

Annual Report on Resources and Services Provided to LGBTQI+ Individuals Entering DV Emergency Shelters (January 1 – December 31 2022)

Pursuant to LL 130 of 2021 to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to requiring the department of social services to report on services and resources provided specific to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, gender non-conforming and non-binary residents of domestic violence emergency shelters, NYC HRA's Office of Domestic Violence Services (DVS) respectfully submits the report below.

1. The total number of survey forms distributed by the department pursuant to paragraph 4 of subdivision k of section 15 of chapter 1 of the charter:

In total, there were 16,043 survey responses for CY2022.

2. The total number of individuals who self-identified as LGBTQI+ on the survey forms distributed pursuant to paragraph 4 of subdivision k of section 15 of chapter 1 of the charter:

There were 2,487 survey respondents that self-identified as LGBTQI+ for CY2022.

3. A description of the department's efforts to collect data specifically about LGBTQI+ individuals utilizing domestic violence emergency shelters:

Capturing data, specifically about LGBTQI+ individuals utilizing domestic violence services, can be challenging due to issues of confidentiality. LGBTQI+ individuals often face unique barriers and concerns when seeking support for domestic violence, such as fear of discrimination, stigma, or outing. These concerns can make it difficult for them to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity, even when accessing services specifically designed for LGBTQI+ community. The Department is currently making efforts to assure individuals seeking support, that personal information obtained will be kept strictly confidential and to ensure procedures in place to protect their privacy, including information on how data will be anonymized and stored securely.

4. A description of what the department has determined are the specific service needs of domestic violence emergency shelter residents who identify as LGBTQI+:

- **Training Staff:** Provide comprehensive training to staff on LGBTQI+ issues, including cultural sensitivity, awareness of diverse identities, and understanding the unique challenges faced by LGBTQI+ survivors. This will help create an environment where individuals feel comfortable disclosing their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- **LGBTQI+ Inclusivity:** Encourage provider intake forms, assessment tools, and data collection mechanisms include options for diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. This allows individuals to self-identify accurately without fear of judgment or discrimination.
- **Privacy and Confidentiality:** Assure individuals seeking support that their personal information will be kept strictly confidential to keep with Federal and State regulations.
- **Trauma-Informed Care:** Promote best practices with both DV residential and non-residential service providers to implement trauma-informed practices that prioritize survivors' safety and well-being to create a supportive environment that respects survivors' autonomy and choices, enabling them to share their experiences and identities more comfortably.
- **Community Partnerships:** Collaborate with LGBTQI+ organizations and community groups to build trust and establish referral networks. This can help increase awareness of domestic violence services and encourage LGBTQI+ individuals to seek support.

5. A description of the types of services and resources provided at domestic violence emergency shelters specific to residents who identify as LGBTQI+:

HRA DVS is mandated by NYS Social Service Law to establish and fund residential and community-based programs that provide temporary emergency housing and supportive services, including prevention and intervention services, crisis counseling, advocacy, economic empowerment programs and legal services to help families and individuals impacted by domestic violence, regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, military status, sex, marital status, disability, or immigration status. Domestic violence residential and non-residential services are inclusive and available to all survivors, irrespective of their sexual orientation or gender identity to ensure that LGBTQI survivors feel welcomed, supported and empowered to seek help.

6. A description of the department's outreach efforts to reach LGBTQI+ individuals who may be eligible for domestic violence emergency shelter services:

LGBTQI+ Community Outreach

DVS is state mandated to provide DV non-residential services as well as residential services and contracts with a network of community-based organizations, that provide counseling, legal services, advocacy, economic opportunity services to domestic violence survivors, and DV education and outreach in the community. One such organization is the Anti-Violence Project (AVP) that provides

diverse programming tailored to the needs of LGBTQI+ and HIV-affected survivors of violence, including support groups for hate violence, sexual violence and intimate partner violence and drop-in groups for transgender and gender non-confirming people. AVP has an English-Spanish hotline that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and provides crisis intervention and safety planning, short term counseling, advocacy, information and referrals and provides free, holistic legal services to LGBTQI+ and HIV-affected survivors in all five boroughs of New York City in Family Court, Housing Court, Civil Court and with immigration matters.

In CY22, AVP served over 600 clients.

Through community organizing, education, policy and research, AVP's Community Organizing and Public Advocacy (COPA) Department works towards shifting policy, building power of community members and responding to incidents of anti-LGBTQI+ violence in order to create systemic change in people's lives.

7. To the extent practicable, the total number of complaints the department received regarding domestic violence emergency shelter services provided to residents who identify as LGBTQI+, disaggregated by complaint type:

In CY22, DVS did not receive any inquires or complaints regarding domestic violence emergency shelter services provided to residents who identified as LGBTQI+. This includes any inquiries/complaints forwarded via the Intranet Quorum (IQ) system.

8. Recommendations for enhancing outreach efforts and services offered by the department specifically for domestic violence emergency shelter residents who identify as LGBTQI+:

- Encourage the use of clear and inclusive Language that explicitly states that all survivors, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, are eligible for services, avoiding gender-specific terms, using inclusive language such as "all survivors" or "individuals of all genders."
- LGBTQI competency and culturally sensitivity training focusing on the unique needs and experiences of LGBTQI survivors.
- Collaboration with LGBTQI organizations and community groups to help build trust and credibility within the LGBTQI community and show a commitment to addressing the specific needs of LGBTQI survivors.
- Outreach and awareness efforts to engage in targeted outreach efforts to LGBTQI communities and organizations that can include participating in LGBTQI events, hosting workshops or educational sessions, and utilizing LGBTQI-friendly media platforms to raise awareness about the services offered.
- Provide LGBTQI-specific resources and referrals to survivors that can include LGBTQI-friendly legal services, healthcare providers, counseling services, support groups, and other relevant resources.

9. The total number of unduplicated department and contracted provider staff who have completed the training regarding LGBTQI+ individuals to be provided pursuant to subdivision c of this section during the preceding fiscal year:

LGBTQI+ Training

DVS contracts with 15 non-for-profit organizations that oversee 55 DV residential shelters.

In July 2022, The Mayor’s Office to End Domestic and Gender Based Violence provided a **Best Practices for Working with LGBTQI+ Survivors** virtual training to all HRA DVS Residential and Non-Residential provider Social Service staff.

In addition, shelter providers confirmed that additional LGBTQI+ training was provided to social service staff at 27 shelters in 2022.

Shelters Providers	# of Shelters	Training and Development Source
Urban Resource Institute	14	URI Quality Improvement Education and Training Program
Safe Horizon	7	Safe Horizon Learning Center; OPDV and the Coalition for Behavioral Health
Services for the Underserved	2	SUS Learning and Engagement Department
Barrier Free Living	1	Anti-Violence Project/Trans club
Volunteers of America	2	VOA Training Department
Henry Street Settlement	1	Foundations of Knowledge & Action: Trans 101 provided by the Transgender Training Institute

HRA DVS is committed to continuing efforts to provide ongoing LGBTQI+ training to build awareness regarding LGBTQI+ issues and to ensure services remain inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of all survivors.