Gender & Gender Identity

Gender — Is a broad term that encompasses a range of characteristics including physical characteristics, as well as roles, conduct and presentation, and how those elements are perceived by society.

Gender Identity — Is linked to a person's sense of self, and the sense of being a man, a woman, both or neither. Gender identity is how a person identifies and may, or may not, be aligned with their sex assigned at birth. Gender expression is how a person presents their gender, through things like dress and mannerisms. Gender identity and gender expression are both elements of one's gender.

Agender — A term used to describe a person who does not identify with any gender or does not feel a sense of male or female.

Non-Binary — A term used to describe a person whose gender exists outside of, or between, the gender binary of man and woman. The term can be used solely to describe one's gender and it can also be used as an umbrella term or a continuum or spectrum for identities and expressions (i.e., agender, genderqueer, bigender, non-binary, gender fluid, etc.). The term is based on the rejection of the gender binary's assumption that gender is strictly an either/or option of man or woman, based on sex (male/female) assigned at birth.

Gender-Fluid — A term used to describe a person who experiences gender fluidly, identifying with different genders at different times.

Gender Non-Conforming — A term used to describe a person who does not conform to society's expectations for their gender roles or gender expression.

Gender Expansive — An umbrella term sometimes used to describe a person who expands notions of gender expression and identity beyond perceived or expected societal gender norms.

Gender Questioning — A term used to describe a person who is in the process of deciding which gender identity suits them best, if any.

Genderqueer — A term used to describe a person who does not follow gender stereotypes based on the sex they were assigned at birth. They may identify and express themselves by any number of different identities such as "feminine men" or "masculine women" or as androgynous, outside of the categories "boy/man" and "girl/woman."

Queer — A term used to describe a person whose sexual orientation is not exclusively heterosexual (e.g., queer person, queer woman). Typically, for those who identify as queer, the terms lesbian, gay, and bisexual are perceived to be too limiting and/or burdened with cultural connotations they feel do not apply to them.

Two-Spirit — A term, traditionally used in Indigenous cultures. that describes a spiritual identity, having masculine and feminine characteristics, and/or a specific role within traditional societies, as mediators, keepers of certain ceremonies, or middle gender(s). Today, it is used to describe Indigenous people who are known in non-Indigenous society as either gay, lesbian, bisexual, intersex or trans and is used to describe both gender and sexual identity.

Transgender Man or Woman or Another Gender — A term used to describe a person whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.