender identity (gender expression) or sex, feel more comfortable showering and changing in private. It is a best practice to offer all participants the option of privacy at all MSU Extension events and camps. A single-user facility or other private option should be made available to anyone who requests it. Some suggestions for providing private options include using dividers, hanging curtains, or arranging private bathing or showering times.

2. Our programming space has coed facilities. Where should people who are transgender, intersex, or nonbinary sleep, use the restroom, and shower?

In a coed facility, people who are transgender, intersex, or nonbinary should use the common sleeping, restroom, and shower facilities with the other event participants. Do not require one person to use single-user facilities (sleeping, restroom, or shower) unless the other participants are also required to do so.

Singling out one person because of their gender identity (gender expression) can be alienating to the person and, despite good intentions, may be harmful to the individual. At the same time, many people, regardless of their gender identity (gender expression) or sex, feel more comfortable showering and changing in private. Therefore, it is a best practice to offer all participants the option of privacy at all MSU Extension events and camps. A single-user facility or other private option should be made available to anyone who requests it. Privacy options include using dividers, hanging curtains, or arranging private bathing or showering times.

3. We have shared changing spaces, like a locker room. How should we approach this?

All participants must be treated in the same manner. If changing spaces are used at your event, then everyone must be permitted to use those spaces according to their gender identity (gender expression). At the same time, many people, regardless of their gender identity (gender expression), feel more comfortable changing in private. Singling out one individual because of their gender identity (gender expression) can be alienating and, despite good intentions, may be harmful to the individual. As such, it is a best practice to offer all participants the option of privacy at all MSU Extension events and camps.

Some programming facilities have installed curtains or partitions in changing areas to provide privacy for all participants. The key is to make these options available to all participants, not just those who are transgender, intersex, or nonbinary.



4. Should adult chaperones be designated to supervise participants during showering and changing times?

Adult chaperones should remain within hearing distance of participants during showering and changing times to prevent bullying. No adult should ever visually supervise participants during showering and changing times. An adult chaperone who stays within eyesight of youth changing and showering risks violating youth privacy and safety.

5. This year, we have participants who are openly gay attending an overnight event who have asked to be housed together. How should we respond?

This is a great time to think about the difference between identities and behaviors. It is inappropriate to restrict someone's participation because of their sexual orientation.

Therefore, if other participants are allowed to request roommates, then these participants should be as well. If you have gender-segregated sleeping arrangements, then these participants should participate in alignment with their gender identity (gender expression) and irrespective of their sexual orientation, as should all participants.

6. A participant and their parents/guardians contacted us to say that the participant doesn't want to stay in a room with a youth who identifies as LGBTQIA+. How do we respond?

Inform the participant and their parents/guardians that MSU Extension follows the MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy (<https://bit.ly/3tAoJh6>). Although we do collect information on program participants' gender, we do not collect or disclose information about individuals' gender identity (gender expression), sex, or sexual orientation. While 4-H members (or their parents/guardians) may choose to not participate in

4-H programming, MSU Extension will not allow discrimination against any individual, despite objections or concerns from staff members, youth or adult participants, volunteers, families, or other community members. You may also encourage them to share their concerns with your district director and the state 4-H leader (phone 517-432-7575, email msue4h@msu.edu). Also notify your supervisor, district director, and the state 4-H leader of the conversation.

Some other supportive considerations for staff:

- Since the MSU Extension anti-discrimination statement is a required component of event and program materials, you can remind the objecting parties that our programs follow this policy across many differences. There is not a "one size fits all" answer to help staff determine when a roommate change is appropriate or when the change could be discriminatory. Approach this situation as a dialogue rather than as a confrontation between opposing sides. Listen without judgment to all those directly involved and talk about options. If you're unsure about next steps, contact your supervisor or other designated colleagues to talk through the situation.
- When talking with participants, if a roommate change is suggested and agreed on, be sure to discuss who will stay in the first room they were assigned and who will be moved to a new room. It is important for all the roommates, including the LGBTQIA+ youth, to participate in the conversation so they all have a say or voice in the decision.
- Make sure that soon after the incident, everyone involved documents what happened from their perspective, without investigating the incident. They may need these notes later if they are asked to recall events, conversations, and actions.
- Staff members should document the incident as objectively as possible but not investigate it.



FIND OUT MORE

If you have other questions or need more information about including and welcoming people of all sexes, gender identities (gender expressions), and sexual identities or orientations to MSU Extension programming, contact the MSU Extension director (phone 517-355-0118, email msuedir@msu.edu).

Media inquiries about the involvement of people of all sexes, gender identities (gender expressions), and sexual identities or orientations in MSU Extension programs and events should be forwarded to the MSU Extension director's office at 517-355-2308.

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

References

- 4-H Program Leaders Working Group (2020). *Practices for inclusion of individuals of all genders and sexual orientations*. <https://bit.ly/2QpwHep>
- Michigan State University. (2015). *MSU anti-discrimination policy*. <https://bit.ly/3tAoJh6>
- University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources. (2017). *4-H practices for inclusion of individuals of all gender identities, gender expressions, sexual orientations, and sexes: Frequently asked questions*. <https://bit.ly/3sFRQOu>

Resources

Descriptions of the organizations and online resources listed in this section are adapted from the websites.

MSU & MSU EXTENSION RESOURCES

- **Conducting University Youth Programs: Minimum Operational Requirements** (<https://bit.ly/33V2c6r>)—This MSU policy was updated in 2021.
- **MSU Extension DEI in Action: Developing, Planning, and Facilitating Educational Programs and Events Guide** (<https://bit.ly/3nDwxNV>)—This 2021 MSU Extension guide discusses best practices for diversity, equity, and inclusion in program management, facilitation, training, and events.

- **MSU Extension Organizational Development: Civil Rights** (<https://bit.ly/3tHAYbO>)—The Civil Rights website provides a number of resources that can answer your questions on MSU Extension Civil Rights Policy and Procedures, anti-discrimination statement use, how to obtain and use copies of the “And Justice for All” programming poster, civil rights law, bias-free communication, and more.
- **MSU Gender and Sexuality Campus Center** (GSCC; <https://gsccl.msu.edu>)—The center provides educational tools and resources related to being an ally; important LGBTQIA+ dates; intersecting identities; the importance of using the personal pronouns a person gives you (<https://bit.ly/3xatlMY>); campus, state, and federal resources; and MSU’s policy for reporting discrimination. The GSCC also offers a glossary of terms and provides consultation services.
- **MSU Office of Institutional Equity** (OIE; <https://oie.msu.edu>). The OIE is part of the MSU Office for Civil Rights and Title IX Education and Compliance. It serves to uphold and advance [MSU’s] shared values through oversight and application of civil rights policies. The following OIE resources will help you learn more about MSU policies related to non-discrimination and inclusion and procedures for reporting incidents of discrimination and harassment.
 - *Anti-Discrimination Policy User’s Manual*. (2020). <https://bit.ly/3yB5jvI>



- *University Reporting Protocol: Relationship Violence, Sexual Misconduct, and Stalking.* (2020). <https://bit.ly/3GJxziU>
- *Michigan State University Office of Institutional Equity Resource Guide.* (2020). <https://bit.ly/3bNILxt>
- **MSU Prevention, Outreach, and Education Department (POE;** <https://poe.msu.edu/>)—The department is part of the MSU Office for Civil Rights and Title IX Education and Compliance. It promotes safety and improves quality of life by educating members of the MSU campus community on sexual assault and relationship violence; eliminating violence on campus; empowering staff, faculty, and students to become advocates for a non-violent community; and positively affecting social change.
- **Our Commitment: Campus Programs and Support** (<https://msu.edu/ourcommitment/resources/>)—This resource page is part of the “Our Commitment” website that is designed to keep the community informed of MSU efforts to “be more aware and accountable,” to “act more thoughtfully,” and to create “solutions for a safer, more secure, and more supportive university.”
- **University Reporting Protocol: Child Abuse and Other Harm to Children** (<https://bit.ly/2VBvsLx>)—This MSU policy was most recently updated in 2021.

OTHER RESOURCES

- **GLSEN** (<https://www.glsen.org>)—GLSEN was founded in 1990 as the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network, and currently has chapters in 30 states, including Michigan. GLSEN’s mission is to “ensure that every member of every school community is valued and respected regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.”
- **GLAAD** (<https://www.glaad.org/>)—GLAAD rewrites the script for LGBTQ acceptance. As a dynamic media force, GLAAD tackles tough issues to shape the narrative and provoke dialogue that leads to cultural change. GLAAD protects all that has been accomplished and creates a world where everyone can live the life they love.
- **The Trevor Project** (<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>)—Founded in 1998 by the creators of the Academy Award-winning short film TREVOR, The Trevor Project is the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to LGBTQ young people under 25.
- **Pronouns** (<https://pronouns.minus18.org.au/>)—Pronouns are basically words used to refer to a person other than by their name. Common pronouns include “they,” “she,” and “he.” When a trans person comes out they may want to use new pronouns. Some people prefer less common or gender-neutral pronouns, such as “they,” “xe,” and “ey.” This interactive website allows visitors to choose a set of neopronouns and practice using them in different grammatical contexts.



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This document was adapted from the following resources:

University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources. (2017). *4-H practices for inclusion of individuals of all gender identities, gender expressions, sexual orientations, and sexes: Frequently asked questions*. <https://bit.ly/3sFRQOu>

4-H Program Leaders Working Group (2020). *Practices for inclusion of individuals of all genders and sexual orientations*. <https://bit.ly/2QpwHep>

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