

KEY THINGS TO CONSIDER

Policies and procedures

- Review your Human Resources policies to check that they promote fair employment opportunities for everyone, including transgender people.
- Have and promote a zero-tolerance policy regarding harassment of people because they are transgender - this should cover internal relations and external relations with customers.
- Have a clear process for dealing with any customer or employee complaints relating to discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment.

Staff training

- Train your staff about transgender equality so they understand their role and responsibilities.
- Encourage staff not to make assumptions about people but to be sensitive to people's personal lives.
- Make it clear to staff that people who plan to undergo, are currently undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment have the right to use toilets appropriate to their reassigned gender.

WHO IS THIS LEAFLET DESIGNED TO HELP?

This leaflet aims to offer practical information for service providers in Oxfordshire from the public, private and voluntary sectors.

The following teams in your organisation/business may find it particularly useful:

- Customer service staff
- Human Resources

WHAT IS HALT?



HALT is a multi agency partnership which aims to support lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Oxfordshire.

WHO MAKES UP HALT?

HALT involves representatives from the LGBT community in Oxfordshire, the five district councils, Oxfordshire County Council, Thames Valley Police, Terrence Higgins Trust, Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust and others.

For more information about HALT, visit our website www.oxhalt.co.uk.

Are your services accessible to all?

An advice leaflet for service providers about promoting transgender equality



This leaflet has been produced by Oxfordshire's Homophobia Awareness Liaison Team (HALT).

WHAT IS TRANSGENDER EQUALITY?

It's about making sure that people have the same opportunities in life, irrespective of whether or not they are transgender.

It means giving transgender people equal access to the services and/or employment opportunities that you provide. They should not face any form of harassment or unlawful discrimination when either working for you or being served by you.

In order to achieve this, your business/organisation will need to be flexible towards and respectful of the needs of transgender people.

WHAT DOES TRANSGENDER MEAN?

In order to be able to provide accessible services for transgender people, it is important to understand that the term 'transgender' is an inclusive word covering:

Transsexuals:

- People who are not comfortable with their birth gender and feel that they were born into the

wrong body. This is a medical condition known as gender dysphoria.

- Many transsexual people have a wish to alter their bodies. These physical changes are collectively known as gender reassignment. References to 'pre-operative', 'post-operative' and 'non-operative' transsexual people indicate whether they have had, or are planning to have gender reassignment surgery.
- People who have transitioned and no longer identify as transgender or transsexual may identify as simply a man or a woman. Those that continue identifying as transsexual don't want to ignore their pre-transition life, and may continue strong ties with other trans people and raising social consciousness.

Cross-dressers/transvestites:

- People who belong to one sex but wear the clothing of the opposite sex because it is the clothing of the opposite sex.

Drag queens:

- Men who wear clothing and make-up that parody the opposite sex for the purposes of performing as stage artists.

WHY DOES MY ORGANISATION/BUSINESS NEED TO PROMOTE TRANSGENDER EQUALITY?

By promoting transgender equality for both your service users and employees, you will be:

- Providing excellent customer service for all, leading to increased satisfaction and repeat custom.
- Providing a positive work environment where staff feel valued and motivated.
- Staying within the law - employers and service providers must not discriminate against people because they are planning to undergo, are currently undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment. This is set out in the **Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999** and the **Sex Discrimination (Amendment of Legislation) Regulations 2008**

Sources of further information

- The Equality and Human Rights Commission - www.equalityhumanrights.com