



Elevating LGBTIQ2S+ Needs in
Restorative Justice Practices:
Restorative Rainbow Alliance
Restorative Justice Facilitator Code
of Conduct

Last updated: July 2022



Elevating LGBTIQ2S+ Needs in Restorative Justice Practices: Restorative Rainbow Alliance Restorative Justice Facilitator Code of Conduct

Table of Contents

<u>Introduction & Honoring</u>	1
<u>Historical & Current Context</u>	2
<u>About the Restorative Rainbow Alliance (RRA)</u>	3
<u>Purpose and Use of Code</u>	3
<u>LGBTIQ2S+ Acronym Definitions</u>	4
<u>RJ Facilitator Code of Conduct</u>	5
<u>Glossary</u>	10
<u>Resources for continued education</u>	11

Introduction & Honoring

Creating a new narrative is a powerful and transformative act. This process invites us to acknowledge what currently exists, be aware that what exists is not all-inclusive, to be open to learning about additional perspectives, and to commit to action towards integrating new and additional information. As Restorative Justice (RJ) Practitioners, we know that these alchemical engagements happen regularly within our practices. We also know that these acts of creation have their own challenges. New narratives often stretch our comfort zones and invite us to question our current processes, knowledge bases, practices, structures, laws, etc. However, practicing Restorative Justice calls us to remain curious and committed to growth that expands inclusion and equity to best honor each participant in the RJ process and within our communities.

In keeping with these commitments, the Restorative Rainbow Alliance (RRA) offers this [LGBTIQ2S+](#) inclusive Facilitator Code of Conduct as an additional context for RJ practices. The document is offered as a companion to be used with other RJ Facilitator Codes of Conduct.

Our work as LGBTIQ2S+ Restorative Justice Practitioners is intended to honor LGBTIQ2S+ people who are currently experiencing systemic and communal oppression and violence for living as their authentic selves. This includes those who live in countries where their very existence is considered illegal, those who have lost familial support, those who are branded as immoral, criminal or sick, those who are struggling to find support, and those who have lost their lives to transphobia or homophobia.

We honor those who have come before us in this work and those who have worked diligently to create and sustain our LGBTIQ2S+ communities. In particular, we honor Black and Brown trans activists who have consistently been transformative leaders on the front lines of the LGBTIQ2S+ movement, and yet are continually denied the rewards of this activism while continuing to face persecution in all areas of society. Furthermore, we acknowledge Indigenous communities whose practices and ways of being have become the fruitful, nourishing roots of current Restorative Justice Practices. We support the use of Restorative Justice practices to address “The First and Second Harms,” the theft of Indigenous land and enslavement of Africans, as Edward Valandra describes in *Colorizing Restorative Justice* ([Living Justice Press, 2020](#)). This includes acknowledgement by white settler RJ practitioners of these harms and the return of Indigenous lands.

[Glossary](#)



Historical & Current Context

Historical Context:

Members of the LGBTIQ2S+ community have specific needs that vary from those of non-LGBTIQ2S+ individuals. Being mindful of these needs is essential when working with LGBTIQ2S+ participants in an RJ process. To understand these needs, one must be familiar with the historical and [intersectional](#)¹ contexts in which members of the LGBTIQ2S+ community live. Social institutions and systems (education, criminal legal, health & mental health systems, etc.) have been created to uphold the [cisheteronormative](#)² narrative and perpetuate relentless prejudice and discrimination against the LGBTIQ2S+ community. Though we are still far from our goal of LGBTIQ2S+ liberation, we have made significant advancements.

Within the criminal legal system, a system that is meant to uphold justice in our society, the LGBTIQ2S+ community has experienced disproportionate injustice and harm. Historically, our community has experienced higher rates of police brutality and neglect when reporting violence, both in high-profile cases and in those that are unacknowledged. This includes dismissiveness when injustices are reported and goes as far as state-sanctioned violence against the LGBTIQ2S+ community.

These systems and institutions inflict historical and collective traumas which have created generational harms, wounds and unmet needs for the LGBTIQ2S+ community. The community also experiences higher rates of mental health issues and decreased access to inclusive and affirming service providers. As practitioners, it is important to engage in continued learning about the history of systems and institutions and how they have perpetuated harm and created inequity.

Current Context:

Members of the LGBTIQ2S+ community face higher rates of discrimination, violence, suicidal ideation, homelessness, housing insecurity, and poverty. A 2020 study by the Human Rights Campaign showed that 40% of homeless youth were LGBTIQ2S+ ([HRC](#)). This is especially true for transgender individuals and people of color. These elevated levels of oppression put members of the LGBTIQ2S+ community at higher risk for sexual assault. They also increase vulnerability in communities that already face significant marginalization, such as those living with HIV, undocumented individuals, other-abled individuals, people of color, and women, as well as many others.

The use of [transphobic, homophobic, biphobic](#)³ or any form of derogatory language towards LGBTIQ2S+ individuals is considered as harmful, if not more harmful, than physical harm. According to data collected by Stonewall Research, 84% of young gay people experience distress when they hear the word 'gay' used as an insult. Furthermore, 56% of gay and bisexual youth engage in self-harm as a result of homophobic language ([Stonewall](#)).

Stonewall studies have also shown that LGBTIQ2S+ K-12 school pupils are twice as likely to experience bullying as their non-LGBTIQ2S+ counterparts ([Stonewall](#)). In 2021, 64% of study participants reported that they experienced anti-LGBTIQ2S+ violence and abuse ([Galop UK](#)).

Each successive year in recent history has become deadlier and more dangerous for trans people in the U.S., primarily for trans women of color, and particularly for Black trans women ([HRC](#)). Data show that public opinions about transgender and gender non-conforming people directly influence rates of violence enacted on these communities ([HRC 2020](#)). RJ Facilitators are well positioned to influence public opinion for these marginalized



communities, thus reducing violence against community members. Practitioners can do this by supporting, recognizing, and welcoming LGBTIQ2S+ people in their workspaces, restorative processes, and personal lives.

The historical and current context for the LGBTIQ2S+ community speaks directly to the need for this RRA Restorative Justice Facilitator Code of Conduct.

For more information on axes of oppression and violence affecting the LGBTIQ2S+ community, explore the [resources section](#).

About the Restorative Rainbow Alliance (RRA)

The [Restorative Rainbow Alliance](#) (RRA) was born out of the October 2020 joint Statewide Convening of the [Colorado Coalition for Restorative Justice Practices \(CCRJP\)](#) and [the Colorado Restorative Justice Council](#). RJ Practitioner Rami El Gharib hosted a breakout session for participants to discuss working with LGBTIQ2S+ individuals during RJ processes. Over the next 18 months, five of the attendees, Rami El Gharib, Laura Beth Waltz, Míceal Munroe-Allsup, Michael Tom, and Ames Stenson, have worked to create the RRA and this document. RRA's newest members, Danielle Collette and Crystal Salvador-Zapote, have also made significant contributions to the final version of this document.

The Restorative Rainbow Alliance's vision is that all Restorative Justice Practices be inclusive and LGBTIQ2S+ affirming.

Our mission is to promote LGBTIQ2S+ inclusion and increase the number of LGBTIQ2S+ practitioners in Restorative Justice Practices by offering LGBTIQ2S+-affirming circles, training, outreach, research, and advocacy.

In addition to valuing the [5 R's of Restorative Practices](#), RRA is committed to the following values in our work: LGBTIQ2S+ affirmation, community-based engagement and empowerment, visibility, inclusion, anti-racism, anti-colonialism, anti-ableism, anti-oppression, non-violence, resilience, healing, transformation, and leadership.

If you are interested in working with RRA to support your RJ program or community, or if you are interested in contributing to the growth and development of RRA, please email us at restativerainbowalliance@gmail.com.

Purpose and Use of Code

As RJ practices become more prevalent throughout communities and within systems, practitioners are recognizing the importance of having a Code of Conduct for those who are leading RJ processes. Some states are issuing State Codes of Conduct for RJ Facilitators as guiding principles for general RJ Facilitator conduct. This LGBTIQ2S+-inclusive code of conduct for RJ Facilitators has been created to enhance general Codes of Conduct with an LGBTIQ2S+-inclusive lens. The structure of this document mirrors that of [Colorado's Restorative Justice Facilitator Code of Conduct](#) and our hope is that through engaging with the RRA Restorative Justice Facilitator Code of Conduct, RJ Facilitators will feel empowered to engage in best practices when working with LGBTIQ2S+ participants.

This code gives guidelines for working with members of the LGBTIQ2S+ community. However, please consider that when facilitating, you may not yet be aware of all the intersectional identities of participants. As one would with all identities, please work with the information the participants are sharing. By upholding as many of the



outlined standards as possible, you will be fostering an inclusive environment even when you may not be aware of a participant's identity.

In this document, we use the term "Restorative Justice (RJ) practices" to be inclusive of all restorative practices, models, and tools which are utilized for both preventative, proactive work as well as in response to harm.

This document applies to all RJ Facilitators and Co-Facilitators, including circle-keepers, group or community conference Facilitators, High Impact Dialogue Facilitators and all other individuals who utilize restorative justice/restorative practices frameworks, even if not officially defined as such. For the sake of clarity and ease, in this document, RRA uses the term "Facilitator" to include all the previously mentioned groups.

We encourage Facilitators to reference this document for both formal and informal processes, during preventative and community-building practices, and during interventions that happen in response to harm. Finally, this code is intended to serve as a guide for Facilitators during RJ processes as well as within other programmatic or community engagements (ex: facilitator recruitment or facilitator training).

In addition, we use the term "we" within the RRA RJ Facilitator Code of Conduct because the authors of this document include ourselves in the learning and growth opportunities shared and recommended within it. Therefore, in the spirit of RJ and sharing "power with," ([Wachtel and McCold](#)) "we" is used to remind us all that these concepts and learnings are not about "us" and "them." Rather, we, as a collective, have the opportunity to become more inclusive. We all have the responsibility to call one another into this ongoing work of diversity, equity, inclusion, anti-racism, and anti-oppression work within RJ practices.

Last, please note that the RRA Code of Conduct was created based on the authors' lived experiences within the LGBTIQ2S+ community and as RJ Practitioners and Facilitators. We have done our best to be inclusive, and to acknowledge that we are limited in our scope. Therefore, this document is a living tool which will be regularly reviewed, edited and updated to best support members of the LGBTIQ2S+ community and RJ Facilitators who serve LGBTIQ2S+ participants.

LGBTIQ2S+ Acronym Definitions

Language and words are powerful! This document has been created with careful attention to the use of language, terminology, definitions, and the context of these words. Many of these terms are shifting and evolving in vernacular use and scholarship. Colloquial terms and coinage of additional terms are prevalent within the community. Directly asking for a person's preferred identification is best practice. Facilitators should consult the "[Best Practices Living Document](#)," housed on the RRA website, regularly and anytime they are uncertain about an RJ issue involving the LGBTIQ2S+ community. Facilitators may contact the RRA for assistance or advice about best practices when they are facing a challenging situation, in need of clarification, or seeking advice regarding RJ and the LGBTIQ2S+ community.

LGBTIQ2S+

This acronym refers to: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual/aromantic, and Two-Spirit. RRA has chosen to use this acronym because of the visibility it brings to those communities not explicitly named in other similar acronyms such as LGBT+ or LGBTQ+: intersex, asexual, and Two-Spirit. Education about these communities is rare even within the larger LGBTIQ2S+ community. Language and preferred terminology are in constant flux. Therefore, terminology will also be regularly reviewed according to the needs and preferences of the community.



- **Lesbian:** term that women and non-binary people might use to self-describe as emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to other women ([HRC glossary of terms](#))
- **Gay:** A term that men, women, and non-binary people might use to self-describe as emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to people of the same gender ([HRC glossary of terms](#))
- **Bisexual:** a term that people might use to self-describe as emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to more than one sex, gender, or [gender identity](#)⁴, though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way, or to the same degree. Is sometimes used interchangeably with the term “pansexual” ([HRC glossary of terms](#))
- **Transgender:** an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or [gender expression](#)⁵ is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Under this umbrella are identities such as transman/woman, non-binary/gender non-conforming, genderfluid, genderqueer, and more ([HRC glossary of terms](#)). Trans identity is not indicative of a person’s [sexual orientation](#)⁶.
- **Intersex:** refers to people who are born with a range of naturally occurring bodily variations in reproductive or sexual anatomy that is not described under the binary-based concepts of a “male” or “female.” Intersex identity is not indicative of a person’s [sexual orientation](#)⁶ or gender identity ([United Nations for LGBT Equality](#))
- **Queer:** an umbrella term for people who are not heterosexual or are not cisgender. This was a pejorative term used against those with same-sex desires or relationships in the late 19th century. Beginning in the late 1980’s, queer activists, such as the members of Queer Nation, began to reclaim the word as a deliberately provocative and politically radical alternative to the more assimilationist branches of the LGBTIQ2S+ community. Not everyone in the LGBTIQ2S+ community feels comfortable with this term being used to describe them. It is sometimes considered [“in-group” terminology](#)⁷.
- **Asexual and/or aromantic:** umbrella terms which exist on a spectrum of people who may have varying degrees of interest in sex, romance, and intimacy. Often abbreviated as ace, ace-spec, and/or aspec, aro and/or aro-spec, and others. The terms ace/aspec are used by some to reference the aromantic spectrum ([Queer Undefined](#), [Trevor Project](#)).
- **2S Two-Spirit:** a general, pan-Indigenous term that includes multiple understandings of gender and sexuality and may specifically mean something different within each distinct Indigenous nation. Also includes all other sexual orientations and gender identities that do not fit within colonial binaries or related terms ([Style Guide for Reporting on Indigenous People](#)).
- **+**: Inclusive of other sexualities, such as pansexual or demisexual, or gender identities that are not necessarily described within the rest of the acronym. The ‘+’ also acknowledges that language is fluid and changes regularly to fit the needs of humans rather than forcing humans into pre-existing categories.

Further terms are defined throughout the document using linked endnotes. To access a full list of these terms, [click here to jump to the glossary](#).

RJ Facilitator Code of Conduct

Standard I: General Guidelines

These guidelines are considered standard requirements and apply to all Facilitators in RJ processes. Facilitators:

- Shall use inclusive and nonjudgmental language in order to be sensitive when addressing topics that may cause discomfort for LGBTIQ2S+ individuals
- Shall use inclusive language (if gender, pronouns and/or titles are known) and non-gendered language (if gender, pronouns and/or titles are unknown) with colleagues and clients and on all forms, paperwork and correspondence



- Shall allow participants to identify as they wish and give options to identify in different ways in different contexts (pronouns, legal name, given name, gender identity)
- Shall be aware that gender expression, gender identity, and sexual orientation are different
- Shall affirm and validate the feelings of LGBTIQ2S+ individuals especially when a [microaggression](#)⁸ is reported
- Shall take full responsibility for our actions and acknowledge the mistake if we misgender or misname participants involved in an RJ process
- Shall not silence or invalidate LGBTIQ2S+ individuals and their experiences
- Shall listen and take into consideration the lived experience of LGBTIQ2S+ individuals before moving forward with an RJ process
- Shall be aware of the possibility of a shame response within LGBTIQ2S+ individuals and/or prolonged trauma of facing LGBTIQ2S+ prejudice and be trauma responsive based on their expressed needs
- Shall be knowledgeable about resources in the community and be able to connect LGBTIQ2S+ people to resources and community supports as needed
- Shall hold LGBTIQ2S+-inclusive space and norms even when a member of the LGBTIQ2S+ community is not present (ex: introductions always include one's pronouns, using gender-neutral group terms such as "y'all" instead of "ladies," etc. Be proactive in creating inclusive space rather than reactive)
- Shall refrain from comparing non-LGBTIQ2S+ struggles and issues to that of the struggles of LGBTIQ2S+ individuals
- Shall protect LGBTIQ2S+ participants by assessing RJ meeting space for LGBTIQ2S+ inclusion and affirmation and, accordingly, either adjust the space or relocate, make accommodation, and/or acknowledge the lack of inclusivity in a space. For example, Facilitators should ask themselves: are there gender-neutral bathrooms? Are there any symbols displayed that are overtly or covertly associated with homophobia or transphobia?

Standard II: Respect for Privacy

Maintaining privacy and confidentiality is of the utmost importance when working with LGBTIQ2S+ individuals. Many LGBTIQ2S+ individuals struggle with their identities or might be subjected to harm from various sources for their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Thus, when working with LGBTIQ2S+ people, it is particularly important to ensure the privacy of all individuals participating in an RJ process. Facilitators:

- Shall discuss the sharing of personal information, particularly information regarding sexuality and gender identity, with each individual before sharing. Even if an LGBTIQ2S+ individual shares their sexual orientation and/or gender identity with a Facilitator, Facilitators must not reveal that information to anyone else without the participant's explicit consent
- Shall, when asking a person's name and pronouns, ask whether they have permission to use them in other settings (i.e., in front of family, in front of other people, in the conference, etc.)
- Shall not make assumptions about who is a safe audience based on how well the LGBTIQ2S+ individual appears to be getting along with someone
- Shall double check preferred names and pronouns at several intervals to allow people multiple opportunities and contexts to share this information based on safety
- Shall consider the role of physical space (meeting space/pre-conference space/circle space) as an important factor in order to protect the privacy of participants
- Shall remain respectful of how people want to be identified regardless of any institutions' policies and norms around gender. For example, institutions such as youth detention centers and prisons are gendered in ways that may conflict with participants' identities, but this shall not interfere with respect for RJ participants' identities



- Shall ensure that sexual orientation and gender identity only be shared if a participant gives explicit consent if reporting data to external sources or partners

Standard III: Participation/Naming and Addressing Harm

In addition to allowing all individuals in an RJ process to voluntarily choose whether or not to participate, the following are additional expectations. Facilitators:

- Shall recognize the effects of discriminatory words or actions when a harmful situation arises in which an LGBTIQ2S+ person has taken retaliatory action. Facilitators must be mindful that such words and actions can trigger trauma responses in LGBTIQ2S+ individuals
- Shall be mindful that classifying a retaliatory action by an LGBTIQ2S+ individual against direct oppression (oppressive language/slurs) from the initial harm constitutes a revictimization of the LGBTIQ2S+ person
- Shall acknowledge the gravity of harm created by oppressive language that reinforces violent systems
- Shall acknowledge the problematic practice and underlying messaging of labeling LGBTIQ2S+ persons as “parties responsible for harm” if the “harmed” person has used homophobic, biphobic, transphobic or other forms of oppressive language or actions directed toward the LGBTIQ2S+-identified person
- Shall recognize and halt possible microaggressions or macroaggressions when they are being used to place blame on members of the LGBTIQ2S+ community. In such situations, Facilitators should explicitly clarify that harm and discomfort are distinct from each other**
- Shall not conflate an uncomfortable experience that is grounded in homophobia with one that is harmful or violent. For example, being assumed to be a member of the LGBTIQ2S+ community because of proximity to a member of the community may be uncomfortable, but is grounded in homophobia and does not constitute harm**
- Shall understand that perceptions or rumors about sexuality are not the same as overtly homophobic actions or statements in terms of harm and should consider this when defining harm**
- Shall name microaggressions and all forms of trans- or homophobia as a harm to the LGBTIQ2S+ community and to LGBTIQ2S+ participants
- Shall, when necessary, guide all parties through an exploration of power dynamics and harm impacting the LGBTIQ2S+ participant and community from the incident.
- Shall be mindful of LGBTIQ2S+ individuals’ boundaries regarding the discussion of experiences and personal information related to their sexual and/or gender identity(ies)

**Common tactics directed at the LGBTIQ2S+ community that shift blame by conflating harm and discomfort:

- *“Gay panic” defense*: Assertions that the proximity to or romantic advances by an LGBTIQ2S+ individual caused a non-LGBTIQ2S+ individual to panic and thus justify violence or harm ([LGBTQ+ Bar](#))
- *Diminished Capacity defense*: A way to shift or shirk blame for harm caused to members of the LGBTIQ2S+ community that has historically been used to validate the “diminished capacity” of someone doing harm and block community members from receiving justice for the harm or violence perpetrated against them
- *“Pre-emptive rumor” defense*: A defensive positioning in which someone with proximity to a member of the LGBTIQ2S+ community is violent, harmful, or inappropriately open about embarrassing personal information in order to distance themselves from or remove associations with a member of the LGBTIQ2S+ community. This can mean that a member of the LGBTIQ2S+ is non-consensually “outed”

Standard IV: Invested Facilitation

Oppressive paradigms ask Facilitators to be impartial and neutral, however, RJ practices are human processes, and all RJ practitioners have implicit bias. It’s important that we acknowledge our own identities and biases that we bring to each process. We encourage Facilitators to be invested Facilitators who are accountable and responsible for emphasizing care for all participants and extra care for LGBTIQ2S+ folks because of the greater



risk of harm. When conducting RJ processes in response to harms that are rooted in oppression, Facilitators are obligated to name, acknowledge, and terminate oppressive actions, language, microaggressions, and other forms of oppression. Facilitators:

- Shall ensure that the LGBTQIA2S+ participants in the process feel that they are going into a welcoming environment
- Shall ensure that homophobic, biphobic or transphobic language is stopped when occurring
- Shall have a functional awareness of microaggressions so that we can address them if they happen during a pre-conference or conference
- Shall not debate or share negative opinions that involve matters that affect the LGBTQIA2S+ community
- Shall not push to explore trauma. However, if some form of trauma is present, Facilitators must provide proper assistance and available resources
- Shall affirm LGBTQIA2S+ participants' assertions that their identity was a contributing factor in the incident that occurred
- Shall affirm and explore LGBTQIA2S+ participants' inferences or hypotheses that their identity was a contributing factor in the incident that occurred

Standard V: Quality of the Process

If harm is done to an LGBTQIA2S+ person, Facilitators shall ensure that the person responsible for the harm has taken proper accountability before moving forward with the Restorative Justice process.

Accountability can be facilitated in many ways, including the following, as prerequisites to any continued RJ practice.

All participants:

- Shall refrain from misgendering others throughout the RJ process by using proper pronouns and names
- Shall take full responsibility if an inaccurate name or pronoun is used and correct it
- Shall refrain from using "you people" or dehumanizing the community in any way, including objectifying the LGBTQIA2S+ community or community members

Facilitators:

- Shall, if necessary, use the pre-conference to deconstruct harmful assumptions that a participant might harbor towards members of the LGBTQIA2S+ community in order to support their ability to participate in a RJ process which respects and honors the LGBTQIA2S+ participant
- Shall be aware of common microaggressions, harmful assumptions, and blame shifting strategies
- Shall stop, name, and counter any harmful assumptions, microaggressions, or blame shifting by any participant during the RJ process
- Shall assess the language and posturing a participant uses during pre-conferencing when communicating with the Facilitator, focusing on homophobic, transphobic, biphobic, or derogatory language, objectifying, using a moral argument for behavior, etc.

Empowering members of the LGBTQIA2S+ community is critical to the restorative nature of any process.

Facilitators:

- Shall refrain from asking participants of the RJ process to educate them on how to be LGBTQIA2S+-inclusive. These types of questions require a significant amount of emotional labor that is not required of LGBTQIA2S+ individuals participating in the process
- Shall be aware of their own body language and facial expressions when LGBTQIA2S+ participants discuss their identity with the Facilitator

Standard VI: Creating an Inclusive Space/Setting an Inclusive Tone

Facilitators shall set a tone for a space of respect.

All participants:



- Shall avoid using cisheteronormative constructs as the default model (i.e., assuming gender based on appearance or name, assuming the gender of a married participant’s partner, etc.)
- Shall use inclusive language around partners/significant others and be mindful of possible emotional triggers surrounding marriage equality and inequality
- Shall refrain from asking trans individuals about personal information regarding gender affirming surgery or any other personal details not freely shared
- Shall refrain from asking intersex/non-binary individuals about personal information regarding health information, chromosomal categories, details about anatomy, or any other personal details not freely shared
- Shall refrain from asking any participant about their sexual preferences, “types,” marital status, or any other personal information regarding their personal relationships that is not freely shared
- Shall refrain from sexualizing members of the LGBTQIA2S+ community or the community at large
- Shall understand that learning that a person is LGBTQIA2S+ is not an invitation to introduce them to personal LGBTQIA2S+ contacts

Facilitators:

- Shall refrain from making assumptions about the identities of participants based on their appearance
- Shall offer Restorative Justice as an option without pressuring LGBTQIA2S+ individuals into the process
- Shall understand and respect the nuances surrounding the LGBTQIA2S+ experience and the fear or trepidation that a LGBTQIA2S+ person may have about candid conversations due to the possibility of retaliation, marginalization, disclosure of private information, or other violations
- Shall ensure that gender-neutral bathrooms are available for use
- Shall ensure that no posters, signs, or other materials with either overt or covert homophobia or transphobia are present. Facilitators shall make every effort to research the subtle messaging that might be associated with the components of their physical space
- Shall be aware of the additional issues that the LGBTQIA2S+ community is more likely to face associated with discrimination
- Shall understand how a person’s other identities, especially marginalized identities, interact with the experiences they might have as a member of the LGBTQIA2S+ community as independent but interlocking systems. Such intersecting identities may include race, neurodivergence, ability, socioeconomic class, ethnicity, etc.
- Shall recognize that the primary way to create a welcoming and inclusive space in RJ practices is to openly show support for the LGBTQIA2S+ community in their practice and organization at all times to avoid performative inclusion

Standard VII: Continued Education

As outlined above, in order to work competently and inclusively with LGBTQIA2S+ individuals, additional knowledge, resources, and skillsets are needed. To support this, Facilitators:

- Shall consult the “[Best Practices living document](#)”, housed on the RRA website, regularly, as well as anytime they are uncertain about an RJ issue involving the LGBTQIA2S+ community
- May use the RRA website for assistance or advice about best practices when they are facing a challenging situation, need clarification, or desire advice regarding RJ and the LGBTQIA2S+ community
- Shall ask for assistance from another RJ Practitioner who can adequately support the needs of the involved parties
- Shall be aware of the diverse experiences of members of the LGBTQIA2S+ community with intersecting marginalized identities (i.e., culture, religion, race, ethnicity, etc.)



Restorative Justice Facilitators are highly encouraged to regularly educate themselves on topics that may impact members of the LGBTIQ2S+ community, including:

- Local, state and national policies and laws ([ACLU: Legislation Affecting LGBTQ Rights](#))
- Policies of the agency/organization in which they are facilitating (i.e., a dress code policy that is specific to female/male)
- Normalized or standard policies that impact LGBTIQ2S+ people (i.e., organizational policies that do not include pronouns)
- Discriminatory practices that create barriers for LGBTIQ2S+ people to fully participate in society (i.e., stigma against HIV positive individuals, people being prohibited from using the bathroom of the gender they identify with, some LGBTIQ2S+ people being prohibited from blood donation, etc.)
- International policies, laws and resources which affect the other intersecting identities of LGBTIQ2S+ participants

Commitment to Best Practices

In addition to following the above outlined RRA Facilitator Code of Conduct, RJ Facilitators are highly encouraged to review and stay updated with RJ best practices for LGBTIQ2S+ inclusivity and continue to learn about LGBTIQ2S+ barriers, opportunities and inclusion within RJ practices and their community. We also highly encourage inviting more LGBTIQ2S+ people into the field of Restorative Justice, not only to increase LGBTIQ2S+ representation, but also to increase LGBTIQ2S+ individuals' opportunities to experience the healing power of RJ. The Restorative Rainbow Alliance is proud to offer this resource and we are committed to providing ongoing support and opportunities to include and enhance this work within Restorative Justice Practices.

Glossary

Unless otherwise noted, these definitions are sourced from the [HRC glossary of terms](#), as well as the knowledge and lived experience of the RRA board members.

¹ Intersectionality: the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.

² Cisheteronormative: denoting or relating to a world view that promotes heterosexuality as the normal or preferred sexual orientation and cisgender identity as the normal or preferred gender identity.

³ Homophobic/transphobic/biphobic/queerphobic/etc: describes actions or expressions that show or are prejudice against members of the LGBTIQ2S+ community or community members.

⁴ Gender identity: a person's conception of their own gender. Distinct from sexual orientation.

⁵ Gender expression: a person's behavior, mannerisms, interests, and appearance that are associated with gender in a particular cultural context. (Note: a person's gender expression is different from their gender identity, and assumptions of one based on the other should be avoided).

⁶ Sexual orientation: an enduring emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attraction to other people. Is an identity often based on the gender or genders that someone experiences this attraction towards.

⁷ In-group terminology: terms that are often used in the context of "reclaiming" that are considered only appropriate when used by members within a community or with a shared identity that are actively "reclaiming" a word that has been used historically to oppress them and the community.

⁸ Microaggressions: offensive mechanisms, such as comments and actions, which are subtly, and either intentionally or unintentionally degrading or hateful towards someone of a marginalized community. These exist side-by-side with aggressions and macroaggressions, or openly harmful, hostile, often violent comments and actions towards someone of a marginalized community. The term was coined in 1970 by Chester M. Pierce in his collection of essays titled *The Black Seventies*. Pierce coined the term in reference to the "pro-racist microaggressions" which Black individuals face from white society as well as the harmful behavior that adults



frequently direct towards children. Usage of the term increased in the late seventies and was later applied to offensive mechanisms born out of discriminations other than race ([Merriam-Webster](#)).

Resources for Continued Education

For further reading on LGBTQIA2S+ inclusivity, discrimination faced by the LGBTQIA2S+ community, and RJ-related LGBTQIA2S+ news, please consult the [RRA website's resources page](#). This list is updated frequently to ensure up-to-date information.