

International Pronouns Day in Los Angeles County

On January 24, 2018, Countywide Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines (PPG) 813—*Gender Identity and Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Policy* took immediate effect incorporating amendments to the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, which expands the definition of ‘sex’ to include gender identity and gender expression as protected characteristics. PPG 813, aligned with the County Policy of Equity, directs Management to foster a work environment with respect, ongoing support, and open communication for transgender employees who have transitioned, are in transition, or are considering transitioning. Additionally, once requested, the employee’s new name and pronouns will be used in the workplace (even if not legally changed), including email, phone, directory, ID card/access badge, name plate, etc.

The Board of Supervisors had directed specific County Departments and offices to undertake action consistent with the inclusion and acceptance of transgender and

MOTION

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gender non-conforming people. For example, the Board asked the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to evaluate how its services and programs can be tailored to address the needs of LGBTQ+ foster youth. The CEO was also asked to lead efforts in the standardization of sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) data collection that are compliant with State mandates on recording and reporting.

A 2021 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health done by The Trevor Project¹ revealed that 75% of LGBTQ youth (ages 13-24) reported that they had experienced discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity at least once in their lifetime; 42% seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year, including more than half of transgender and nonbinary youth. The study also noted that LGBTQ youth who had access to spaces that affirmed their sexual orientation and gender identity reported lower rates of attempting suicide. Affirming transgender and nonbinary youth by respecting their pronouns and allowing them to change legal documents is associated with lower rates of attempting suicide, i.e., half the rate of those who did not have their pronouns respected by anyone with whom they lived.

These numbers are grim and must be taken seriously. While the County has already made significant strides in nurturing the diversity of its workforce and enhancing its commitment to inclusion and acceptance of all individuals, families, and communities, a huge amount of work still lies ahead of us.

This October 20, 2021 provides an opportunity for the County of Los Angeles to affirm its commitment and unwavering support to transgender and gender non-

¹ <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2021/>

conforming people by celebrating International Pronouns Day. International Pronouns Day, observed on the third Wednesday of October, started in 2018 as a movement seeking to stop the violence that disproportionately affects the transgender community. The movement asserts that “using the right pronouns is one of the most basic starting points to acknowledging the humanity of transgender and gender nonconforming people. While that may not in and of itself stop the violence, it is an entry point into the conversation.”²

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors proclaim October 20, 2021 as International Pronouns Day in Los Angeles County and encourage all County residents, County departments, government agencies and organizations to use inclusive pronouns in all types of communication, whether verbal or written, as an expression of our continuing commitment to diversity and inclusion.

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² <https://pronounsday.org/>