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### Publication Date

2024-06-18

### Supplemental Material

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9js2b9dv#supplemental>

### Data Availability

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School of Law  
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# COMMUNITIES OF RESILIENCE

The Lived Experiences  
of LGBTQ Adults in  
Los Angeles County

June 2024

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# CONTENTS

OVERVIEW .....	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	2
INTRODUCTION .....	13
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS.....	15
OVERALL CLIMATE FOR LGBTQ PEOPLE IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY .....	20
SOCIAL SUPPORT .....	28
FAMILY AND SOCIAL NETWORKS.....	28
PARENTING AND FAMILY FORMATION .....	35
COMMUNITY SAFETY: LOCAL NEIGHBORHOODS AND LGBTQ COMMUNITIES.....	42
RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL COMMUNITIES.....	49
DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND VICTIMIZATION.....	54
EMPLOYMENT .....	54
MISGENDERING .....	63
PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS, PUBLIC SPACES, AND SAFETY .....	65
INTERACTIONS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT .....	76
ECONOMIC AND HEALTH DISPARITIES.....	83
INCOME & FOOD INSECURITY.....	83
HOUSING .....	89
HEALTH .....	97
AUTHORS .....	115
APPENDIX.....	117
METHODS .....	117
SCHOOL CLIMATE .....	121

# OVERVIEW

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Approximately 665,000 LGBTQ adults live in Los Angeles County. They make up nearly 9% of the county's adult population, and they live, work, shop, and seek services throughout the county. This report presents information about their experiences with discrimination and harassment in the areas of education, employment, housing, health care, public spaces, and law enforcement, as well as findings about their health and economic well-being.

The report uses representative data collected from 1,006 LGBTQ Los Angelenos who completed the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health's 2023 Los Angeles County Health Survey (LACHS), including 504 LGBTQ Angelenos who also completed the Lived Experiences in Los Angeles County (LELAC) Survey, which was a call-back study to LACHS developed by the Williams Institute. Survey adults were diverse in terms of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, age, income, and other personal characteristics, reflecting the diversity of Los Angeles County's LGBTQ population. This report is being published with three other reports to provide a fuller view of LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County:

- [\*Para Mi Punto de Vista / From My Point of View: Results of the 2023 LA County Trans & Nonbinary Survey\*](#)
- [\*Hear Us. Support Us. Join Us! Civic Engagement of LGBTQ Adults in LA County and Recommendations for Local Elected Officials\*](#)
- [\*We are LA! What LGBTQ People Contribute to Los Angeles\*](#)

Several main themes emerge from the analyses presented in this report:

- **Affording life in Los Angeles.** Los Angeles County's historic promise of equality and freedom for LGBTQ adults is being undermined by a rapidly escalating cost of living. More than one-third of LGBTQ adults are living below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL), and they have higher rates of food insecurity and housing instability than non-LGBTQ adults. Being able to afford living in Los Angeles County is the most common worry among LGBTQ people, and it is the primary issue they would like elected officials to address. As the county's leaders work to address the housing crisis and other economic issues, they must take the specific challenges of LGBTQ people into account.
- **Safety concerns.** Many LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County shape their daily lives to protect their safety. They are more likely than non-LGBTQ adults to be victims of crime, and many face harassment when out in public. To protect themselves, many avoid public transportation, parks, and beaches; do not frequent LGBTQ-related businesses; and do not attend events such as Pride festivals. LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County want more protection from law enforcement, including prosecution of hate crimes. However, some are reluctant to contact law enforcement because of bad experiences that include verbal, physical, and sexual harassment. LGBTQ people and spaces need to be protected, and work needs to continue to make law enforcement more reflective of and responsive to the LGBTQ community.

- **Ongoing discrimination and harassment.** Even with supportive state and local laws in place, a number of LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County continue to experience discrimination and harassment in education, employment, housing, public accommodations, and health care. Nearly half are not out to their supervisors at work. As a result of these negative experiences, many don't get the education, income, opportunities, and services they need. These findings confirm that equality "on the books" does not always translate to equality in lived experience. Local protections need to be strengthened and backed with consistent enforcement, training, and monitoring for compliance.
- **Challenges in building families and receiving social support.** Most LGBTQ people are not born into LGBTQ families and communities that pass on community culture, support, and coping mechanisms. Instead, many LGBTQ people in Los Angeles County are not out to all of their friends and families, face unique challenges in having children, don't feel welcome in their neighborhoods, and are isolated from religious and spiritual communities. LGBTQ adults are more likely than non-LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County to live alone and to feel lonely, especially those who are older. For some, including LGBTQ adults of color, discrimination within LGBTQ communities adds to isolation. Policy solutions for LGBTQ people must address these unique challenges to building families and communities, with a particular focus on services and programs that assume a certain level of family support or that are administered by faith-based organizations.
- **Resultant health disparities.** As a result of their lived experiences, LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County have higher rates of mental health issues, substance use issues, and disabilities. These health conditions are exacerbated by unfair treatment from health care providers, leading many LGBTQ people to avoid care or to not be out to their providers. Improving the health of LGBTQ people and reducing sexual orientation and gender identity-related health disparities will require initiatives specifically tailored to the community, ongoing training of providers, civil rights enforcement, and community education.
- **Vulnerable subpopulations.** Specific subpopulations within the LGBTQ community face even greater challenges. Throughout this analysis, we found that LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL, transgender and nonbinary adults, LGBTQ adults of color, and bisexual men and women are disproportionately impacted by discrimination, harassment, and isolation and account for many of the disparities between LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ adults.
- **Communities of resilience.** Despite the challenges, most LGBTQ adults agree that Los Angeles County is a good place for LGBTQ people to live and that elected officials are responsive to their needs. They celebrate the many ways that LGBTQ people contribute to the unique identity of Los Angeles, including by adding to its rich diversity; serving as models for others to be strong, love, and live their lives authentically; providing leadership in arts and entertainment; and living with some "sparkle" and "joy." While facing numerous challenges, many LGBTQ people are already working alongside elected officials and others to make Los Angeles County a better place not only for LGBTQ people, but for everyone.

## KEY FINDINGS

### Demographics

- LGBTQ people reflect the rich diversity of Los Angeles.
  - LGBTQ adults make up 9% of the county's adult population, approximately 665,000 LGBTQ adults.
    - Approximately 211,000 LGBTQ adults live in L.A. County Supervisory District 3, 120,000 in District 1; 109,000 in District 4; 109,000 in District 5; and 98,000 in District 2.
  - Forty-two percent of LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County are 18 to 35 years old, 48% are 35 to 64 years old, and 10% are 65 years of age or older.
  - Fourteen percent of LGBTQ adults in the county are transgender or nonbinary.
    - Two-thirds of LGBTQ adults in the county are people of color, including 39% who are Latinx; 13% who are Asian; 8% who are Black; and 4% who are multiracial, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or "other race."
  - Nearly one in five LGBTQ adults (18%) in the county were born outside of the U.S.
  - Forty-one percent of LGBTQ adults in the county met criteria used by the U.S. Census Bureau to assess disability.
  - More than one in four LGBTQ adults (28%) are currently married or in a domestic partnership.
  - Almost one in five LGBTQ adults (18%) in the county is a parent.
  - More than one-third of LGBTQ adults (35%) in Los Angeles County are living below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL).<sup>1</sup>

### Social Climate and Overview

- Many LGBTQ adults agreed that Los Angeles County is a good place for LGBTQ people to live (81%), although LGBTQ people of color (77%) and those living below 200% FPL (69%) were less likely to agree than those who are White (90%) or have higher incomes (89%).
  - Most LGBTQ adults felt that California (86%) and the country (84%) have become more accepting over the past decade than their local neighborhood (73%).
- Despite feeling that Los Angeles County is a good place to live, a number of LGBTQ people reported experiences of mistreatment and harassment and reported that they avoid certain professionals and places because they fear unfair treatment or threats to their safety.
  - Even though many LGBTQ adults view Los Angeles County as supportive, many are not out to others, including family and friends, supervisors and coworkers at work, or health care providers.

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<sup>1</sup> The terms "living below 200% of the FPL" and "living at or above 200% of the FPL" refer to adults with household incomes below, or at or above, that amount throughout the report.

- More than one-third of LGBTQ adults (36%) reported unfair treatment based on their LGBTQ identity while living in Los Angeles County, including 28% who reported that this had occurred within the past five years.
- More than half of LGBTQ adults (51%) reported being verbally harassed in Los Angeles County because of their LGBTQ identity, including 39% who reported occurrences within the past five years.
- Many LGBTQ adults said they had avoided public places like businesses, parks, and public transportation in the past year because they feared unfair treatment or threats to their safety due to their LGBTQ identities.

## Family, Friends, and Social Support

- Many LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County are not out to all of their family members and friends.
  - Only about half (52%) are out to all of their immediate family.
    - LGBTQ people of color are less likely than White LGBTQ adults to be out to all of their immediate family (43% vs. 69%).
    - Almost half of cisgender bisexual men (48%) are not out to any of their immediate family members, compared to 18% of cisgender bisexual women, 8% of lesbians, and 7% of gay men.
  - Three-quarters of LGBTQ adults (75%) are out to all of their LGBTQ friends, and half (50%) are out to all of their non-LGBTQ friends.
- Eleven percent of LGBTQ adults in the county are caregivers compared to 18% of non-LGBTQ adults.
- LGBTQ adults in the county are more likely to live alone (29% vs. 16%) than non-LGBTQ adults and are twice as likely to feel lonely (48% vs. 23%).
  - LGBTQ adults who are 50 years of age and older are twice as likely to live alone than non-LGBTQ adults (43% vs. 21%).
- Fewer LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County (52% vs. 65%) feel that they always or usually get the social and emotional support they need.
  - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were less likely to report the same as compared to those with higher incomes (39% vs. 59%).

## Family Formation

- In Los Angeles County, the majority (62%) of LGBTQ residents 18 to 49 years old would like to have a child or expand their families.
- Most are considering a variety of strategies for doing so, including assisted reproductive technologies (ART) (such as using donor sperm, IVF, and surrogacy) and adoption.
- Cost was identified as a barrier by 61% of LGBTQ adults who would like to use ART to have a child and by 50% of those who would like to adopt or to foster a child.

## LGBTQ Communities and Local Neighborhoods

- LGBTQ people reported safety concerns in their own neighborhoods and while visiting LGBTQ events and businesses.
  - Only 46% of LGBTQ adults felt there was a lot of social acceptance for LGBTQ adults in the neighborhood where they lived.
    - Among LGBTQ county residents, fewer of those who were living below 200% FPL (29%) or who were people of color (42%) felt there was a lot of social acceptance in their neighborhoods compared to LGBTQ adults who had higher incomes (55%) or who were White (54%).
  - Almost 30% of LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County (29%) reported feeling safe none or just some of the time in their neighborhoods.
    - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL (42%) and LGBTQ people of color (37%) were twice as likely to not feel safe in their neighborhood any of the time or only some of the time as compared to LGBTQ adults who had higher incomes (22%) or who were White (15%).
  - About one-fourth of LGBTQ adults (23%) reported having been verbally harassed by strangers while attending an LGBTQ event or visiting an LGBTQ establishment in Los Angeles County. Most of these experiences (16%) had occurred within the past five years.
  - Due to fears of being assaulted or attacked because of their LGBTQ status, 15% of LGBTQ adults in the county had avoided LGBTQ bars, nightclubs, or events during the past year, and 6% had avoided going to other LGBTQ organizations or businesses.
    - Transgender and nonbinary adults were more than twice as likely as cisgender LGBTQ adults to avoid LGBTQ bars or events (27% vs. 13%) and other LGBTQ organizations or businesses (14% vs. 5%) out of safety concerns.
    - Those living below 200% FPL were nearly twice as likely as those with higher incomes to avoid LGBTQ bars and events (20% vs. 12%) and more than twice as likely to avoid other LGBTQ organizations or businesses (10% vs. 3%).
  - More than one-third (38%) of LGBTQ adults of color reported having been treated unfairly or poorly as a person of color while living in Los Angeles County. Thirteen percent of these instances involved racism within LGBTQ communities.

## Religious and Spiritual Communities

- More than two-thirds of LGBTQ adults (69%) in Los Angeles County identified as spiritual or religious, although many are not out in their religious or spiritual communities and have experienced negative treatment in these environments.
  - Forty-two percent of LGBTQ adults said that religion is somewhat or very important in their lives, and more than a quarter (27%) attend religious services at least a few times a year.
  - LGBTQ people of color were much more likely than White LGBTQ adults to say that religion is very important in their lives (23% vs. 9%).



- Nearly half of LGBTQ adults with religious and spiritual communities (48%) were not out to any of the people with whom they attend religious services or spiritual practices.
  - More than half of LGBTQ people of color (53%) are not out to anyone in their religious or spiritual communities, compared to one-third of White LGBTQ adults (36%).
  - Approximately three-fourths of cisgender bisexual men (73%) and bisexual women (75%) are also not out to anyone in these communities.
- Some LGBTQ adults had avoided religious services or spiritual practices in the past year to avoid poor treatment (19%) or because of safety concerns (15%) due to their LGBTQ status.

## Employment

- Among adults in the workforce in Los Angeles County, unemployment is higher among LGBTQ adults (16%) than non-LGBTQ adults (11%).
- Almost half (48%) of employed LGBTQ adults are not out to their supervisor, and nearly one in four (24%) are not out to any of their coworkers.
  - LGBTQ employees of color are more likely than White LGBTQ employees to be out to none or only some of their coworkers (58% vs. 37%).
  - Among cisgender LGBQ adults, three-fourths of bisexual women (73%) and bisexual men (77%) are not out to their supervisor, compared with 23% of lesbians and 30% of gay men.
- Approximately one in eight LGBTQ adults reported being fired/not promoted (12%) or not hired (11%) for a job because of their sexual orientation or gender identity while living in Los Angeles County, with most of these experiences having occurred in the past five years (7% to 8%).
  - Transgender and nonbinary adults (24%) and LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL (20%) were more than twice as likely as cisgender LGBQ adults (9%) and those with higher incomes (7%) to have not been hired for a job because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- One in five (20%) LGBTQ employees reported having been verbally harassed at work by their supervisor, coworkers, customers, or clients, including 13% who had experienced such harassment in the past five years.
  - LGBTQ people of color were more than twice as likely as White LGBTQ adults to report verbal harassment by their supervisor or coworkers (23% vs. 13%).

## Public Accommodations, Public Spaces, and Safety

- About one-third of LGBTQ adults (32%) reported experiencing verbal harassment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity from strangers on the street, including 23% who had had these experiences in the past five years.
  - Cisgender lesbians (42%) and gay men (45%) were three times as likely to report harassment from strangers on the street as cisgender bisexual women (15%) and bisexual men (13%).

- Twelve percent of LGBTQ adults experienced verbal harassment when accessing services from businesses open to the public in Los Angeles County, including 8% whose experiences had been in the past five years.
  - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were more likely than those with higher incomes to report such harassment (20% vs. 8%).
  - Cisgender lesbians (20%) and gay men (17%) were much more likely to report such harassment than cisgender bisexual women (1%) and men (3%).
- Approximately one in five LGBTQ adults reported avoiding restaurants or stores (22%), places of entertainment (19%), or public transportation (17%) in order to avoid poor treatment based on their LGBTQ status.
  - Those living below 200% FPL were more than twice as likely to report that they had avoided places of entertainment or public transportation to avoid unfair treatment.
  - Cisgender lesbians and gay men were approximately four times as likely to avoid these locations as cisgender bisexual men and women.
- In the past year, many LGBTQ adults avoided public parks or beaches (16%), restaurants or stores (14%), public transportation (14%), and places of entertainment (13%) due to concerns about being assaulted or attacked because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
  - Compared to cisgender LGBTQ people, transgender and nonbinary adults were more likely to report that they had avoided public parks and beaches (33% vs. 13%) and public transportation (27% vs. 12%) out of safety concerns.
- Among LGBTQ adults who had lived in Los Angeles County their entire lives, around 40% reported that they had been victims of personal (39%) or property crimes (42%). Of those who had been victims of both types of crimes, 72% felt that they had been targeted because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

## Interactions With Law Enforcement

- Forty-one percent of LGBTQ adults strongly or somewhat disagreed that law enforcement treats LGBTQ adults fairly, while 31% strongly or somewhat agreed.
  - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL (13%) were more likely than those with higher incomes (5%) to say that they had avoided calling the police in order to avoid unfair treatment.
- LGBTQ adults reported experiencing verbal harassment (17%), physical harassment or assault (6%), sexual harassment or assault (6%), and being solicited for sex (3%) by law enforcement in Los Angeles County.
  - Transgender and nonbinary adults, LGBTQ adults of color, and those living below 200% FPL were all twice as likely to report verbal harassment by law enforcement compared to LGBTQ cisgender adults (34% vs. 14%), White LGBTQ adults (20% vs. 10%), and LGBTQ people with higher household incomes (24% vs. 13%).

- Among adults who had had contact with law enforcement in the prior year, 31% felt that they had not been treated respectfully or properly and said that the interactions made them less likely to contact law enforcement in the future. However, more than half (52%) were satisfied with their interactions with law enforcement.
  - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were much more likely to feel that law enforcement had not acted properly in a recent interaction compared to LGBTQ adults with higher incomes (46% vs. 23%), and they were much less likely to contact law enforcement in the future as a result (46% vs. 22%).

## Income and Food Insecurity

- Similar to non-LGBTQ adults, one-third of LGBTQ adults (35%) in Los Angeles County were living below 200% FPL, and 13% were living in poverty (below 100% FPL).
  - Among LGBTQ adults, transgender adults (47%) and adults of color (42%) were more likely to be living below 200% FPL than cisgender LGBTQ (33%) and White adults (21%).
- One-third (33%) of LGBTQ adults described their household's financial situation as just meeting basic expenses (24%) or as not having enough to meet basic expenses (9%).
  - However, nearly two-thirds (65%) of LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL described their household's financial situation as just meeting basic expenses (45%) or as not having enough to meet basic expenses (21%).
- Nearly one in three (32%) LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County lived in households that experienced food insecurity in the past year, as did more than one fifth (23%) non-LGBTQ adults.
  - More LGBTQ adults (56%) living below 200% FPL and LGBTQ people of color (42%) had experienced food insecurity than those with higher household incomes (19%) and who are White (19%).
  - More cisgender bisexual men (37%) and women (37%) experienced food insecurity compared to cisgender gay men (22%) and lesbians (30%).

## Housing Insecurity

- Due to high levels of renting among LGBTQ people in Los Angeles County (61%) compared to non-residents (46%), LGBTQ people are at elevated risk of housing insecurity.
  - Two-thirds of cisgender bisexual men (66%) and bisexual women (68%) are renters, compared to half of cisgender gay men (55%) and lesbians (50%). Over two-thirds (68%) of transgender and non-binary adults are renters.
- More LGBTQ than non-LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County live in households that are “cost burdened” or “severely cost burdened” by housing expenses.
  - More than half (61%) of LGBTQ adults and 53% of non-LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County spend 30% or more of their monthly household income on housing.
  - One-quarter (26%) of LGBTQ adults and 21% of non-LGBTQ adults spend over 50% of their household's total monthly income on rent or a mortgage.

- More LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults live in households that were delayed or unable to pay their mortgage or rent at least once in the prior two years (19% vs. 15%).
  - More LGBTQ people of color live in households that had had any difficulty paying for housing compared to White LGBTQ adults (22% vs. 14%).
- More than one in 10 LGBTQ adults (11%) and 6% of non-LGBTQ adults had been homeless at some time in the past five years.
- More than one in 10 LGBTQ adults (12%) reported having a landlord or realtor in Los Angeles County refuse to sell or rent to them because of their LGBTQ identity, with 5% reporting such an experience in the past five years.
  - More cisgender lesbians (36%) and gay men (13%) reported such treatment than cisgender bisexual men (6%) and women (1%).
- More than one in 10 LGBTQ adults (11%) reported experiencing verbal harassment from their landlord, other tenants, or neighbors, with 8% reporting such experiences within the past five years.
  - More LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL (22%) reported such harassment than those with higher incomes (6%).

## Health

- While LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ adults had similar self-reports on their overall health and access to health insurance, on 11 out of 16 more specific health indicators—including those related to mental health, and substance abuse—more LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County had worse outcomes than non-LGBTQ adults. Those living below 200% FPL were the mostly likely to have poor health.
- Symptoms of depression were twice as common among LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults (21% vs. 10%).
  - Among LGBTQ adults, 30% of those living below 200% FPL had symptoms of depression, compared to 16% of those with higher incomes.
- Lifetime suicide attempts were more common among LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults (13% vs. 3%).
  - Among LGBTQ adults, suicide attempts were reported by more:
    - transgender and nonbinary adults than cisgender LGBTQ adults (24% vs. 11%)
    - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL than adults with higher incomes (20% vs. 9%)
    - cisgender bisexual women compared to cisgender bisexual men (6%), cisgender lesbians (5%), and cisgender gay men (8%).
- More LGBTQ adults had engaged in binge drinking (32%) and heavy marijuana use (15%) in the past month than non-LGBTQ adults (21% and 5%, respectively).
  - Among LGBTQ adults, heavy marijuana use was more common among adults living below 200% FPL than among those with higher incomes (20% vs. 12%).

- While almost half of LGBTQ adults (46%) had received mental health care in the prior year, about one in four (26%) expressed an unmet need for care. While the primary barriers involved cost (75%), 31% were unable to find care supportive of LGBTQ adults.
- More than a third of LGBTQ adults (37%) had experienced intimate partner violence (IPV)—twice as many as non-LGBTQ adults (18%).
  - Half (50%) of cisgender bisexual women reported IPV.
- Almost one in 10 LGBTQ adults (9%) said they smoked regularly, compared to fewer non-LGBTQ adults (6%).
  - Among LGBTQ adults, smoking was more common among:
    - cisgender gay and bisexual men than cisgender lesbians and bisexual women (13% vs. 5%)
    - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL than those with higher incomes (15% vs. 6%)
- While somewhat fewer LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults were overweight (BMI of 25.0–29.9) (28% v. 33%) or obese (BMI greater than 30.0) (28% vs. 30%), obesity was more common among:
  - cisgender lesbians than cisgender gay men (42% vs. 21%)
  - LGBTQ people of color than White LGBTQ adults (32% vs. 22%)
  - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL than those with higher household incomes (37% vs. 23%)
- More LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults had difficulty accessing needed medical care (32% vs. 23%).
  - Among LGBTQ adults, difficulty accessing care was more common among:
    - LGBTQ adults of color than White LGBTQ adults (36% vs. 27%)
    - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL than among adults with higher incomes (43% vs. 27%)
- In the past year, about one in 10 LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County (11%) did not go to health care providers for fear of unfair treatment, and 8% did not go for fear of being threatened or physically attacked because of their LGBTQ status.
  - Transgender and nonbinary adults (21%) were approximately twice as likely as cisgender LGBTQ adults (11%) to report that they had not accessed health care in order to avoid unfair treatment.
- Among LGBTQ adults who had health care providers, just over half reported being out to all of their providers (51%), and almost one in four (23%) reported not being out to any of their providers.

- Among LGBTQ adults, the likelihood of not being out to any of their health care providers was higher among:
  - cisgender bisexual women (54%) and men (37%) than cisgender lesbians (6%) and gay men (6%).
  - those living below 200% FPL compared to those with higher incomes (36% vs. 17%)
  - transgender and nonbinary adults compared to cisgender LGBQ adults (32% vs. 23%)
  - adults of color compared to White adults (28% vs. 14%)
- More than one in 10 LGBTQ adults (11%) reported being denied medical care or provided inferior care because of their sexual orientation or gender identity while living in Los Angeles County, including 8% who had had these experiences in the past five years.
- More than one in 10 LGBTQ adults (11%) reported being verbally harassed because of their LGBTQ status while accessing health care in Los Angeles County.
  - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL (17%) were more likely to have experienced verbal harassment than those with higher incomes (8%).

## INTRODUCTION

Approximately 665,000 LGBTQ adults live in Los Angeles County.<sup>2</sup> While state and national research studies have found that LGBTQ adults experience discrimination, economic instability, and poor health,<sup>3</sup> local research has been limited by sample size, topics covered,<sup>4</sup> and sample representativeness. However, findings from these limited studies suggest that LGBTQ adults in the county also encounter discrimination and violence,<sup>5</sup> and that they face economic and health challenges. The goal of this study is to provide information about the needs and experiences of LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County—nearly 9% of local adults<sup>6</sup>—to county leaders, institutions, community-based organizations, and the broader community.

Prior research on LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County has largely focused on subpopulations within the community, such as transgender adults and adults living with HIV or specific topics such as interactions with law enforcement or housing instability. Such research has been based on convenience samples. For example, transgender adults—particularly transgender women of color, who face intersecting forms of inequality—may be among the most vulnerable of the county's residents.<sup>7</sup> Findings from the *2023 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count* indicate that transgender adults

<sup>2</sup> AskCHIS query. <https://ask.chis.ucla.edu/> Sexual orientation (4 levels) by gender identity (2 levels) restricted to Los Angeles region, years 2020-2022 pooled (calculation on file with authors)

<sup>3</sup> 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey: California State Report. (2017). Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality. [https://transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/USTSCAStateReport\(1017\).pdf](https://transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/USTSCAStateReport(1017).pdf); Heslin, K. C., & Hall, J. E. (2021). Sexual Orientation Disparities in Risk Factors for Adverse COVID-19-Related Outcomes, by Race/Ethnicity - Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, United States, 2017-2019. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep*, 70(5), 149-154. doi:10.15585/mmwr.mm7005a1; Meyer, I. H. (2019). Experiences of Discrimination Among Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People in the US. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/lgb-discrimination-experiences/>; O'Neill, K.K. (2020). Economic Vulnerabilities to COVID-19 Among LGBT Adults in California. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/covid-economics-lgbt-ca/>; O'Neill, K.K. (2020). Health Vulnerabilities to COVID-19 Among LGBT Adults in California. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/covid19-health-lgbt-ca/>; Patterson, C. (2020). Understanding the well-being of LGBTQI+ populations. Washington, DC: National Academies Press. Wilson, B.D.M., O'Neill, K.K., & Vasquez, L.A. (2021). LGBT Renters and Eviction Risk. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/lgbt-renters-and-eviction-risk/>

<sup>4</sup> Los Angeles County has been engaged in HIV surveillance, prevention, and treatment monitoring activities for decades. See the Los Angeles County Integrated HIV Prevention and Care Plan, 2022-2026 for recent data about men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender people related to HIV risk and treatment utilization available through county needs assessments and health surveillance activities. Los Angeles County Commission on HIV and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Division of HIV and STD Programs. Los Angeles County Comprehensive HIV Plan (2022- 2026), December 2022: 1-136. [http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/dhsp/HIV/LAC\\_Integrated\\_HIV\\_Prevention\\_and\\_Care\\_Plan\\_2022-2026\\_\(final\).pdf](http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/dhsp/HIV/LAC_Integrated_HIV_Prevention_and_Care_Plan_2022-2026_(final).pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations. 2022 Hate Crime Report. County of Los Angeles. <https://assets-us-01.kc-usercontent.com/0234f496-d2b7-00b6-17a4-b43e949b70a2/ae9b9bbb-8328-449d-82b0-6ad2f330169b/LA%20County%202022%20Report%20of%20Hate%20Crime.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> AskCHIS query. See footnote 2. 8.7% of 2020-2022 (pooled) California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) participants from Los Angeles County were LGBT; 8.5% of LACHS 2023 participants were LGBTQ.

<sup>7</sup> Reback, C. J., Clark, K., Holloway, I. W., & Fletcher, J. B. (2018). Health Disparities, Risk Behaviors and Healthcare Utilization Among Transgender Women in Los Angeles County: A Comparison from 1998-1999 to 2015-2016. *AIDS Behav*, 22(8), 2524-2533. See [https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as\\_sdt=0%2C22&q=Cathy+J.+Reback+and+los+angeles&btnG=to+read+additional+local+HIV-focused+research.](https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C22&q=Cathy+J.+Reback+and+los+angeles&btnG=to+read+additional+local+HIV-focused+research.)

are overrepresented among the unhoused.<sup>8</sup> Community-based studies have found that transgender women of color in L.A. County experience challenges that impact their quality of life, including difficulty locating shelter that is safe, high levels of harassment by law enforcement officers, and limited access to employment and competent health care.<sup>9</sup>

Experiences of stigma and rejection by service providers in the county, as well as fear of rejection, can exacerbate existing health disparities. For instance, discrimination that limits access to health care for adults living with HIV was documented in studies.<sup>10</sup> Fear of judgment may also limit access to nonprofit resources, especially those that are religiously affiliated, as was observed in a recent study of hunger among low-income LGBTQ adults.<sup>11</sup>

This study adds to existing research by including the entire LGBTQ population in a probability-based sample, and by more comprehensively investigating the extent to which discrimination, harassment, housing security, income and health disparities, and service barriers impact the broader LGBTQ population in Los Angeles County. For this study, we used representative data collected from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health's 2023 Los Angeles County Health Survey (LACHS) and the Lived Experiences in Los Angeles County (LELAC) Survey, a call-back study developed by Williams Institute researchers. Data from the LACHS sample of more than 9,000 adults were used to describe the demographic, socioeconomic, and health characteristics of LGBTQ adults in relation to non-LGBTQ adults. Information about LGBTQ families and family-building intentions and obstacles, discrimination, verbal harassment, police interactions, coping mechanisms, civic engagement, and perspectives on Los Angeles County services is presented from the LELAC call-back sample of approximately 500 LGBTQ adults. Potential differences in experiences among LGBTQ adults by gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, and economic status were also examined. Details about study methods are included in the Appendix.

Each chapter in this report starts with a summary of key findings and ends with a set of policy recommendations, many of which are suggestions from the LGBTQ adults who took the LELAC survey. In addition to quantitative findings, each chapter contains quotes from those who completed the LELAC survey.

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<sup>8</sup> Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. (2023, Nov. 8) *2023 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count - City of Los Angeles*. Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. <https://www.lahsa.org/documents?id=7680-city-of-la-hc23-data-summary>

<sup>9</sup> Fuentes, M., Ortega, Q.V., Salcedo, B., Conron, K. (2023). *From Surviving to Thriving: A Quality-of-Life Study with Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming, and Intersex (TGI) Adults in the City of Los Angeles*. The TransLatin@Coalition and the Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/TGI-QOL-LA-Nov-2023.pdf>; Galvan, F.H. & Mohsen, B. (2012). *Interactions of Latina Transgender Women with Law Enforcement*. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law; <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/latina-trans-women-law-enforcement/>; Olaes, G. Cristobal, A., Ma, Y., & Sey, E-K. (N.D). National HIV Behavioral Surveillance Project. *Transgender Women in Los Angeles County, 2019*. [http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/dhsp/Reports/HIV/NHBS\\_Factsheet\\_FINAL.pdf](http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/dhsp/Reports/HIV/NHBS_Factsheet_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Sears, B. & Ho, D. (2006). *HIV Discrimination in Health Care Services in Los Angeles County. The results of three testing studies*. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/hiv-discrimination-healthcare-services-la/>

<sup>11</sup> Wilson, B.D.M., Badgett, M. V. L., & Gomez, A. G. H. (2020). *"We're Still Hungry" Lived Experiences with Food Insecurity and Food Programs Among LGBTQ People*. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/lgbtq-experiences-food-bank/>



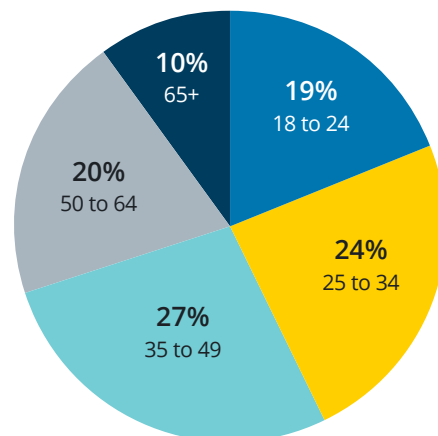
## DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

### KEY FINDINGS

- Forty-two percent of LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County are 18 to 35 years of age, 48% are 35 to 64 years old, and 10% are 65 years of age or older.
- Fourteen percent of LGBTQ adults in the county are transgender or nonbinary.
- More than one in three (36%) LGBTQ adults are cisgender bisexual adults, including one in four (24%) who are cisgender bisexual women.
- Two-thirds of LGBTQ adults in the county are adults of color, including 39% who are Latinx, 13% who are Asian, 8% who are Black, and 4% who are multiracial, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander or “other race.”<sup>12</sup>
- Almost one in five (18%) LGBTQ adults in the county was born outside the U.S.
- More LGBTQ adults (41%) than non-LGBTQ adults (25%) met the criteria used by the U.S. Census Bureau to assess disability.
- More than one in four (28%) LGBTQ adults are currently married or in a domestic partnership.
- Most (91%) LGBTQ adults have lived in L.A. County for more than five years, including 44% who have lived their whole lives in the county.

The LACHS sample of LGBTQ adults ( $N = 1,006$ ) was demographically diverse on age, gender identity, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, marital status, and educational attainment. More than a third (42%) of adults were between the ages of 18 to 35 years, including 19% who were 18 to 24 years old and 24% who were 25 to 34. Nearly half (48%) of adults were 35 to 64 years old, including 28% who were 35–49 and 21% who were 50 to 64. One in 10 (10%) adults was 65 years of age or older. As shown in [Supplemental Tables](#), LACHS adults who completed the LELAC survey ( $N = 504$ ) had the same demographic profile as the larger LACHS sample.

Figure 1. Age of LGBTQ adults, LACHS, 2023

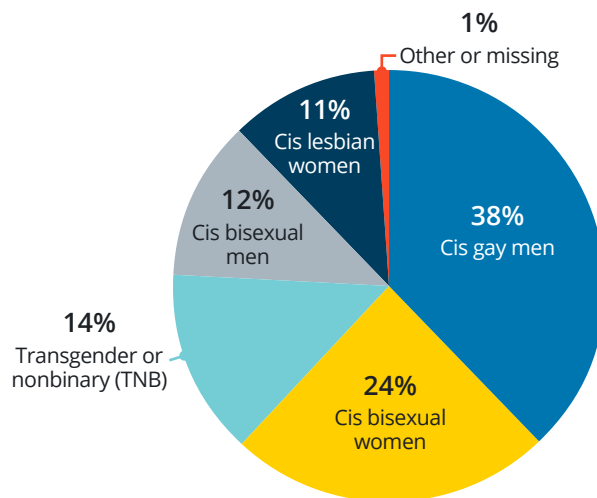


<sup>12</sup> Refer to Methods section in the Appendix for information about the coding of race/ethnicity.

Most (85%) LGBTQ adults were cisgender, and 14% were transgender or nonbinary (1% could not be classified due to missing information on gender identity or sex assigned at birth). Slightly more than half (52%) of the sample identified their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian; 43% of LGBTQ adults were bisexual (by identity or by a write-in that reflected a non-monosexual identity, e.g., pansexual); 2% were heterosexual; and 2% were asexual, not sure, or did not provide a usable response.

Taken together, 38% of LGBTQ adults were cisgender gay men, 11% were cisgender lesbians, 12% were cisgender bisexual men, 24% were cisgender bisexual women, and 14% were transgender or nonbinary adults (of any sexual orientation). A handful of LGBTQ adults (1%) could not be classified into these five groups, primarily due to missing information on gender identity or sex assigned at birth.

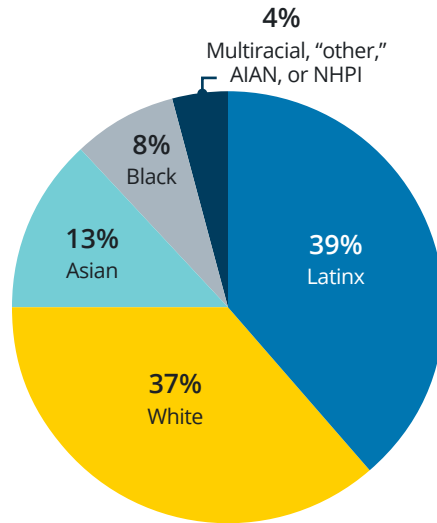
**Figure 2. Sexual orientation and gender of LGBTQ adults, LACHS, 2023**



Gender identity and sexual orientation differed among cisgender and transgender and nonbinary adults. Among cisgender adults, 59% identified as men and 41% as women. More than half (57%) of cisgender adults identified as gay or lesbian, and 43% were bisexual. Among transgender and nonbinary adults, 57% identified as nonbinary or gender nonconforming, 32% identified as men, and 11% identified as women. Nearly half (47%) of transgender and nonbinary adults identified as bisexual, 21% identified as gay or lesbian, 17% identified as heterosexual, and 7% identified with other terms (e.g., asexual) or were “not sure.” Seven percent did not understand answer the question or preferred not to answer it.

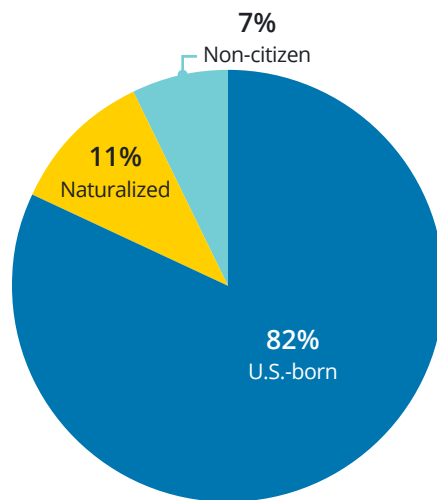
Latinx adults were the majority (39%), followed by non-Hispanic adults who were White (37%), Asian (13%), Black (8%), or multiracial, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or “some other race” (4%).

Figure 3. Race/ethnicity of LGBTQ adults, LACHS, 2023



Most LGBTQ adults (82%) were U.S.-born citizens, 11% were naturalized citizens, and 7% were not U.S. citizens.

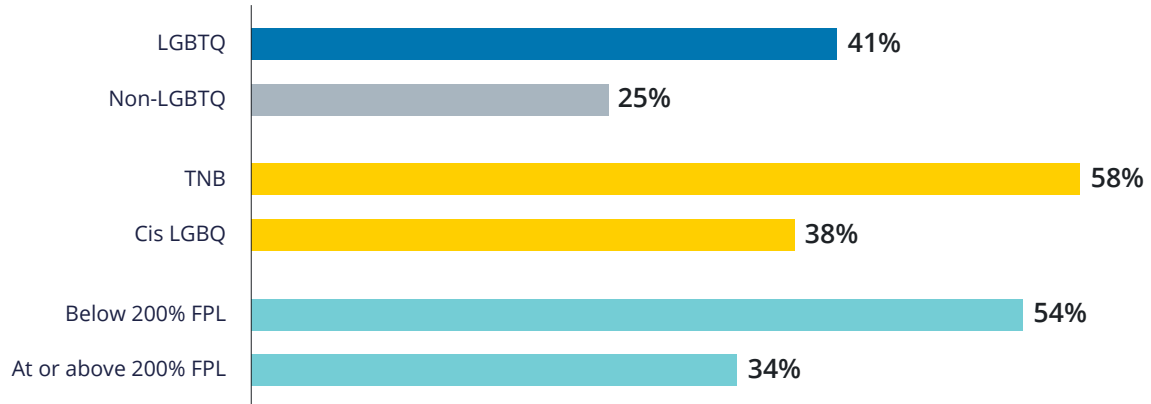
Figure 4. Citizenship status of LGBTQ adults, LACHS, 2023



More LGBTQ people (41%) than non-LGBTQ people (25%) met criteria used by the U.S. Census Bureau to assess disability.<sup>13</sup> More than half of transgender and nonbinary people (58%) and LGBTQ people living below 200% FPL (54%) had a disability—more than among cisgender LGBTQ participants (38%) and those with higher incomes (34%).

<sup>13</sup> Disability was defined as having serious difficulty with one or more of the following: hearing, seeing (with glasses), walking or climbing stairs; dressing or bathing; or because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, having serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions or difficulty doing errands alone, such as visiting a doctor’s office or shopping.

**Figure 5. Disability by LGBTQ status and among LGBTQ respondents, by gender identity and economic status, LACHS, 2023**



A majority (55%) of LGBTQ adults had never been married; more than a quarter (28%) were currently married or in a domestic partnership; 8% were unmarried and cohabitating; and 6% were widowed, divorced, or separated.

Almost one-quarter (24%) of adults over the age of 25 had a high school degree, GED, or less formal education; 26% reported some college or an associate degree; 28% had a terminal four-year degree; and 22% had a graduate degree.

LGBTQ adults lived across the county. Nearly a third (32%), or more than 200,000 adults, resided in District 3, which includes West Hollywood (Figure 6, Table 1).

**Figure 6. Residence of LGBTQ adults across Los Angeles County supervisorial districts, LACHS, 2023**

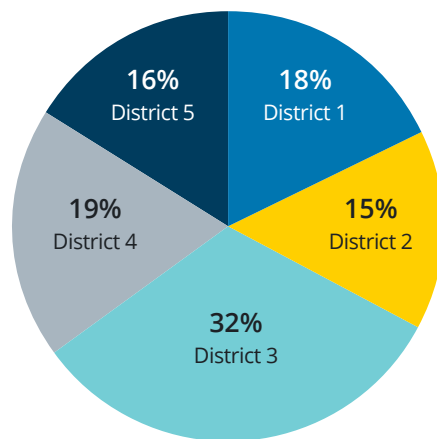


Table 1. Estimated number of LGBTQ adults living in Los Angeles County by district, LACHS, 2023

COUNTY DISTRICT	ESTIMATED COUNT	LOWER BOUND ESTIMATE	UPPER BOUND ESTIMATE
District 1	120,000	99,000	142,000
District 2	98,000	78,000	118,000
District 3	211,000	184,000	239,000
District 4	127,000	103,000	150,000
District 5	109,000	87,000	131,000
Total	665,000		

## OVERALL CLIMATE FOR LGBTQ PEOPLE IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

### KEY FINDINGS

More than four in five LGBTQ adults agreed that Los Angeles County is a good place for LGBTQ people to live and felt that acceptance for LGBTQ people has been growing over time.

- Eighty-one percent of LGBTQ adults strongly or somewhat agreed that Los Angeles County is a good place for LGBTQ people to live. Only 9% of LGBTQ adults believed that Los Angeles is not a good place for LGBTQ people to live.
- LGBTQ people of color (77%) and LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL (69%) were less likely to agree that Los Angeles County is a good place to live than White LGBTQ adults (90%) and those with higher incomes (89%).
- Most LGBTQ adults felt that their neighborhood (73%), California (86%), and the country (84%) have become a little or a lot more accepting over the past decade.

Despite feeling that Los Angeles County is a good place to live, a number of LGBTQ people reported experiences of mistreatment and harassment and said that they avoided certain professionals and places because they fear unfair treatment or threats to their safety.

- More than one-third of LGBTQ adults (36%) reported having received unfair treatment based on their sexual orientation or gender identity while living in Los Angeles County.
- More than half of LGBTQ adults (51%) reported having been verbally harassed because of their sexual orientation or gender identity in Los Angeles County.
- Approximately one in five LGBTQ adults avoided businesses open to the public, such as restaurants and stores (22%), places of entertainment (19%), religious or spiritual services (19%), and public transportation (17%) in the past year to avoid unfair treatment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- About one in 10 avoided accessing health care services (11%) or getting services that they or their family needed (10%) for the same reason.

Overall, 81% of all LGBTQ adults strongly (43%)<sup>14</sup> or somewhat (39%) agreed that Los Angeles County is “a good place for LGBTQ people to live.” Only 9% of LGBTQ adults somewhat (5%) or strongly (4%) disagreed with this statement. When asked whether they were considering moving out of Los Angeles County because it is not a good place for LGBTQ people to live, about three-fourths of LGBTQ adults strongly (59%) or somewhat (15%) disagreed with that statement, while about one in 10 somewhat (7%) or strongly (4%) agreed.

<sup>14</sup> Due to rounding, some percentages will not match the sum of the percentages of their component parts and/or the relevant percentages in a chart or graph. More precise percentages, to the tenth decimal place, and corresponding confidence intervals can be found in the tables in the appendices to this report.

*In my opinion, Los Angeles County is an excellent place to live!*

— **Cisgender White lesbian in her 40s**

*[We set] an example of LGBTQ proudness as a city that other cities can use as an example.*

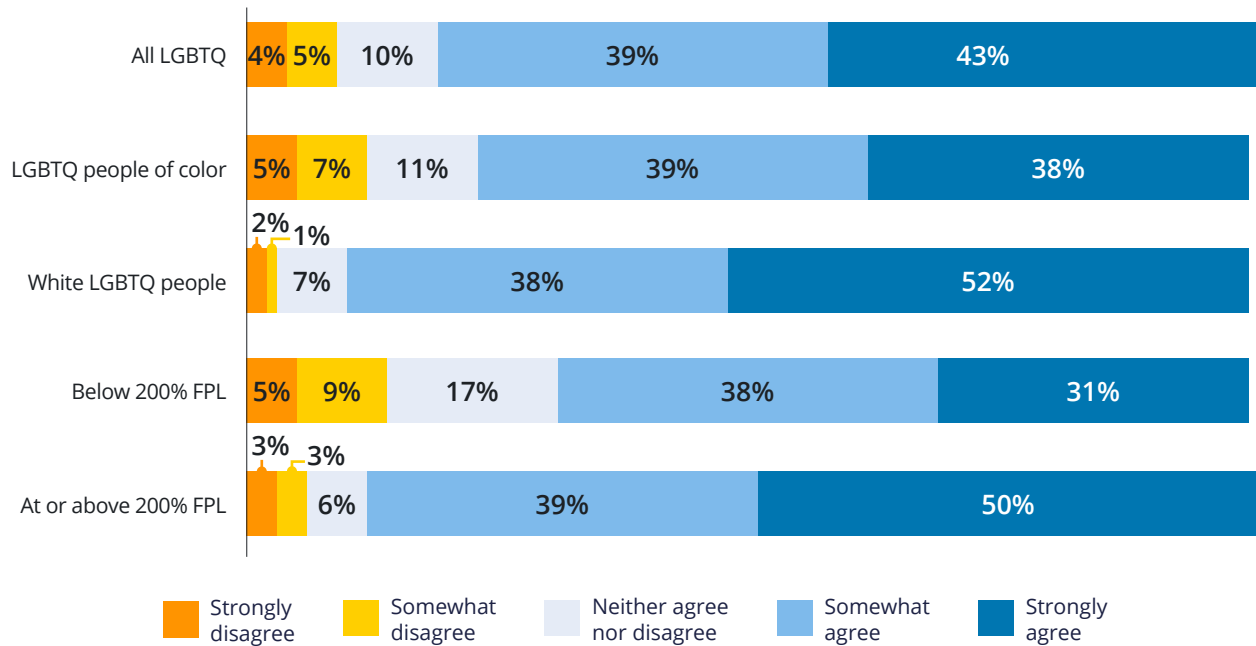
— **Cisgender bisexual Asian woman in her 20s**

*We live with pride. Spread beauty. Thereby, filling the County with Pride.*

— **Cisgender gay Black man in his 50s**

LGBTQ people of color and LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were less likely to agree that Los Angeles County is a good place for LGBTQ adults to live. Only 77% of LGBTQ people of color strongly or somewhat agreed that Los Angeles County is a good place for LGBTQ people to live, compared to 90% of White LGBTQ adults. Likewise, only 69% of LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL felt that Los Angeles County is a good place for LGBTQ people to live, compared to 89% of LGBTQ adults with higher incomes.

**Figure 7. Support for the statement that Los Angeles is a good place for LGBTQ people to live, by race/ethnicity and economic status, LELAC**



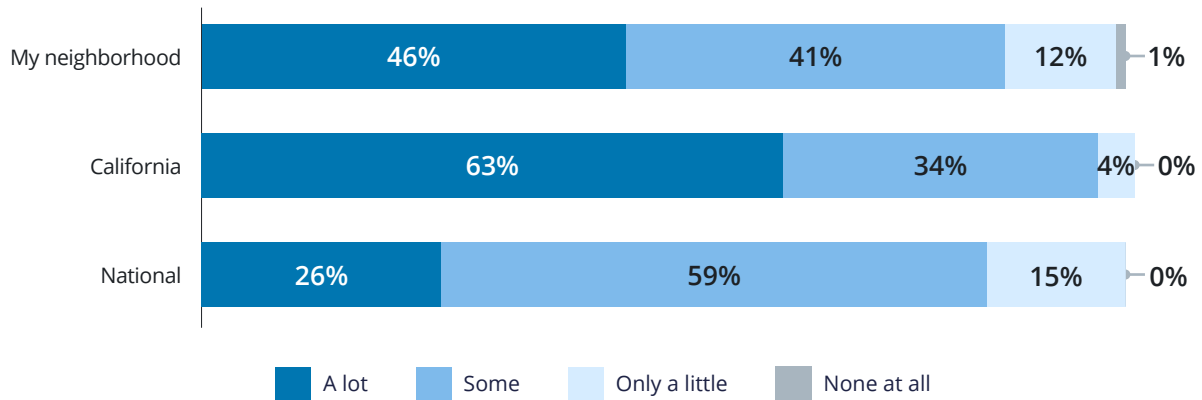
*As a queer Chinese person living in L.A. during COVID-19, I experience racism, sexism, Sinophobia, and homophobia.*

— **Nonbinary queer multiracial person in their 30s**

Respondents were also asked about the level of social acceptance for LGBTQ people in the United States, California, and their Los Angeles County neighborhood, and whether they felt social acceptance was improving or getting worse. Most LGBTQ adults felt there was a great deal of social acceptance for LGBTQ people in California, with 63% reporting “a lot” of social acceptance for LGBTQ

adults in the state. In contrast, only 46% of LGBTQ adults felt there was a lot of social acceptance in their neighborhood, and only 26% felt that way about the country. Only 4% of LGBTQ adults reported that they felt there was little social acceptance in California, while 13% felt there was little (12% or no (1%) social acceptance in their neighborhood in Los Angeles County, and 15% had similar views about the national social climate.

**Figure 8. Perceptions of LGBTQ social acceptance at the national, state, and neighborhood levels, LELAC**



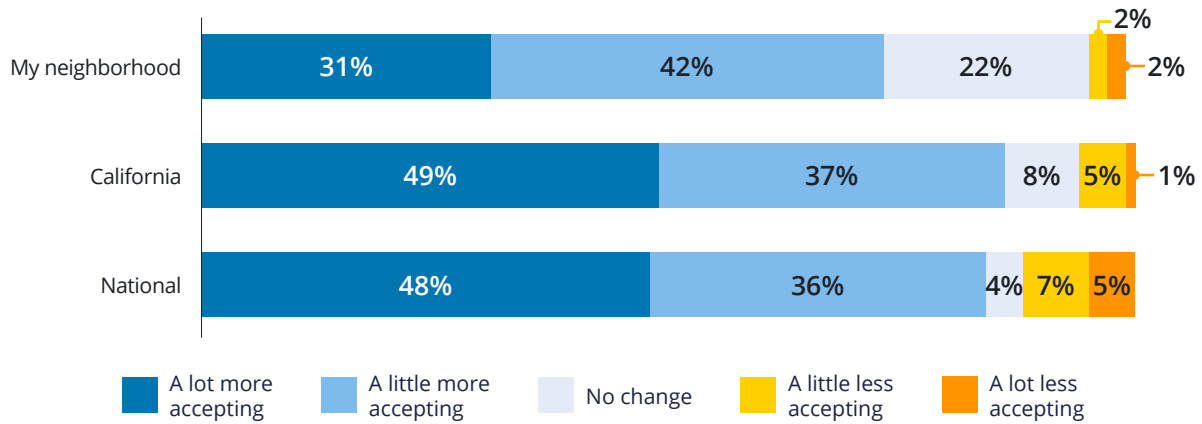
*Being a lesbian Latina woman is just hard in general, probably a bit less in progressive CA, but I would definitely think twice about living my true self in other states where racism and homophobia are rampant.*

— Cisgender Latina lesbian in her 40s

In terms of whether social acceptance of LGBTQ people has improved over the past decade, the majority of LGBTQ adults felt that their neighborhood, California, and the country have become more accepting of LGBTQ people. More than 70% of LGBTQ adults felt that their neighborhood (73%), California (86%), and the country (84%) have become a little or a lot more accepting over the past decade. In contrast, 12% of LGBTQ adults thought that social acceptance for LGBTQ people has declined over the past decade nationally, but only 6% felt that way about California and only 4% about their local neighborhood.



**Figure 9. Perceptions of whether LGBTQ social acceptance has improved over the past decade at the national, state, and neighborhood levels, among adults who had lived in the county, the state, or their neighborhood for at least the past decade, LELAC**



When asked about their greatest concerns, 13% of adults wrote about a future of the United States that might be more challenging for LGBTQ people. These responses included concerns about “LGBTQ national issues,” “Donald Trump and his supporters,” “the radical right,” “discrimination and legal challenges to human rights,” “democracy in America,” “the direction of our country,” and “public ignorance.” Some of these concerns included:

*We seem to be going backward with LGBTQ+ acceptance as a nation.*  
 — Cisgender gay Asian man in his 40s

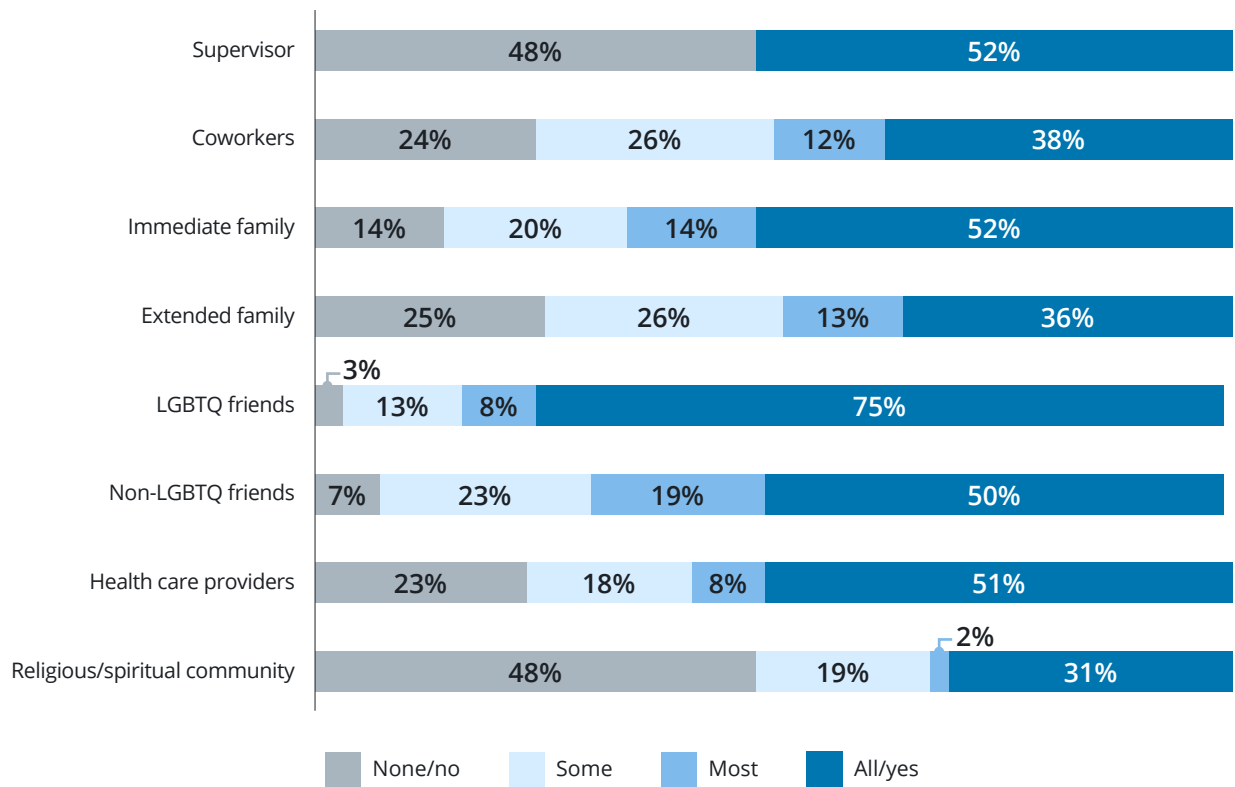
*The next national election and the Supreme Court rulings coming up.*  
 — Cisgender gay White man in his 50s

*Everything shown in the media.*  
 — Cisgender queer Black woman in her 30s

Despite most LGBTQ adults feeling that Los Angeles County is a welcoming environment, a number of adults reported experiences of unfair treatment and harassment and said that they avoided certain professionals and places because they feared mistreatment or threats to their safety.

**The Closet.** Even though many LGBTQ adults view Los Angeles as supportive, many reported not being out in at least some part of their lives. For example, almost half (48%) of LGBTQ adults are not out to their supervisor, and approximately one-fourth are not out to any of their co-workers (24%), extended family (25%), or health care providers (23%).

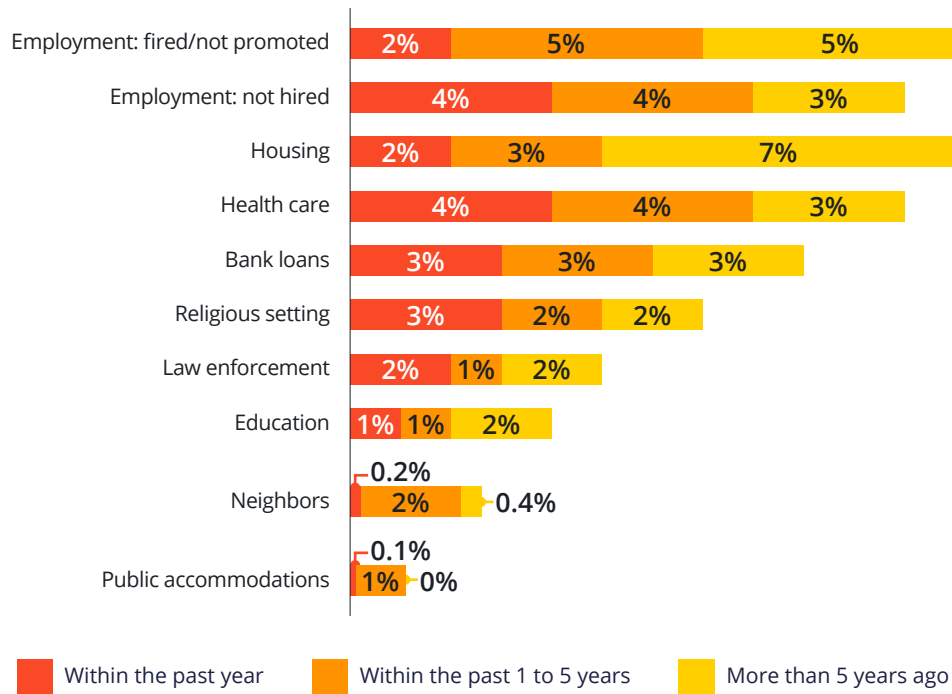
Figure 10. Level of outness among adults who knew their level of being out and reported that the professional and/or setting was applicable to them, LELAC



**Unfair Treatment.** More than one-third of LGBTQ adults (36%) reported experiencing unfair treatment based on their sexual orientation or gender identity while living in Los Angeles County in at least one of nine areas: work, law enforcement, education, housing, public accommodations,<sup>15</sup> applying for a bank loan, health care, religion, or interactions with neighbors. Most of these experiences had happened in the past five years. Seventeen percent of LGBTQ adults had had these experiences in the past year, and 28% had had them within the past five years. For example, within the past five years in Los Angeles County, at least one in 20 LGBTQ adults experienced unfair treatment when accessing health care (8%), applying for jobs (8%), looking for housing (5%), applying for bank loans (6%), and trying to practice their religion or spiritual beliefs (5%).

<sup>15</sup> Public accommodations are defined in the LELAC study as businesses open to the public, such as a stores, restaurants, movie theaters, hotels, gyms, daycare centers, and hair salons.

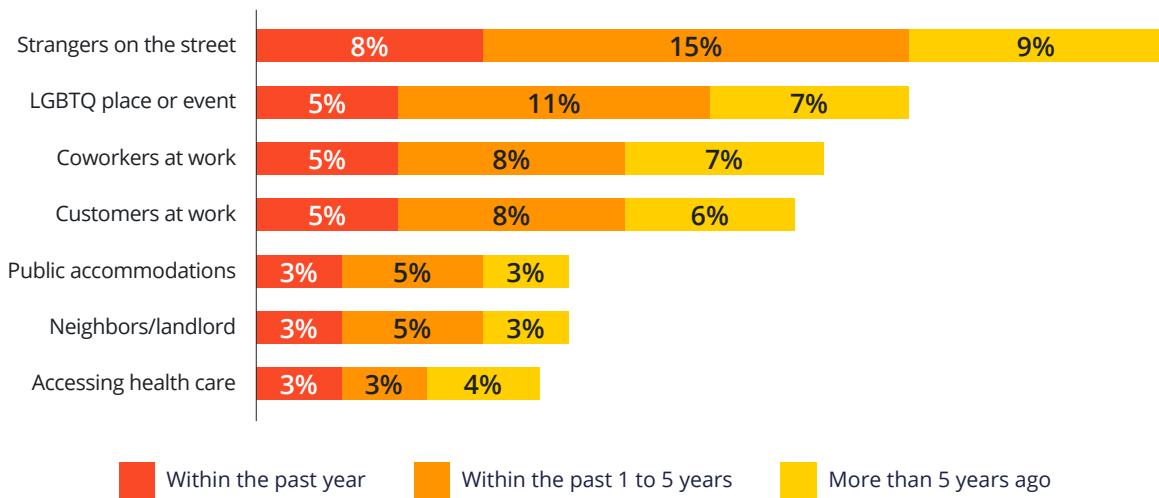
**Figure 11. Experiences of unfair treatment in Los Angeles County because of sexual orientation or gender identity, by most recent experience, LELAC**



**Verbal Harassment.** More than half of LGBTQ adults (51%) reported being verbally harassed<sup>16</sup> because of their sexual orientation or gender identity in Los Angeles County in at least one of six areas: at work; at home by their landlord, other tenants, or neighbors; by strangers on the street; at LGBTQ businesses or events; at businesses open to the public; and when accessing health care. Most of these experiences had happened recently; twenty percent of LGBTQ adults reported having had these experiences in the past year, and 39% reported having had them in the past five years. More specifically, within the past five years in the county, almost one in four (23%) LGBTQ adults had experienced verbal harassment from a stranger on the street; one in six had experienced verbal harassment while at an LGBTQ event or venue (16%); and one in eight (13%) had experienced verbal harassment from coworkers or customers at work.

<sup>16</sup> Verbal harassment was defined as including “negative comments, name-calling, slurs, or jokes that are made at a person’s expense.”

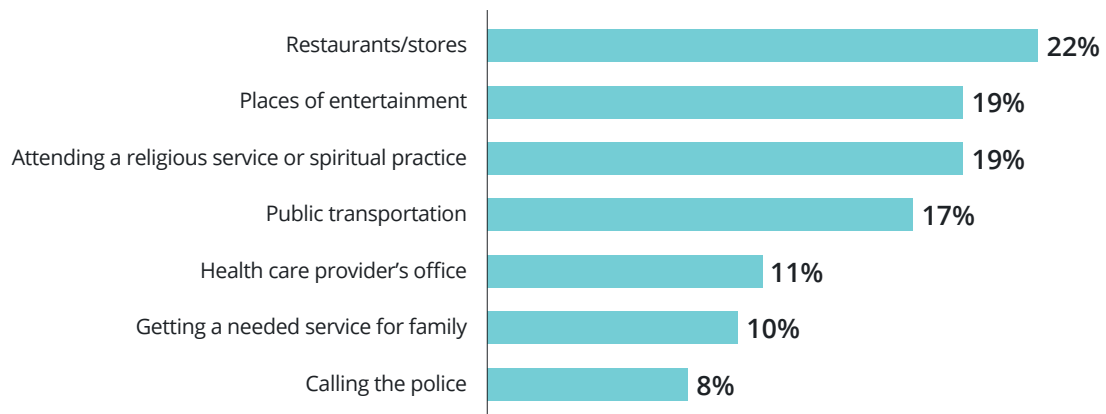
**Figure 12. Experiences of verbal harassment in Los Angeles County because of sexual orientation or gender identity, by most recent experience, LELAC**



**Avoiding locations and professionals.** Many adults reported avoiding certain locations or adults, including health care providers, to protect themselves from unfair treatment, harassment, or violence.

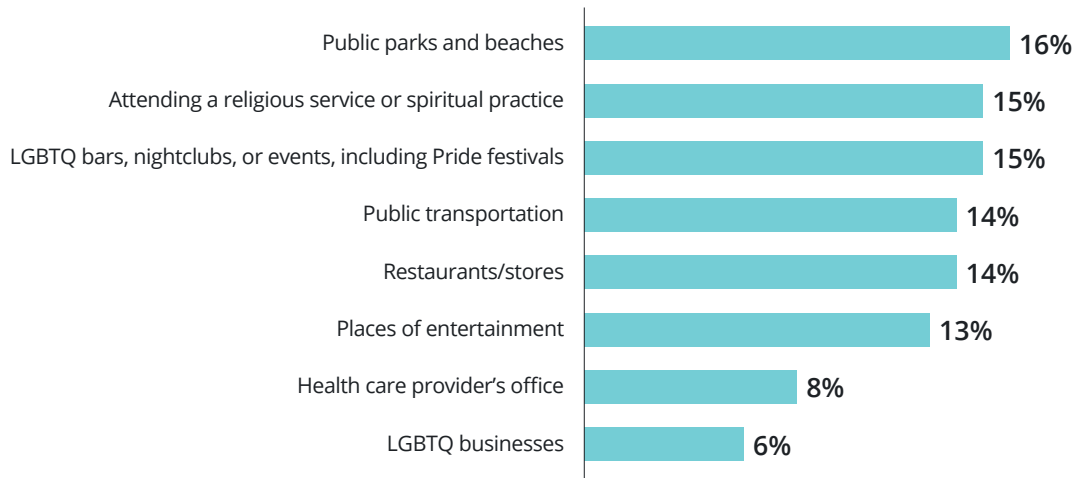
In the past year, approximately one in five LGBTQ adults avoided businesses open to the public, such as restaurants and stores (22%), places of entertainment (19%), religious or spiritual services (19%), and public transportation (17%) to avoid unfair treatment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. More than one in 10 avoided accessing health care services (11%) or getting services that they or their family needed (10%) for the same reason.

**Figure 13. LGBTQ adults who avoided certain locations or professionals in order to avoid poor treatment based on sexual orientation or gender identity in the past year, LELAC**



More than one in seven LGBTQ adults avoided places open to the public, such as parks and beaches (16%), religious or spiritual services (15%), restaurants and stores (14%), public transportation (14%), and places of entertainment (13%) because they feared being threatened or physically attacked due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. A similar percentage (15%) avoided LGBTQ bars, nightclubs, and events such as Pride festivals for the same reason.

**Figure 14. LGBTQ adults who avoided certain locations or people in the past year in order to avoid being threatened or physically attacked because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, LELAC**



**Victimization.** Finally, many LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County not only have concerns about their safety but have also experienced victimization. Thirty-nine percent of LGBTQ adults who have lived their entire lives in Los Angeles County reported that they had been a victim of a personal crime (“mugged, held up, threatened with a weapon, or assaulted”) at least once in their lifetime, and 42% reported that they had been a victim of a property crime (someone had intentionally damaged or destroyed property owned by them or someone else in their house). When asked about the motivations for these crimes, of LGBTQ adults who had been victims of both types of crimes (personal and property), 72% felt that they definitely or probably had been targeted because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

The following chapters explore some of these experiences in depth, including in the domains that organize people’s lives and experiences: family, community, education, the workplace, housing, health care, law enforcement, public business and spaces, and government services.

# SOCIAL SUPPORT

## FAMILY AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

### KEY FINDINGS

More than half of LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles identified the greatest source of joy in their lives as family, friends, and community.

However, many LGBTQ people are still not out to all of their family members and friends.

- Only about half (52%) of LGBTQ adults are out to all of their immediate family, and only 36% are out to all of their extended family.
- Three-quarters (75%) of LGBTQ adults are out to all of their LGBTQ friends, and half (50%) are out to all of their non-LGBTQ friends.
- LGBTQ adults of color in Los Angeles County are less likely than White LGBTQ adults to be out to all of their immediate family (43% vs. 69%), all of their extended family (28% vs. 50%), and all of their LGBTQ friends (70% vs. 83%).
- Almost half (48%) of cisgender bisexual men are not out to any of their immediate family members, compared to 18% of cisgender bisexual women, 8% of lesbians, and 7% of gay men.

Eleven percent of LGBTQ adults in the County are caregivers compared to 18% of non-LGBTQ adults. Many LGBTQ adults are concerned about meeting their friends' and families' needs for support.

LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County are more likely to live alone than non-LGBTQ adults (29% vs. 16%) and twice as likely to feel lonely (48% vs. 23%).

- More transgender and nonbinary adults than cisgender LGB adults reported being lonely (62% vs. 45%).
- More LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL reported being lonely compared to those with higher incomes (54% vs. 44%).
- Further, more cisgender bisexual women (55%) were lonely than cisgender lesbians (33%), although their rates of being lonely were similar to those of bisexual (47%) and gay (41%) cisgender men.

Fewer LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults in L.A. County (52% vs. 65%) felt that they always or usually get the social and emotional support they need.

- LGBTQ people living below 200% FPL were less likely to report that they always or usually get the social and emotional support that they need as compared to those with higher incomes (39% v. 59%).

## Relationships With Friends and Family

When survey respondents were asked about their greatest source of joy, more than half (54%) reported they found the most joy in their social connections, including friends and community (27%), family (25%), and partners (15%). In addition, almost one in five (17%) stated that their pets brought them joy. Examples of these responses include:

*My personal relationships give me my greatest joys.*

— Cisgender gay White man in his 50s

*My friends and family, my husband and cat, and nature.*

— Nonbinary bisexual Latinx person in their 30s

*My friends who support me and never judge me.*

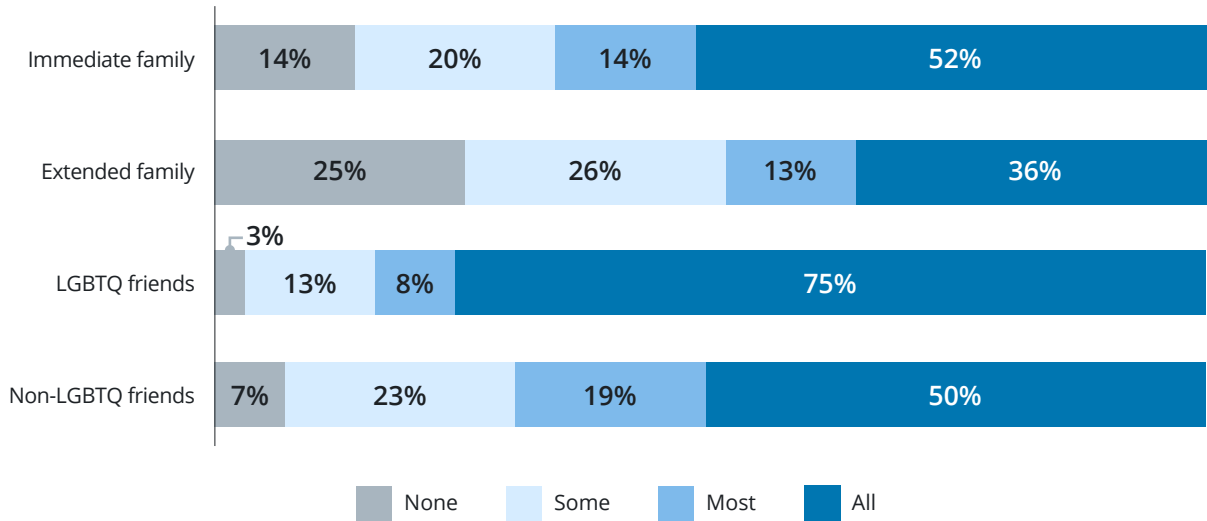
— Cisgender bisexual White woman in her 30s

However, many LGBTQ people in Los Angeles County are not out to all of their family members and friends. Only about half (52%) of LGBTQ adults are out to all their immediate family, and only 36% are out to all of their extended family. Fourteen percent of LGBTQ adults reported not being out to anyone in their immediate family. While 75% reported being out to all of their LGBTQ friends, only 50% are out to all of their non-LGBTQ friends.

*I ... have endured it [being misgendered] regularly from family for many years. It causes me to feel ashamed of who I am, discourages me from interacting with people, and has compelled me to hide my past and withdraw myself. In extreme cases, it makes me afraid for my personal safety.*

— Transgender White lesbian in her 30s

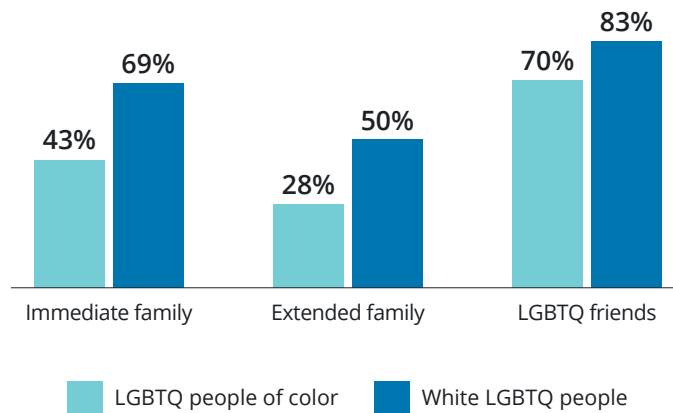
**Figure 15. Level of outness to family and friends among LGBTQ adults who knew their level of being out and reported that the people and/or setting was applicable to them, LELAC**



Note: These percentages are of those who responded none, some, most, or all. They do not include adults who selected that the question did not apply to them or that they did not know their level of outness to family members or friends. See [Supplemental Tables](#).

LGBTQ people of color in Los Angeles County are less likely than White LGBTQ adults to be out to all of their immediate family (43% vs. 69%), all of their extended family (28% vs. 50%), and all of their LGBTQ friends (70% vs. 83%).

**Figure 16. LGBTQ adults out to all family and friends, by race/ethnicity, LELAC**

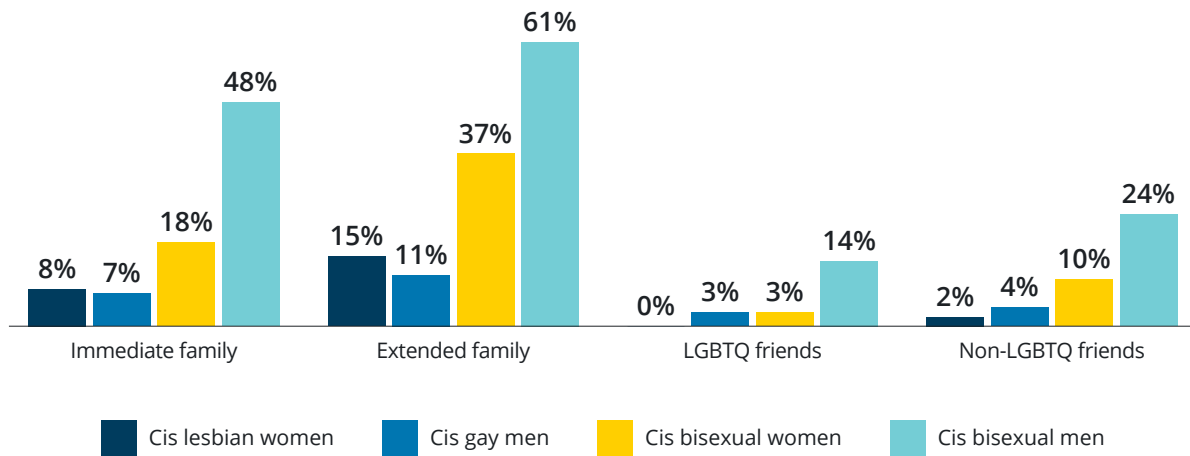


Note: These percentages are of those who responded all. They do not include adults who selected that the question did not apply to them or that they did not know their level of outness. See [Supplemental Tables](#).

Cisgender bisexual adults are less likely than cisgender lesbians and gay men to be out to their family and friends. For example, almost half (48%) of bisexual men are not out to any of their immediate family members, compared to 18% of bisexual women, 8% of lesbians, and 7% of gay men. About one-quarter of bisexual men (24%) are not out to any of their non-LGBTQ friends, and 14% are not out to any of their LGBTQ friends.



Figure 17. LGBTQ adults not out to any of the people in their personal life, by sexual orientation, LELAC



Note: These percentages are of those who responded none. They do not include adults who selected that the question did not apply to them or that they did not know their level of outing. See [Supplemental Tables](#).

### Caretaking

Eleven percent of LGBTQ people in the County were caregivers compared to 18% of non-LGBTQ adults. When asked about their biggest source of worry or concern, 7% of adults specifically mentioned concerns about caring for their family and friends. Some of these concerns (4% of all responses) focused on caretaking for other adults, including adult children, siblings, and parents. The concerns articulated by LGBTQ adults who were caregivers included:

*Health of close relatives that I help to care for. Need to move closer to them, but unable to afford [that].*

— Cisgender bisexual Asian woman in her 40s

*Being the eldest daughter while our family is falling apart, and logistics with a recent injury.*

— Cisgender bisexual Black woman in her 20s

*One of my five adult children is not doing well. Also, financial worries.*

— Transgender straight White man in his 70s

*Money, my various health comorbidities, [my] parents' slow death/ senility/ dependency/ immobility.*

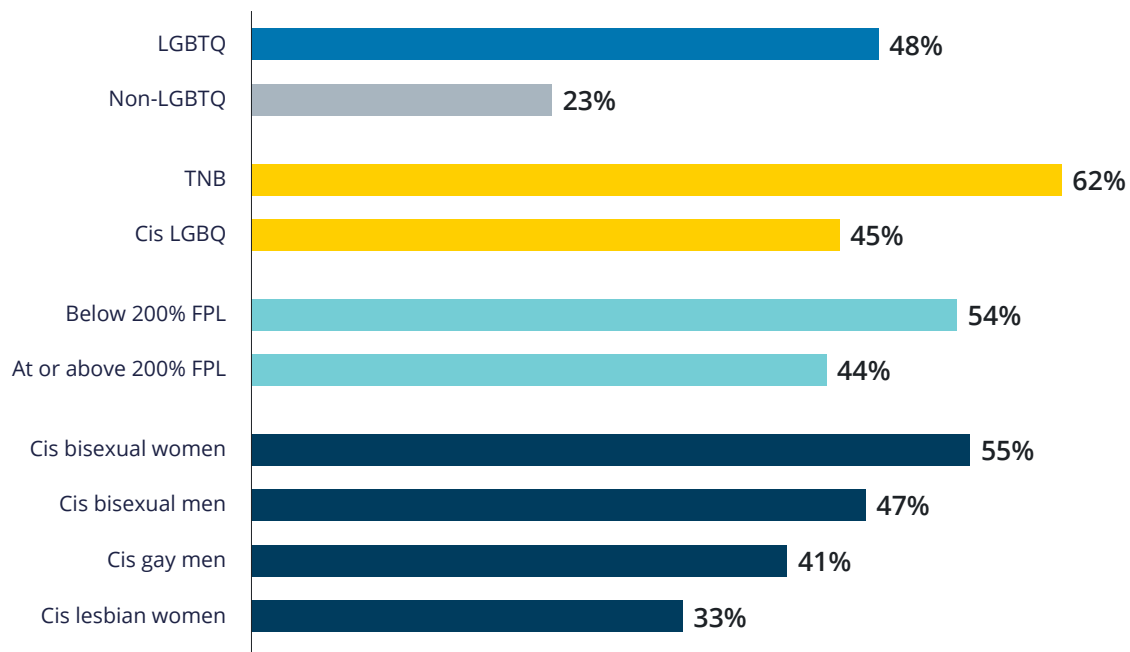
— Cisgender gay White man in his 50s

## Loneliness

In addition to not being out to family and friends, LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County are less likely to be married or to have a partner or children. For many, this means living alone and feeling a sense of loneliness. LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County are more likely to live alone than non-LGBTQ adults (29% vs. 16%).

Based on the UCLA Loneliness Scale,<sup>17</sup> 48% of LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County were lonely, compared with 23% of non-LGBTQ adults. More transgender and nonbinary adults were lonely than cisgender LGBTQ adults (62% vs. 45%), and more LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were lonely compared to those with higher household incomes (54% vs. 44%). Further, more cisgender bisexual women were lonely (55%) than cisgender lesbians (33%), although the level of loneliness of cisgender bisexual women was similar to levels for cisgender bisexual (47%) and gay men (41%).

**Figure 18. Loneliness as measured using the UCLA Loneliness Scale, by LGBTQ status, gender identity, economic status, and sexual orientation, LACHS, 2023**



In terms of getting the emotional support they needed, fewer LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County felt they always or usually received the support they needed (52% vs. 65%). Within the LGBTQ community, LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL feel they always or usually get the support they need compared to those with higher incomes (39% v. 59%).

<sup>17</sup> One of the most widely used assessments for loneliness among adults is the UCLA Loneliness Scale. This measure asks 20 questions that focus primarily on people's evaluations of their social networks (e.g., "How often do you feel part of a group of friends?" and "How often do you feel that there are people who really understand you?") Studies show that adults who have higher scores on the UCLA Loneliness Scale tend to have more challenges related to friendships and romantic relationships, health, well-being, and economic stability. [UCLA Loneliness Scale \(Version 3\) | SPARQtools](#).

Figure 19. LGBTQ adults who feel they always or usually get the social and emotional support they need, by LGBTQ status and economic status, LACHS, 2023



When asked about their biggest source of worry or concern, 3% of respondents provided answers related to “being alone” or “loneliness.” These concerns included:

*Never finding and love and being alone the rest of my life.*

— Cisgender bisexual Latina in her 20s

*[I] work too much, lonely and getting older, isolation.*

— Cisgender gay White man in his 50s

*Being too isolated and not being able to make new friends. Lack of purpose.*

— Cisgender gay White man in his 70s

*Dying alone.*

— Cisgender Black lesbian in her 60s

## Aging

For some LGBTQ adults, issues related to being alone are grounded in concerns about aging, including being alone when older, declining health, and financial insecurity. Thirty percent of LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles are 50 years of age or older. Consistent with data about older LGBTQ adults in California,<sup>18</sup> LGBTQ adults 50 or older in L.A. County are twice as likely to live alone as non-LGBTQ adults in the same age group (43% vs. 21%). Among LGBTQ adults in the county who were 50 years of age or older, 42% were lonely and 20% reported not getting the social and emotional support they needed.

<sup>18</sup> “LGB older adults were more likely to have never married, and to live alone, than their straight counterparts. In the age group 50–64, 30.6% of LGB adults lived alone compared with 13.6% of straight adults. Among the age group 65 and older, 39.8% of LGB adults lived alone compared with 26.2% of straight adults.” Choi, S.K, Kittle, K., & Meyer, I. H. (2018, August). Aging LGB Adults in California: Findings from the 2015–2016 California Health Interview Survey. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law.

When survey respondents were asked about their biggest source of worry, 4% specifically referenced aging. Their concerns included:

*My financial future, specifically being able to afford a home and retirement.*

— Cisgender Asian lesbian in her 20s

*[The] cost of health care and assistance after retirement.*

— Cisgender gay Asian man in his 60s

*Finances, HIV, depression, and additional age-related health issues.*

— Cisgender gay Black man in his 50s

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide support for LGBTQ adults who are not out to friends and family members.

- In particular, provide mental health services and community and peer support for LGBTQ people of color and cisgender bisexual men and women who are not out to their friends and families.
- Develop support programs and social activities for LGBTQ adults who may not be connected to their families.

Ensure that programs and services that support caregivers are welcoming and responsive to the needs of LGBTQ caregivers.

- Expand paid family leave benefits for adults who are caring for seriously ill chosen or extended family members.<sup>19</sup>

Provide support for LGBTQ adults who may live alone, feel lonely, or lack the emotional and social support they need.

- Support mental health services, community programs and social activities, and peer support groups for LGBTQ adults, in particular LGBTQ adults of color and LGBTQ adults with low incomes.
- Routinely assess loneliness among older LGBTQ adults.

Support older LGBTQ adults.

- Ensure housing and financial support for LGBTQ adults who are aging.
- Provide mental health services, community programs and events, and peer support for LGBTQ adults who are aging, in particular those who may be living alone or may not have a network of support through friends and family.

<sup>19</sup> The California Family Rights Act provides protected job leave for all eligible employees who are caring for new children (by birth, adoption, or foster care placement) or immediate family members who have serious health conditions. California Paid Family Leave offers partial wage replacement benefits to eligible employees. Employment Development Department, State of California. (2024, Feb.) California Paid Family Leave: Helping Californians Be There for the Moments That Matter. Employment Development Department, State of California. [https://edd.ca.gov/siteassets/files/pdf\\_pub\\_ctr/de8520](https://edd.ca.gov/siteassets/files/pdf_pub_ctr/de8520). Paid family leave: eligibility: care for designated persons, Cal. Assemb. B. 518 (2023-2024) (Cal. Sta. 2023) .[https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=202320240AB518](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240AB518).

## PARENTING AND FAMILY FORMATION

### KEY FINDINGS

- Nearly one in five LGBTQ adults (18%) in Los Angeles County is a parent.
- A majority (62%) of LGBTQ residents in the county under the age of 50 would like to have a child or expand their families.
  - Most are considering a variety of strategies to do so, including Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART)—such as using donor sperm, IVF, and surrogacy—and adoption.
- Cost was identified as a barrier by 61% of LGBTQ adults who would like to use ART to have a child and by 50% of those who would like to adopt or to foster a child.
- LGBTQ respondents who have or want children asked that elected officials do the following to support LGBTQ people in having and raising children:
  - address costs associated with family formation and child-rearing (26%)
  - ensure legal protections and equality for LGBTQ people (22%)
  - promote awareness about LGBTQ families to reduce prejudice (21%)
  - increase support for adoption and foster care by LGBTQ people (19%)

### Parenting

Almost one in five LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County said they were a parent (See [Supplemental Tables](#)). Of these parents, 41% had a child under the age of 18 in the household, and the remainder had adult children. LGBTQ adults had become parents through a variety of pathways: biological children (80%), stepchildren (24%), and adopted children and foster children (15%).<sup>20</sup>

### Family Formation

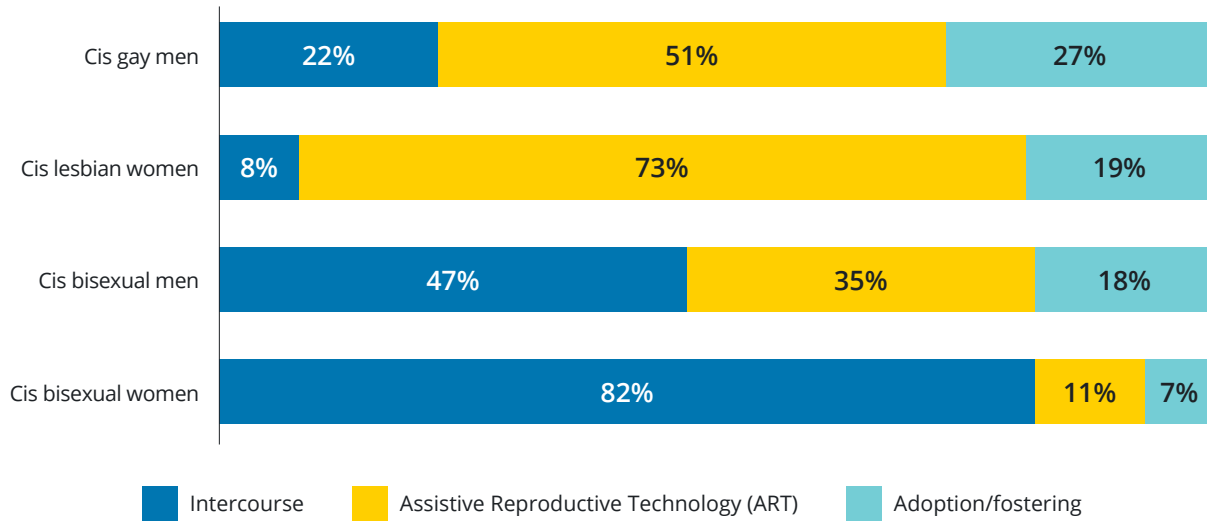
Consistent with national research, interest in family building among LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County is high.<sup>21</sup> A majority (62%) of LGBTQ adults under the age of 50 said they wanted to have children, including some who already had at least one child. Among those who wanted a child, most were considering multiple strategies to create or expand their families. Specifically, 61% were considering adoption, 53% were considering intercourse (defined as having sperm and egg and uterus available and not needing assistance with insemination), and 48% were considering ART. In this study,

<sup>20</sup> Total exceeds 100% because people may have more than one type of child (i.e., biological and stepchildren, or biological and adopted or fostered). The terms used in the LELAC survey are consistent with the terminology used by the U.S. Census Bureau to describe U.S. families. Measurement research may be valuable in understanding how different types of parents report their relationships to their children. For instance, an adopted child may have no biological relationship to either adoptive parent; they may have been adopted by a second, intended nonbiological parent for establishment of legal parentage, and have a biological relationship with one birthparent; or they may have been adopted by a stepparent who became a parent through marriage.

<sup>21</sup> Harris, E., & Hopping-Winn, A. (2019). LGBTQ Family Building Survey. Family Equality Council. New York: NY. [www.familyequality.org/fbs2018](http://www.familyequality.org/fbs2018)

ART was defined as including in vitro fertilization (IVF) and surrogacy and as needing one or more of the following: sperm, egg, uterus, or assistance with insemination.<sup>22</sup> Another 29% of LGBTQ adults in the county were considering fostering a child.

**Figure 20. Method would like to use to have a child among cisgender LGBQ adults considering building or expanding their families, by sexual orientation, LELAC**



Study participants were asked to select the one method that they would most like to use to build or expand their families. Responses varied among cisgender adults by sexual orientation and gender, as expected, given the relative ease and cost associated with various methods available to prospective parents. Among cisgender adults, more than half of gay men (51%) and lesbians (73%) selected ART, as did 35% of bisexual men. Many cisgender bisexual women (82%) and men (47%) indicated that they would like to have a child through intercourse. Transgender adults reported interest in a variety of strategies for having children; however, due to sample size limitations, specific percentages are not reported here.

Close to one in five cisgender LGBQ adults indicated that they would prefer to adopt or foster a child over other methods to build or expand their family, including 27% of gay men, 19% of lesbians, 18% of bisexual men, and 7% of bisexual women. Prior research found that 26% of male same-sex couples raising children in the U.S. have adopted children and 5% have a foster child.<sup>23</sup> Among female same-sex couples raising children, 20% have adopted children and 2% have a foster child.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup> To simplify the question-and-response process, we listed insemination as an assisted reproductive technology; however, the term “medically assisted reproduction” is preferred by the American Society for Reproductive Medicine to describe assistance with insemination. Zegers-Hochschild, F., Adamson, G. D., Dyer, S., Racowsky, C., de Mouzon, J., Sokol, R., . . . van der Poel, S. (2017). The International Glossary on Infertility and Fertility Care, 2017. *Hum Reprod*, 32(9), 1786-1801. doi:10.1093/humrep/dex234

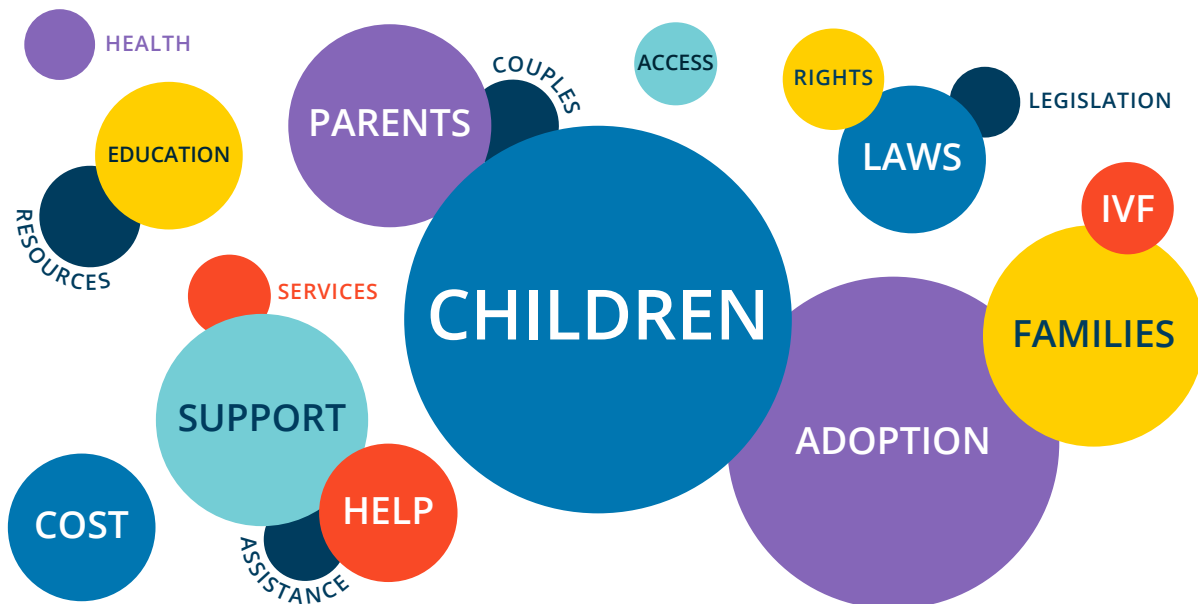
<sup>23</sup> Goldberg, S.K. & Conron, K.J. (2018). How Many Same-Sex Couples in the U.S. Are Raising Children? The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

For preferred type of family-building strategy, 43% of cisgender adults who would like to have a child through intercourse indicated that it was very likely they would have a child this way, compared to 26% who said they would like to use ART to build or expand their family, and 9% who said they would like to adopt or foster a child.<sup>25</sup> Among LGBTQ adults who indicated that they would like to have a child through intercourse, not having a partner was a barrier for 28%, and fertility problems were a barrier for 14%. Among LGBTQ adults who would like to use ART to have a child, 61% identified cost as a barrier, not having a partner was a barrier for 17%, and lacking a needed element (egg, sperm, or uterus) was a barrier for 16%. Among those who would like to adopt or foster a child, cost was a barrier for 50%, and not having a partner was a barrier for 43%.

## Support for LGBTQ Families

Figure 21. Word cloud representing responses of LGBTQ adults who have or want children to the question, “What, if anything, should elected officials do to support LGBTQ adults in having and raising children?”, LELAC



Survey respondents were asked, “What, if anything, should elected officials do to support LGBTQ people in having and raising children?” We sorted the 434 respondents who answered this question<sup>26</sup> into two groups—people who have or want children ( $n = 219$ ), and the remainder ( $n = 215$ ), who do not have children and do not wish to—to explore the possibility that each group might have different types of recommendations. Four common themes emerged across the groups: (1) financial assistance and resources, (2) legal protections and equality, (3) education and awareness, and (4) support for adoption and foster care. Yet the frequency of themes varied between groups. The responses of those who are parenting or who wish to be parents are presented in this report.

<sup>25</sup> Percentages do not total to 100. Participants were asked about the likelihood that they will have a child through the specific method that they would most like to use to create or expand their family. Responses are reported by method selected.

<sup>26</sup> A total of 486 participants were asked this question, of which 434 provided usable responses. Unusable responses such as don’t know, not applicable, blanks, and not sure were excluded from analyses.

Among LGBTQ respondents who have or want children, more than a quarter (26%) asked elected officials to address financial barriers to family formation and costs associated with child-rearing, 22% asked officials to ensure legal protections and equality for LGBTQ people, 21% asked elected leaders to promote education and awareness about LGBTQ families and reducing prejudice toward LGBTQ people, and 19% recommended increasing support for adoption and foster care by LGBTQ people.

**Figure 22. Responses to “What should elected officials do to support LGBTQ adults in having and raising children?” among adults who have or want children, LELAC**



## Financial resources

A number of recommendations provided by respondents focused specifically on financial resources. Recommendations related to financial assistance and resources included providing support for family building, reducing the cost of living in Los Angeles County, and supporting parental leave. Specific suggestions related to lowering out-of-pocket costs for family building and ART included providing financial support (grants, tax credits, subsidies, and loans), increasing coverage by health insurers, and regulating the price of services.

*Help fund reproductive services. The biggest thing keeping us from [forming] a family is the cost associated with it.*

— Cisgender White lesbian in her 30s

*Pay for ART.*

— Nonbinary bisexual Black person in their 40s

*Most health plans do not provide assisted reproductive technology assistance to LGBTQ people, only straight people (I know because I spent a year arguing for this at my company.)*

— Cisgender gay White man in his 50s

Some responses focused more generally on the high cost of living in Los Angeles County and the need to support parents through parental leave and help with childcare and education costs.

*I'm lucky to have my own uterus, and it's still a huge expense. I'm not sure what elected officials can do about that—it's sort of just expensive to live in L.A., in general, so living here probably doesn't help with saving up for IUI or IVF.*

— Cisgender White lesbian in her 40s



*Parental leave laws. Child care assistance.*

— Cisgender bisexual Latina in her 20s

*Reduce aftercare [child care] costs, [provide] cheap credits for education.*

— Cisgender gay Latino in his 30s

## Legal Protections and Equality

Recommendations related to legal protections and equality were expansive and included passing and strengthening laws related to adoption and surrogacy, protections against bullying for LGBTQ youth and children of LGBTQ parents, and general legal protections. Some adults mentioned specific types of laws that that would enable them to care for a family in the future (such as access to ID change and non-discrimination protections).

*Elected officials should ensure equal access, equal support to all forms of families.*

— Cisgender gay Latino in his 30s

*Make sure supportive parents don't have to worry about their kids being taken away.*

— Nonbinary queer White young adult

*There should be more laws in place to make it easier for LGBTQ parents to have legal protections without having to jump through extra hoops like second-parent adoptions.*

— Cisgender bisexual White woman in her 30s

*In my own case, recent [2014] laws enabling me to secure a gender-affirming ID, passport, and birth certificate have been invaluable in gaining employment and participating relatively fully in society. ... That's to say, this is critical to help me support myself at a level that I might also be able to support a child.*

— Transgender White lesbian in her 30s

## Education and Awareness

Recommendations related to education and awareness were focused on communicating that LGBTQ families are as much a part of our communities as non-LGBTQ families and on helping the public understand that LGBTQ people are not a danger to children. Specific requests focused on public education campaigns and school policies as vehicles for communicating these messages. Several respondents specifically mentioned supporting diversity in school curricula.

*Create public awareness that it doesn't have to be a male and female household for it to be the norm. That it is more about the love and care in a home and not the gender.*

— Nonbinary queer Asian person in their 50s

*Make it known to all that they [government officials] support the LGBTQ community. That we are not pedophiles, and explain the differences to those that don't know the difference. Help adults understand that the LGBTQ [community] can love and help those in bad situations and are like [any] other person wanting to adopt those in need.*

— Cisgender gay White man in his 70s

*Make sure there is diversity in school and children are aware that families can be different.*

— Cisgender bisexual Asian woman in her 30s

## Support for Adoption and Foster Care

Recommendations related to support for adoption and foster care focused on reducing discrimination against would-be LGBTQ parents in these systems and included reducing adoption costs. Several comments also reflected awareness of stereotypes about LGBTQ people related to child safety and to the general fitness of LGBTQ people to be parents.

*Queer couples should have the same rights and access to having, adopting, and raising children. With adoption and/or fostering, [they] should still undergo thorough background checks to ensure the child(ren) will be safe.*

— Cisgender pansexual multiracial woman in her 20s

*Ensure that the adoption/foster agencies judge fairly.*

— Cisgender Black lesbian in her 60s

*Have low/no-interest loans or stipends for help with adoption or reproduction costs.*

— Cisgender gay Latino in his 30s

*Cheaper adoption. I feel like it's only for rich people and out of reach for anyone even remotely low income. It's a much higher barrier than having a "traditional" child through "normal" intercourse.*

— Transgender straight White woman in her 30s

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Expand insurance coverage for ART (including IVF) and fertility preservation for LGBTQ people in large group health plans offered within the state and Medi-Cal.<sup>27</sup>
- Extend these benefits through insurance plans offered to Los Angeles County employees and low-income residents, following the city of San Francisco’s initiative to cover gender-affirming care.<sup>28</sup>
- Develop a state tax credit for family formation costs beyond adoption, including all costs associated with surrogacy.
- Encourage employers to offer family formation benefits that include surrogacy, as well as out-of-pocket expenses for other forms of ART, and adoption costs.<sup>29</sup>
- Educate LGBTQ people about adoption and fostering access, costs, and resources through the California Department of Social Services, including the state child adoption tax credit.<sup>30</sup>
- Educate LGBTQ people about family-building options and fertility resources.
- Include representation of LGBTQ families in all public information campaigns that feature families to reduce stigma and bias toward LGBTQ people in the state.
- Include LGBTQ families in school curricula and classroom conversations. Make sure LGBTQ children and LGBTQ parents feel welcome and included at school.

<sup>27</sup> Health care coverage: treatment for infertility and fertility services. Cal. S. B. 729 (2023–2024). [https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=202320240SB729](https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240SB729); California Health Benefits Review Program (CHBRP). (2023). *Abbreviated Analysis: California Senate Bill 729: Treatment for Infertility and Fertility Services*. CHBRP: Berkeley, CA. <https://www.chbrp.org/sites/default/files/bill-documents/SB729/SB%20729%20Infertility%20Abbreviated%20Analysis%20Final.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> San Francisco Health Plan. (2024, Feb. 29). *Access Gender Affirming Care*. <https://www.sfhp.org/news/health-and-wellness/access-gender-affirming-care/>

<sup>29</sup> Hatch Fertility. (n.d.). *The Best Companies for Surrogacy Benefits in 2024*. Hatch. Retrieved May 5, 2024, from <https://www.hatch.us/en/blog/best-companies-offering-surrogacy-benefits>; Starbucks Coffee Company. (2024). *Benefits and Perks*. <https://careers.starbucks.com/benefits/health-and-wellbeing/> See Parental Leave Family Expansion Reimbursement

<sup>30</sup> *California foster care and adoption guidelines*. (n.d.). AdoptUSKids. Retrieved May 5, 2024, from <https://www.adoptuskids.org/adoption-and-foster-care/how-to-adopt-and-foster/state-information/california>; *California Department of Social Services*. (2024). *Frequently Asked Questions About Adoption*. <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/adoptions>; State of California Franchise Tax Board. (2024, Jan. 25). Child adoption costs credit. <https://www.ftb.ca.gov/file/personal/credits/child-adoption-costs-credit.html>

## COMMUNITY SAFETY: LOCAL NEIGHBORHOODS AND LGBTQ COMMUNITIES

### KEY FINDINGS

LGBTQ people reported safety concerns in their own neighborhoods and while visiting LGBTQ events or businesses.

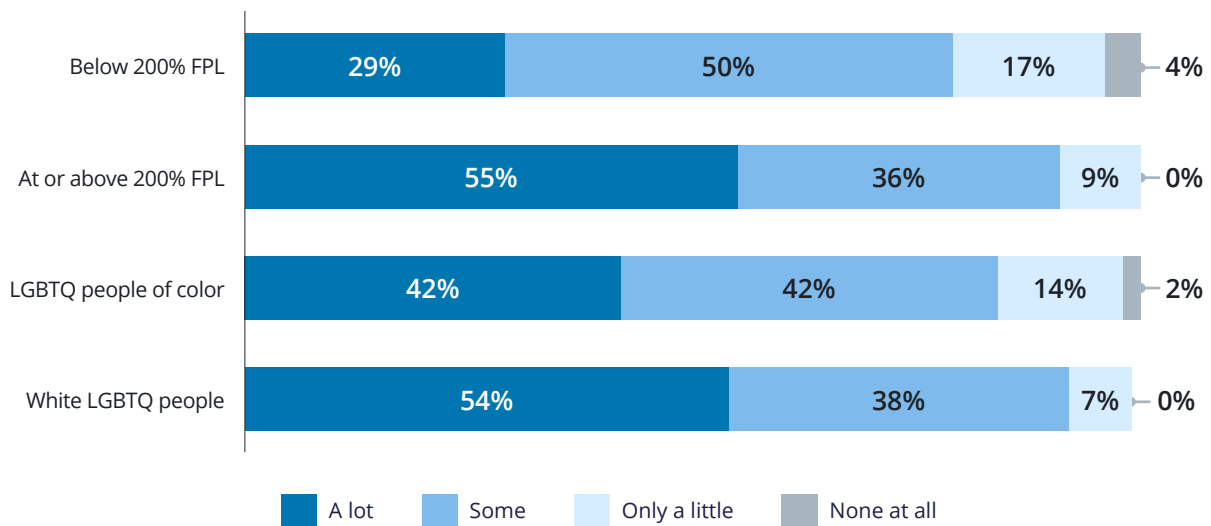
- Only 46% of LGBTQ adults felt there was a lot of social acceptance for LGBTQ people in the neighborhood where they lived.
  - Fewer LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL than those with higher household incomes felt that there was a lot of social acceptance for LGBTQ people in their neighborhood (29% vs. 55%).
  - Fewer LGBTQ people of color than White LGBTQ adults felt that there was a lot of social acceptance in their neighborhood (42% vs. 54%).
- Almost 30% of LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles (29%) reported feeling safe none or just some of the time in their neighborhoods.
  - LGBTQ people of color were more than twice as likely to not feel safe in their neighborhood any of the time or only some of the time compared to White LGBTQ adults (37% vs. 15%).
  - Those living below 200% FPL were also twice as likely to not feel safe in their neighborhoods compared to those with higher household incomes (42% vs. 22%).
- About one-fourth of LGBTQ adults (23%) reported that they had been verbally harassed by strangers while attending an LGBTQ event or visiting an LGBTQ establishment. Most of these experiences (16%) had occurred within the past five years.
  - More than one-third of cisgender lesbians (35%) and one-quarter of cisgender gay (25%) and bisexual men (25%) reported having experienced verbal harassment while attending an LGBTQ event or visiting an LGBTQ business, compared to only 8% of cisgender bisexual women.
- Fifteen percent of LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County reported avoiding going to LGBTQ bars, nightclubs, or events, including Pride festivals, and 6% said they avoided going to other LGBTQ organizations or businesses, including LGBTQ bookstores, in order to avoid being assaulted or attacked because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
  - Transgender and nonbinary adults were more likely than cisgender LGBTQ adults to have avoided LGBTQ bars or events (27% vs. 13%) and other LGBTQ organizations or businesses (14% vs. 5%) in the past year out of safety concerns.
  - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were more likely than those with higher household incomes to have avoided LGBTQ bars and events (20% vs. 12%) and other LGBTQ organizations or businesses (10% vs. 3%) in the past year out of safety concerns.

- More than one-third of LGBTQ people of color (38%) reported being treated unfairly or poorly as a person of color while living in Los Angeles County. Thirteen percent of these instances involved racism within LGBTQ communities.

### Neighborhood Social Acceptance

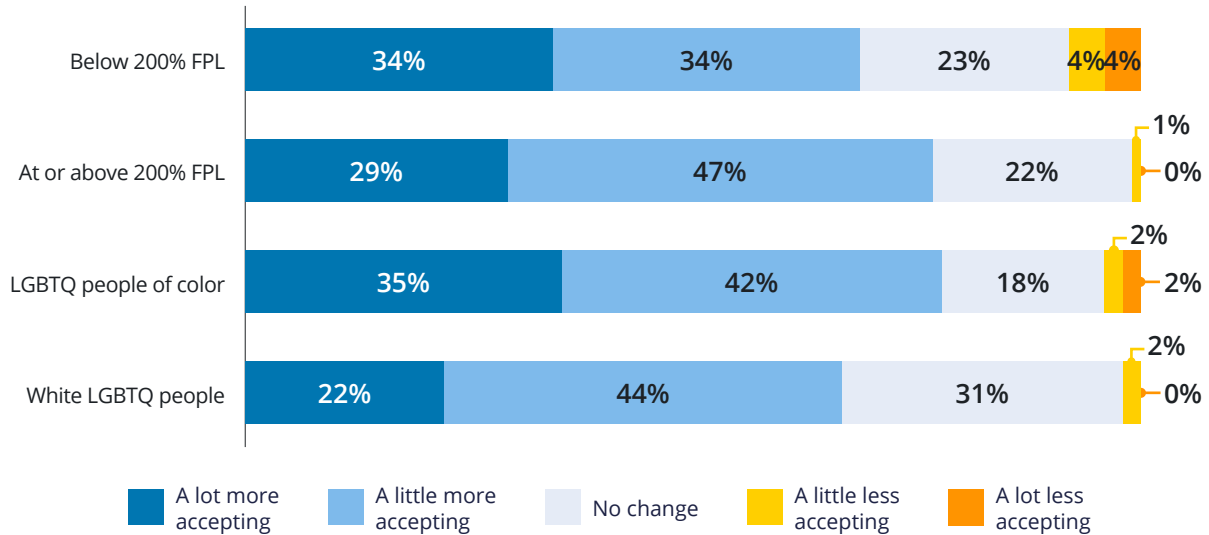
Only 46% of LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County felt there was a lot of social acceptance in their neighborhood, while 13% felt there was little (12%) or no (1%) social acceptance in their neighborhood. LGBTQ people of color and LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL reported feeling less acceptance in their neighborhoods than did White LGBTQ adults and those with higher incomes. Fewer than one-third of LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL (29%) felt that there was a lot of social acceptance for LGBTQ people in their neighborhood, compared to more than half of those with higher household incomes (55%). Only 42% of LGBTQ people of color felt that there was a lot of social acceptance in their neighborhood, compared to 54% of White LGBTQ adults.

**Figure 23. Perceptions of LGBTQ social acceptance in neighborhood, by economic status and race/ethnicity, LELAC**



In terms of whether social acceptance of LGBTQ people has improved over the past decade, most LGBTQ adults felt that their neighborhood had become a little or a lot more accepting over the past decade. LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL (68%) were less likely than those with higher household incomes (76%) to feel that social acceptance had improved in their neighborhood over the past decade. LGBTQ people of color (77%) were more likely than White LGBTQ adults (66%) to feel that social acceptance in their neighborhood had improved over the past decade.

**Figure 24. Perceptions of whether LGBTQ social acceptance has improved over the past decade at the neighborhood level among adults who had lived in their neighborhood for at least the past decade, by economic status and race/ethnicity, LELAC**

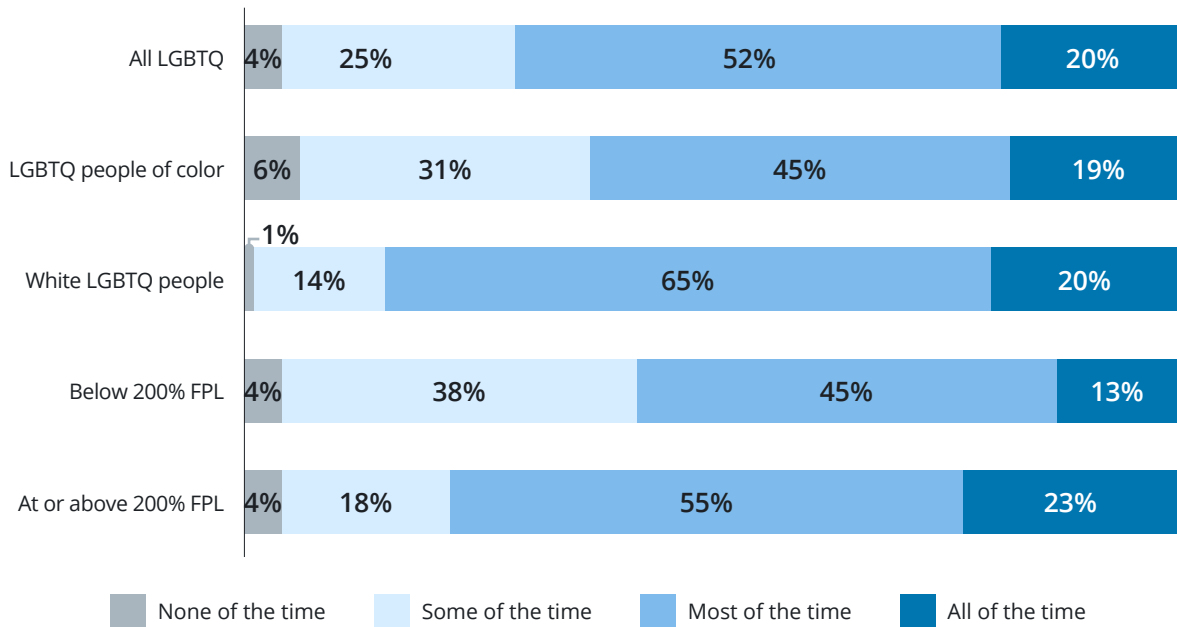


### Neighborhood Safety

Similar percentages of LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ adults said that they did not feel safe (27% vs. 25%) in their neighborhoods. Cisgender bisexual women (34%) and lesbians (29%) were more likely to report feeling unsafe in their neighborhood than cisgender gay men (26%) and bisexual men (19%). Similarly, LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were more likely to feel unsafe in their neighborhood than those with higher household incomes (37% vs. 22%).

However, when asked if they felt safe in their neighborhood all, most, some, or none of the time, only one in five LGBTQ adults (20%) said they felt safe all of the time in their neighborhood and 52% felt safe most of the time. Twenty-five percent reported feeling safe just some of the time and 4% reported feeling safe none of the time in their neighborhoods. More than one-third (37%) of LGBTQ people of color reported that they do not feel safe in their neighborhood any of the time or only some of the time, compared to 15% of White LGBTQ adults. While 42% of LGBTQ adults with incomes below 200% FPL did not feel safe any of the time or only some of the time in their neighborhood, only 22% of those with higher household incomes felt similarly.

Figure 25. How often LGBTQ adults felt safe in their neighborhood, all adults and by race/ethnicity and economic status, LELAC



### Experiences Within LGBTQ Communities and Spaces

Some LGBTQ adults reported having been verbally harassed when attending LGBTQ events, such as Pride parades, or going to LGBTQ businesses or entertainment destinations in Los Angeles County. They also reported avoiding LGBTQ businesses and events out of concerns for their safety.

Almost one in four LGBTQ adults (23%) reported having been verbally harassed by strangers while attending an LGBTQ event (like a Pride parade or a festival) or visiting an LGBTQ organization, community center, theater, restaurant, or business in Los Angeles County. Most of these experiences (16%) had occurred within the past five years.

*I was shot with a paintball gun out of a moving car during Pride Month, walking out of a gay bar on Sunset Ave. at night. My girlfriend and I ... were holding hands.*

— Cisgender bisexual Latina in her 30s

*My friends and I were accosted while walking to a community event. Our gender expression and race, along with our confidence in a familiar environment, meant our guard was down. We were verbally harassed, asked if we were lesbians, if we were a couple. I felt angry, and also trapped because we were in public. ... This incident made me feel I couldn't relax even in a community I belonged to.*

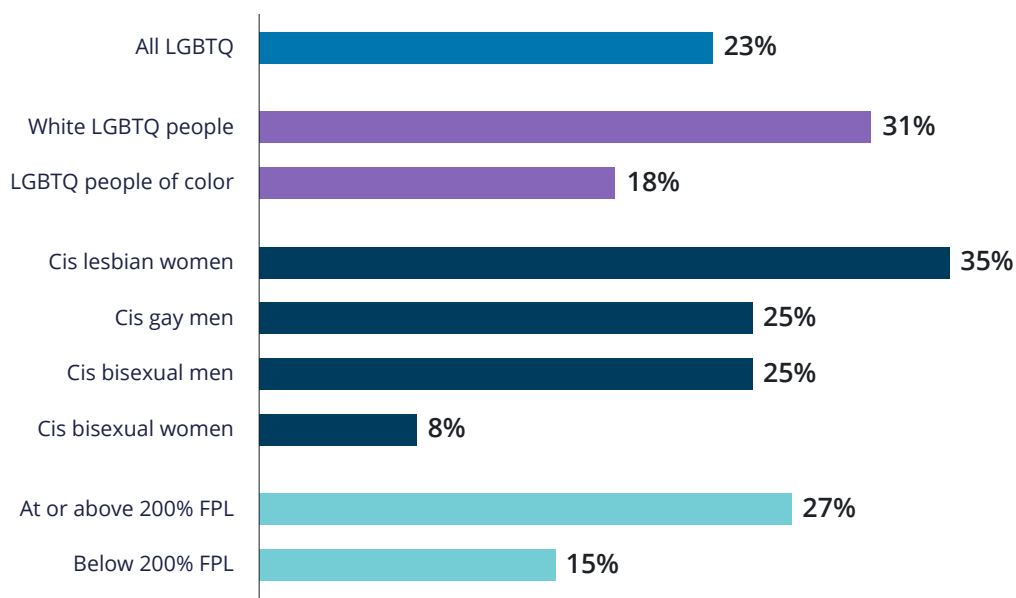
— Nonbinary queer Asian person in their 40s

*I've been harassed and verbally abused as a Black woman while attending L.A. Pride.*

— Cisgender bisexual Black woman in her 40s

More than one-third of cisgender lesbians (35%) and one-quarter of cisgender gay (25%) and bisexual (25%) men reported experiencing verbal harassment while attending an LGBTQ event or visiting an LGBTQ business, compared to only 8% of cisgender bisexual women. LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were less likely to report verbal harassment while attending an LGBTQ event or visiting an LGBTQ business than those with higher household incomes (15% vs. 27%). LGBTQ adults of color were also less likely to report such harassment than White LGBTQ adults (18% vs. 31%). These differences may reflect who attends LGBTQ events or businesses. For example, if fewer LGBTQ adults of color attend LGBTQ events, they would be less likely to experience such harassment.

**Figure 26. Experiences of verbal harassment at LGBTQ businesses or events in Los Angeles County because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, all adults and by race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and economic status, LELAC**



## Avoiding LGBTQ Spaces for Safety Concerns

Events intended for the LGBTQ community in many areas of the country have been subject to violent threats. In 2024, the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security issued a warning that terrorist organizations may target LGBTQ events, and in particular Pride Month events.<sup>31</sup> Further, between the period of early 2022 to April 2023, GLAAD identified 166 events at public accommodations that featured drag performance artists which were subject to protest and, in many cases, threats of violence.<sup>32</sup>

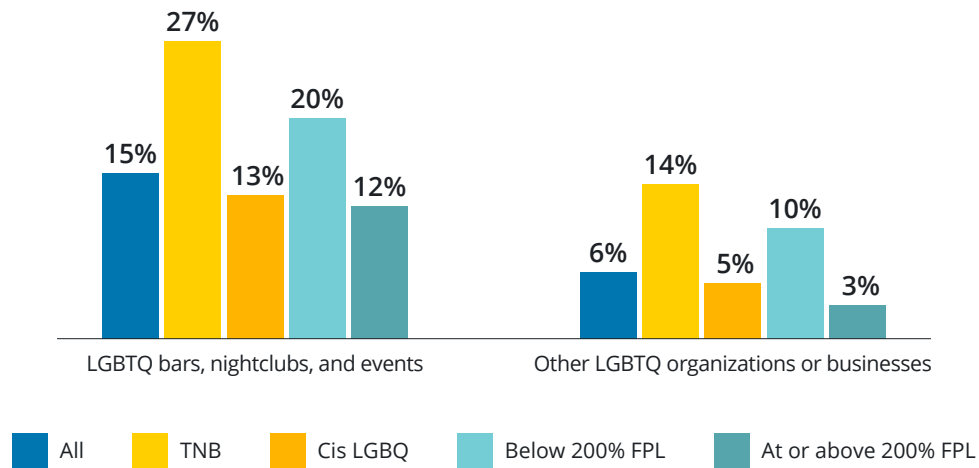
<sup>31</sup> Santana, R. (2024, May 14). Federal Agencies Warn of Possible Threats to LGBTQ Events, Including Pride Month Activities. PBS. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/federal-agencies-warn-of-possible-threats-to-lgbtq-events-including-pride-month-activities>.

<sup>32</sup> GLAAD. (2023, Apr. 25) Updated Report: Drag Events Faced More than 160 Protests and Significant Threats Since Early 2022. GLAAD. <https://glaad.org/anti-drag-report/>; See also, James Factora, J. (2023, Sept. 25). This Weekend Alone, Three LGBTQ+ Events in the U.S. Received Bomb Threats. Them. <https://www.them.us/story/three-lgbtq-events-in-the-us-bomb-threats-brooklyn-new-haven-salt-lake-city>.



LGBTQ people in Los Angeles County reported avoiding LGBTQ spaces out of concerns for their safety. Fifteen percent of LGBTQ adults reported avoiding going to LGBTQ bars, nightclubs, or events, including Pride festivals, and 6% avoided going to other LGBTQ organizations or businesses, including LGBTQ bookstores, in order to avoid being assaulted or attacked because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Compared to cisgender LGBQ adults, transgender and nonbinary adults were more likely to report that they had avoided LGBTQ bars or events (27% vs. 13%) and other LGBTQ organizations or businesses (14% vs. 5%) in the past year out of safety concerns. In addition, compared to LGBTQ adults living at or above 200% FPL, those with lower household incomes were more likely to have avoided LGBTQ bars and events (20% vs. 12%) and other LGBTQ organizations or businesses (10% vs. 3%) in the past year out of safety concerns.

Figure 27. LGBTQ adults who avoided LGBTQ spaces to avoid being attacked or assaulted because of their sexual orientation or gender identity in the past year, all adults and by gender identity and economic status, LELAC



When asked about their biggest concerns and their recommendations for local elected officials, a number of LGBTQ respondents mentioned community safety concerns:

*Political instability, violence, and hate crimes.*  
 — Nonbinary sexual minority Latinx person in their 20s

*We need more protection and security at LGBTQ public events.*  
 — Cisgender bisexual White man in his 30s

*Provide a safe community for us to live.*  
 — Cisgender Asian lesbian in her 30s

*Create more safe spaces in South L.A. and the Valley.*  
 — Cisgender gay Latino man in his 20s

## Racism Within the LGBTQ Community

LGBTQ people of color who took the survey were asked about their experiences of racism in Los Angeles County. Overall, 38% of LGBTQ people of color reported having been treated unfairly or poorly as a person of color while living in Los Angeles County. Eighty-two LGBTQ people of color responded to an open-ended question asking them to share an experience of racism that had occurred in the county, whether it involved their LGBTQ identity or not. Notably, 13% of these responses involved racism experienced within the LGBTQ community. Here are a few examples of those experiences:

*Well, I was surprised [the racism] came from the LGBTQ community—back in the '70s, we couldn't get in gay clubs.*

— **Cisgender Black lesbian in her 60s**

*I've been called a spic or a wetback by White adults in the community.*

— **Transgender straight Latina in her 20s**

*Within my own LGBTQ community, I have experienced racism. Anything from reading “No fats, femmes, or Asians” in dating advertisements to being given nicknames such as “Eggroll,” I have been marginalized in my own marginalized community ... It does make me feel lonely.*

— **Cisgender gay Asian man in his 40s**

*White LGBTQ and white straight people simultaneously place barriers on gay bodies of color. We used to have Silver Lake, and now it's no longer the lesbian mecca, but instead a place for white hipsters. Where is the space for gay bodies of color in L.A.?*

— **Cisgender heteroflexible Asian woman in her 30s**

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Below are recommendations that are in addition to those provided in the section related to public accommodations, public spaces, and safety:

- Improve community safety for LGBTQ people throughout the county, but in particular for LGBTQ neighborhoods and community businesses and events.
- Help to increase the number and capacity of LGBTQ spaces and centers, particularly in South Los Angeles, the San Fernando Valley, and other areas outside of West Hollywood and Hollywood.
- Support LGBTQ-owned businesses and venues.
- Make community-based resources available for LGBTQ people.
- Dedicate adequate resources to protecting people who visit LGBTQ entertainment and nightlife venues and who attend LGBTQ community events such as Pride.
- Enforce laws that prohibit discrimination and hate crimes on the basis of race, ethnicity, and gender identity against LGBTQ businesses and venues.
- Provide community-specific resources, trainings, and public education campaigns to combat racism, discrimination on the basis of gender identity, and other forms of discrimination within LGBTQ communities.

## RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL COMMUNITIES

### KEY FINDINGS

- More than two-thirds of LGBTQ adults (69%) in Los Angeles County identified as being spiritual or religious.
- Forty-two percent said that religion is somewhat or very important in their lives, and more than a quarter (27%) said they attend religious services at least a few times a year.
  - LGBTQ adults of color (23%) were more likely to say that religion is very important in their lives compared to White LGBTQ adults (9%).
  - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL (50%) were more likely than those with higher incomes (40%) to attend religious services at least once a year.
- Almost half of LGBTQ adults (48%) said that they had a community with whom they attended religious services or participated in spiritual practices.
  - LGBTQ people of color were more likely than White LGBTQ adults to have such a community (52% vs. 42%).
  - Cisgender bisexual men (75%) were more likely to have such a community than cisgender bisexual women (60%), lesbians (54%), and gay men (37%).
- However, of those with religious and spiritual communities, nearly half of LGBTQ adults (48%) were not out to any of the people with whom they attend religious services or spiritual practices. More than a third of White LGBTQ adults (36%) and more than half of LGBTQ people of color (53%) are not out to anyone in their communities. Approximately three-fourths of cisgender bisexual men (73%) and bisexual women (75%) are also not out to anyone in these communities.
- Seven percent of LGBTQ adults reported having been discouraged by a religious or spiritual organization or adviser from pursuing their religion or spirituality because of their LGBTQ status while living in Los Angeles County, including 5% who had had these experiences within the past five years.
  - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL (11%) were twice as likely as those with higher incomes (5%) to say they had been discouraged by a religious or spiritual organization or adviser from pursuing their religion or spirituality because of their LGBTQ status. Seven percent of LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL reported having had these experiences within the past year.
- Some LGBTQ adults had avoided religious services or spiritual practices in the past year to avoid poor treatment (19%) or because of safety concerns (15%) due to their LGBTQ status.

While fewer LGBTQ adults were religious than the overall adult population, many LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County identified as spiritual people or people of faith (69%). More than two-thirds of LGBTQ adults (68%) identified as “a spiritual person” and 14% percent identified as “a religious person” (most people who identified as religious also identified as spiritual).

Forty-two percent of LGBTQ adults stated that religion was somewhat or very important in their life. In contrast, in 2014, 75% of all adults in the Los Angeles metro area reported that religion was very or somewhat important in their life.<sup>33</sup> Some of this difference, however, is likely due to the fact that LGBTQ adults are younger than the general adult population in California, and younger adults are less likely to be religious. Levels of religiosity have also decreased significantly over the past decade.

When asked about their greatest source of joy, several survey respondents mentioned their “church,” religious beliefs, “spirituality,” or practices that can be spiritual, such as yoga and meditation. Examples include:

*My meditation practices.*

— Cisgender gay White man in his 60s

*Church and my family.*

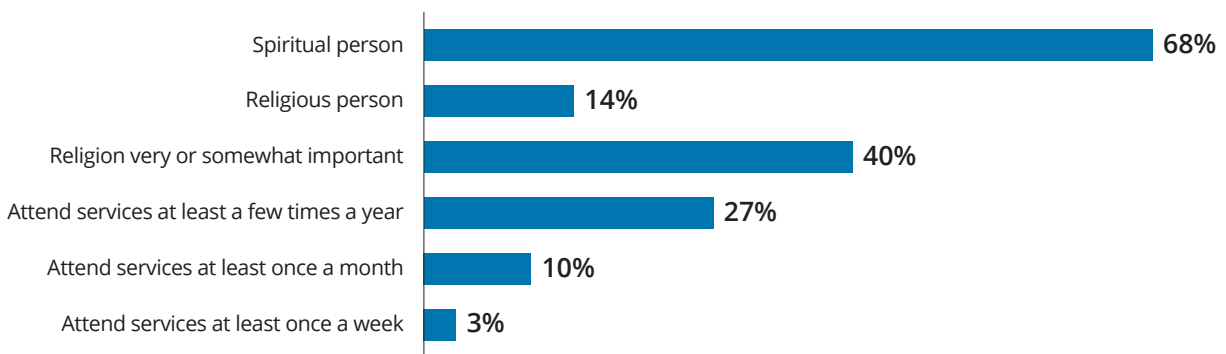
— Cisgender bisexual woman of color in her 30s

*Playing my original music before friends, and faith-based activities.*

— Transgender queer White man in his 30s

In terms of attending religious services, more than a fourth (27%) of LGBTQ adults in L.A. County reported that they attend religious services at least a few times a year, with 10% reporting that they attend services at least once a month. By comparison, recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s Household Pulse Survey indicate that in the Los Angeles metro area, 41% of all adults attend religious services at least a few times a year, with 18% reporting that they attend services at least once a week.<sup>34</sup>

**Figure 28. Religious and spiritual beliefs and practices, LELAC**



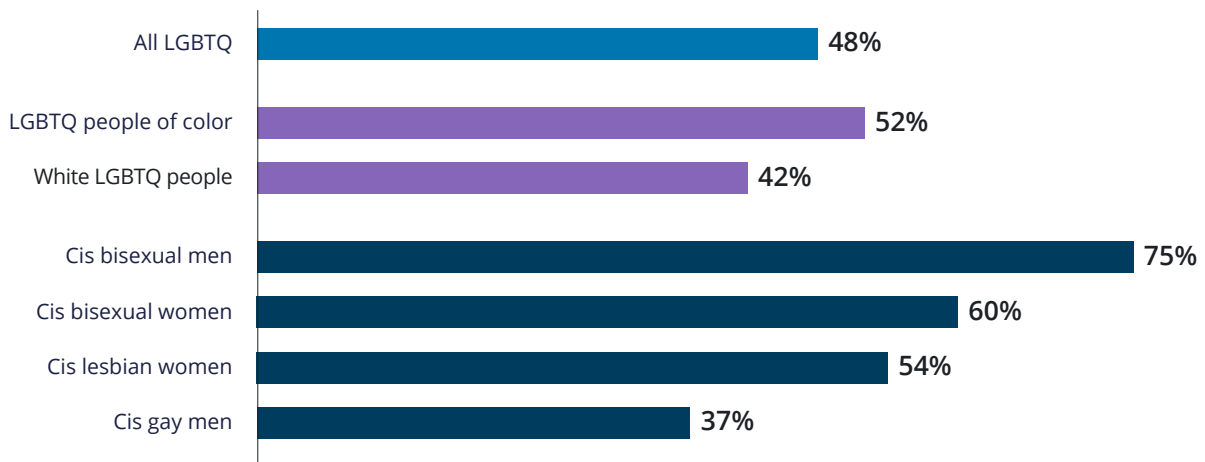
<sup>33</sup> Pew Research Center. (2014). Religious Landscape Study: Adults in the Los Angeles Metro Area. Pew Research. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religious-landscape-study/database/metro-area/los-angeles-metro-area/> (last visited May 1, 2024).

<sup>34</sup> Burge, R. (2024, Mar. 18) Which Cities are the Least Religious?, [graphsaboutreligion.com](https://www.graphsaboutreligion.com/p/which-cities-are-the-least-religious). <https://www.graphsaboutreligion.com/p/which-cities-are-the-least-religious>.

LGBTQ people of color were more than twice as likely as White LGBTQ adults to say religion was very important in their lives (23% vs. 9%). Those living below 200% FPL were more likely to attend religious services at least once a year (50%) compared to those with higher household incomes (40%).

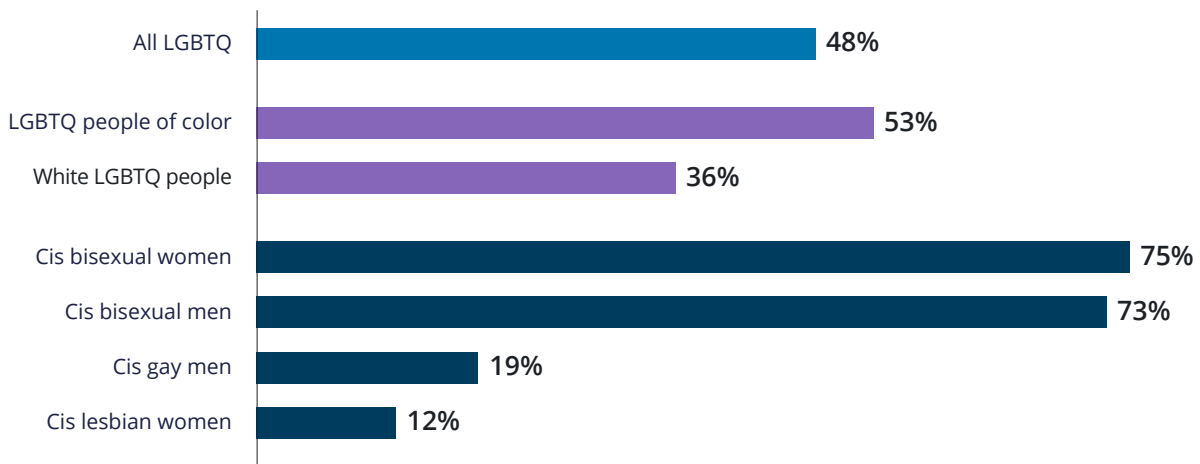
Almost half of LGBTQ adults (48%) said that they had a community with whom they attend religious services or participate in spiritual practices. LGBTQ adults of color were more likely than White LGBTQ adults to feel part of a religious or spiritual community with whom they attend religious services or participate in spiritual practices (52% vs. 42%). About three-fourths of cisgender bisexual men (75%) felt they were part of a religious or spiritual community, compared with 60% of cisgender bisexual women, 54% of lesbians, and 37% of gay men.

**Figure 29. LGBTQ adults who felt that a question about being out to those with whom they attend religious services or spiritual practices was applicable to them, all adults and by race/ethnicity and sexual orientation, LELAC**



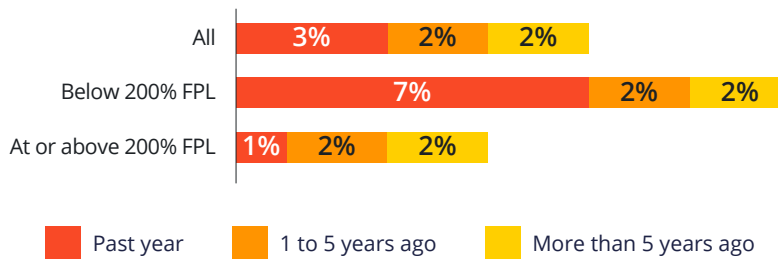
For those who had a religious or spiritual community, nearly half (48%) were not out to any of the people with whom they attend religious services or spiritual practices, and only 31% were out to everyone in those settings. LGBTQ people of color were more likely than White LGBTQ adults to report that they were not out to anyone with whom they attend religious services or spiritual practices (53% vs. 36%). About three-fourths of cisgender bisexual women (75%) and men (73%) were not out to anyone in those communities, compared to 12% of lesbians and 19% of gay men.

**Figure 30. LGBTQ adults not out to any of the people with whom they attend religious services or spiritual practices, all adults and by race/ethnicity and sexual orientation, LELAC**



Seven percent of LGBTQ adults reported having been discouraged by a religious or spiritual organization or adviser from pursuing their religion or spirituality because of their LGBTQ status while living in Los Angeles County. Over 5% of LGBTQ adults reported having had these experiences within the past five years.

**Figure 31. Experiences of being discouraged by a religious or spiritual organization or adviser from pursuing religion or spirituality because of LGBTQ status in Los Angeles County, by most recent experience, all adults and by economic status, LELAC**



LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were more likely than those with higher incomes to have been discouraged by a religious or spiritual organization or adviser from pursuing their religion or spirituality because of their LGBTQ status while living in Los Angeles County (11% vs. 5%). Many of these experiences had occurred in the past year, in particular for those living below 200% FPL (7%).

In the past year, approximately one in five adults (19%) reported not having attended religious services or spiritual practices in order to avoid poor treatment because of their LGBTQ status. Approximately one in six LGBTQ adults (15%) reported having avoided places for religious services or spiritual practices in the past year in order to avoid being assaulted or attacked because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Nongovernmental organizations should support LGBTQ people's access to religious and spiritual communities.

- Provide resources and referrals to LGBTQ people of welcoming and inclusive congregations and practices.
- Provide training and resources to religious and spiritual organizations and leaders to support them in being welcoming, inclusive, and aware of the unique needs of LGBTQ people.
- Support public education campaigns that encourage religious and spiritual organizations and practices to be welcoming of LGBTQ people.
- Support advocacy efforts within religious denominations and spiritual practices to become more inclusive of LGBTQ people.

LGBTQ organizations should resist frames that pit LGBTQ people against people of faith.

- LGBTQ organizations should promote public education messages that recognize that many LGBTQ people are people of faith.
- Ensure that LGBTQ people of faith feel welcomed within LGBTQ organizations and spaces.
- Governmental entities and elected officials should ensure that government programs and services—in particular, those that are for people living below 200% FPL—are not contracted to faith-based organizations that are not welcoming and inclusive of LGBTQ people.
- Enforce non-discrimination laws that prohibit sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination to the extent that these apply to religious and spiritual organizations.
- Enforce grant and contractor provisions that require that programs and services not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, consistent with existing law.
- Survey LGBTQ people about their experiences with all grantees and contractors, including faith-based grantees and contractors.

# DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND VICTIMIZATION

## EMPLOYMENT

### KEY FINDINGS

More LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County were in the workforce (80% vs. 70%). However, among those in the workforce, more LGBTQ adults were unemployed (16% vs. 11%).<sup>35</sup>

Four percent of LGBTQ adults reported that they had been discouraged from pursuing educational opportunities in Los Angeles County because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

- LGBTQ adults of color (5%) were significantly more likely than White LGBTQ adults (2%) to report these experiences.

Almost half (48%) of employed LGBTQ adults are not out to their supervisor, and almost one in four (24%) are not out to any of their coworkers.

- LGBTQ employees of color were more likely than White LGBTQ employees to be out to none or only some of their coworkers (58% vs. 37%).
- Cisgender bisexual men and women were much less likely to be out at work than cisgender lesbians and gay men. For example, about three-quarters of bisexual women (73%) and men (77%) were not out to their supervisor, compared with 23% of lesbians and 30% of gay men.

Approximately one in eight LGBTQ adults reported being fired/not promoted (12%) or not hired (11%) for a job because of their sexual orientation or gender identity while living in Los Angeles County.

- Many of these experiences had occurred recently, with 7% reporting that they had been fired/not promoted because of their sexual orientation or gender identity within the past five years and 8% reporting that they had not been hired during that time period.
- Transgender and nonbinary adults (24%) were twice as likely as cisgender LGBTQ adults (9%) to have not been hired for a job because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL (20%) were twice as likely as those with higher incomes (7%) to have not been hired for a job because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

<sup>35</sup> The workforce is defined to include both those who are employed and those who are unemployed, but actively looking for employment. See Bureau of Labor Stats. (n.d.). Labor force statistics from the Current Population Survey: concepts and definitions (CPS). Retrieved June 11, 2024, from <https://www.bls.gov/cps/definitions.htm#unemployed>.



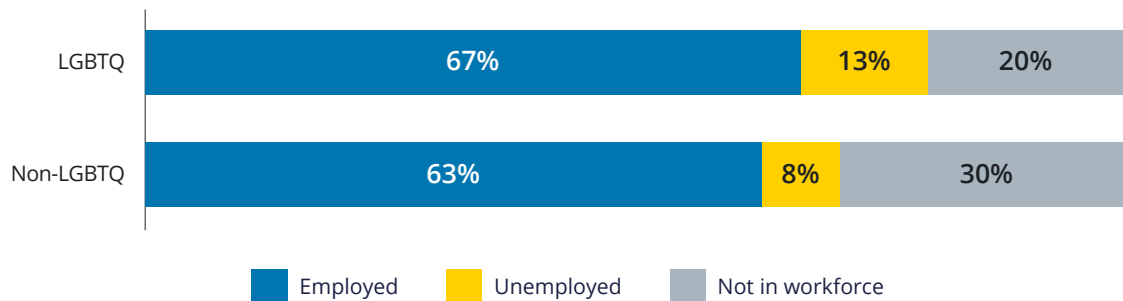
One in five (20%) LGBTQ adults reported having been verbally harassed at work by their supervisor or co-workers or by customers or clients, including 13% who had experienced such harassment in the past five years.

- LGBTQ people of color (23%) were more likely to report verbal harassment by their co-workers or supervisor than White LGBTQ adults (13%).
- Cisgender gay men (27%) were more likely to report verbal harassment by their coworkers or supervisor than cisgender lesbians (16%) and bisexual men (19%) and women (10%).
- Four percent of LGBTQ adults reported that they had been discouraged from pursuing educational opportunities in Los Angeles County because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- LGBTQ people of color (5%) were more likely than White LGBTQ adults (2%) to report these experiences.

## Employment Status

As shown in Figure 32, more LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County were in the workforce than non-LGBTQ adults (80% vs. 70%).<sup>36</sup> However, among those in the workforce (not shown), more LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults were unemployed (16% vs. 11%).<sup>37</sup>

Figure 32. Employment status by LGBTQ status, LACHS, 2023



When survey respondents were asked about their biggest source of worry, 24% expressed their concerns in terms of “work,” “job,” “employment,” “career,” “boss,” “wages,” or “income.” Most of these concerns were related to unemployment:

*I was laid off and don't have a reliable source of income.*

— Cisgender gay White man in his 30s

<sup>36</sup> Non-LGBT adults, as a group, are older than LGBT adults, both—in Los Angeles County and in the U.S. more broadly. Most of the difference in workforce participation by LGBT status in this study was due to retirement; 16% of non-LGBT adults in the LACHS were retired, compared to 7% of LGBT adults.

<sup>37</sup> Differences in the odds of being unemployed vs. employed between LGBT and non-LGBT adults persist even after taking into account differences in the age composition of each group (age-adjusted Odds Ratio 1.4; 95% confidence interval, 1.1, 2.0).

*Cost of living in Los Angeles ... no job security, inflation.*

— Cisgender lesbian Latina woman in her 40s

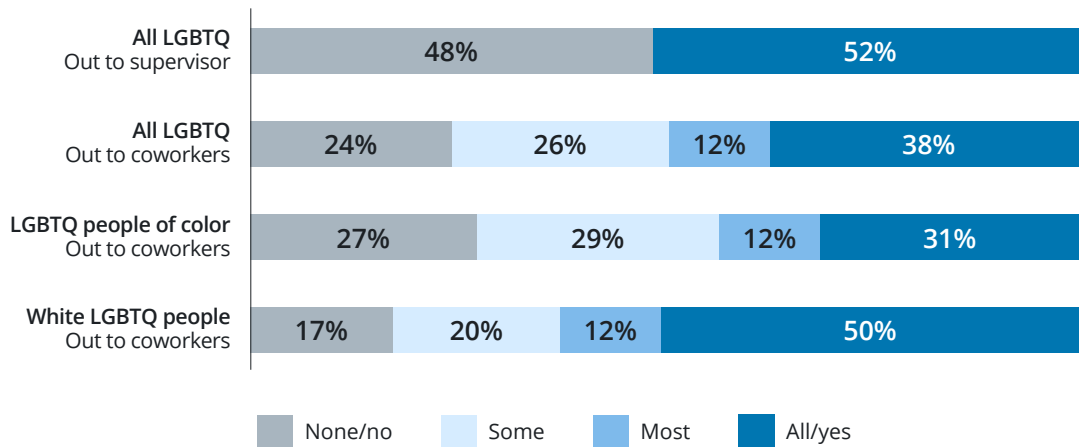
*Unemployment and losing my home and becoming homeless.*

— Cisgender gay Latino male in his 50s

## Being Out at Work

Of employed LGBTQ adults, only 52% are out to their immediate supervisor, and only 38% are out to all of their coworkers. Put differently, almost half of LGBTQ employees are not out to their supervisor, and about one-quarter (24%) are not out to any of their coworkers. LGBTQ employees of color are more likely than White LGBTQ employees to be out to none or only some of their coworkers (56% vs. 37%).

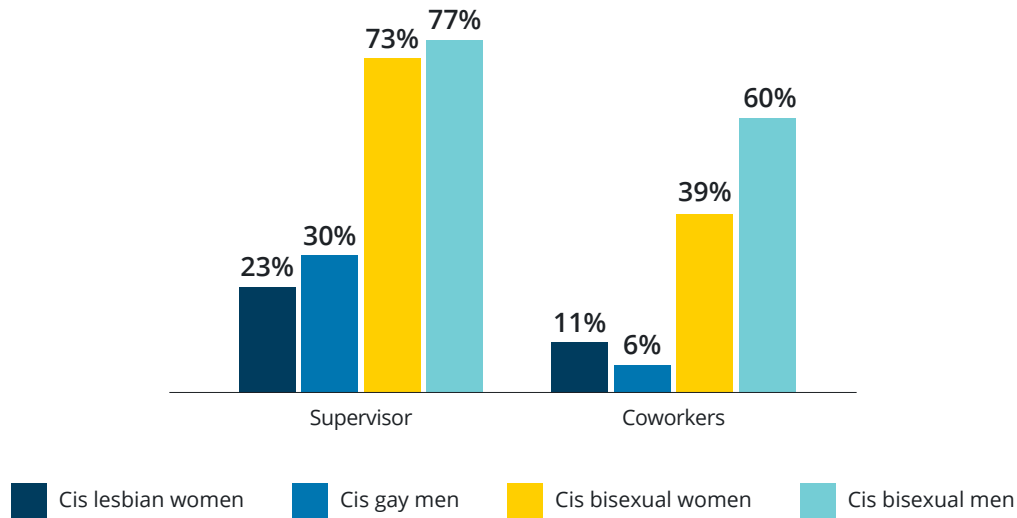
**Figure 33. Level of outness at work among LGBTQ employees to supervisor and coworkers, all adults and by race/ethnicity, LELAC**



Note: Percentages are of those who responded none/no, some, most, or all/yes. They do not include those who selected that the question did not apply to them or who did not know their level of outness at work. See [Supplemental Tables](#).

Cisgender bisexual women (73%) and men (77%) are less likely to be out to their supervisor than cisgender lesbians (23%) and gay men (30%). While many bisexual men (60%) and women (39%) were not out to any co-workers, that was less so for lesbians (11%) and for gay men (6%).

Figure 34. LGBTQ employees not out to supervisor or any coworkers, by sexual orientation, LELAC



Note: These percentages are of those who responded no/none. They do not include respondents who selected that the question did not apply to them or that they did not know the response. See [Supplemental Tables](#).

These findings are consistent with results from national surveys. For example, a prior Williams Institute analysis of a 2021 survey about employment experiences found that half (50%) of LGBTQ employees were not out to their current supervisor, and one-quarter (26%) were not out to any of their coworkers.<sup>38</sup> Thirty percent were out to all of their coworkers.<sup>39</sup> In addition, cisgender bisexual employees (36%) were less likely to be out to their supervisors than cisgender gay men and lesbians (75%). One in five (19%) bisexual employees reported being out to all of their coworkers, compared to half (50%) of lesbians and gay men.<sup>40</sup>

## Discrimination

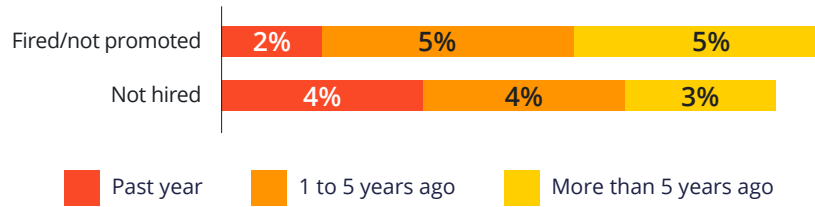
Approximately one out of eight LGBTQ adults reported having been fired or not promoted at work (12%) or having not been hired for a job (11%) because of their sexual orientation or gender identity while living in Los Angeles County. Many of these experiences had occurred recently, with 7% reporting that within the past five years they had been fired or not promoted because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, and 8% reporting that they had not been hired for this reason within the past five years.

<sup>38</sup> Sears, B., Mallory, C., Flores, A. R., & Conron, K. J. (2021, Sept). LGBTQ People's Experiences of Workplace Discrimination and Harassment. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Workplace-Discrimination-Sep-2021.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Mallory, C., Brad Sears, B. & Flores, A. R. (2022, Sept.) The Role of Sexual Orientation and Gender in Workplace Experiences of Cisgender LGB Employees. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Bisexual-Workplace-Discrimination-Sep-2022.pdf>

**Figure 35. LGBTQ adults fired/not promoted or not hired in Los Angeles County because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, by most recent experience, LELAC**

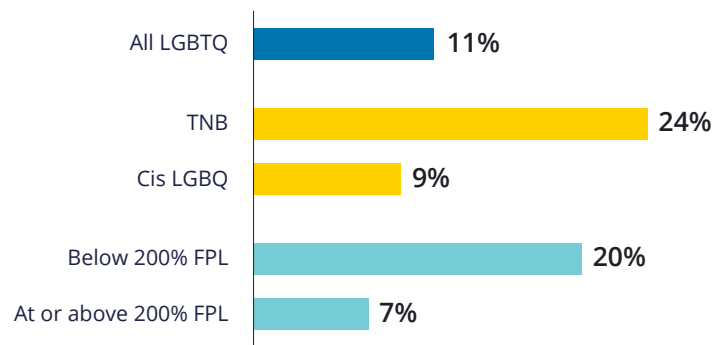


Experiences of employment discrimination in Los Angeles County were less common than those documented in national surveys. For example, the 2021 Williams Institute study found that about one-quarter of LGBTQ employees nationally reported having been fired (23%) or not hired (24%) because of their sexual orientation or gender identity at some point in their lives. Fourteen percent of LGBTQ adults reported having been fired and 15% reported not having been hired within the past five years because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.<sup>41</sup>

Transgender and nonbinary adults were significantly more likely than cisgender LGBQ adults (24% vs. 9%) to report that they had not been hired for a job in Los Angeles County because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. In the Williams Institute’s 2021 study, transgender adults nationally were also significantly more likely than cisgender LGB adults (44% vs. 22%) to report that they had not been hired for a job because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.<sup>42</sup>

Similarly, LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were significantly more likely than those living with higher incomes to report that they had not been hired for a job in Los Angeles County because of their sexual orientation or gender identity (20% vs. 7%).

**Figure 36. LGBTQ adults not hired in Los Angeles County because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, all adults and by gender identity and economic status, LELAC**



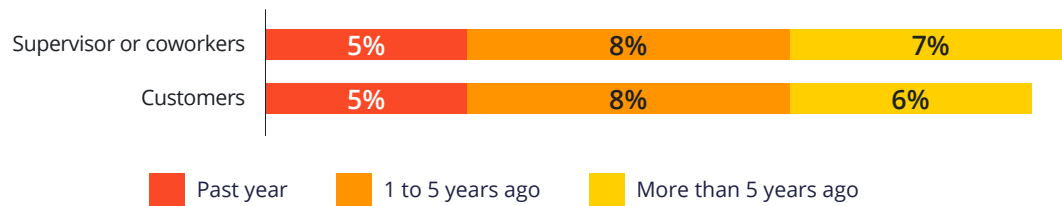
<sup>41</sup> Ibid. Data from prior five-year period on file with authors. This survey was only of LGBTQ adults currently in the workforce, which may explain some of the difference.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

## Verbal Harassment

One in five LGBTQ adults reported that they had been verbally harassed at work because of their sexual orientation or gender identity while working at a job in Los Angeles County. One in five (20%) reported that they had been verbally harassed by their supervisor or coworkers, and a similar percentage (19%) reported having been harassed by customers or clients. Thirteen percent of adults had experienced such harassment from coworkers or customers within the past five years. The 2021 Williams Institute study found that 31% of LGBT employees nationally reported experiencing verbal harassment in the workplace at some point in their lives, with 17% of workers reporting such experiences in the past five years.<sup>43</sup>

**Figure 37. LGBTQ adults who experienced verbal harassment at work in Los Angeles County because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, by most recent experience, LELAC**



LGBTQ people of color were more likely than White LGBTQ adults to report that they had been verbally harassed by their coworkers or supervisor while working in Los Angeles County (23% vs. 13%).<sup>44</sup> Consistent with these findings, the 2021 Williams Institute study found that nationally, 36% of LGBT employees of color reported experiencing verbal harassment in the workplace, compared to 26% of White LGBT employees.<sup>45</sup>

Further, in Los Angeles County, cisgender gay men (27%) were more likely to report verbal harassment by their coworkers or supervisor than cisgender lesbians (16%), bisexual men (19%), and bisexual women (10%). The 2021 Williams Institute study also found that gay men (39%) and bisexual men (38%) were more likely than lesbians (26%) and bisexual women (21%) to report verbal harassment in the workplace.<sup>46</sup>

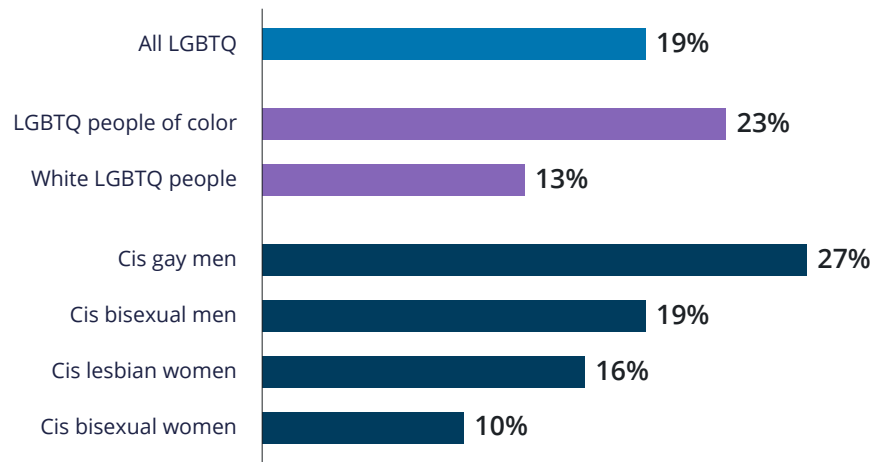
<sup>43</sup> Ibid. Data from prior five-year period on file with authors. This survey was only of LGBTQ adults currently in the workforce, which may explain some of the difference.

<sup>44</sup> Sears, B., Mallory, C., Flores, A. R., & Conron, K. J. (2021, Sept). LGBT People’s Experiences of Workplace Discrimination and Harassment. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Workplace-Discrimination-Sep-2021.pdf>. This survey was only of LGBTQ adults currently in the workforce, with may explain some of the difference.

<sup>45</sup> Data on file with authors, publication forthcoming summer 2024. This national survey was only of LGBTQ adults currently in the workforce, which may explain some of the difference.

<sup>46</sup> Data on file with authors, publication forthcoming summer 2024. This national survey was only of LGBTQ adults currently in the workforce, which may explain some of the difference.

**Figure 38. Lifetime experiences of verbal harassment by supervisor or coworkers in Los Angeles County because of sexual orientation or gender identity, all adults and by race and sexual orientation, LELAC**



In addition, there was some indication that transgender and nonbinary adults (31%), and LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL (25%), were more likely to have experienced verbal harassment from customers while working in Los Angeles County compared to cisgender LGBTQ adults (17%) and LGBTQ adults with higher incomes (15%).

*At my job, customers routinely misgender me. It feels like getting punched in the gut. ... It's painful to be someone that other people don't respect.*

— Nonbinary White sexual minority person in their 20s

*Ser agredido verbalmente en mi trabajo por ser Latino y ser LGBTQ me aventaron un baso de agua caliente en la cara. Me afectó emocionalmente y psicológicamente.<sup>47</sup>*

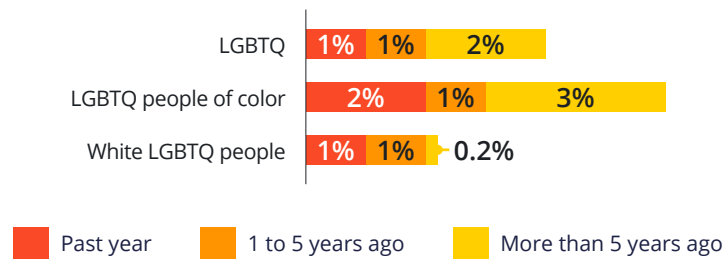
— Cisgender gay Latino in his 30s

## Support for Education

Adults also faced barriers to receiving education, which could limit their employment opportunities in the future. Four percent of LGBTQ adults reported that while living in Los Angeles County, they had been treated unfairly because of their LGBTQ status by teachers or advisers related to continuing their education (See [Supplemental Tables](#)). LGBTQ people of color (5%) were significantly more likely than White LGBTQ adults (2%) to report that while living in the county, they had been discouraged from pursuing educational opportunities because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

<sup>47</sup> [I was] verbally attacked at my job for being Latino and being LGBTQ [and] had a glass of hot water thrown in my face. It affected me emotionally and psychologically.

Figure 39. LGBTQ adults discouraged from pursuing educational opportunities while in Los Angeles County because of sexual orientation or gender identity, all adults and by race/ethnicity, LELAC



When asked what their biggest worries were, 2% of respondents focused on education. For many, the concern was about the cost of education:

*College and money. The rent is too high ... gas prices, bills, etc.*

— Cisgender bisexual Latino in his 20s

*Student loans. And how the grad program I attended seems to prey on low-income, marginalized people.*

— Cisgender bisexual woman of color in her 30s

National research has found that LGBTQ adults ages 40 and under are more likely than non-LGBTQ adults to have federal student loans (35% vs. 23%).<sup>48</sup> Approximately half (51%) of transgender adults have federal student loans.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Enforce workplace non-discrimination laws and ensure workplaces are welcoming for everyone.

- Provide training and resources to employers to ensure that management and staff are aware of and comply with non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies.
- Ensure that trainings address different workplace experiences of lesbians, gay men, bisexual men, bisexual women, transgender adults, and nonbinary employees.
- Make sure trainings and enforcement address intersectional discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity.
- Encourage employers to provide greater access to gender-neutral restrooms.

Support employment and job opportunities for LGBTQ people with benefits and a living wage for Los Angeles County.

- Encourage employers to engage in targeted recruitment efforts directed at the LGBTQ community, including by participating in job fairs hosted by LGBTQ organizations and

<sup>48</sup> Conron, K.J., Luhur, W, O'Neill, K., & Santiago, M. (2021, July). Student Loan Debt Among LGBTQ People. The Williams Institute at UCLA School of Law and the Point Foundation, Los Angeles, CA. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/LGBTQ-Student-Debt-Jul-2021.pdf>

advertising job openings in publications or on websites directed at the LGBTQ community.

- Support efforts to increase the minimum wage and other policies that support workers with low incomes.
- Support LGBTQ-owned small businesses.

Increase representation in civil service and among those who receive government contracts and grants.

- Ensure that LGBTQ people are being considered for civil service jobs by engaging in targeted outreach when hiring by, for example, participating in job fairs hosted by LGBTQ organizations and creating outreach materials that demonstrate commitment to equity and inclusion.
- Enforce non-discrimination laws and requirements for grants and contractors.
- Incentivize LGBTQ-led organizations and businesses among government grantees and contractors.



## MISGENDERING

### KEY FINDINGS

Many transgender and nonbinary adults, and some cisgender LGBTQ adults, have experienced misgendering in Los Angeles County.

- More than half (55%) of transgender and nonbinary adults reported having been misgendered in Los Angeles County.
- About one-fifth (19%) of cisgender LGBTQ adults reported having been misgendered.
- Many transgender and nonbinary adults described experiences of being misgendered by family members and strangers, and across a range of settings (including in grocery stores, at work, at school, at restaurants, and by law enforcement).

For many LGBTQ adults, and particularly transgender and nonbinary adults, being misgendered is part of their daily lives in Los Angeles County. Approximately one in four LGBTQ adults (24%) reported being misgendered while living in Los Angeles County. More than half (55%) of transgender and nonbinary adults reported that they had been misgendered, compared to only 19% of cisgender LGBTQ adults (See [Supplemental Tables](#)). The high rates of experiencing being misgendered in Los Angeles County among transgender and nonbinary adults are similar to high rates of misgendering reported on national surveys. For example, in a 2022 national survey, 70% of transgender and nonbinary adults reported that they had been accidentally misgendered often or sometimes, and 66% said they had often or sometimes been intentionally misgendered.<sup>49</sup>

Thirty-three transgender and nonbinary respondents shared how it felt to be misgendered. Words and phrases used to describe how the experience felt included: “disrespected,” “like being punched in the gut,” “hard,” “ignored,” “wrong,” “hurt,” “insulted,” “dismissed,” “diminished,” “denied” “irritating,” “afraid,” “ashamed,” “insecure,” “embarrassing,” “discouraged,” “uncomfortable,” “unsafe,” “jarring,” “annoyed,” “mocked,” and “invisible.”

Respondents described being misgendered by strangers and family members. They also described being misgendered in grocery stores, at work, at school, at restaurants, and by law enforcement. Examples they shared include:

*I go by they/them pronouns and use the title Mx. I have a very feminine gender expression, so I understand why people call me “she” and “Miss,” but it is constant misgendering by older coworkers and my bosses. My interactions with the public are also tainted with misgendering ... It’s like death by a thousand paper cuts.*

— Nonbinary bisexual multiracial person in their 20s

<sup>49</sup> Rodriguez, V. (2022). SurveyMonkey poll: Misgendering and Microaggressions Against the LGBTQ Population. Survey Monkey. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/curiosity/misgendering-and-microaggressions-against-the-lgbtq-population/>.

*I am used to it. It is a fact of life, and I accept it and am not bothered by it. Of course, I would love it to be different ... for all to be more accepting of our differences.*

— Nonbinary White person in their 80s

*I get misgendered a lot because I'm a feminine trans man. I'm very secure in my gender and sexuality. It's taken a lot for me to get to this point ... Sometimes, it makes me question myself, and I think I should present with more masculinity, but I am happy with the way I present, and I'm lucky to have support systems.*

— Transgender bisexual multiracial man in his 20s

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Enforce non-discrimination laws and policies to ensure that schools, workplaces, businesses, government programs and services, health care settings, and other spaces are welcoming for everyone, including by using proper pronouns.

- In partnership with community-based organizations, provide training and resources to ensure that management and staff are aware of and comply with non-discrimination and anti-harassment laws and policies related to misgendering.

Ensure that transgender and nonbinary people are treated consistently with their gender identity.

- Continue to provide training for all government departments, staff, and officials on the use of correct pronouns, particularly gender-neutral pronouns, and on the impact of misgendering on LGBTQ people.
- Model using pronouns for in-person introductions, email signatures, online meetings, name cards and name tags, etc.
- Ensure that all government forms, surveys, and other materials are inclusive of transgender and nonbinary people, including by allowing individuals to select genders other than male and female.

Support efforts to educate the public about transgender and nonbinary people and the use of correct pronouns.

## PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS, PUBLIC SPACES, AND SAFETY

### KEY FINDINGS

LGBTQ adults reported experiencing verbal harassment from strangers while walking on the street or in public accommodations.<sup>50</sup>

- About one-third of LGBTQ adults (32%) reported experiencing verbal harassment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity from strangers on the street, including 23% who had had these experiences in the past five years.
  - Cisgender lesbians (42%) and gay men (45%) were three times as likely to report harassment from strangers on the street than cisgender bisexual women (15%) and men (13%).
- Twelve percent of LGBTQ adults experienced verbal harassment when accessing services from businesses open to the public in Los Angeles County.
  - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were more likely than those with higher incomes to report such harassment (20% vs. 8%).
  - Cisgender lesbians (20%) and gay men (17%) were much more likely to report such harassment than cisgender bisexual women (1%) and men (3%).

Many LGBTQ adults reported that they had avoided certain places in Los Angeles County within the past year in order to avoid poor treatment or to avoid being threatened or physically attacked because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

- Approximately one in five LGBTQ adults reported avoiding restaurants or stores (22%), places of entertainment (19%), or public transportation (17%) in order to avoid poor treatment based on their LGBTQ status.
  - Those living below 200% FPL were more than twice as likely to report that they had avoided places of entertainment or public transportation to avoid unfair treatment.
  - Cisgender lesbians and gay men were approximately four times as likely to report that they had avoided these locations as cisgender bisexual men and women.
- In the past year, many LGBTQ adults avoided public parks or beaches (16%), restaurants or stores (14%), public transportation (14%), and places of entertainment (13%) due to concerns about being assaulted or attacked because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
  - Compared to cisgender LGBQ adults, transgender and nonbinary adults were more likely to report that they had avoided public parks and beaches (33% vs. 13%) and public transportation (27% vs. 12%) to avoid being assaulted or attacked.
  - Similarly, compared to LGBTQ adults living at or above 200% FPL, those with lower household incomes were more likely to avoid public transportation (21% vs. 10%).

<sup>50</sup> Public accommodations are defined in the LELAC study as businesses open to the public, such as a stores, restaurants, movie theaters, hotels, gyms, daycare centers, and hair salons.

- Cisgender lesbians and gay men were also more likely than cisgender bisexual men and women to report that they had avoided restaurants or stores, places of entertainment, and public transportation in the past year due to safety concerns.

Many LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County have been victims of crime because of their sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Among LGBTQ adults who have lived in Los Angeles County for their entire lives, around 40% reported that they had been victims of personal (39%) or property crimes (42%) in the county.
- Of those who had been victims of both types of crimes, 72% felt that they had been targeted because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

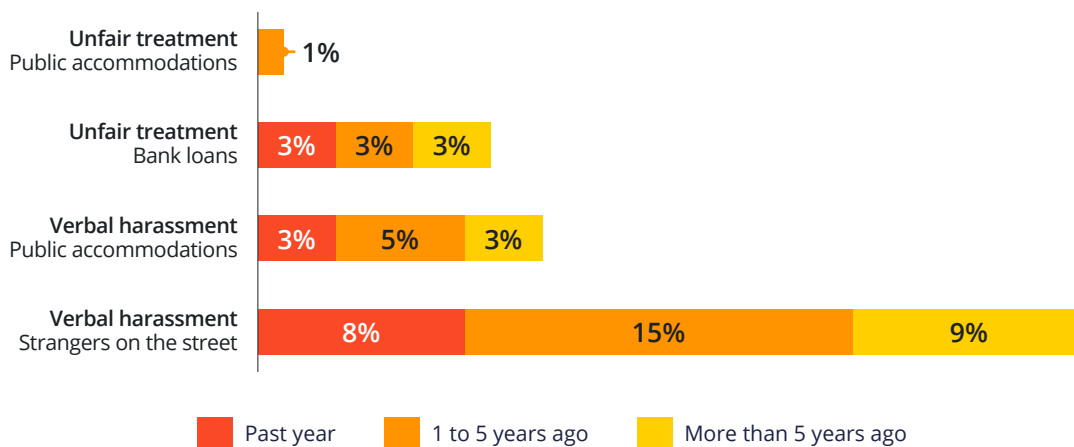
### Unfair Treatment and Verbal Harassment

Compared to other areas, LGBTQ adults reported relatively low levels of unfair treatment from businesses open to the public in Los Angeles County. However, LGBTQ adults reported relatively high levels of verbal harassment from strangers while walking on the street.

When asked about unfair treatment related to their sexual orientation or gender identity in businesses open to the public (such as stores, restaurants, and theaters), only 1% of LGBTQ adults reported such experiences. About one in 10 (9%) reported that they had been denied a bank loan because of their sexual orientation or gender identity in Los Angeles County.

When asked specifically about verbal harassment, 12% of LGBTQ adults reported experiencing such harassment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity while in businesses open to the public in the county. A higher percentage of LGBTQ adults reported experiencing verbal harassment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity by strangers on the street. About one-third (32%) of LGBTQ adults reported experiencing such harassment in Los Angeles County, including almost one in four (23%) who had had these experiences within the past five years.

**Figure 40. Experiences of unfair treatment and verbal harassment in Los Angeles County because of sexual orientation or gender identity, by year of most recent experience, LELAC**

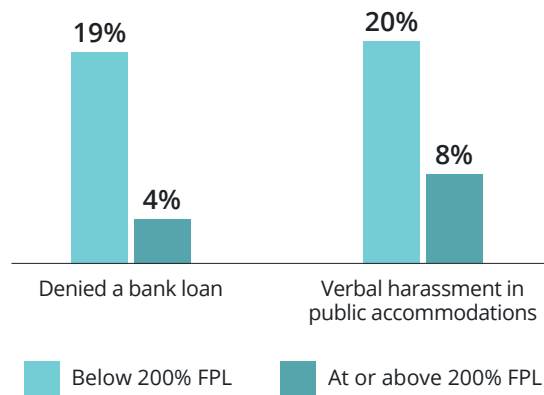


*My boyfriend and I have experienced multiple occasions of poor treatment at some restaurants and bars, mainly because of my boyfriend's color and difficulty speaking English.*

— Cisgender gay Latino in his 30s

LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were significantly more likely than those with higher incomes to report that they had been denied a bank loan in Los Angeles County because of their sexual orientation or gender identity (19% vs. 4%). LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were also more likely to report experiences of verbal harassment while at a business open to the public in Los Angeles County (20% vs. 8%).

**Figure 41. Experiences of being denied bank loan or of being verbally harassed when accessing public accommodations in Los Angeles County because of sexual orientation or gender identity, by economic status, LELAC**

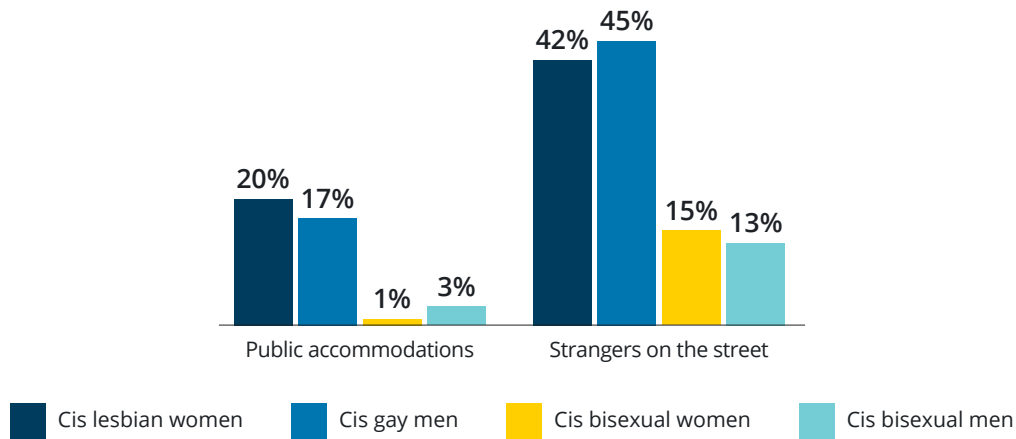


*Loans for buying homes are so discriminating when you're not a single White gay man.*

— Cisgender gay Latino in his 40s

Cisgender lesbians (20%) and gay men (17%) were more likely to report experiences of verbal harassment than cisgender bisexual women (1%) and bisexual men (3%) in businesses open to the public. Lesbians (42%) and gay men (45%) were three times as likely as bisexual women (15%) and bisexual men (13%) to report harassment from strangers on the street.

Figure 42. Experiences of verbal harassment in Los Angeles County because of sexual orientation or gender identity, by sexual orientation, LELAC



*When sashaying into a business, being followed, stared at, looked at like I have three heads—puzzled and confused morons watch me, devoid of common sense and decency by staring at me. ALL 6'5" OF ME IN A 3-PIECE MAN'S SUIT & TIE. I'm prompted to return the discourteous remark, glaring back in the same manner. Other times, I'm assumed, if they ask, "which gender?" My answer is determined by which day of the week it may be.*

— Cisgender gay Black man in his 50s

*I was misgendered today by someone collecting signatures outside of a grocery store. When I informed the person that they had misgendered me, the person responded that I was violating their political rights to free speech. I felt very triggered and hurt by the interaction, and it ruined the next few hours of my day.*

— Nonbinary White sexual minority person in their 40s

By comparison, an analysis of KFF's 2023 Racism, Discrimination, and Health Survey found that nationally, 26% of LGBTQ adults reported that they had received poorer service than other people at restaurants or stores within the prior year.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, a prior Williams Institute analysis of data collected through the Generations and TransPop studies found that nationally, 24% of LGBTQ adults reported that they had received poorer service than other people at restaurants or stores.<sup>52</sup> Another study by the Center for American Progress based on a 2022 survey found that 28% of LGBTQI+ adults had experienced discrimination in public spaces based on any personal characteristic within the past

<sup>51</sup> Montero, A., Hamel, L., Artiga, S., & Dawson, L. (2024, Apr. 2). LGBTQ Adults' Experiences with Discrimination and Health Care Disparities: Findings from the KFF Survey of Racism, Discrimination, and Health. Kaiser Family Foundation. <https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/poll-finding/lgbt-adults-experiences-with-discrimination-and-health-care-disparities-findings-from-the-kff-survey-of-racism-discrimination-and-health/>.

<sup>52</sup> Meyer, I.H., Wilson, B.D.M., & O'Neill, K. (2021, Jun.) LGBTQ People in the US: Select Findings from the Generations and TransPop Studies. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Generations-TransPop-Toplines-Jun-2021.pdf>.

year.<sup>53</sup> The 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey, a large, national survey of transgender people, found that 14% of transgender adults had been denied equal treatment in a place of public accommodation within the past year, and 11% reported that they had been denied equal treatment at a store, restaurant, hotel, or theater.<sup>54</sup>

In addition, the Williams Institute analysis of data from the Generations and TranPop studies found that 33% of LGBTQ adults reported that they had been called names or insulted, and 22% reported that they had been threatened or harassed.<sup>55</sup> In the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey, 46% of transgender adults reported that they had been verbally harassed within the past year based on their transgender status; 24% of adults reported having been verbally harassed in a place of public accommodation.<sup>56</sup>

### Avoiding Public Spaces in Order to Avoid Poor Treatment

Many LGBTQ adults reported having avoided businesses, places of entertainment (such as theaters), public transportation, and public spaces (such as parks and beaches) in the past year in Los Angeles County in order to avoid poor treatment or being threatened or physically attacked because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Approximately one in five LGBTQ adults reported that they had avoided restaurants or stores (22%), places of entertainment (19%), or public transportation (17%) in the county within the past year in order to avoid poor treatment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. One in ten (10%) avoided getting a service from a business that they needed for their family in order to avoid poor treatment.

Compared to those with higher incomes, LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were more likely to report that they had avoided businesses such as places of entertainment (28% vs. 14%), public transportation (24% vs. 13%), and getting services that their family needed (17% vs. 6%) in the past year in order to avoid poor treatment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

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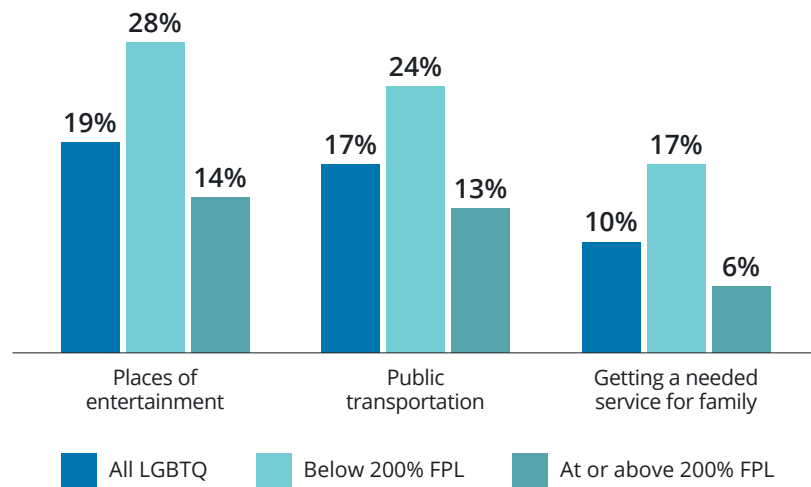
<sup>53</sup> Medina, C., & Mahowald, L. (2023, Jan. 12). Discrimination and Barriers to Well-Being: The State of the LGBTQI+ Community in 2022. Center for America Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/discrimination-and-barriers-to-well-being-the-state-of-the-lgbtqi-community-in-2022/>.

<sup>54</sup> James, S.E., Herman, J.L., Rankin, S., Mara Keisling, M., Mottet, L., & Anaf, M. (2016, Dec.) The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey. National Center for Transgender Equality. <https://transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/USTS-Full-Report-Dec17.pdf>.

<sup>55</sup> Meyer, I.H., Wilson, B.D.M., & O'Neill, K. (2021, Jun.) LGBTQ People in the US: Select Findings from the Generations and TranPop Studies. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Generations-TransPop-Toplines-Jun-2021.pdf>.

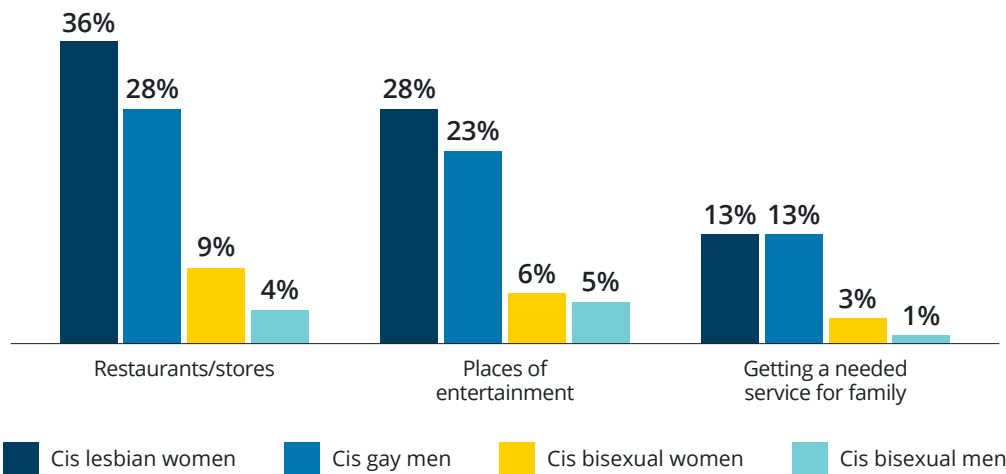
<sup>56</sup> James, S.E., Herman, J.L., Rankin, S., Keisling, M., Mottet, L., & Anaf, M. (2016, Dec.). The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey. National Center for Transgender Equality. <https://transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/USTS-Full-Report-Dec17.pdf>.

Figure 43. LGBTQ adults who avoided public spaces in the past year in order to avoid poor treatment based on sexual orientation or gender identity, all adults and by economic status, LELAC



Cisgender lesbians and gay men were more likely than cisgender bisexual men and women to report that they had avoided restaurants and stores, places of entertainment, and getting a service that their family needed in in the past year to avoid poor treatment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Figure 44. LGBTQ adults who avoided public spaces in the past year to avoid poor treatment based on sexual orientation or gender identity, by sexual orientation, LELAC



By comparison, a 2016 national survey by the Center for American Progress found that within the past year, 26% of transgender adults and 10% of cisgender LGB adults had avoided public spaces, such as stores and restaurants; 11% of transgender adults and 4% of cisgender LGB adults had avoided public transportation; and 12% of transgender adults and 4% of cisgender LGB adults had avoided getting a service they or their family needed in order to avoid discrimination.<sup>57</sup> Similarly, the 2015 U.S.

<sup>57</sup> Cusick, J. (2017, May 2). Widespread Discrimination Continues to Shape LGBT People’s Lives in Both Subtle and Significant Ways. Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/widespread-discrimination->



Transgender Survey found that 20% of adults had avoided at least one type of public accommodation in the past year because they feared they would be mistreated based on their gender identity.<sup>58</sup>

## Avoiding Public Spaces to Protect Safety

*While in a predominantly white area, I was called a dyke and a beaner. It felt bad and made me avoid going near there again.*

— Nonbinary Latinx sexual minority person in their 20s

Approximately one in six LGBTQ adults (16%) said that they had avoided going to public parks or beaches in Los Angeles County in the past year due to concerns about being threatened or physically attacked because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, and one in seven had avoided going to restaurants or stores (14%), using public transportation (14%), or going to places of entertainment (13%) for the same reason.

**Figure 45. LGBTQ adults who avoided public spaces in the past year in order to avoid being threatened or physically attacked because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, LELAC**

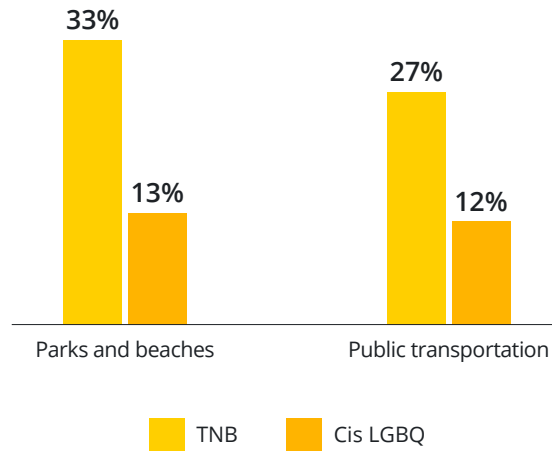


Compared to cisgender LGBTQ adults, transgender and nonbinary adults were more likely to report that they had avoided public parks and beaches (33% vs. 13%) and public transportation (27% vs. 12%) in the past year in order to avoid being threatened or physically attacked because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Similarly, compared to those with higher incomes, LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were more likely to report that they had avoided public transportation (21% vs. 10%) in the past year out of safety concerns.

[continues-shape-lgbt-peoples-lives-subtle-significant-ways/](#).

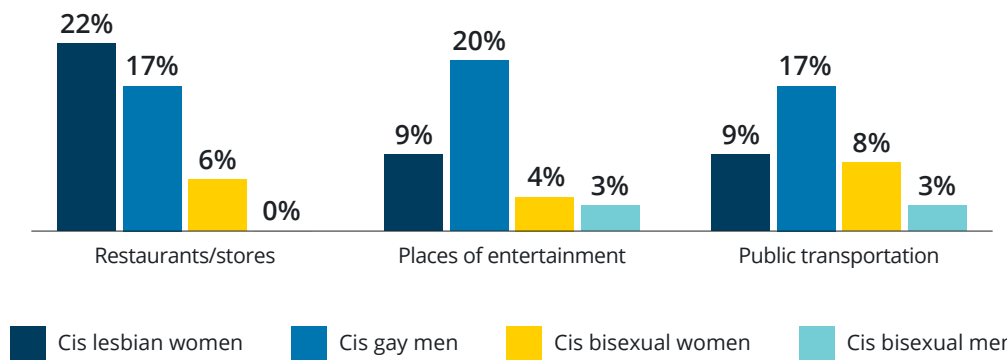
<sup>58</sup> James, S.E., Herman, J.L., Rankin, S., Keisling, M., Mottet, L., & Anafi M. (2016, Dec.). The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey. National Center for Transgender Equality. <https://transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/USTS-Full-Report-Dec17.pdf>.

Figure 46. LGBTQ adults who avoided public spaces in the past year in order to avoid being threatened or physically attacked based on sexual orientation or gender identity, by economic status, LELAC



Cisgender lesbians and gay men were more likely than cisgender bisexual men and women to report that they had avoided restaurants or stores, places of entertainment, and public transportation in the past year in order to avoid being threatened or physically attacked because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Figure 47. LGBTQ adults who avoided public spaces in the past year in order to avoid being threatened or physically attacked based on sexual orientation or gender identity, by sexual orientation, LELAC



By comparison, a 2023 survey by [SafeHome.org](https://www.safehome.org/) found that 61% of LGBTQ+ adults nationally have avoided a public place or event due to fears of discrimination or violence.<sup>59</sup>

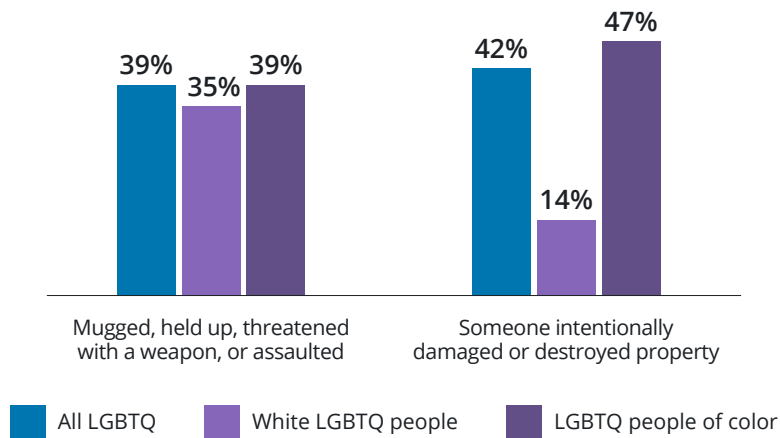
<sup>59</sup> Gabriele, R. (2023, Sept. 11). 2023 LGBTQ+ State Safety Report Cards. [SafeHome.org](https://www.safehome.org/data/lgbtq-state-safety-rankings/). <https://www.safehome.org/data/lgbtq-state-safety-rankings/>.

Other research has examined avoidance behaviors on public transportation and its link to experiences of violence.<sup>60</sup> Two percent of respondents to the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey did not use public transportation in the past year to avoid being mistreated.<sup>61</sup> Three percent of U.S. Transgender Survey respondents reported having been physically attacked on public transportation, and 32% reported that they had been verbally harassed.<sup>62</sup> However, this may be more extreme in the context of Los Angeles County. A 2018 survey from the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority found that 41% of nonbinary adults had experienced physical sexual harassment in the prior six months on buses and 29% on rail transit.<sup>63</sup>

## Victimization

Many LGBTQ people in Los Angeles County not only have concerns about their safety but have also experienced victimization. Thirty-nine percent of LGBTQ adults who have lived their entire lives in Los Angeles County reported that they had been a victim of a personal crime (“mugged, held up, threatened with a weapon, or assaulted”) at least once in their lifetime, and 42% reported that they had been a victim of a property crime (i.e., someone had intentionally damaged or destroyed property owned by them or someone else in their house). LGBTQ people of color were more likely than White LGBTQ adults to report having been a victim of a property crime in Los Angeles County at least once in their lifetime (47% vs. 14%).

**Figure 48. LGBTQ adults who have lived their entire life in Los Angeles County and who have been the victim of a personal or property crime, all adults and by race/ethnicity, LELAC**



<sup>60</sup> Forsdike, K., Ison, J., Hooker, L., Henry, N., & Taft, A. (2024). “God, Whatever You Do, Don’t Tell People It’s Unsafe”: Public Transport Service Providers’ Perspectives on Women’s Safety from Sexual Violence on Public Transport. *Transport Policy*, 150 (May 2024) :14-23. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0967070X24000714> (discussing feelings of safety and avoidance behaviors on public transportation).

<sup>61</sup> James, S.E., Herman, J.L., Rankin, S., Keisling, M., Mottet, L., & Anafi M. (2016, Dec.). The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey. National Center for Transgender Equality. <https://transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/USTS-Full-Report-Dec17.pdf>.

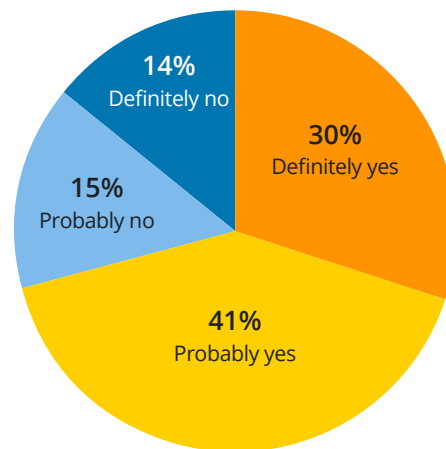
<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. (2019, Aug. 30). Understanding How Women Travel. Metro. [https://libraryarchives.metro.net/db\\_attachments/2019-0294/understandinghowwomentravel\\_fullreport\\_final.pdf](https://libraryarchives.metro.net/db_attachments/2019-0294/understandinghowwomentravel_fullreport_final.pdf).

A prior Williams Institute analysis of data from the Generations and TransPop studies found similar rates of lifetime victimization among LGBTQ adults nationally.<sup>64</sup> The analysis found that 41% of LGBTQ adults had been victims of property crimes (including being robbed or having property stolen, vandalized, or purposely damaged), and 42% of LGBTQ adults had been victims of personal crimes (hit, beaten, physically attacked, or sexually assaulted) at some point in their lives.

When asked about the motivations for crimes committed in Los Angeles County, 71% of LGBTQ adults who had been victims of both types of crimes (personal and property) felt that they had been definitely or probably targeted because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Only 14% felt that their sexual orientation or gender identity was definitely not the motivation.

**Figure 49. Among those who had been victims of both a personal and a property crime, perception that the crimes were motivated by sexual orientation or gender identity, LELAC**



LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County had rates similar to those of non-LGBTQ adults of reporting that something had been stolen from them or from someone in their household, from home or car, in the past 12 months (27% vs. 23%); that they or someone in their household had been mugged, hit, or shot in their neighborhood (5% vs. 5%); or that they or someone in their household had been sexually assaulted in their neighborhood (2% vs. 1%).

By comparison, prior analyses of data from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) found that LGBTQ people are more likely to be victims of crime than non-LGBTQ people.<sup>65</sup> For example, an analysis of 2017–2020 NCVS data found that lesbians and gay men experienced 43.5 violent victimizations (including rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault) per 1,000 people ages 16 and older, and bisexual people experienced 129.1 victimizations per 1,000 people. These rates were significantly higher than the rate of victimization experienced by straight

<sup>64</sup> Meyer, I.H., Wilson, B.D.M., & O'Neill, K. (2021, Jun.) LGBTQ People in the US: Select Findings from the Generations and TransPop Studies. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Generations-TransPop-Toplines-Jun-2021.pdf>.

<sup>65</sup> Truman, J.L., & Morgan, R.E. (2022, June). Violent Victimization by Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, 2017-2020. U.S. Dept of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. Flores, A.R., Wilson, B.D.M., Langton, L., & Meyer, I.H. (2023, Feb.), Violent Victimization at the Intersections of Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Race. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/lgbt-victimization-and-race/>.

people—19.0 victimizations per 1,000 people ages 16 and older. Transgender people were also more likely to experience violent victimization than cisgender people, with 51.5 victimizations per 1,000 people compared to 20.5 victimizations among cisgender people. A prior Williams Institute study using 2017 data also found that LGBT people were more likely to be victims of property crimes, in addition to violent crimes.<sup>66</sup> For example, LGBT people experienced 44.3 burglaries per 1,000 households, compared with 20.5 among non-LGBT people.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Ensure that LGBTQ people are free from discrimination and harassment in public spaces.

- Enforce non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies against entities that treat LGBTQ people unfairly because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Provide training and resources to entities that interact with the public to ensure that management and staff are aware of and comply with non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies.
- Ensure that people have access to restrooms and other shared facilities that match their gender identity, including gender-neutral spaces.
- Support public education campaigns that inform the public about LGBTQ people.

Ensure that LGBTQ people are safe in public spaces.

- Improve community relationships and policing with LGBTQ communities.
- Improve systems for reporting hate incidents and hate crimes and for prosecuting hate crimes.
- For hate crime reporting and enforcement and victims' services, partner with community-based organizations and hire more LGBTQ people to work in law enforcement.
- Proactively promote to the LGBTQ community that measures have been taken to provide safety at LGBTQ venues and events.

Improve the environment for LGBTQ people in county departments and programs.

- Provide training and resources to staff and officials across LGBTQ county programs and services, as well as city programs and services within Los Angeles County, that address equity and inclusion for LGBTQ people and compliance with non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies. This is particularly necessary for law enforcement so that they will enforce the policies.
- Ensure that departments and programs make it clear that they are welcoming of LGBTQ people by, for example, conducting LGBTQ-specific research, tailoring their advertisements to LGBTQ-specific needs and people, including images of LGBTQ people and same-sex couples on their websites and in printed outreach materials, informing clients of non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies, recognizing diverse sexual orientations and gender identities on department forms and other materials, and regularly assessing LGBTQ people's satisfaction with their services.

<sup>66</sup> Flores, A. R., Langton, L., Meyer, I. H., & Romero, A. P. (2020). Victimization rates and traits of sexual and gender minorities in the United States: Results from the National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017. *Science Advances*, 6(40), eaba6910. <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.aba6910>

## INTERACTIONS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT

### KEY FINDINGS

Forty-one percent of LGBTQ adults strongly or somewhat disagreed that law enforcement treats LGBTQ people fairly, while 31% strongly or somewhat agreed.

- Eight percent of LGBTQ adults had avoided calling the police in the past year in order to avoid unfair treatment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL (13%) were more likely than those with higher incomes (5%) to say that they had avoided calling police in order to avoid unfair treatment.

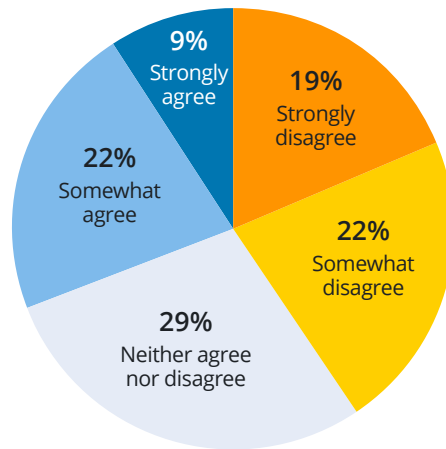
A number of LGBTQ adults reported experiencing harassment, assault, or negative treatment from law enforcement in Los Angeles County.

- LGBTQ adults reported experiencing verbal harassment (17%), physical harassment or assault (6%), sexual harassment or assault (6%), and being solicited for sex (3%) by law enforcement in Los Angeles County.
  - Transgender and nonbinary adults, LGBTQ adults of color, and those living below 200% FPL were all more likely to report verbal harassment by law enforcement compared to LGBTQ cisgender adults (34% vs. 14%), White LGBTQ adults (20% vs. 10%), and those with higher incomes (24% vs. 13%).
- Among adults who had contacts initiated by law enforcement in the past year, 31% felt that they had not been treated respectfully or properly in their most recent contact, and that the interaction made them less likely to contact law enforcement in the future. However, more than half (52%) were satisfied with their interactions with law enforcement.
  - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were much more likely to feel that law enforcement had not acted properly (46% vs. 23%) in a recent interaction compared to LGBTQ adults with higher incomes, and they were much less likely to contact law enforcement in the future as a result (46% vs. 22%).

### Views of Law Enforcement and the Los Angeles County Criminal Legal System

Forty-one percent of LGBTQ adults strongly or somewhat disagreed with the statement that “police and other law enforcement in Los Angeles County treat everyone fairly, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity,” while 31% strongly or somewhat agreed with that statement.

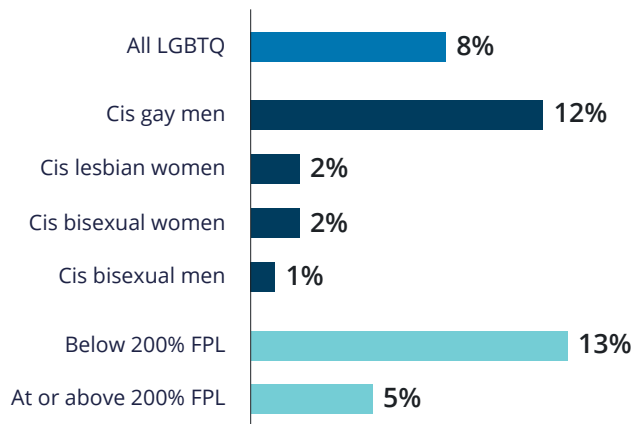
**Figure 50. Support for the statement that Los Angeles County law enforcement treats all LGBTQ adults fairly, all adults, LELAC**



Eight percent of LGBTQ adults had avoided calling the police in the past year in order to avoid unfair treatment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were more likely to have avoided calling the police (13% v. 5%) in the past year in order to avoid unfair treatment than those with higher household incomes. Cisgender gay men (12%) were more likely to have avoided calling the police in the past year to avoid unfair treatment than cisgender lesbians (2%), bisexual men (1%), and bisexual women (2%).

By comparison, a prior Williams Institute analysis of data from two national surveys found that 13% of LGBQ adults reported that they avoided calling the police within the past year (for any reason) when they needed help.<sup>67</sup>

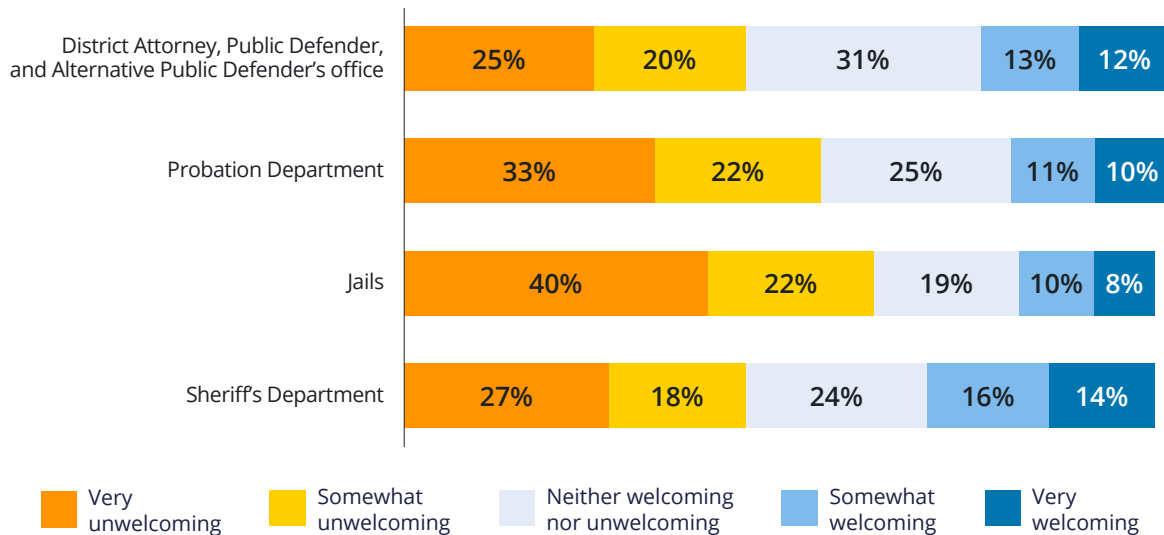
**Figure 51. LGBTQ adults who avoided calling law enforcement in the past year in order to avoid poor treatment based on sexual orientation and gender identity, all adults and by sexual orientation and economic status, LELAC**



<sup>67</sup> Luhur, W., Meyer, I.H., & Wilson, B.D.M. (2021, May). Policing LGBQ People. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Policing-LGBQ-People-May-2021.pdf>.

As discussed more fully in the companion report, *Hear Us, Support Us, Join Us! Civic Engagement of LGBTQ Adults in LA County and Recommendations for Local Elected Officials*,<sup>68</sup> out of 16 Los Angeles County service areas, the four programs viewed by the fewest LGBTQ adults as welcoming—and by the most as unwelcoming—were all related to Los Angeles County’s criminal legal system: the probation department, jails, the district attorney’s office (D.A.), the public defender’s office (P.D.) and the alternate public defender’s office (Alt.P.D.), and the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department. Of respondents who evaluated the jails (40%), 62% felt that they were somewhat or very unwelcoming to LGBTQ people. Of respondents who evaluated the probation department (32%), 55% felt that it was somewhat or very unwelcoming to LGBTQ people. Of the respondents who evaluated the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department (50%), 45% felt that it was somewhat or very unwelcoming to LGBTQ people. The county district attorney’s office, the public defender’s office, and the alternative public defender’s office were all evaluated together. Of respondents that evaluated this group of services (34%), 45% found them somewhat or very unwelcoming to LGBTQ people.

**Figure 52. Perceptions of how welcoming Los Angeles County programs are of LGBTQ adults, among adults who provided a rating, LELAC**



### Harassment of LGBTQ Adults by Law Enforcement

A number of LGBTQ adults reported having had negative interactions with police and law enforcement in Los Angeles County. These experiences included verbal harassment (17%), physical harassment or assault (6%), sexual harassment or assault (3%), and being solicited for sex (3%). Of the eight respondents solicited for sex by a law enforcement, seven were LGBTQ people of color and were living below 200% FPL.

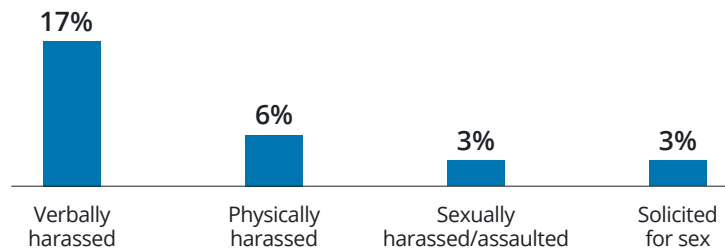
By comparison, in a study based on a national convenience sample of LGBTQ adults conducted in 2022, 25% of LGBTQ adults reported that they had been verbally harassed in their last face-to-face encounter with law enforcement, 13% reported they had been physically harassed, and 13% reported that they had been sexually harassed.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Sears, B., Mallory, C., & Conron, K.J. Hear us, Support us, Join us! Civic Engagement of LGBTQ Angelenos and Recommendations for Local Elected Officials. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law.

<sup>69</sup> Frazer, S., Saenz, R., Aleman, A., & Laderman, L. (2023). Protected & Served?: 2022 Community Survey Of Lgbtq+

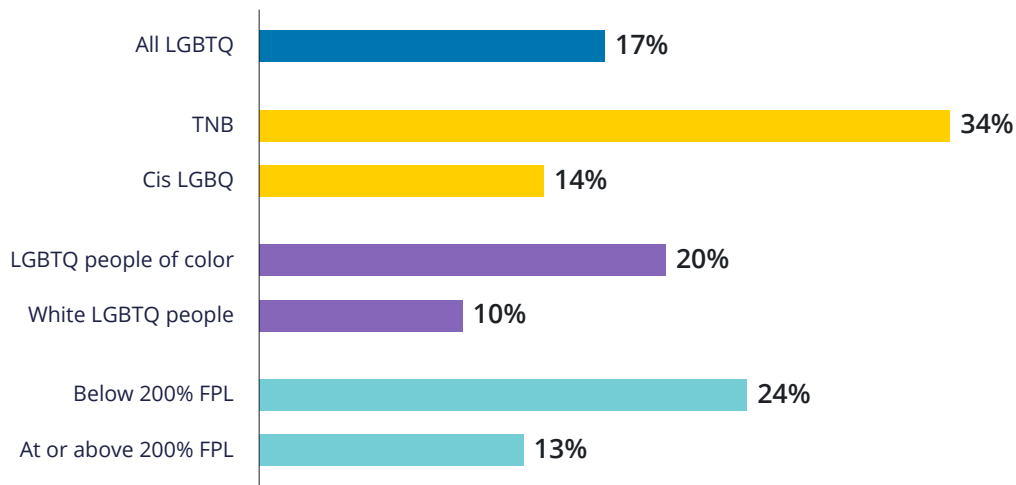


Figure 53. Experiences of harassment by Los Angeles County law enforcement, LELAC



Transgender and nonbinary adults, LGBTQ people of color, and those living below 200% FPL were all more likely to report verbal harassment by law enforcement in Los Angeles County compared to cisgender LGBQ adults (34% vs. 14%), White LGBTQ adults (20% vs. 10%), and those with higher incomes (24% vs. 13%).

Figure 54. Experiences of verbal harassment by Los Angeles County law enforcement, all LGBTQ adults and by gender identity, race/ethnicity, and economic status, LELAC



*My driver’s license states that I am nonbinary (X), though I identify as a trans man. During a recent LAPD traffic stop, I was verbally misgendered as F even after the officer was in possession of my license. I received a ticket, and the ticket also listed my gender as F.*

— Transgender bisexual Black man in his 40s

*I was ... sexually harassed by [a] police officer due to being an Asian woman.*

— Cisgender Asian lesbian in her 30s

## Interactions with Law Enforcement in the Past Year

More than one-third of LGBTQ adults (37%) had had interactions with law enforcement in the past year. This includes 33% who had affirmatively contacted law enforcement to report a traffic accident;

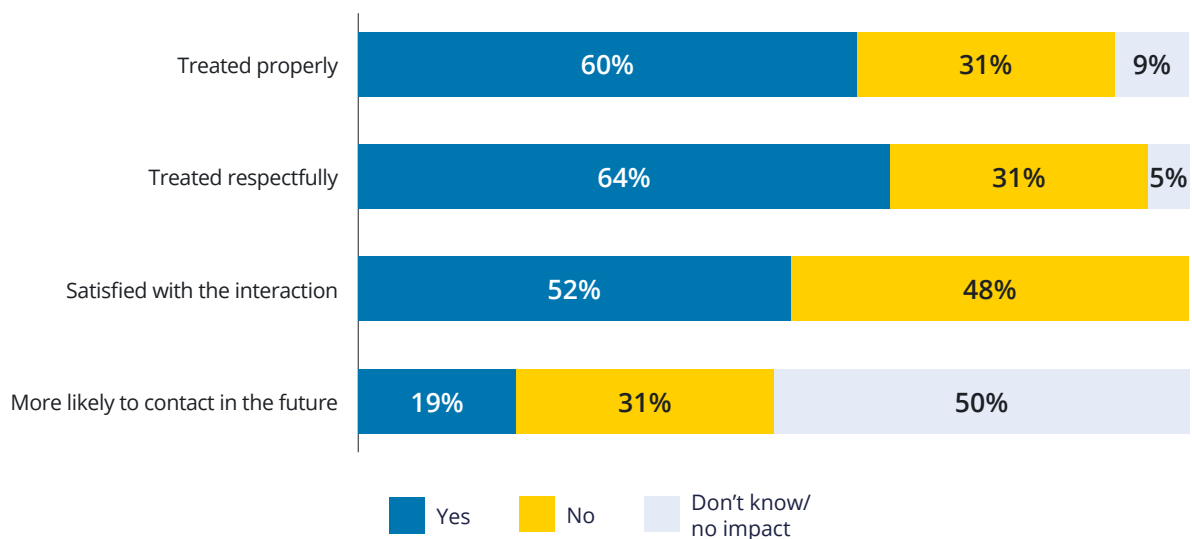
ask for directions; or report a crime, disturbance, or suspicious activity, and 18% for whom contact had been initiated by law enforcement, such as when being pulled over in a car while driving (9%) or a passenger (2%); being stopped or questioned on the street (4%); or as the result of a traffic accident (6%). Of the nearly one in five LGBTQ respondents (18%) for whom law enforcement had initiated contact in the past year, five had been arrested. Four of these five were LGBTQ people of color and were living below 200% FPL.

A prior Williams Institute study found that LGBTQ people were more likely than non-LGBTQ people to have had contact with police in the past year.<sup>70</sup> For example, more LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults reported having been stopped by police in a public place (6% vs. 1%) or while driving (19% vs. 8%), having been involved in a traffic accident where police responded (6% vs. 3%), and having sought help from police (22% vs. 11%).<sup>71</sup>

Among respondents who reported that law enforcement had initiated contact with them in the past year, 38% had been approached by the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, about one-third (32%) had been approached by other local police departments in California, and 17% had been in contact with the California Highway Patrol.

Respondents who reported that law enforcement had initiated contact with them in the past year had had mixed experiences with these contacts. In considering their most recent contact, almost one-third (31%) felt they had not been treated respectfully or properly and that the interaction made them less likely to contact law enforcement in the future for any reason. However, 19% said that the interaction made them more likely to contact law enforcement in the future, and more than half (52%) said they were satisfied with the interaction.

**Figure 55. Perceptions of most recent interaction with law enforcement among those for whom law enforcement initiated contact in the past year, LELAC**



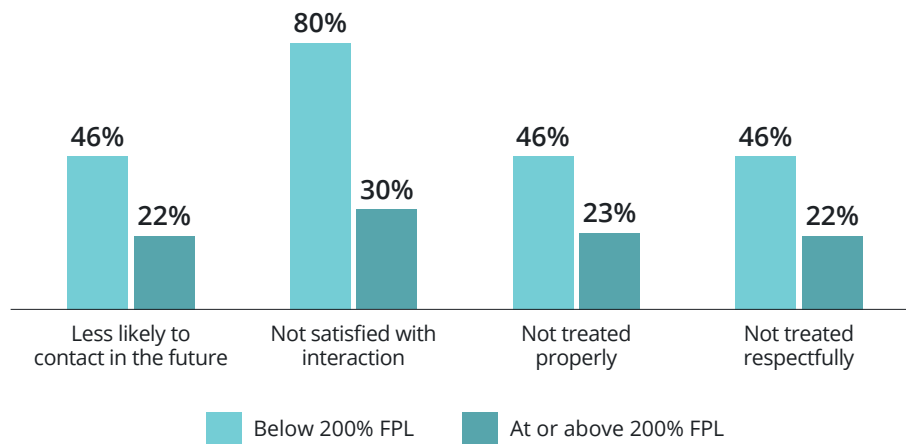
<sup>70</sup> Luhur, W., Meyer, I.H., & Wilson, B.D.M. (2021, May). Policing LGBTQ People. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Policing-LGBTQ-People-May-2021.pdf>

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

By comparison, the prior Williams Institute analysis of data collected from national surveys found that among LGBTQ people who had had contact with police in the past year, whether initiated by them or by law enforcement, 81% felt that the police had behaved properly during their most recent contact, and 77% said they were satisfied with the interaction.<sup>72</sup> Non-LGBTQ adults were more likely than non-LGBTQ adults to say that police had behaved properly during their most recent interaction (91%).<sup>73</sup> A slightly higher percentage of non-LGBTQ adults (85%) reported that they were satisfied with police during their most recent contact, but the difference was not statistically significant.<sup>74</sup> However, LGBTQ adults were more likely than non-LGBTQ adults to say that they were less likely to contact police in the future based on their most recent experience (22% vs. 6%).<sup>75</sup>

Among respondents with whom law enforcement initiated contact, those living below 200% FPL were approximately twice as likely to report that they had not been treated respectfully or properly, that they were not satisfied with the interaction, and that the interaction made them less likely to contact law enforcement in the future compared to those with higher incomes.

**Figure 56. Perceptions of most recent interaction with law enforcement among those for whom law enforcement initiated contact in the past year, by economic status, LELAC**



When asked for their suggestions for local elected officials, 8% of respondents had recommendations focused on the criminal legal system. Several respondents called for “defunding” or “abolishing” the criminal legal system or stopping law enforcement from targeting the LGBTQ community. Others called for “improving relations between police and LGBTQ people” through “training,” “monitoring,” and “hiring more LGBTQ people” in law enforcement. Others focused on having law enforcement take hate crimes against members of the LGBTQ community more seriously. These responses include:

*Don't go after sex workers. Especially transgender escorts.*

— Transgender sexual minority Latina in her 20s

<sup>72</sup> Luhur, W., Meyer, I.H., & Wilson, B.D.M. (2021, May). Policing LGBTQ People. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Policing-LGBTQ-People-May-2021.pdf>

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

*Defund the LAPD. Fund other forms of LGBTQ support.*

— Cisgender pansexual Asian man in his 30s

*Get a new sheriff, retrain police, and hire more LGBTQ people in law enforcement.*

— Cisgender bisexual White man in his 40s

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Strengthen relationships between law enforcement and LGBTQ communities through community policing efforts and initiatives.
- Provide training and resources to law enforcement to ensure that they are aware of and comply with non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies.
- Ensure that law enforcement departments are engaging in mandated training on the LGBTQ community and other marginalized populations.
- Enact, enforce, and strengthen policies that require law enforcement to respect individuals' gender identity and ensure safety in arrest processing, searches, and placement in police custody.
- Ensure that law enforcement is fully responding to, investigating, and accurately identifying, hate crimes motivated by victims' sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Support community policing efforts to engage in community outreach and build positive relationships between law enforcement and the LGBTQ community.
- Ensure that LGBTQ people are being considered for jobs in law enforcement by engaging in targeted outreach when hiring by, for example, participating in job fairs hosted by LGBTQ community organizations and creating outreach materials that demonstrate commitment to equity and inclusion.
- Consider community input on funding alternative community safety approaches.

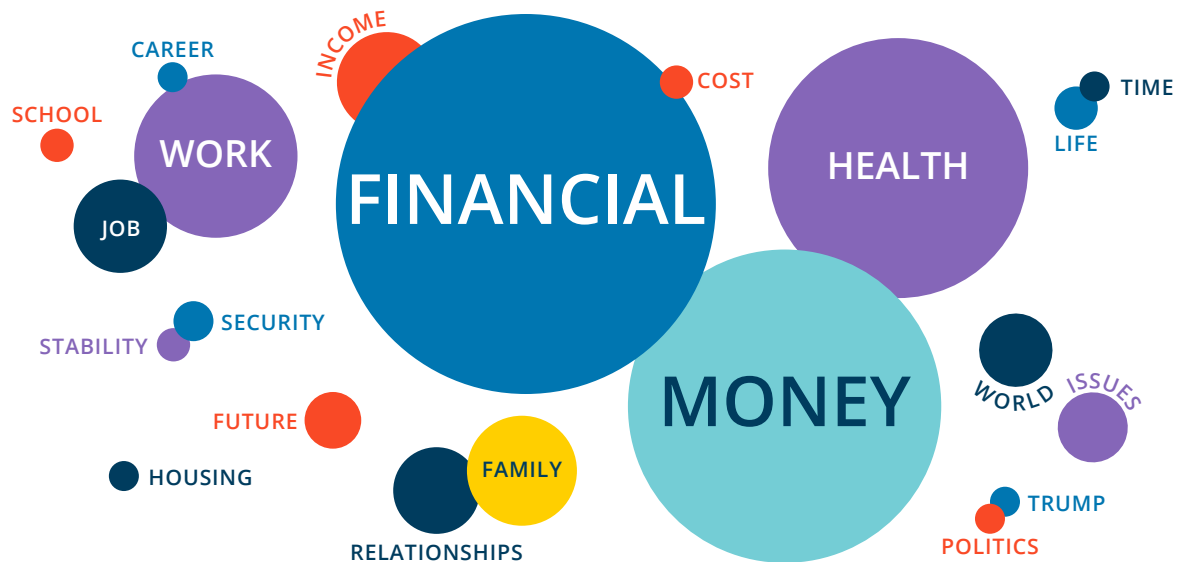
# ECONOMIC AND HEALTH DISPARITIES

## INCOME & FOOD INSECURITY

### KEY FINDINGS

- One-third of adults living in Los Angeles County, both LGBTQ (35%) and non-LGBTQ (33%), are living below 200% FPL.
  - This includes 13% of LGBTQ adults and 11% of non-LGBTQ adults who are living in poverty (below 100% FPL).
  - Among LGBTQ adults, transgender adults (47%) and adults of color (42%) are more likely to be living below 200% FPL than cisgender (33%) and White adults (21%).
- One-third (33%) of LGBTQ adults described their household's financial situation as just meeting basic expenses (24%) or as not having enough to meet basic expenses (9%).
  - However, nearly two-thirds (65%) of LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL described their household's financial situation as just meeting basic expenses (45%) or as not having enough to meet basic expenses (21%).
- Nearly one in three (32%) LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County live in households that experienced food insecurity in the prior year as did more than one in five (23%) non-LGBTQ adults.
  - More cisgender bisexual men (37%) and women (37%) had experienced food insecurity compared to cisgender gay men (22%) and lesbians (30%).
  - More LGBTQ people of color (42%) had experienced food insecurity compared to White adults (19%).
  - More LGBTQ adults (56%) living below 200% FPL had experienced food insecurity compared to those with higher incomes (19%).
- Only a third of income-eligible adults, both LGBTQ (37%) and non-LGBTQ (33%), in the county are utilizing CalFresh benefits.

Figure 57. Word cloud representing responses of LGBTQ respondents to the question, “What are your biggest sources of worry?”, LELAC



Respondents were asked, “What are your biggest sources of worry?” Economic stability emerged as the largest category of concern. Almost two-thirds (63%) of respondents were worried about economic stability, expressed through comments about one or more of the following: financial security (47%), employment (23%), income and costs of living in general (6%), and housing costs, specifically (6%). Some of these responses include:

*My biggest source of worry is not being able to take care of myself and my household.*

— Cisgender bisexual Black woman in her 30s

*El pago de facturas y ver que el dinero no alcanza para vivir dignamente. (“Paying the bills and seeing how the money isn’t enough to live a dignified life.”)*

— Cisgender gay Latino man in his 30s

*The cost of living in Los Angeles, no job security, inflation.*

— Cisgender lesbian Latina in her 40s

*Money in relation [to] the cost of living, taxes and low wages.*

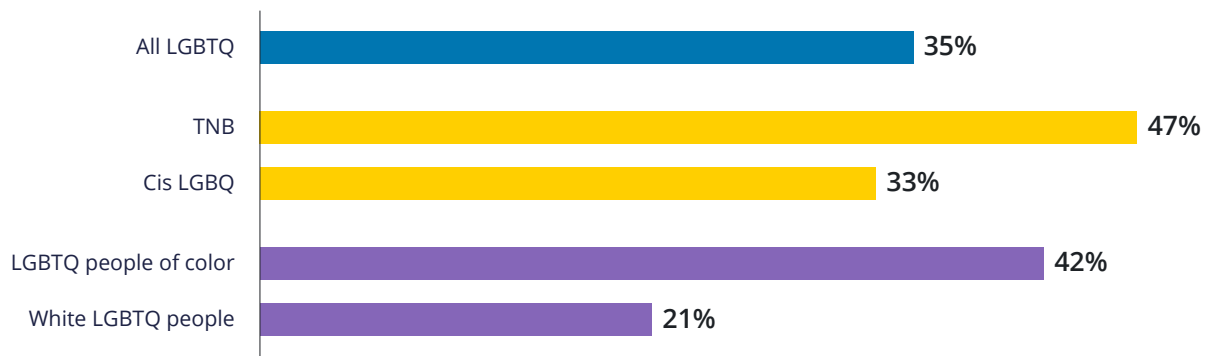
— Cisgender gay Latino in his 60s

## Household Income

One-third (33%) of adults in Los Angeles, including LGBTQ (35%) and non-LGBTQ (33%) adults, were living on less than 200% FPL.<sup>76</sup> This included 13% of LGBTQ adults and 11% of non-LGBTQ adults who were living in poverty (below 100% FPL).

Among LGBTQ adults, transgender and nonbinary adults and people of color were more likely to be living below 200% FPL relative to cisgender and White adults. Almost half (47%) of transgender adults were living below 200% FPL, compared to a third (33%) of cisgender adults. Twice as many LGBTQ people of color as White LGBTQ adults were living below 200% FPL (42% vs. 21%). Observed patterns are consistent with prior research on poverty in California and in the United States more broadly.<sup>77</sup>

Figure 58. Living below 200% FPL, all LGBTQ adults, by gender identity and race/ethnicity, LACHS, 2023



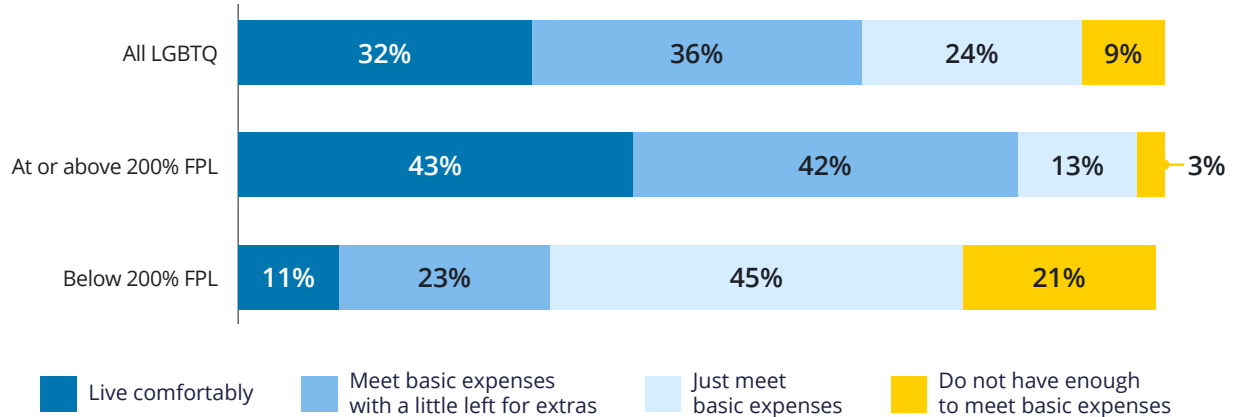
## Financial Insecurity

The extent to which LGBTQ people reported being able to live comfortably or under economic strain varied considerably among LGBTQ adults, with notable differences by household income level (Figure 59). One-third (33%) of LGBTQ adults described their household financial situation as just meeting basic expenses (24%) or as not having enough to meet basic expenses (9%). The majority (85%) of higher-income households reported being able to “live comfortably” (43%) or to “meet basic expenses with a little left for extras” (42%). In contrast, two-thirds (65%) of LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL described their household financial situation as “just meeting basic expenses” (45%) or indicated that they “don’t even have enough to meet basic expenses.”

<sup>76</sup> For a one-person household, living on less than 200% of the federal poverty level meant living on less than \$27,180 per year, for a two-person household, it meant living on less than \$36,620 per year, and for a three-person household, it meant living on less than \$46,060 per year. An estimated livable wage salary for typical expenses in Los Angeles for a one-person household is \$55,385, for a two-adult household it’s \$74,182, and for two adults and one child it’s \$110,952. City of Los Angeles (2024, Feb 1). July 1, 2024 Minimum Wage Ordinance Wage Rate Increase. Office of Wage Standards, City of Los Angeles. <https://wagesla.lacity.org/sites/g/files/wph1941/files/2024-02/2024%20MWR%20Increase%20Memo.pdf>; Amy K. Glasmeier, A.K. (2024, Feb. 14) Living Wage Calculator. Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Accessed on May 13, 2024, <https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06037>

<sup>77</sup> Choi, S. K., Badgett, M. V. L., & Wilson, B. D. M. (2019). State Profiles of LGBT Poverty in the United States. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/state-lgbt-poverty-us/>; Badgett, M. V. L., Choi, S. K., & Wilson, B. D. M. (2019). LGBT Poverty in the United States: A study of differences between sexual orientation and gender identity groups. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/National-LGBT-Poverty-Oct-2019.pdf>

Figure 59. Household financial situation, all LGBTQ adults and by economic status, LACHS, 2023



## Household Food Insecurity and CalFresh Participation

More LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults lived in households that met criteria for food insecurity in the past 12 months (32% vs. 23%).<sup>78</sup> Among LGBTQ adults:

- Larger proportions of cisgender bisexual men (37%) and women (37%) had experienced food insecurity in the past year compared to cisgender gay men (22%) and lesbians (30%).
- More LGBTQ adults of color (42%) had experienced food insecurity in the past year compared to White LGBTQ adults (19%).
- More LGBTQ adults (56%) living below 200% FPL had experienced food insecurity in the prior year compared to those living in households with higher incomes (19%).<sup>79</sup>

All observed patterns are consistent with national research.<sup>80</sup>

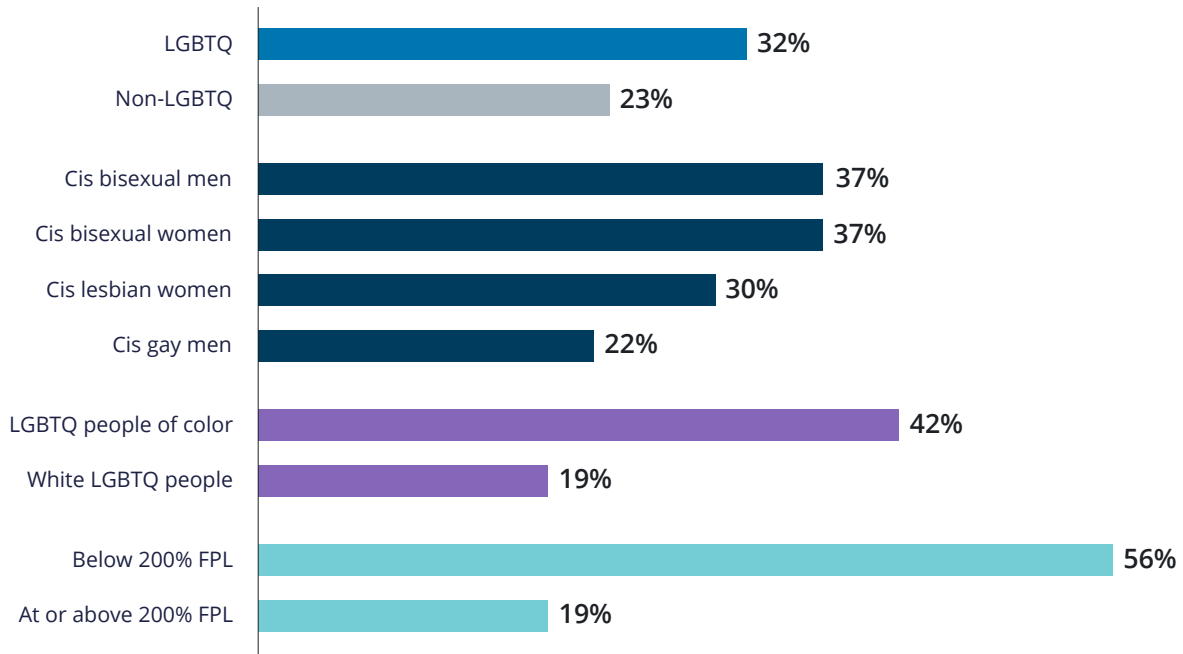
<sup>78</sup> The Household Food Security Scale was scored by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health according to guidance published in Blumberg, S. J., Bialostosky, K., Hamilton, W. L., & Briefel, R. R. (1999). The effectiveness of a short form of the Household Food Security Scale. *Am J Public Health*, 89(8), 1231–1234. doi:10.2105/ajph.89.8.1231; Differences in the odds of food insecurity versus being food secure between LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ persist even after differences in the age composition of each group are taken into consideration (age-adjusted Odds Ratio 1.4; 95% Confidence Interval, 1.1, 1.7).

<sup>79</sup> Among LGBTQ adults, 40% of transgender people and 30% of cisgender people met criteria for household food insecurity in the prior 12 months. These differences were not statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$ .

<sup>80</sup> Conron, K.J., Guardado, R., O'Neill, K., & Wilson, B.D.M. (2022). Food Insecurity Among LGBT Adults During the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Williams Institute. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/LGBT-Food-Insufficiency-Apr-2022.pdf>



Figure 60. Household food insecurity in the prior 12 months, by LGBTQ status and among LGBTQ adults by sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, and economic status, LACHS, 2023



Worry about access to food was embedded in financial concerns expressed by some respondents.

*No tener trabajo, no tener dinero para pagar mi renta y no poder tener comida. ("Not having a job, not having money to pay my rent and not being able to have food.")*

— Cisgender gay Latino in his 50s

*Paying for rent and groceries.*

— Cisgender bisexual woman in her 50s

*Money, food, housing, funds for a bearable retirement not fraught with worry.*

— Cisgender gay White man in his 60s

Utilization of CalFresh was comparable across income-eligible LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ adults (37% and 33%, respectively).<sup>81</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Many people in California who are living under 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL) are income eligible for CalFresh. <https://dps.lacounty.gov/en/food/calfresh/gross-income.html> The 2023 Los Angeles County Health Survey asked about CalFresh usage among adults whose household income was below 185% of the FPL or whose income was not known or reported.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase access to employment opportunities for LGBTQ people who are out of work, including connecting LGBTQ residents to county Economic and Workforce Development Department resources.<sup>82</sup>
- Support LGBTQ organizations to engage in workforce development, job placement, and job retention activities with LGBTQ residents.<sup>83</sup>
- Ensure that LGBTQ people in Los Angeles County are familiar with public benefits options and enrollment processes, including General Relief and CalFresh.<sup>84</sup>
- Support LGBTQ organizations in providing food pantries, e-gift cards to support food purchase, and assisting with enrollment in public benefits programs.<sup>85</sup>
- Continue to increase minimum wages to a level that would allow workers to cover housing costs, accrue savings for emergencies, and manage fluctuations in living expenses (e.g., gas prices, rent increases).

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<sup>82</sup> Los Angeles County Economic and Workforce Development Department <https://ewddlacity.com/index.php/employment-services>

<sup>83</sup> Redfield, E., Viveros, M., & Conron, K. (2024). Employment as a Path Towards Greater Food Security for LGBTQ+ Youth: Convening Report. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/No-Kid-Hungry-Convening-Jan-2024.pdf>

<sup>84</sup> See NYC Department of Social Service's LGBTQ outreach effort to promote use of food benefits (SNAP). [https://www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/fighting\\_food\\_insecurity\\_in\\_the\\_lgbtq\\_community.page](https://www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/fighting_food_insecurity_in_the_lgbtq_community.page)

<sup>85</sup> Conron, K., Redfield, E., Kajokaite, K., Gonzalez, A., Viveros, M., & Flynn, L. (2024). The Role of LGBTQ+ Youth Organizations in Addressing Food Insufficiency. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/lgbtq-youth-programs-hunger/>

## HOUSING

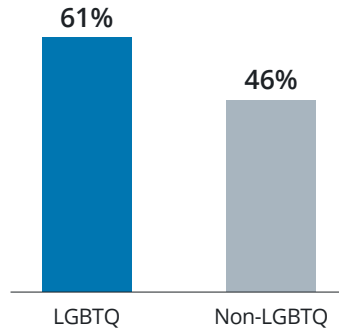
### KEY FINDINGS

- Many LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County are vulnerable to housing insecurity—loss of stable, safe housing due to insufficient access to housing they can afford.
  - More LGBTQ adults (61%) than non-LGBTQ adults (46%) rent their housing.
  - About three-quarters (74%) LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL are renters.
  - Two-thirds of cisgender bisexual men (66%) and women (68%) are renters, compared to about half of cisgender gay men (55%) and lesbians (50%).
- High housing costs, particularly costs that are high relative to income, increase housing insecurity. More LGBTQ than non-LGBTQ households in Los Angeles County are “cost burdened” or “severely cost burdened” by housing expenses.
  - More than half (61%) of LGBTQ adults and 53% of non-LGBTQ adults spend 30% or more of their household income on housing.
  - One-quarter (26%) of LGBTQ adults and 21% of non-LGBTQ adults spend over 50% of their household’s total monthly income on rent or a mortgage.
  - Nearly half (49%) of LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL spend 50% or more of their household income on housing, compared to 14% of those with higher incomes.
- More LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults had been delayed in paying or unable to pay their mortgage or rent at least once in the past two years (19% vs. 15%).
  - Three times as many LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL had difficulty paying for housing compared to those with higher incomes (33% vs. 11%).
  - More LGBTQ people of color than White LGBTQ adults had had any difficulty paying for housing (22% vs. 14%).
- More than one in 10 (11%) LGBTQ adults and 6% of non-LGBTQ adults in the county have been homeless, including not having their own place to live or sleep, at some time in the prior five years.
- More than one in 10 (12%) LGBTQ adults reported having a landlord or realtor in Los Angeles County refuse to rent or sell to them because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, with 5% reporting having had such an experience in the prior five years.
  - More cisgender lesbians (36%) and gay men (13%) reported such treatment than cisgender bisexual men (6%) and women (1%).
- More than one in 10 (11%) LGBTQ adults reported verbal harassment from their landlord, other tenants, or neighbors, with 8% reporting that they had had these experiences within the past five years.
  - More LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL (22%) reported such harassment than with those with higher incomes (6%).

## Home Ownership

Consistent with national research, more LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults reported that they rent housing (versus owning their own homes) (61% v. 46%).<sup>86</sup> Historically, renting has been associated with an increased risk of housing insecurity, since rent can increase annually, while mortgage payments tend to be more stable.<sup>87</sup> Home ownership, however, requires far more cash upfront.

Figure 61. Rent housing by LGBTQ status, LACHS, 2023



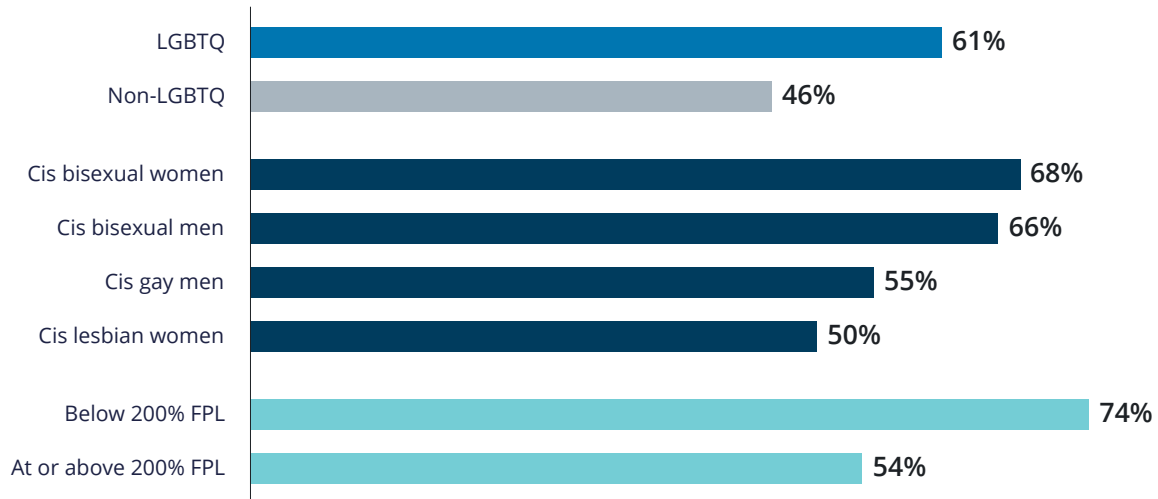
Among LGBTQ adults, larger proportions of cisgender bisexual men (66%) and women (68%) rented compared to cisgender gay men (55%) and lesbians (50%).<sup>88</sup> More LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL rented compared to those with higher incomes (74% vs. 54%).

<sup>86</sup> Wilson, B.D.M, O'Neill, K., & Vasquez, L. (2021). LGBT Renters and Eviction Risk. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/LGBT-Eviction-Risk-Aug-2021.pdf>; Wilson, B.D.M., Choi, S.K., Harper, G.W., Lightfoot, M., Russell, S., & Meyer, I. H. (2020). Homelessness Among LGBT Adults in the U.S. The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/lgbt-homelessness-us/>

<sup>87</sup> Solá, A.T. (2024, Feb 21). With mortgage rates remaining high, renting is less expensive than buying. CNBC. Personal Finance. <https://www.cnbc.com/2024/02/21/with-mortgage-rates-staying-high-renting-is-less-expensive-than-buying-.html#:~:text=The%20costs%20of%20owning%20a,increase%20with%20each%20lease%20renewal>

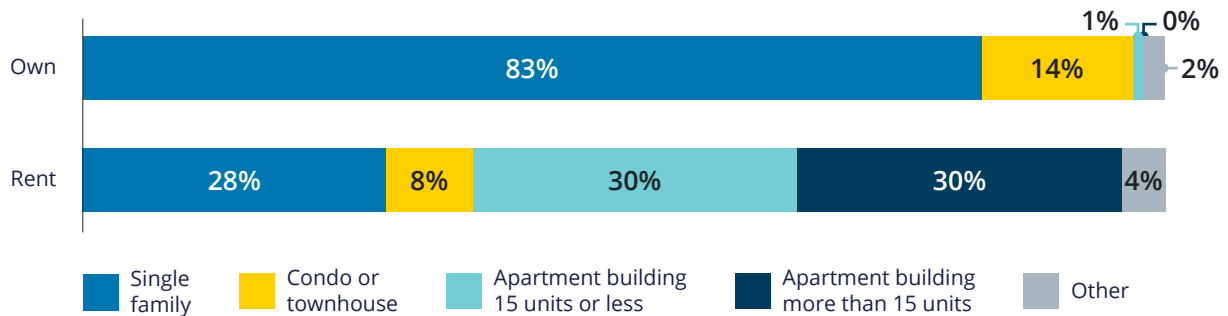
<sup>88</sup> The proportion renting among all cisgender gay/lesbian adults (54%; 95% Confidence Interval 48%, 60%) was statistically significantly smaller than the proportion renting among all cisgender bisexual adults (72%; 95% Confidence Interval 65%, 79%).

Figure 62. Rent housing, LGBTQ adults by sexual orientation and economic status, LACHS, 2023



More than half (60%) of all renters, LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ alike, lived in apartments, whereas 83% of homeowners lived in single-family homes.

Figure 63. Housing type by own/rent, all adults, LACHS, 2023



## Housing Insecurity

For the purposes of this study, and following thresholds used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, we defined “cost-burdened” households as those that spend over 30% of household income on rent or mortgage payments, and “severely cost-burdened” as those who spend over 50% of their household income on housing costs.

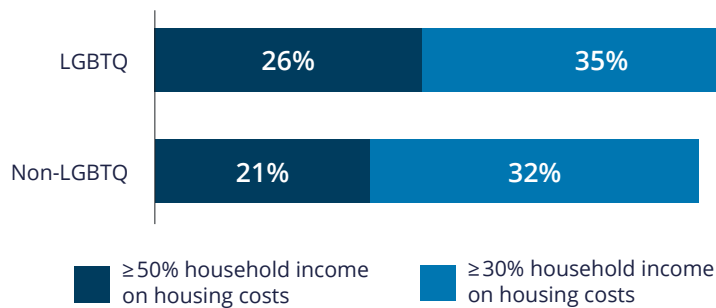
<sup>89</sup>More LGBTQ than non-LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County are “cost burdened” or “severely cost burdened” by housing expenses. More than half of LGBTQ adults (61%) and 53% of non-LGBTQ adults spend 30% or more of their household income on housing. Among LGBTQ adults, 79% of adults living

<sup>89</sup> Our measure did not include the cost of utilities and in that way differs slightly from how housing costs are defined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. See [https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/cp/CHAS/bg\\_chas.html](https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/cp/CHAS/bg_chas.html). If our measure included utility costs, even more households would be defined as cost-burdened and severely cost-burdened. See, Angst, S., Rosen, J., De Gregorio, S. & Painter, G. (2023). How Do Renters Survive Unaffordability? Household-level Impacts of Rent Burden in Los Angeles. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07352166.2023.2235039>

below 200% FPL spend 30% or more of their incomes on housing, compared to 52% of those with higher incomes.

Slightly more LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults spend over 50% of their household's total monthly income on rent or a mortgage (26% vs. 21%). Among LGBTQ adults, half (49%) of those living below 200% FPL spent 50% or more of their income on housing, compared to 14% of those with higher incomes.

**Figure 64. Housing cost burden by LGBTQ status, LACHS, 2023**



These high rates of cost-burdened and severely cost-burdened LGBTQ households are consistent with other research focused more generally on households in Los Angeles.<sup>90</sup> Prior research also shows that people in households that are cost or rent-burdened reduce consumption of basic necessities, work more hours, and are more likely to take in additional residents to help meet housing costs.<sup>91</sup> For example, a recent study that focused on residents of South Central Los Angeles found that “two-thirds of rent-burdened households cut back on food, half cut back on clothing, half cut back on entertainment or family activities, half deferred bill payments and/or took on more debt, one-third decreased their transportation costs, and one-fifth went without medicine or seeing a doctor.”<sup>92</sup>

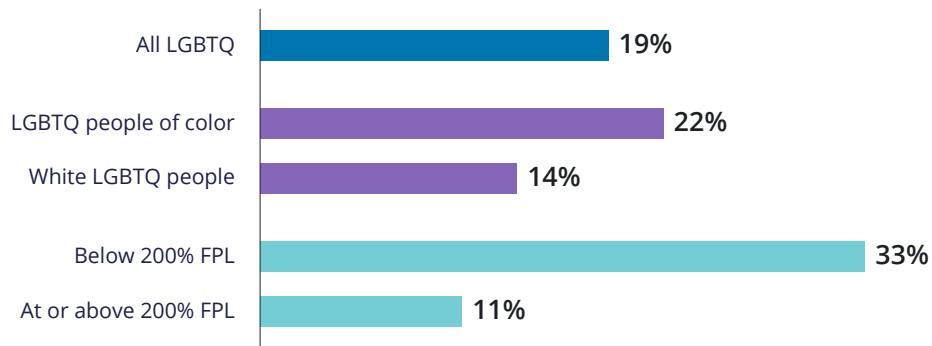
Slightly more LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults had delayed paying or been unable to pay their mortgage or rent at least once in the past two years (19% vs. 15%). Among LGBTQ adults, more people of color had had difficulty paying for housing compared to White adults (22% vs. 14%). Almost one-third (33%) of LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL had had difficulty paying for housing, compared to 11% of those with higher incomes.

<sup>90</sup> See, e.g., Manzella, D.M., (2023, May). Los Angeles County 2023: Affordable Housing Needs Report. California Housing Partnership. [https://chpc.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Los-Angeles-County\\_Housing-Report\\_2023.pdf](https://chpc.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Los-Angeles-County_Housing-Report_2023.pdf); Bonilla, M. & Zong, J. (2024, Jan.). Facts About Latino Renters in Los Angeles County. Latino Data Hub. <https://latinodatabhub.org/#/research/facts-about-latino-renters-in-los-angeles-county>

<sup>91</sup> See, e.g., Angst, S., Rosen, J., De Gregorio, S. & Painter, G. (2023). How Do Renters Survive Unaffordability? Household-level Impacts of Rent Burden in Los Angeles. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07352166.2023.2235039>; Qin, A. (2021, May). Renter Vulnerabilities in Los Angeles. *Neighborhood Data for Social Change*. <https://la.myneighborhooddata.org/2021/05/renter-vulnerabilities-in-los-angeles/>

<sup>92</sup> Angst, S., Rosen, J., De Gregorio, S. & Painter, G. (2023). How Do Renters Survive Unaffordability? Household-level Impacts of Rent Burden in Los Angeles. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07352166.2023.2235039>

Figure 65. Any difficulty paying housing expenses in the past two years, all LGBTQ adults and by race/ethnicity and economic status, LACHS, 2023



When asked their greatest sources of worry, several respondents mentioned financial concerns that included their ability to sustain housing:

*Advocate for housing!! Housing costs (and child care costs) are the biggest barrier to staying in L.A. County and raising a family.*

— Cisgender White gay man in his 30s

*Not being able to pay rent every month.*

— Cisgender bisexual Black woman in her 40s

*Having enough money for things I need/want. Worrying about being evicted.*

— Transgender Latina in her 20s

Others mentioned habitability issues with their current housing:

*Rainwater coming into my home.*

— Transgender straight Latino in his 60s

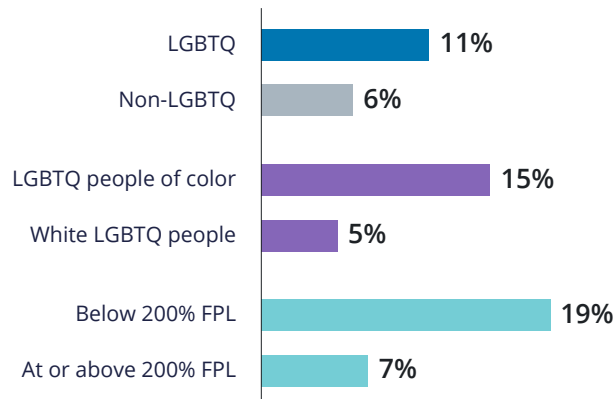
*Poverty and housing with black mold [and a] slumlord.*

— Cisgender gay Black man in his 50s

More than one in 10 LGBTQ (11%) and 6% of non-LGBTQ adults had been unhoused, including not having their own place to live or sleep, at some time in the prior five years.<sup>93</sup> Among LGBTQ adults, experiences of being unhoused were more common among people of color (15%) than among White adults (5%), and more common among adults living below 200% FPL (19%) than those with higher incomes (7%).

<sup>93</sup> The difference between LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ adults in the proportions reporting being homeless in the prior 5 years was statistically significantly different at  $p < 0.05$ .

Figure 66. Unhoused at any time in the prior five years, by LGBTQ status and among LGBTQ adults by race/ethnicity and economic status, LACHS, 2023



Some LGBTQ respondents felt that being unhoused was a real possibility in their lives. They identified their biggest worries as:

*Unemployment and losing my home and becoming homeless.*

— Cisgender gay Latino in his 50s

*Not having a roof over my head.*

— Cisgender lesbian Latina in her 30s

*Income for food, rent, [the] idea of being homeless, my sister who has cancer, my other sister [who is] sick.*

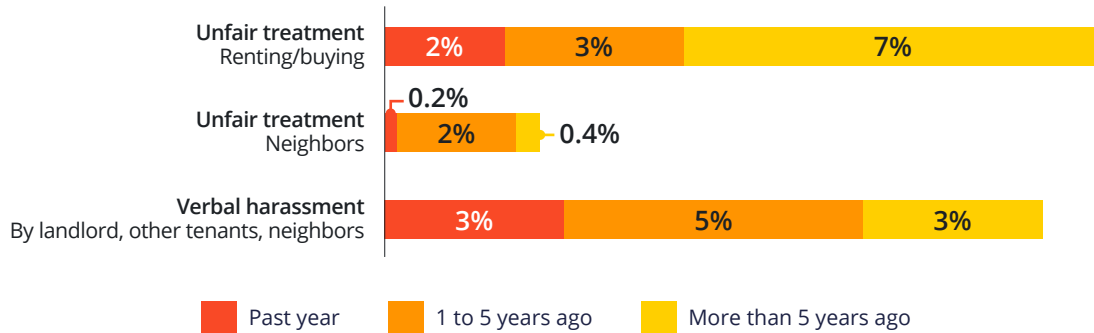
— Cisgender gay man of color in his 60s

### Unfair Treatment and Verbal Harassment

In addition to not being able to afford adequate and safe housing, LGBTQ adults also face discrimination and harassment from landlords, realtors, other tenants, and neighbors. For example, approximately one out of eight LGBTQ adults (12%) reported having had a landlord or realtor in Los Angeles County refuse to sell or rent to them because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, with 5% reporting that they had had such an experience in the past five years. A smaller percentage of LGBTQ adults (3%) reported unfair treatment from neighbors.



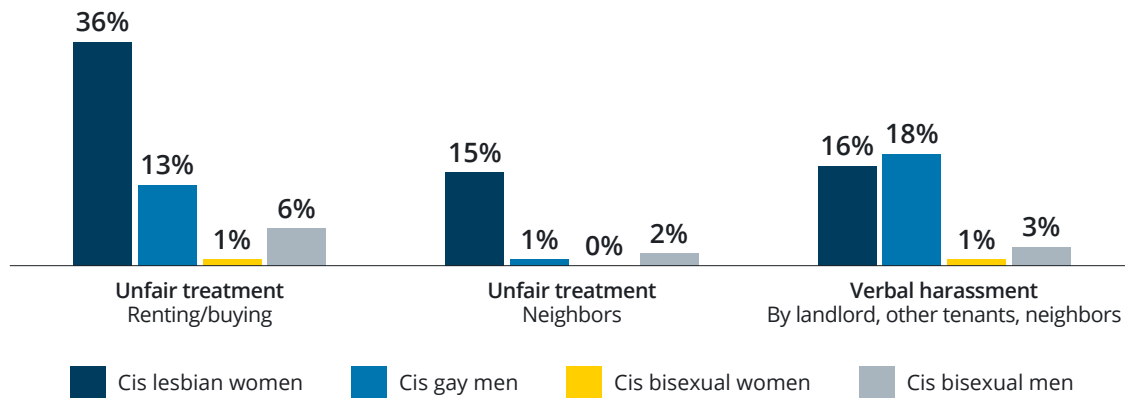
**Figure 67. Experiences of unfair treatment and verbal harassment because of sexual orientation or gender identity from landlord or realtor, other tenants, and neighbors in Los Angeles County, by most recent experience, LELAC**



Among cisgender adults, more than one-third of lesbians (36%) and 13% of gay men reported unfair treatment related to housing, compared to only 6% of bisexual men and 1% of bisexual women. While 15% of lesbians reported unfair treatment from neighbors, that was true for only 1% of gay men, 2% of bisexual men, and no bisexual women.

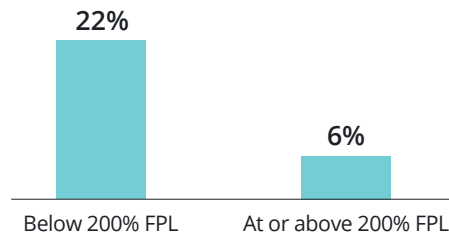
More than one in 10 (11%) LGBTQ adults reported verbal harassment from their landlord, other tenants, or neighbors, with most adults (8%) reporting that these experiences had occurred within the past five years. Cisgender lesbians (16%) and gay men (18%) were more than five times more likely than bisexual men (3%) and women (1%) to report verbal harassment from their landlord, other tenants, or neighbors.

**Figure 68. Experiences of unfair treatment and verbal harassment because of sexual orientation or gender identity from landlord, other tenants, and neighbors in Los Angeles County, by sexual orientation, LELAC**



Further, those living below 200% FPL were more than three times more likely than with those with higher household incomes to report verbal harassment from a landlord, other tenants, or neighbors (22% vs. 6%).

Figure 69. Experiences of verbal harassment because of sexual orientation or gender identity from landlord, other tenants, and neighbors in Los Angeles County, by economic status, LELAC



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure that LGBTQ people and their needs are considered in county housing policies and programs.
- Prevent eviction by conducting outreach to LGBTQ communities about housing resources within the county, including assistance with vouchers for rental assistance and emergency and legal assistance in case of eviction or foreclosure.<sup>94</sup>
- Sustain efforts to stabilize rents; support rent control policies that increase access to housing for all Los Angeles County residents, including LGBTQ people.
- Invest in creating permanently affordable housing for low-income residents of Los Angeles County, including LGBTQ people, through new building and the conversion of existing structures.
- Ensure compliance with existing sexual orientation and gender identity-related non-discrimination protections in housing, starting with apartment complexes where low-income renters are concentrated.
- Provide training and resources to landlords to ensure that they are aware of and comply with non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies and obligations to ensure that all tenants have equal use and enjoyment of the property.

<sup>94</sup> See Eviction Help for L.A. City Renters and other resources at the Los Angeles Housing Department: <https://housing.lacity.org/>.

## HEALTH

### KEY FINDINGS

#### Overview

While LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ adults have similar self-reports on their overall health and access to health insurance, on 11 out of 16 more specific health indicators—including those related to mental health and substance abuse—more LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County have worse outcomes than non-LGBTQ adults.<sup>95</sup> On three other indicators, health is similar across LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ adults. On two indicators, fewer LGBTQ adults have poor health than non-LGBTQ adults. Among LGBTQ adults, those living below 200% FPL are the mostly likely to have poor health.

#### Mental health

- One in five (22%) LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County said they were living with anxiety—far more than the 8% of U.S. adults in the general population.
- Symptoms of depression were twice as common among LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults (21% vs. 10%).
  - Among LGBTQ adults, 30% of those living below 200% FPL had symptoms of depression, compared to 16% of those with higher incomes.
- Lifetime suicide attempts were more common among LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults (13% vs. 3%).
  - Among LGBTQ adults, suicide attempts were reported by more:
    - transgender and nonbinary adults than cisgender LGBQ adults (24% vs. 11%)
    - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL than adults living at higher incomes (20% vs. 9%)
    - cisgender bisexual women (21%) compared to cisgender bisexual men (6%), cisgender lesbians (5%), and cisgender gay men (8%).

#### Alcohol and marijuana misuse

- Almost one-third (32%) of LGBTQ adults had engaged in binge drinking in the past month, compared to 21% of non-LGBTQ adults.
  - Among LGBTQ adults, binge drinking was more common among:
    - cisgender LGBQ adults than among transgender and nonbinary adults (34% vs. 20%)
    - LGBTQ adults living at or above 200% FPL than those with lower incomes (35% vs. 26%)

<sup>95</sup> Differences in health between LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ adults remain even after differences in the age composition of each group are taken into consideration. Findings from age-adjusted logistic regressions on file with authors.

- Heavy marijuana use was more common among LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults (15% vs. 5%).
  - Among LGBTQ adults, heavy marijuana use was more common among adults living below 200% FPL than those living on higher incomes (20% vs. 12%).

### Access to behavioral health care

- While almost half (46%) of LGBTQ adults had received mental health care in the prior 12 months, about one in four (26%) expressed an unmet need for care.
  - Among those who expressed an unmet need for mental health care, barriers included:
    - concerns about cost (75%) and/or lack of insurance coverage (45%)
    - not knowing how or where to get treatment (64%)
    - being unable to find a program or health care professional that they wanted to go to (60%) and/or that is supportive of LGBTQ people (31%)
  - More LGBTQ adults felt that they should have received professional counseling, medication, or other treatment for alcohol or drug use in the prior 12 months (6%) than those who actually received such care (4%).

### Intimate partner violence

- More than one-third of LGBTQ adults (37%) have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV)—twice as many as non-LGBTQ adults (18%).
  - Half (50%) of cisgender bisexual women reported IPV.

### General access to health care

- Few adults ages 18 to 64 — both LGBTQ (5%) and non-LGBTQ (6%) — were without health insurance, and among adults aged 65 and older, the uninsurance rate was below 1%.
- Coverage type varied among LGBTQ adults:
  - Among those ages 18 to 64, more LGBTQ people of color than White LGBTQ adults had public insurance (39% vs. 18%), and more LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL had public insurance than those with higher incomes (60% vs. 17%).
  - Among adults ages 65 and older, more LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults had public insurance versus private insurance (73% vs. 58%).
- More LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults had difficulty accessing medical care that they needed (32% vs. 23%).
  - Among LGBTQ adults, difficulty accessing care was more common among:
    - LGBTQ people of color than White LGBTQ adults (36% vs. 27%)
    - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL than adults with higher incomes (43% vs. 27%)

### Health related quality of life

- LGBTQ adults average more days of poor mental health per month than non-LGBTQ adults (9 vs. 4 days).
  - Among cisgender LGBTQ adults, bisexual women had more days of poor mental health per month (11) than lesbians (6) and gay men (7).
  - Among LGBTQ adults, those living below 200% FPL reported more days of poor mental health (10) compared to LGBTQ adults with higher incomes (8).

### Chronic disease risks

- Nearly one in 10 (9%) LGBTQ adults smoke regularly compared to 6% of non-LGBTQ adults.
  - Among LGBTQ adults, smoking is more common among:
    - cisgender gay and bisexual men than cisgender lesbians and bisexual women (13% vs. 5%)
    - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL than those with higher incomes (15% vs. 6%)
- Somewhat fewer LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults were overweight (body mass index [BMI] 25.0-29.9) (28% vs. 33%) or obese (BMI > 30.0) (28% vs. 30%) according to Centers of Disease Control and Prevention criteria.
  - Among cisgender LGBTQ adults:
    - More lesbians had a BMI of 30.0 or greater (42%) than gay men (21%).
    - More LGBTQ people of color than White LGBTQ adults had a BMI of 30.0 or greater (32% vs. 21%).
  - More LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL than those with higher household incomes had a BMI of 30.0 or greater (37% vs. 23%).

### Unfair treatment

- In the past year, about one in 10 (11%) LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County did not go to health care providers in order to avoid unfair treatment, and 8% did not go to avoid being threatened or physically attacked because of their LGBTQ status.
  - Transgender and nonbinary adults (21%) were approximately twice as likely to report that they did not access health care to avoid unfair treatment as cisgender LGBTQ adults (11%).

### Out to health care providers

- Among LGBTQ adults with health care providers, just over half reported being out to all of their providers (51%), and almost one in four (23%) reported not being out to any of their health care providers.

- Among LGBTQ adults, in terms of not being out to any of their health care providers:
  - cisgender bisexual women (54%) and men (37%) were much more likely to not be out than cisgender lesbians (6%) and gay men (6%).
  - Transgender and nonbinary adults were more likely to not be out than LGBQ adults (32% vs. 23%).
  - People of color were more likely to not be out than White adults (28% vs. 14%).
  - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were more likely to not be out than those with higher incomes (36% vs. 17%).

### Denied care or harassed while accessing health care

- More than one in 10 LGBTQ adults (11%) reported having been denied medical care or provided inferior care because of their sexual orientation or gender identity while living in Los Angeles County, including 8% who had had these experiences in the past five years.
  - Cisgender lesbians (18%) and gay men (15%) were more likely to have had this experience than cisgender bisexual women (4%) and men (5%).
- More than one in 10 LGBTQ adults (11%) reported that they had been verbally harassed because of their LGBTQ status while accessing health care in Los Angeles County.
  - Cisgender lesbians (20%) and gay men (17%) were more likely to report these experiences than bisexual women (2%) and bisexual men (5%).
  - LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL (17%) were more likely to have experienced verbal harassment than those with higher incomes (8%).

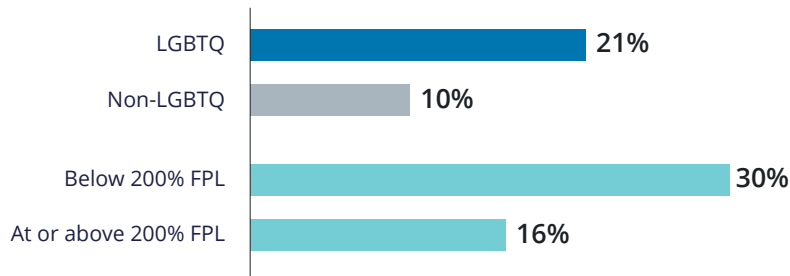
## Mental Health

### Anxiety, Depression, and Suicidality

One in five (22%) LGBTQ adults had experienced symptoms of moderate to severe anxiety—far more than the 8% of U.S. adults in the general population.<sup>96</sup> Symptoms of depression were twice as common among LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults (21% vs. 10%). Among LGBTQ adults, 30% of those living below 200% FPL met criteria for depression, compared to 16% of those with higher incomes.

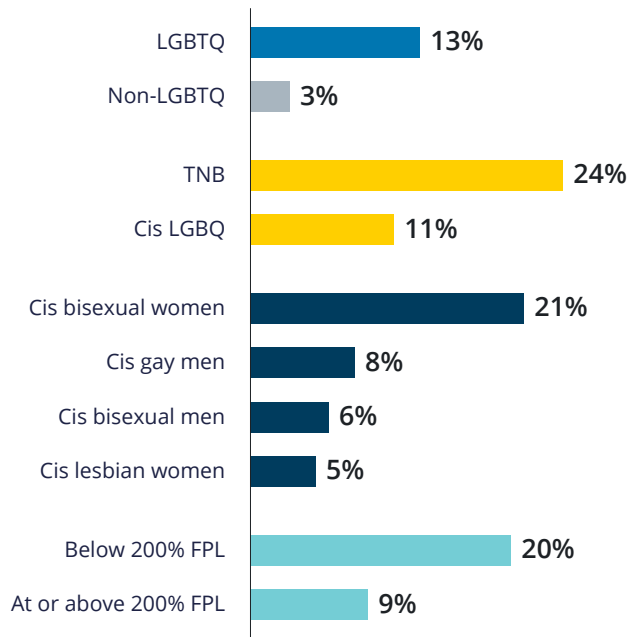
<sup>96</sup> Terlizzi, E.P. & Schiller, J.S. (2021, Mar.). Estimates of Mental Health Symptomatology, by Month of Interview: United States, 2019. National Center for Health Statistics. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/mental-health-monthly-508.pdf>

**Figure 70. Symptoms of depression by LGBTQ status and among LGBTQ adults by economic status, LACHS 2023**



Lifetime suicide attempts were also more commonly reported by LGBTQ than non-LGBTQ adults (13% vs. 3%) (Figure 71). Among LGBTQ adults, nearly one in four (24%) transgender and nonbinary adults and one in five adults living below 200% FPL (20%) had attempted suicide—approximately twice as many as among cisgender LGBQ adults (11%) and those with higher incomes (9%). Among cisgender LGBQ adults, bisexual women were far more likely to report a suicide attempt (21%) compared to cisgender bisexual men (6%), cisgender lesbians (5%), and cisgender gay men (8%).

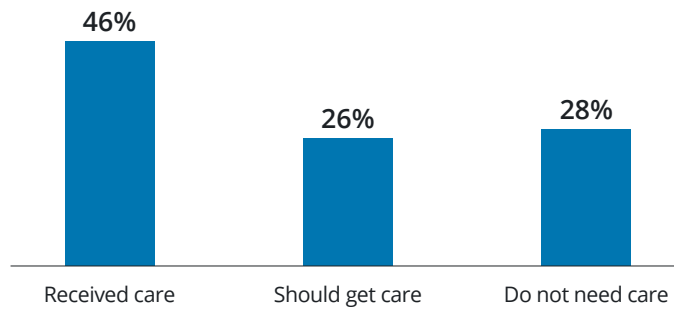
**Figure 71. Lifetime suicide attempt by LGBTQ status and among LGBTQ adults, LACHS, 2023**



### Mental Health Care

Almost half (46%) of LGBTQ adults had received mental health care in the past 12 months; however, slightly more than one in four (26%) indicated that they “should get” care (but were not currently receiving care) (Figure 72). The remainder (28%) did not feel that they needed care.

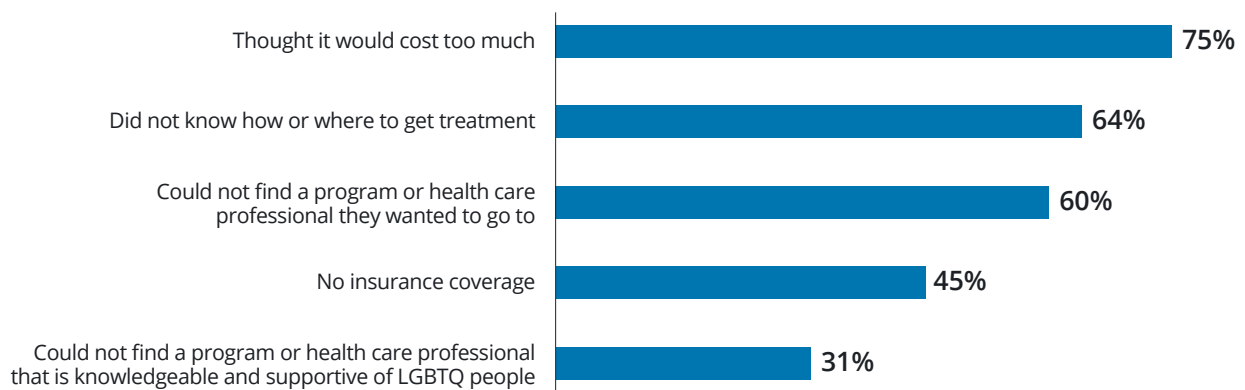
**Figure 72. Received mental health care in the past 12 months or should get such care among LGBTQ adults, LELAC**



By comparison, about a third (34%) of LGB adults in California who completed the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) (2020–2022 pooled) reported having taken a prescription medication for an emotional/mental health issue or having connected with a mental health professional online in the prior year. Almost one in four (23%) LGB adults who completed CHIS (2020–2022 pooled) reported needing help for an emotional or mental health problem or alcohol or drug use in the year prior to survey completion, but not receiving it.<sup>97</sup>

As shown in Figure 73, among LGBTQ adults who expressed an unmet need for mental health care, concerns about cost (75%), not knowing how or where to get treatment (64%), and being unable to find a program or health care professional that they wanted to go to (60%) were the top barriers to getting care. A lack of insurance coverage for mental health treatment was a barrier for almost half (45%) of those with an unmet need for care. Being unable to find a program or a health care professional who is knowledgeable and supportive of LGBTQ people was a barrier for almost one-third (31%) of LGBTQ adults who felt that they should get mental health care.

**Figure 73. Barriers to mental health care among LGBTQ adults who felt they should get care, LELAC**



<sup>97</sup> AskCHIS query. <https://ask.chis.ucla.edu/> Needed mental health care for emotional/mental health problems or use of alcohol/drug by sexual orientation (4 levels), by “Connected with mental health professional online in past 12 months,” restricted to LGB adults, and by “Has taken prescription medicine for emotional/mental health issue in past year,” restricted to LGB adults; all years 2020-2022 pooled. (Calculations on file with authors)



By comparison, among adults (LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ) who responded to the 2021 National Household Survey of Drug Use and Health with a perceived unmet need for mental health care, cost was the top barrier (43%), followed by not knowing where to go for services (35%).<sup>98</sup>

When asked what elected officials should do to improve the quality of life for LGBTQ people in Los Angeles County, several respondents explicitly mentioned supporting mental health, particularly through access to health care. Their recommendations included:

*Support and fund mental health programs!*

— Cisgender gay White man in his 30s

*Trauma-informed mental health care.*

— Cisgender lesbian Asian woman in her 30s

*Be trained in LGBTQ and mental health.*

— Nonbinary sexual minority White person in their 50s.

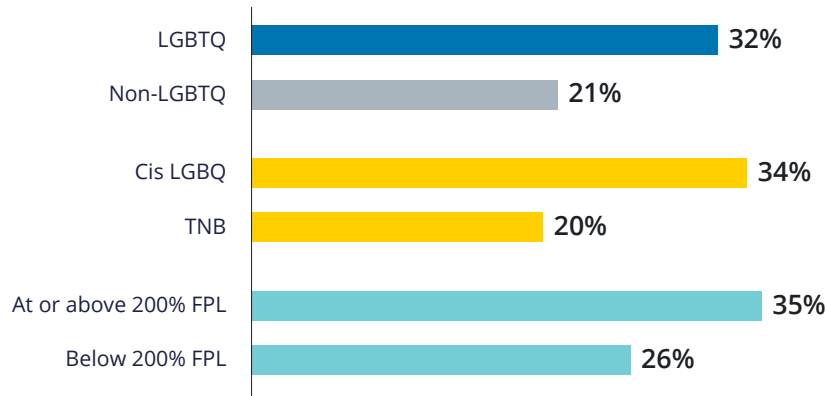
## Alcohol and Marijuana Misuse

Almost a third (32%) of LGBTQ adults reported binge drinking<sup>99</sup> in the prior month compared to 21% of non-LGBTQ adults (Figure 74). Among LGBTQ adults, binge drinking was more common among cisgender adults than among transgender and nonbinary adults (34% vs. 20%) and among those with higher incomes than those living below 200% FPL (35% vs. 26%).

<sup>98</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2022). Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators in the United States: Results from the 2021 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (HHS Publication No. PEP22-07-01-005, NSDUH Series H-57). Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt39443/2021NSDUHFRRRev010323.pdf>

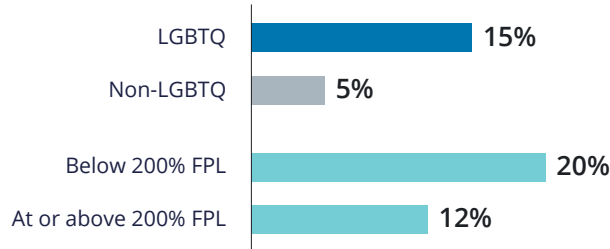
<sup>99</sup> The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) defines binge drinking as a pattern of drinking alcohol that brings blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to 0.08%—or 0.08 grams of alcohol per deciliter—or more. This typically happens if a person assigned female at birth has four or more drinks, or a person assigned male at birth has five or more drinks, within about 2 hours. See, e.g., National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. (2024, Feb.). Understanding Binge Drinking. <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/brochures-and-fact-sheets/binge-drinking>. The LACHS 2023 survey asked anyone identified as female at their time of birth if they had four or more drinks “on the same occasion” in the past 30 days, and all other respondents (sex assigned male at birth, “other” sex assigned at birth, and “prefer not to answer”), if they had 5 or more drinks “on the same occasion” in the past 30 days.

**Figure 74. Binge drinking by LGBTQ status and among LGBTQ adults by gender identity and economic status, LACHS, 2023**



Heavy marijuana use, meaning daily or near daily use in the prior month,<sup>100</sup> was reported by three times as many LGBTQ adults as non-LGBTQ adults (15% vs. 5%) (Figure 75). Among LGBTQ adults, heavy marijuana use was more common among those living below 200% FPL than those with higher incomes (20% vs. 12%).

**Figure 75. Daily/near daily marijuana use by LGBTQ status and among LGBTQ adults by economic status, LACHS, 2023**



### Treatment for Alcohol or Drug Use

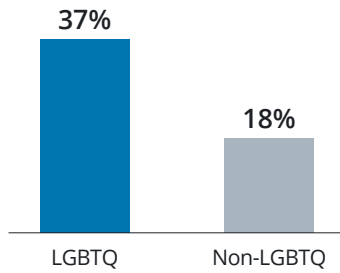
More LGBTQ adults felt that they should have received professional counseling, medication, or other treatment for alcohol or drug use in the prior year but did not (6%) than those who actually received such care (4%).

### Intimate Partner Violence

Twice as many LGBTQ adults (37%) as non-LGBTQ adults (18%) reported any lifetime intimate partner violence (IPV) victimization. IPV was defined as including physical or sexual violence; stalking; being insulted, humiliated, or intimidated; and having an intimate partner attempt to control you. Among cisgender LGBQ adults, half (50%) of bisexual women had experienced IPV—more than among cisgender gay men (28%). About one-third of lesbians (33%) and bisexual men (32%) reported IPV victimization.

<sup>100</sup> Daily or near daily marijuana use was operationalized as use on 20 or more of the prior 30 days.

Figure 76. Lifetime IPV, by LGBTQ status, LACHS, 2023

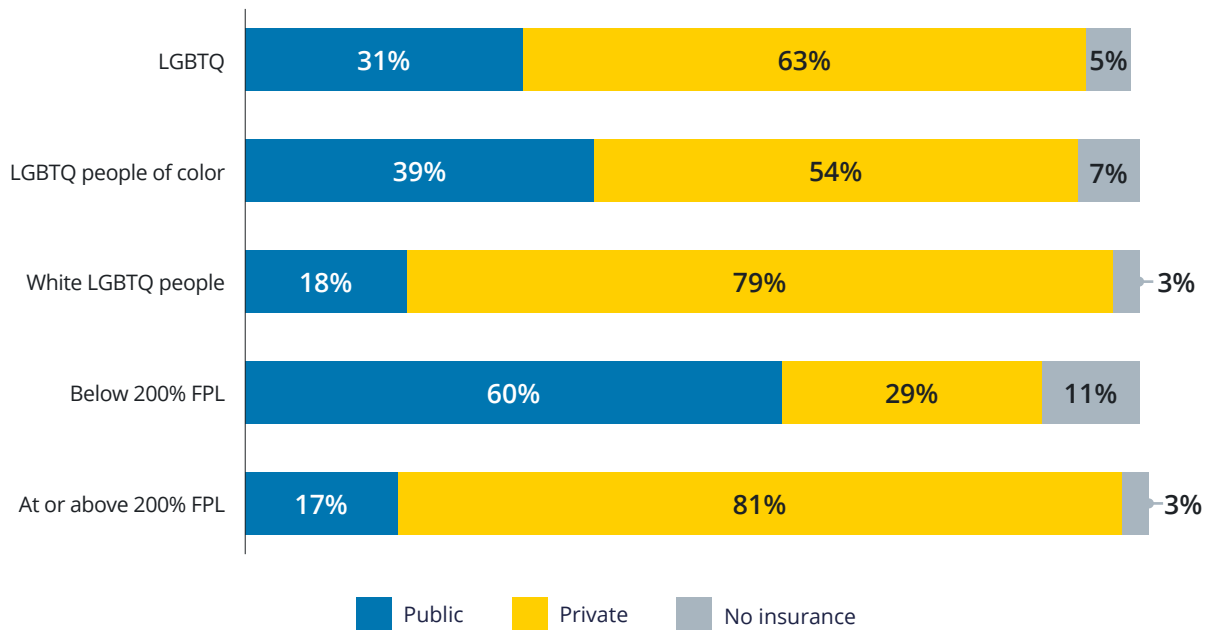


## Health Care Access

### Health Insurance Type

Among adults ages 18 to 64, health insurance coverage did not differ significantly between LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ adults, and few adults were uninsured. However, as shown in Figure 77, 11% of LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL had no health insurance. In addition, coverage type varied among LGBTQ adults. More LGBTQ people of color and those living below 200% FPL reported public insurance coverage than White adults and those with higher incomes.

Figure 77. Type of health insurance among LGBTQ adults ages 18–64 years old by race/ethnicity and economic status, LACHS, 2023

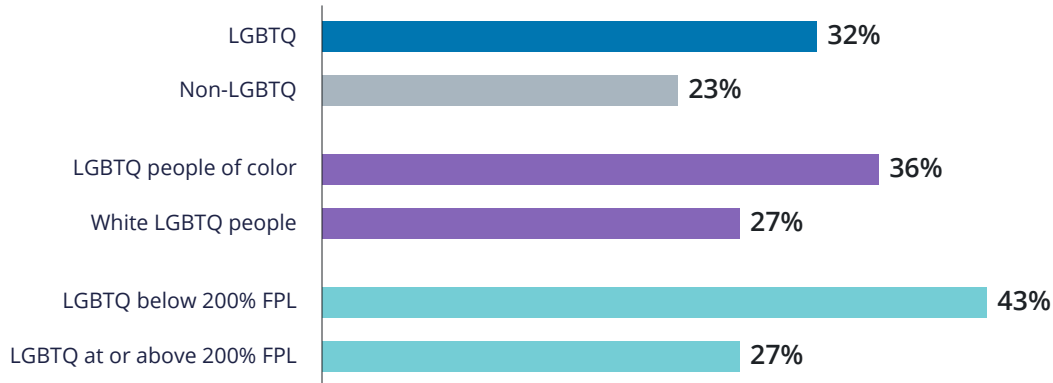


Among all adults ages 65 and older, fewer than 1% were uninsured; however, more LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults had public insurance versus private insurance (73% vs. 58%).

### Difficulty Accessing Care

Somewhat more LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults had difficulty accessing the medical care they needed (32% vs. 23%). More LGBTQ people of color and LGBTQ people living below 200% FPL reported difficulty accessing care compared to White LGBTQ adults and those with higher incomes (Figure 78).

Figure 78. Very or somewhat difficult to access needed medical care among LGBTQ adults, by LGBTQ status, race/ethnicity, and economic status, LACHS, 2023

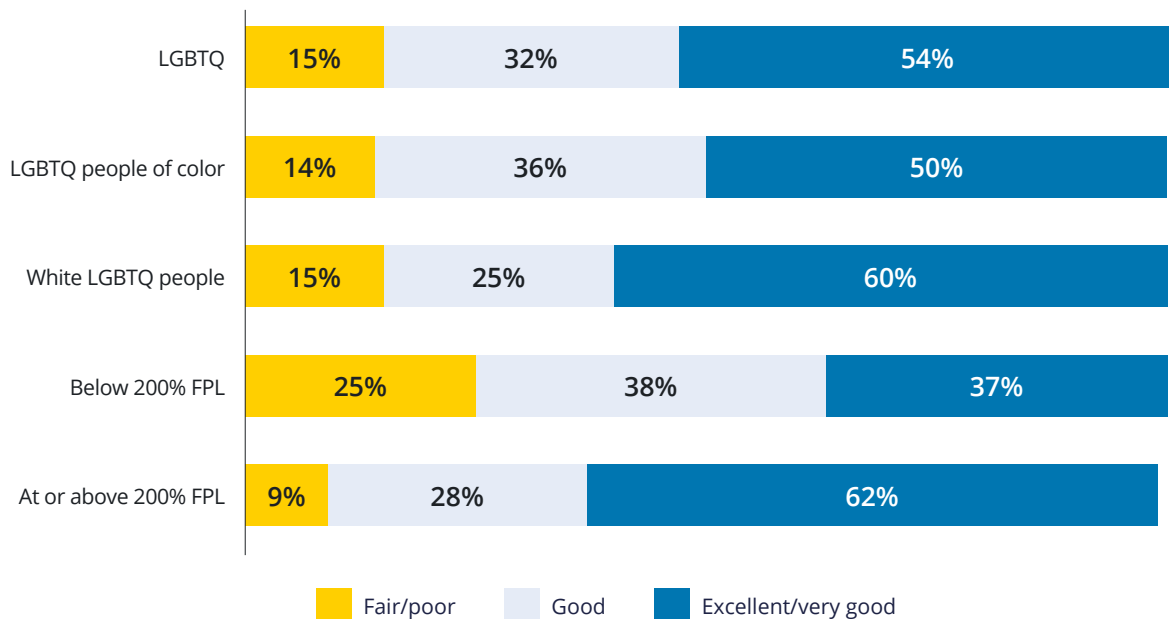


### Health Related Quality of Life

#### Perceived Health Status

Self-rated health was comparable between LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ adults. However, as shown in Figure 79, among LGBTQ adults, more White LGBTQ adults and LGBTQ adults with higher incomes than LGBTQ people of color and those living below 200% FPL reported that they were in excellent or very good health.

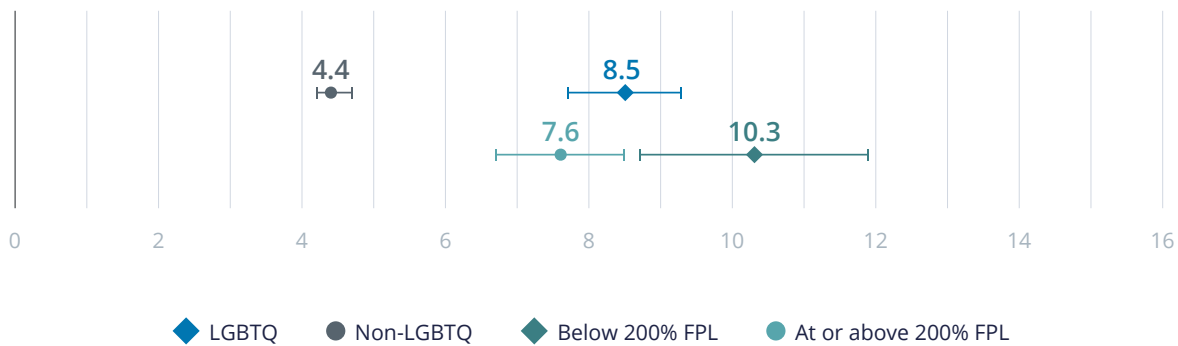
Figure 79. Self-rated health among LGBTQ adults, by race/ethnicity and economic status, LACHS, 2023



### Poor Health Days

LGBTQ adults, on average, reported more days of poor mental health, including stress, depression, and problems with emotions, in the prior 30 days than non-LGBTQ adults (9 vs. 4 days). Among LGBTQ adults, those living below 200% FPL reported more days of poor mental health (10 days) compared to those with higher incomes (8 days).

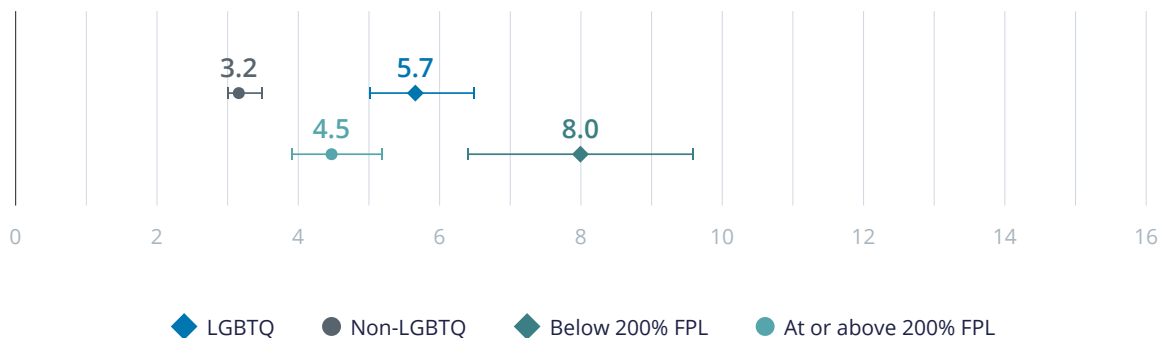
**Figure 80. Mean number of days of poor mental health in the past 30 days by LGBTQ status and among LGBTQ adults, by economic status, LACHS, 2023**



Note: Error bars shown in figures above represent 95% confidence intervals around the mean estimates.

When asked the number of days in the past 30 days that their daily activities, such as self-care, work, or recreation, were limited by poor physical or mental health, LGBTQ adults reported, on average, twice as many days with activity limitations than non-LGBTQ adults (6 vs. 3 days). LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL reported more days with activity limitations (8 days) than those with higher incomes (5 days).

**Figure 81. Mean number of days of activity limitations in the past 30 days, by LGBTQ status and economic status, LACHS, 2023**

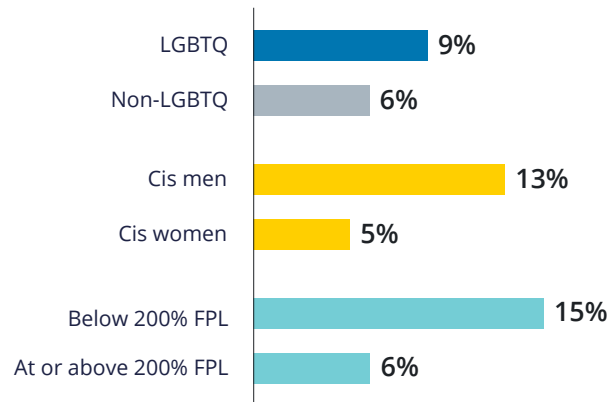


Note: Error bars shown in figures above represent 95% confidence intervals around the mean estimates.

## Chronic Disease Risks

Almost one in 10 (9%) LGBTQ adults reported that they currently smoke, compared with 6% of non-LGBTQ adults (Figure 82). Among LGBTQ adults, more cisgender gay and bisexual men than lesbian and bisexual women were smokers (13% vs. 5%). Smoking was almost three times as common among LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL as among those with higher incomes (15% vs. 6%).

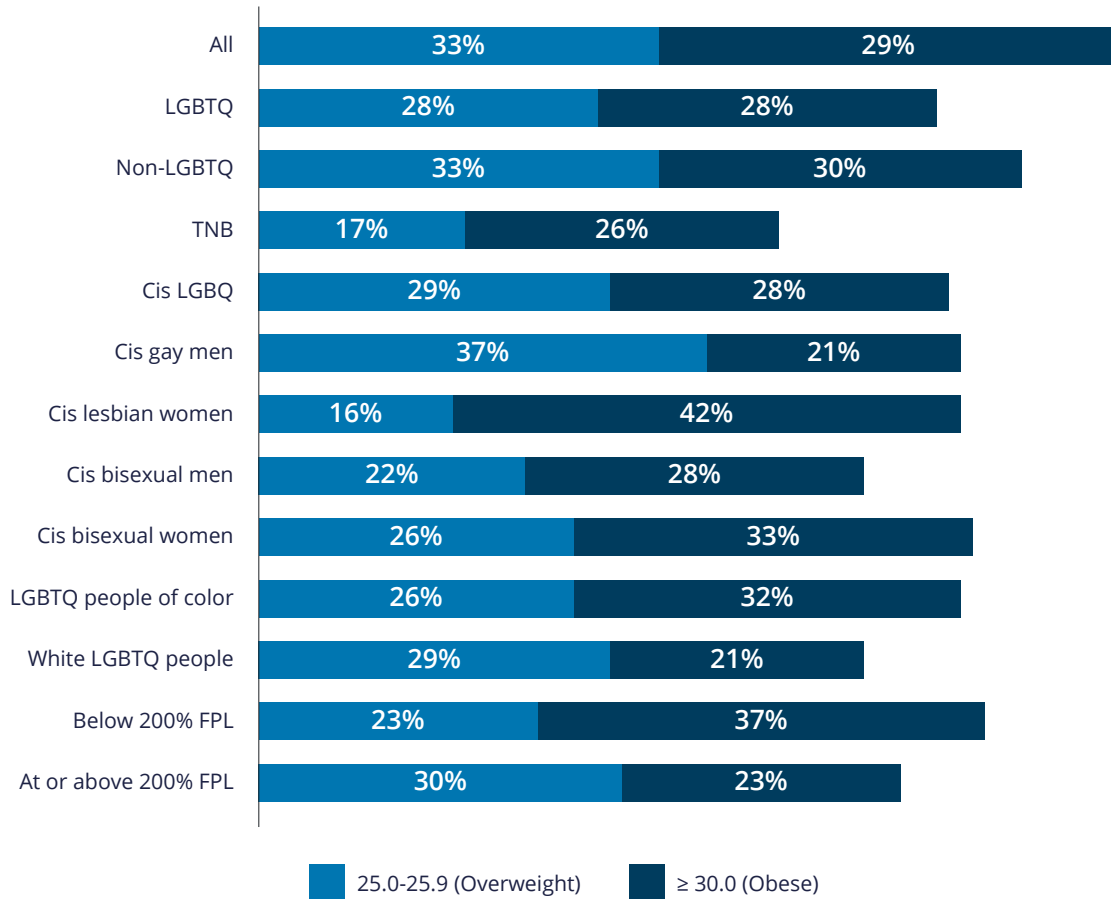
**Figure 82. Current smoker, by LGBTQ status and among LGBTQ adults by gender and economic status, LACHS, 2023**



Somewhat fewer LGBTQ adults had a body mass index (BMI) > 25 than non-LGBTQ adults. A BMI > 25 is considered to exceed a healthy weight for a person's height by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). A BMI of 25.0 to 29.9 is considered overweight by the CDC and a BMI of 30.0 or greater is referred to as obesity by the CDC. Somewhat fewer LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults were overweight (28% v. 33%) or obese (28% v. 30%).

Although a BMI of 30.0 or greater was relatively common among both transgender or nonbinary adults (26%) and cisgender LGBQ adults (28%), fewer than one in five (17%) transgender or nonbinary adults were overweight compared to nearly one in three cisgender LGBQ adults (29%). Among cisgender LGBQ adults, more lesbians had a BMI of 30.0 or greater (42%) than gay men (21%). A BMI of 30.0 or greater was also more common among LGBTQ people of color than White LGBTQ adults (32% v 21%). A BMI of 30.0 or greater was also more common among LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL than among those with higher household incomes (37% v 23%).

Figure 83. Weight status (BMI) by LGBTQ status and among LGBTQ participants, by gender identity, sexual orientation, gender, race/ethnicity, and economic status, LACHS, 2023

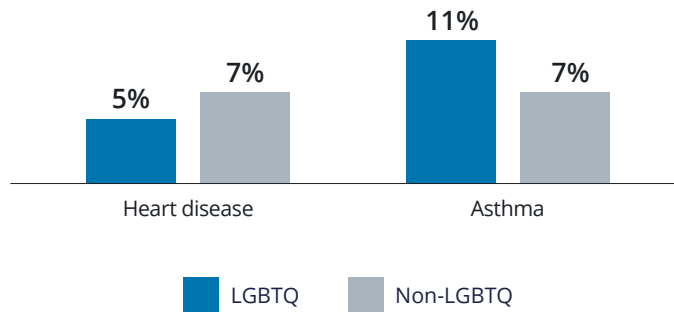


High blood pressure and high cholesterol were reported by similar proportions of LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ adults. Among all adults, 28% had high blood pressure, and 33% had high cholesterol. High blood pressure and high cholesterol were most common among cisgender gay men (37% and 40%, respectively). This may be due, at least in part, to the older age composition of this group (more than half of cisgender gay men in the sample were over the age of 50) relative to other cisgender LGBQ adults.

**Chronic Conditions**

Diagnoses of heart disease were reported by more non-LGBTQ adults than LGBTQ adults (7% vs. 5%). This is not unexpected, given that 46% of non-LGBTQ adults were 50 years of age or older, compared to 30% of LGBTQ adults. Asthma diagnoses were more common among LGBTQ adults than non-LGBTQ adults (11% vs. 7%). Approximately 26% of cisgender gay men reported an HIV diagnosis.

Figure 84. Chronic disease diagnoses among adults by LGBTQ status, LACHS, 2023

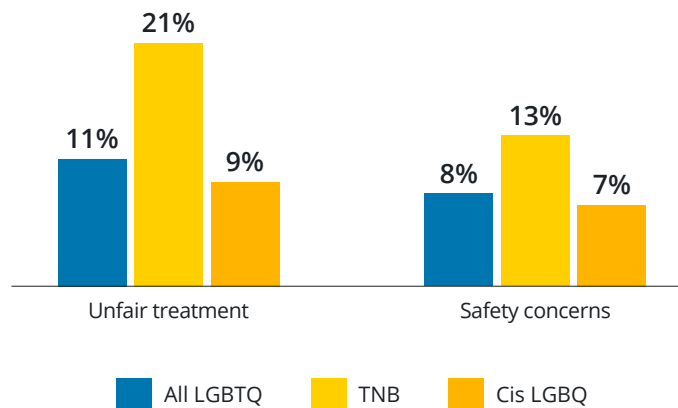


## Health Care Discrimination

### Avoiding Treatment

About one in 10 (11%) LGBTQ adults in Los Angeles County had not gone to health care providers in the prior year in order to avoid unfair treatment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, and 8% did not go in order to avoid being threatened or physically attacked for that reason. Transgender and nonbinary adults (21%) were approximately twice as likely as cisgender LGBTQ adults (9%) to report that they had not accessed health care in order to avoid unfair treatment.

Figure 85. LGBTQ adults who avoided health care providers in the past year in order to avoid poor treatment or for safety concerns based on sexual orientation or gender identity, all adults and by gender identity, LELAC



By comparison, a 2022 study by the Center for American Progress found that 23% of LGBTQ respondents had avoided getting needed medical care in the past year due to discrimination or disrespect by providers. In that study, transgender adults had been more likely than cisgender LGBTQ adults to avoid health care due to discrimination or disrespect (37% vs. 14%).<sup>101</sup>

<sup>101</sup> Medina, C. & Mahowald, L. (2023, Jan. 12). Discrimination and Barriers to Well-Being: The State of the LGBTQI+ Community in 2022. Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/discrimination-and-barriers-to-well-being-the-state-of-the-lgbtqi-community-in-2022/>.

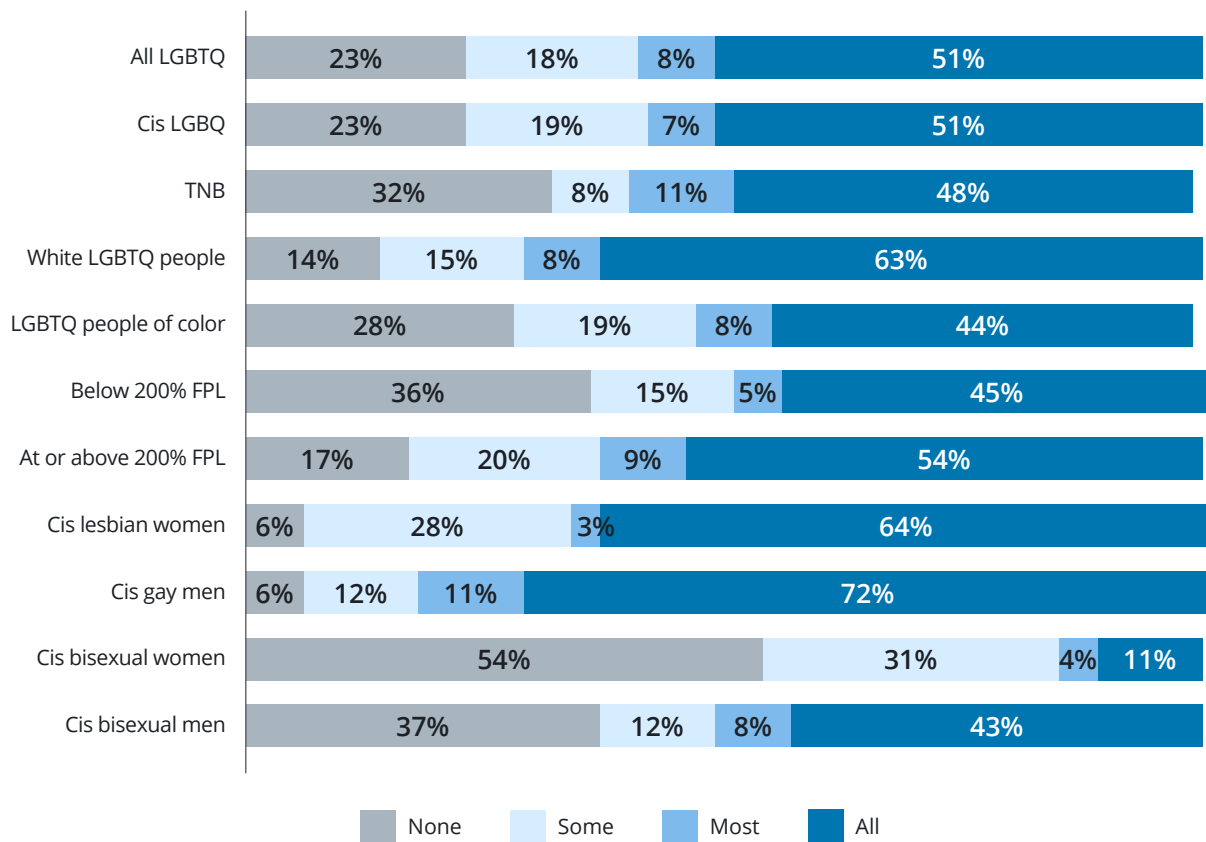


### Outness

Among LGBTQ adults with health care providers, just over half reported being out to all of their providers (51%), and almost one in four (23%) reported not being out to any of their health care providers. Among LGBTQ adults, in terms of not being out to any of their health care providers:

- Cisgender bisexual women (54%) and men (37%) were much more likely to not be out than cisgender lesbians (6%) and gay men (6%).
- Transgender and nonbinary adults were more likely to not be out than cisgender LGBTQ adults (32% vs. 23%).
- People of color were more likely to not be out than White adults (28% vs. 14%).
- Those living below 200% FPL were more likely to not be out than those with higher incomes (36% vs. 17%).

**Figure 86. Level of outness to health care providers, all adults and by gender, race/ethnicity, and economic status, LELAC**

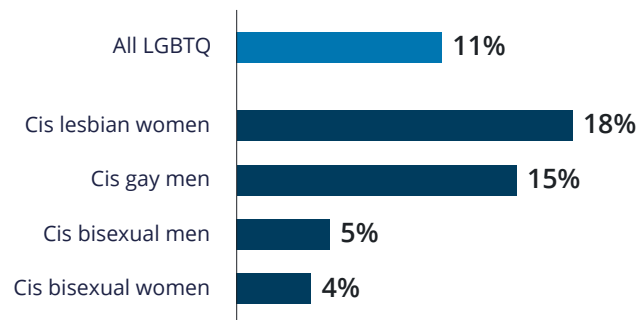


Note: These percentages are of those who responded none, some, most, or all. They do not include respondents who selected that the question did not apply to them or who did not know their level of outness to providers. See [Supplemental Tables](#).

### Inferior Medical Care

More than one in 10 LGBTQ adults (11%) reported that they had been denied medical care or provided inferior care because of their sexual orientation or gender identity while living in Los Angeles County. Most (8%) had had these experiences within the past five years. More cisgender lesbians (18%) and gay men (15%) reported having had this experience than cisgender bisexual men (5%) and women (4%).

**Figure 87. Experiences of being denied medical care or provided inferior care because of sexual orientation or gender identity in Los Angeles County, all adults and by sexual orientation, LELAC**



By comparison, A 2022 Williams Institute study of health care access in California based on data from the California Health Interview Survey found that 42% of transgender adults and 28% of cisgender LGB adults had experienced unfair treatment when getting medical care at some point in their lives.<sup>102</sup> In addition, the analysis of KFF's 2023 Racism, Discrimination, and Health Survey found that nationally, 33% of LGBT adults had been treated unfairly or with disrespect by a health care provider within the past three years, compared to 15% of non-LGBT adults.<sup>103</sup>

### Verbal Harassment

More than one in 10 LGBTQ adults (11%) reported having been verbally harassed because of their sexual orientation or gender identity while accessing health care in Los Angeles County. By comparison, the 2022 Center for American Progress study found that 10% of cisgender LGBQ adults and 16% of transgender adults reported that health care providers had used harsh or abusive language when treating them in the prior year.<sup>104</sup>

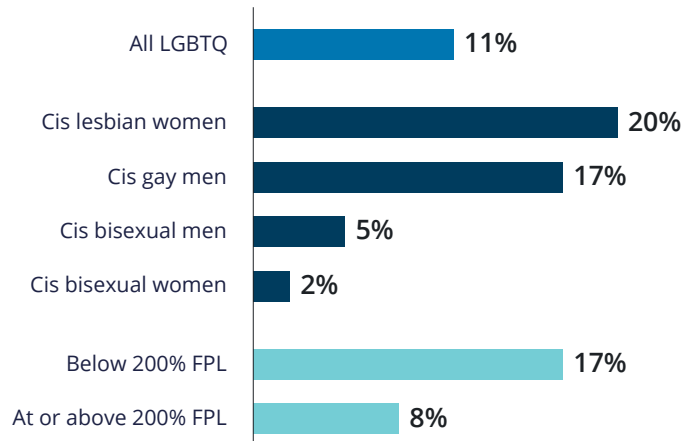
<sup>102</sup> Babey, S.H., Wolstein, J., Herman, J.L., & Wilson, B.D.M. (2022, Feb.). Gaps in Health Care Access and Health Insurance Among LGBT Populations in California. UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/CA-Health-Care-Gaps-Feb-2022.pdf>.

<sup>103</sup> Montero, A., Hamel, L., Artiga, S., & Dawson, L. (2024, Apr. 2) LGBT Adults' Experiences with Discrimination and Health Care Disparities: Findings from the KFF Survey of Racism, Discrimination, and Health. Kaiser Family Foundation. <https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/poll-finding/lgbt-adults-experiences-with-discrimination-and-health-care-disparities-findings-from-the-kff-survey-of-racism-discrimination-and-health/>. A 2022 Center for American Progress study found that, nationally, 7% of cisgender LGBQ adults and 10% of transgender adults had been denied health care because of their sexual orientation or gender identity in the prior year. Medina, C. & Mahowald, L. (2023, Jan. 12). Discrimination and Barriers to Well-Being: The State of the LGBTQI+ Community in 2022. Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/discrimination-and-barriers-to-well-being-the-state-of-the-lgbtqi-community-in-2022/>.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

Cisgender lesbians (20%) and gay men (17%) were far more likely to report such harassment than cisgender bisexual women (2%) and men (5%). Further, LGBTQ adults living below 200% FPL were more likely to report experiences of verbal harassment while accessing health care in Los Angeles County than those with higher incomes (17% vs. 8%).

**Figure 88. Lifetime experiences of verbal harassment because of sexual orientation or gender identity while accessing health care in Los Angeles County, all adults and by sexual orientation and economic status, LELAC**



## Health Concerns

When respondents were asked about their biggest concerns, almost one in four (23%) mentioned issues related to their health or their family’s health. A number of respondents mentioned their own specific health issues, including:

- **Mental health:** Anxiety, burnout, bipolar disorder, depression, emotional health, grief, loneliness, substance abuse disorders, stress, suicidality
- **Physical health:** Being overweight, cancer, COVID, long COVID, surgeries, chronic injury, disabilities, HIV/AIDS, influenza, morbidities, sleeping issues, Parkinson’s disease
- **Aging:** Balance issues, hearing issues, mobility issues, memory issues, senility, vision issues

For many, their health concerns were about being able to survive:

*Doctors removing the prescription meds I’ve been on for nearly 2 decades which enable me to function.*

— Cisgender multiracial gay man in his 70s

*Money ... my mom’s health. Will my lung cancer return?*

— Cisgender White lesbian in her 60s

For others, health issues and disabilities exacerbated current economic and social challenges:

*My depression is resistant to medication, suicidal thoughts ... poverty.*

— Cisgender gay Black man in his 50s

*I have issues with my vision, so getting reliable income coming in.*

— Cisgender gay White man in his 40s

*I'm hard of hearing, so it would be trouble communicating and isolation.*

— Cisgender gay Latino male in his 60s

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure access to LGBTQ-competent health care—especially behavioral health care—including conducting outreach to LGBTQ people.
- Screen LGBTQ people for social determinants of health—including IPV, housing and food insecurity, and discrimination—in health care settings.
- Triage LGBTQ people to public benefits and social services, including free legal services, that support access to health care and well-being.
- Promote free LGBTQ-inclusive activities that reduce stress, address safety concerns, and support mental health, ensuring access to activities for people with disabilities.
- Encourage health care providers to utilize best practices for conducting health assessments that encompass sexual orientation, gender identity, preferred pronouns, and sexual health with all patients.
- Specifically, provide training and resources to health care providers to ensure that they:
  - comply with non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies
  - are aware of the unique health care needs of LGBTQ people, particularly transgender and nonbinary people
  - are versed in communicating with LGBTQ people, including use of correct pronouns
  - are knowledgeable about and comfortable with asking questions about patients' sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Support public education campaigns that encourage LGBTQ people to access routine and necessary health care.
- Increase funding for health services, in particular mental health services and programs, that are tailored and sensitive to the unique needs of LGBTQ people, particularly transgender people, LGBTQ people experiencing homelessness, and LGBTQ youth.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank our respondents for taking the time to share their thoughts and experiences with us. This report would not be possible without them.

In addition, the authors thank Shahrzad Divsalar, research data analyst, and Kotrina Kajokaite, statistical consultant, at the UCLA Office of Advanced Research Computing for their assistance with data analyses. We thank Abbe Land, Abbe Land Consulting, and Rachel Dowd, communications director at the Williams Institute, for their careful review of this report. Thank you to Will Tentindo, Renberg law fellow, Neko Castleberry, research data analyst, of the Williams Institute, and Zabryna Balen, consultant, for their assistance with editing, proof-reading, and other research support.

We extend our appreciation to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health for enabling us to do a call-back survey by building on their efforts to identify a large, representative sample of county residents from the Los Angeles County Health Survey. We also wish to acknowledge RTI International for its work in fielding the LELAC survey.

Finally, this project would not have been possible without funding support from Los Angeles County District Supervisors Hilda Solis (1<sup>st</sup>), Holly J. Mitchell (2<sup>nd</sup>), Lindsey P. Horvath (3<sup>rd</sup>), Sheila J. Kuehl (former 3<sup>rd</sup>), Janice Hahn (4<sup>th</sup>) and Kathryn Barger (5<sup>th</sup>), The California Endowment, and Williams Institute Founder's Councilmember Jack Corwin.

## SUGGESTED CITATION

Sears, B., Conron, K.J., Mallory, C., Fuentes Carreño, M., Cui, Y., & Shah, M. (2024). Communities of Resilience: The Lived Experiences of LGBTQ Adults in Los Angeles County. The Williams Institute, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA.

### ABOUT THE WILLIAMS INSTITUTE

The Williams Institute is dedicated to conducting rigorous, independent research on sexual orientation and gender identity law and public policy. A think tank at UCLA Law, the Williams Institute produces high-quality research with real-world relevance and disseminates it to judges, legislators, policymakers, media, and the public. These studies can be accessed at the Williams Institute website.

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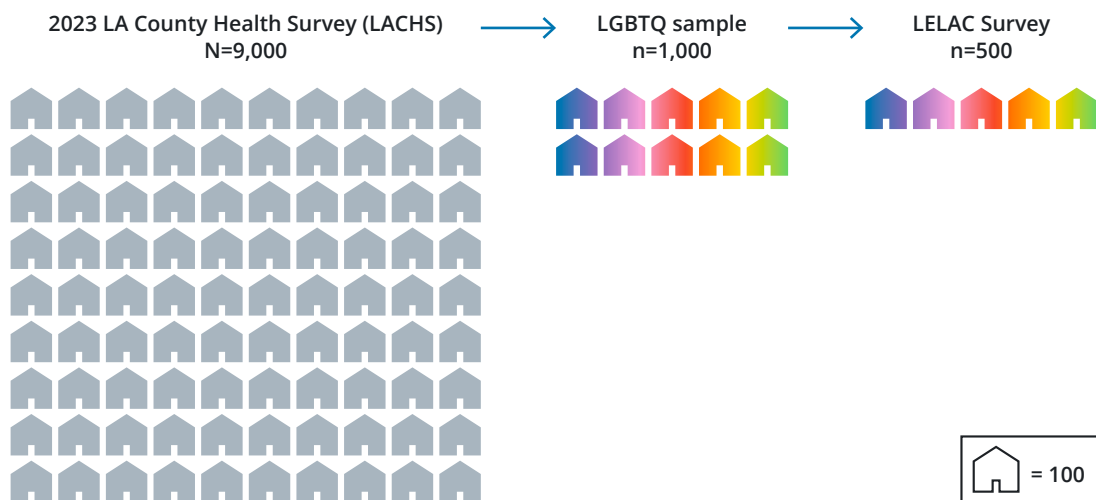
RESEARCH THAT MATTERS



## APPENDIX

### METHODS

The Lived Experiences in Los Angeles County (LELAC) Survey was developed by the Williams Institute to gather data from LGBTQ adult residents of Los Angeles County. Adults ages 18 and up who participated in the 2023 Los Angeles County Health Survey (LACHS),<sup>105</sup> identified as LGBTQ ( $N = 1,006$ ), and consented to be recontacted for future research ( $n = 897$ ) were eligible for the LELAC study. Mailed letters (English/Spanish), emails, and text messages were sent to 897 eligible individuals, inviting their participation in the LELAC Survey. Surveys were available in English and Spanish between December 15, 2023, and January 29, 2024, and could be completed online or by telephone. Respondents were offered a \$20 electronic gift card or paper check as a thank-you for their participation. The study protocol was reviewed and approved by the North Campus Institutional Review Board at UCLA.

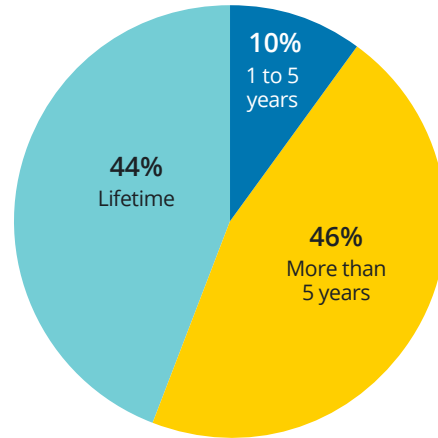


A total of 506 respondents completed surveys after reviewing an information sheet and consenting to participate, including agreeing to have their LELAC and LACHS survey data linked through a unique identification number. The survey response rate was 58.5%. Median survey completion time was 23 minutes. Most surveys were completed in English ( $n = 493$ ), and all but one were completed online (on computers or smartphones). After data cleaning, the final analytic sample included 504 respondents.

<sup>105</sup> The Los Angeles County Health Survey (LACHS) is an on-going survey led by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. RTI International was contracted to field the 2023 LACHS, including obtaining an address-based sample of more than 9,000 adult county residents. Data were collected on-line or by telephone in English, Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, and Korean between October 15, 2022 and June 14, 2023. LACHS adults received a \$20 or \$30 e-gift card or check as a thank-you for their participation, as well as a \$2 pre-incentive included with the survey invitation. <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/ha/hasurveyintro.htm>

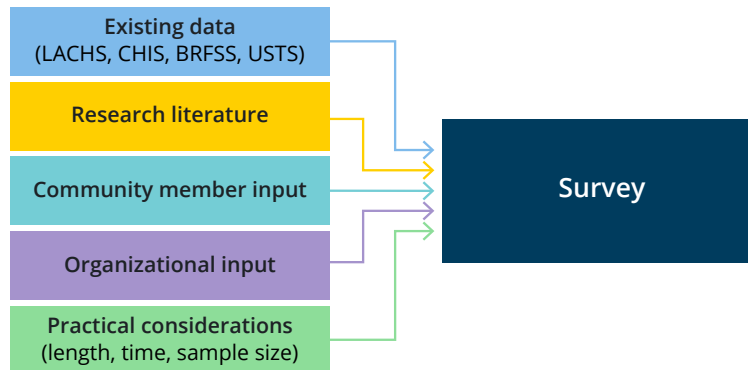
Nearly all (97%) LELAC respondents ( $N = 504$ ) were living in Los Angeles County at the time they completed the call-back survey, and most (94%) had remained in the same city. Most (91%) respondents had lived in Los Angeles County for more than five years, including 44% who had been in the county for their entire lifetime, and 46% who had lived in the county for more than five years but not their whole lives. One-tenth (10%) of the respondents had lived in Los Angeles County for one to five years.

**Figure A1. Time in Los Angeles County among LGBTQ adult respondents, LELAC**



Survey topics were identified through consultation with community-based organizations to gather information to inform local policy, program development, and delivery. The survey was also designed to complement the health and socioeconomic data collected in the LACHS and to avoid redundancy with other data collection efforts (e.g., 2022 U.S. Transgender Survey). Survey topics included experiences in educational, workplace, and public settings—with employers, customers, medical providers, and police—including experiences of discrimination and harassment. Information about avoidance due to unfair treatment and to maintain safety, as well as about perceptions of the social climate, outness, access to behavioral health care, family formation and parenting intentions, religiosity, civic engagement, and perceptions of Los Angeles County services was also gathered. When possible, established measures or questions from large, publicly funded surveys were used to develop the LELAC Survey. Five open-ended questions developed by the research team were also included on the survey to complement closed-ended questions about mental health and civic engagement and to obtain respondent recommendations to policymakers.





Respondents were classified as transgender/nonbinary (TNB) or cisgender based on their responses to LACHS questions about gender identity and sex assigned. After the following introductory text, “We want to ask you about your gender identity and your sex assigned at birth. Gender identity refers to how you identify yourself, which may not be the same as the sex you were at birth,” respondents were asked “What is your current gender identity?” followed by “What was your sex that was designated at your time of birth?” Respondents who selected gender identity options (male or female) that were the same as their sex assigned at birth (male or female) were classified as cisgender. Respondents who selected a gender identity (male or female) that differed from their sex assigned at birth (male or female) were classified as TNB. Respondents who selected “transgender male/trans man,” “transgender female/trans woman,” or “gender non-binary, gender non-conforming” as their gender identity were classified as TNB, regardless of their response to sex assigned at birth. Respondents who selected “another gender category or another identity” and provided a write-in that corresponded to a transgender gender identity (e.g., female and nonbinary) were classified as TNB, regardless of their response to sex assigned at birth. Respondents who provided write-in responses that did not reflect a gender identity (e.g., gay, pansexual) or who selected “prefer not to state” as their response to the gender identity question were excluded from classification.

Sexual orientation was measured on the LACHS with the question, “Do you consider yourself to be ... ?” Respondents (cisgender and TNB) were classified as gay or lesbian if they selected “gay or lesbian” as their response option, or as bisexual if they selected “bisexual” or provided a write-in response to “something else” that indicated a non-monosexual orientation (i.e., pansexual, queer, or “flexible”). Most (84%) non-monosexual respondents selected “bisexual” as their sexual orientation identity, and 16% used other terms. Accordingly, we use “bisexual” in this report to refer to all non-monosexuals, and we use specific write-in identity terms provided by non-monosexual respondents, when available, in quote attributions. TNB respondents who selected “straight or heterosexual” or “not sure,” who identified with other terms (e.g., asexual) via a write-in response, or who did not answer the question formed a third, heterogenous group.

Respondents answered one question about their race and Hispanic ethnicity: “What is your race or ethnicity? Please select all that apply.” Respondents who selected “Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin” were categorized as Latinx. All non-Hispanic single-race respondents were then classified based on their selection as White, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or “some other race.” Non-Hispanic respondents who selected more than one race response were classified as multiracial. Due to the sparse number of respondents in several groups, respondents who selected American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific

Islander, or those who selected “some other race” were grouped with multiracial respondents into one heterogeneous group. For stratified analyses, all Latinx, Asian, Black, and other respondents of color were classified as people of color, while all White, non-Hispanic respondents formed the other (dominant group) category.

Respondents were classified as lower income (< 200% federal poverty level [FPL]) or higher income (> 200% FPL) based on their LACHS responses about their household size and household income relative to the 2022 poverty thresholds developed by the U.S. Census Bureau and published in the *Federal Register*.<sup>106</sup> For a one-person household, < 200% FPL was less than \$27,180; for a two-person household, the amount was less than \$36,620; and for a three-person household, this amount was less than \$46,060.

Descriptive analyses of quantitative data were conducted using SAS v9.4 and R statistical software<sup>107</sup> and included design-based F-tests (Rao-Scott chi-square tests) of differences in proportions to assess whether outcomes varied across demographic groups at an alpha of 0.05.<sup>108</sup> Confidence intervals (95% CI) were presented to communicate the degree of uncertainty around an estimate due to sampling error. All LELAC analyses were weighted using sampling weights developed for the 2023 Los Angeles County Health Survey and adjusted to account for nonconsent, noncontact, and nonresponse given contact, and nonconsent on the LELAC Survey. Weight benchmarks were derived from all LGBTQ respondents to the Los Angeles County Health Survey (LACHS) and included sex assigned at birth, age, race/ethnicity, marital status, educational attainment, economic status, and homeownership. The weighted LELAC sample represents the adult LGBTQ population of Los Angeles County at the time that the survey was administered. Analyses of LACHS 2023 data used weights developed by RTI International for the LACHS 2023.

Qualitative data gathered on the LELAC survey were also analyzed descriptively. Text responses to open-ended questions were coded in NVivo<sup>109</sup> or Excel by main emic themes using a content analysis approach.<sup>110</sup> Responses that indicated no response (e.g., don’t know, no opinion) were excluded from analysis. Examples of quotes provided in the text were copy edited to correct spelling and grammatical errors. After the beginning of the excerpted text, deleted words are indicated by “...” and added words for clarity are indicated by “[.]” Word clouds for each question were created in Adobe Illustrator using the remaining write-in responses. Terms used in the question, filler words (a, the, with, some), and words that were used less frequently were excluded from word clouds. Bubbles in the word clouds are sized proportionally to frequency of the word’s use in responses.

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<sup>106</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2024, Jan. 23). *Poverty thresholds*. [Census.gov. https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-poverty-thresholds.html](https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-poverty-thresholds.html). Becerra, X. (2022, Jan. 18). *Annual Update of the HHS Poverty Guidelines*. Health and Human Services Department. <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/01/21/2022-01166/annual-update-of-the-hhs-poverty-guidelines>

<sup>107</sup> R Core Team (2023). *\_R: A Language and Environment for Statistical Computing\_*. R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. <https://www.R-project.org>

<sup>108</sup> Rao, J. N. K., & Scott, A. J. (1984). On Chi-Squared Tests for Multiway Contingency Tables with Cell Proportions Estimated from Survey Data. *The Annals of Statistics*, 12(1), 46-60, 15.

<sup>109</sup> NVivo. 2023. Lumivero. [www.lumivero.com](http://www.lumivero.com).

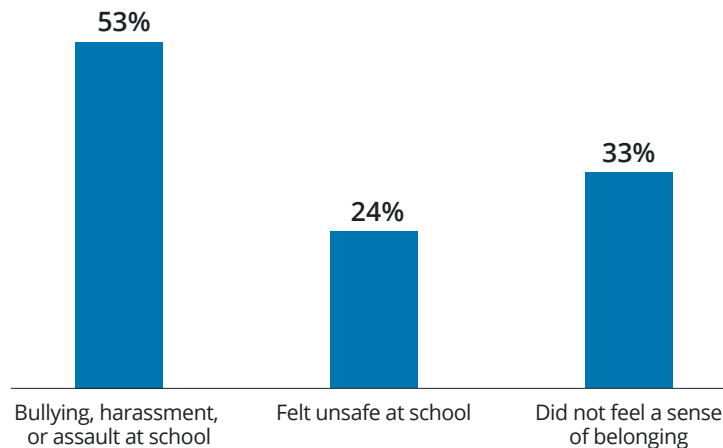
<sup>110</sup> Patton, M. Q., & Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* (3 ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

## SCHOOL CLIMATE

Data collected on the 2022–2023 California Healthy Kids Survey indicate that at least 14% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders and 25% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders in Los Angeles County high schools identify as LGBT.<sup>111</sup> While the LELAC survey focused on adults, respondents ages 18 to 24 who attended high school in Los Angeles County (N = 26) were asked about their high school experiences, including the climates at their schools. Given the small sample size, we provide the results here to inform future research in this area. We do not make any policy recommendations based on these data.

As shown in [Supplemental Tables](#), most (92%) of the LGBTQ young adults who attended high school in Los Angeles County attended a public school, while 8% attended a private school.

**Figure A2. Safety and belonging in Los Angeles County high schools among LGBTQ adults ages 18–24, LELAC**



Consistent with findings for the state, about half (53%) of LGBTQ young adult LELAC respondents experienced bullying, harassment, or assault at their high school.<sup>112</sup> These experiences were both in person (49%) and not in person (e.g., electronic, notes at school locker) (34%). Almost one in four (24%) felt unsafe at their school, and 33% did not feel that they belonged.

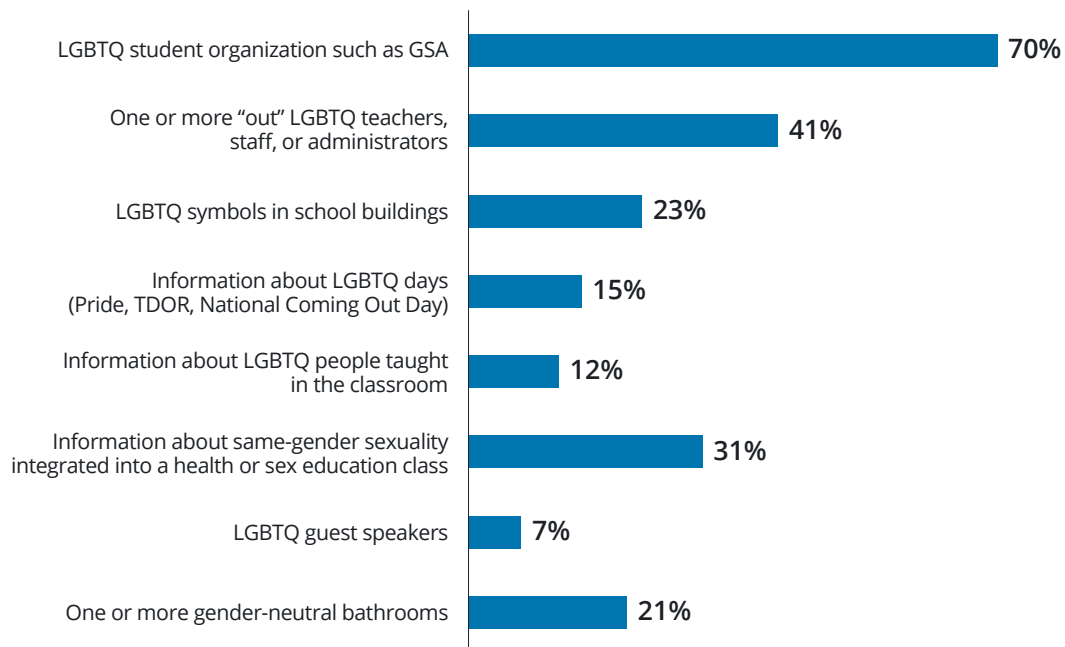
LGBTQ young adults also responded to a series of questions about the presence of LGBTQ resources and indicators of LGBTQ inclusion at their high schools, including the presence of an LGBTQ student organization such as a “Gay-Straight Alliance;” “out” teachers, staff, or administrators; symbols in

<sup>111</sup> Among 9<sup>th</sup> graders, 4% of Los Angeles County students identified as gay or lesbian, 10% as bisexual, and 3% as transgender. By 12<sup>th</sup> grade, 6% of Los Angeles County students identified as gay or lesbian, 19% as bisexual, and 7% as transgender. Source: Los Angeles County Office of Education School District. California Healthy Kids Survey, 2022–2023: Main Report. San Francisco: WestEd for the California Department of Education.

<sup>112</sup> Half (51%) of LGB and 63% of transgender 11<sup>th</sup> graders reported school-based harassment on the 2017–2019 California Healthy Kids Survey—more than double the proportion of straight (24%) and cisgender (27%) students who experienced harassment at school. Public Dashboards: Key Indicators: Secondary. State: Most Recent Data (2017–2019). Domain: School Safety and Cyberbullying. Measure: Any harassment at school. Student Characteristics: Sexual Orientation; Gender Identity. California Department of Education. (2023, Dec.). Public Dashboards. CalSCHLS. <https://calschls.org/reports-data/public-dashboards/f882f1e2-dfc0-4448-b90b-f49cef6e6d3f/>

school buildings; inclusion in curricula, including LGBTQ guest speakers; information about LGBTQ days (e.g., Pride, Transgender Day of Remembrance [TDOR]), and gender-neutral bathrooms. While more than two-thirds (70%) of LGBTQ young adults reported that their high school had an LGBTQ student organization, other indicators of inclusion were less frequently noted by young adults. Only one in five (21%) LGBTQ young adults reported that their high school had at least one gender-neutral bathroom. More than half (54%) of LGBTQ young adults reported no more than one indicator of LGBTQ inclusion, including 10% who reported no indicators and 44% who reported only one. These findings are consistent with research on higher education in that LGBTQ student organizations appear to be the most common way that schools support LGBTQ students, with relatively low levels of utilization of other strategies.<sup>113</sup>

**Figure A3. School-level indicators of LGBTQ inclusion in Los Angeles County high schools reported by LGBTQ young adults ages 18–24, LELAC**



Findings from the 2022–2023 California School Staff Survey are consistent with findings from the reported experiences of LGBTQ young adults in both the LELAC Survey and the California Healthy Kids Survey.<sup>114</sup> Specifically, only 25% of Los Angeles County high school staff strongly agreed that their school had an antibullying climate across a series of indicators, while 44% agreed and 31% disagreed. Many (63%) Los Angeles County high school staff indicated a need for professional development, training, mentorship, or other support related to creating a positive school climate, and 73% indicated professional development needs related to meeting the social, emotional, and developmental needs of youth.

<sup>113</sup> Conron, K.J., O'Neill, K, Arrendondo, M., & Guardado. R. (2023). *Educational Experiences of LGBTQ Adults of Color: Findings from a National Probability Survey*. The Williams Institute and the Point Foundation. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/higher-ed-adults-of-color/>

<sup>114</sup> Los Angeles County Office of Education School District. California School Staff Survey, 2022-2023: Main Report. San Francisco: WestEd for the California Department of Education.