

## APPENDIX A – LGBTQ+ DEFINITIONS <sup>1</sup>

This memo employs the acronym LGBTQ+, which stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/Transsexual, Queer/Questioning, and more. (For a detailed explanation of the acronym, see APPENDIX A.) This term arose in response to the need for language that addresses the complex interweaving of gender, identity and sexuality.

- **Lesbian**
  - A lesbian is a female homosexual: a female who experiences romantic love or sexual attraction to other females.
- **Gay**
  - Gay is a term that primarily refers to a homosexual person or the trait of being homosexual. Gay is often used to describe homosexual males but lesbians may also be referred to as gay.
- **Bisexual**
  - Bisexuality is romantic attraction, sexual attraction or sexual behavior toward both males and females, or romantic or sexual attraction to people of any sex or gender identity; this latter aspect is sometimes termed pansexuality.
- **Transgender / Transsexual**
  - Transgender is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. It is sometimes abbreviated to trans.
  - Transsexual people experience a gender identity inconsistent or not culturally associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.
- **Queer / Questioning**
  - Queer is an umbrella term for sexual and gender minorities that are not heterosexual or cisgender<sup>2</sup>. Queer was originally used pejoratively against those with same-sex desires but, beginning in the late-1980s, queer scholars and activists began to reclaim the word.
  - Questioning: The questioning of one's gender, sexual identity, sexual orientation, or all three is a process of exploration by people who may be unsure, still exploring, and concerned about applying a social label to themselves for various reasons.
- **+ (Plus sign)**
  - Used to shorten a list which includes many other terms of identity, such as Two-Spirit, Intersex, Asexual, Ally, Pansexual, Agender, and Pangender.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ok2bme.ca/resources/kids-teens/what-does-lgbtq-mean/>

<sup>2</sup> "cisgender: of, relating to, or being a person whose gender identity corresponds with the sex the person had or was identified as having at birth" Retrieved from: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/cisgender>