

Town of Amherst Board of Health
LGBTQ+ Equity Statement
(Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning)

June 8, 2023

The Board of Health of the Town of Amherst recognizes that LGBTQ+ individuals face systemic discrimination barriers and experience health-related challenges and disparities.

The Board denounces any policies that would strip people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer of equal rights. It is our position that discrimination in any form – racism, sexism, or on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity – is a significant threat to the health of the public and must be addressed.

Research suggests that LGBTQ+ individuals face higher rates of injuries, illnesses and deaths linked to years of societal stigma, discrimination, and denial of civil and human rights. According to Healthy People 2030, the American Public Health Association (APHA) and the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO):

- LGBTQ+ adolescents are especially at risk for being bullied, thinking about and dying from suicide and using illegal drugs.
- Transgender youth experience disparities in violence victimization, substance use, suicide risk, and sexual risk compared to their cisgender peers.
- LGBTQ+ youth are 2 to 3 times more likely to be homeless.
- The percentage of US adults who identify as LGBTQ+ has increased to 7.1%.
- Lesbians are less likely to get preventive services for cancer.
- Lesbians and bisexual females are more likely to be overweight or obese.
- Transgender individuals have a high prevalence of victimization, mental health issues, and suicide and are less likely to have health insurance than heterosexual individuals.
- Elderly LGBTQ+ individuals face additional barriers to health because of isolation and lack of social services and culturally competent providers.
- LGBTQ+ populations have higher rates of tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use.
- LGBTQ+ individuals are at a greater risk for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- The LGBTQ+ community continues to experience exclusion, isolation, discrimination, injustice and worse health outcomes than their cisgender, heterosexual counterparts.

We support policies that promote equality for all people, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer youth and adults in workplaces, schools, healthcare, housing, religious organizations, marriage, and all aspects of life.

We support NACCHO's "Statement of Policy – LGBTQ+ Health" that encourages local health departments to act on the social injustices at the root of health inequities impacting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and other sexual and gender diverse individuals, families, and communities and honor diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions.

We support the American Public Health Association's statement entitled, "Supreme Court decision on LGBTQ rights is [a] public health victory."

Adopted by the Amherst Board of Health, June 8, 2023



Nancy J. Gilbert, Chair




Maureen Millea



Lauren Mills



Premila Nair



Timothy Randhir

References:

Healthy People 2030 - <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/browse-objectives/lgbt>

APHA Statement "Supreme Court Decision on LGBTQ rights" <https://apha.org/news-and-media/news-releases/apha-news-releases/2020/supreme-court-lgbtq>

WH.GOV White House order on advancing equity for LGBTQ and Intersex Individuals (June 15, 2022) <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2022/06/15/executive-order-on-advancing-equality-for-lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-queer-and-intersex-individuals/>

NACCHO Statement of Policy LGBTQ+ health (2023). <https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/00-10-LGBTQ-Health.pdf>