



nclusive

Inclusive Space Decals for Local Businesses and Organizations that Welcome LGBTQ People and Families

We are excited to announce an update to our already popular “Ithaca Is Inclusive” program! Celebrating the diversity within our communities – those things that make Ithaca ‘Ithaca’ and Tompkins County so unique – provides an important opportunity for local businesses and organizations to visibly declare they are committed to inclusiveness and to welcoming lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people and families. This county-wide visibility program is open to any business or organization wishing to make this commitment.

What does it mean to be an inclusive and welcoming business/organization to the LGBTQ community and LGBTQ employees?

Being an inclusive and welcoming business/organization to the LGBTQ community means you and your staff believe and act in ways that show LGBTQ customers deserve the same kindness, respect, and treatment non-LGBTQ customers get. An inclusive environment means that you and your staff are welcoming to LGBTQ people and expect customers/clients that bring a fabulous diversity of gender expression, partners, and diverse family groups into your business or organization.

Why standing up and visually representing your commitment to being an inclusive and welcoming business/organization matters.

When a business/organization takes a stand and says “we see you and you belong here!” it can make a positive difference. Being actively engaged in LGBTQ allyship means confronting heteronormativity, sexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia; interrupting bias, and stepping up to be a part of solutions to inequality and bias. Being visibly and actively welcoming to the LGBTQ community is founded on the belief that dismantling oppression is good for individuals, good for our community and good for business.

An important note: LGBTQ people also share many other identities and lived experiences. Actively welcoming LGBTQ people is one critical step. Making a commitment to learn about and advocate for welcoming spaces and places for people of color, immigrants, youth and elders, and people with various abilities/disabilities is another critical step.

What can you do?

Create welcoming and affirming practices and environments for your LGBTQ customers, and welcome LGBTQ employees and job applicants. Some basic steps include:

- Educate yourself and your staff about LGBTQ people and experiences
- Make sure you have non-discrimination policies, and a clearly stated and easy to follow process if something doesn't go quite right
- Provide equitable benefits for LGBTQ employees and their families
- Know some of the ways LGBTQ people have historically experienced discrimination, and the things LGBTQ people and families still have to think about and navigate in their everyday lives.

A special note about pronouns:

When someone shares their pronouns with you, use those pronouns. Using the names and pronouns people share with you is the best way to show dignity and respect. If you don't know someone's pronouns, you can use their name until you know more. Some people use pronouns like he or her, some people may use pronouns like they or them. You can't tell what pronouns someone uses simply by looking at them. If you are unsure, you can simply use their name and not use pronouns when speaking with them or referring to them. This may take a bit of practice for some people.

What is my business/organization promising if I use this decal?

By putting this decal in your window, you are telling members of the LGBTQ community and everyone who knows and loves them that you support them. You are making a concerted effort to promote inclusion and equity among your staff and those who frequent your business/organization. You are telling the LGBTQ community they are welcome in your establishment, and that you recognize the worries and obstacles they may face when simply trying to go about their daily lives.

What can I say if a customer asks why the decal is displayed?

Simply enough, you can say that you are proud to be an LGBTQ inclusive business/organization and that you believe that LGBTQ people deserve kindness, respect and they are welcome in your business/organization.

We have chosen this updated flag design for several reasons.

Representation matters — especially for the most marginalized communities. The six-color rainbow pride flag we know well has served to symbolize the queer community since its emergence in 1971, but the queer community has evolved over the past few decades, leading many to question whether the pride flag still caters to those most marginalized in the community, including queer people of color and trans people.

It's a dilemma Portland-based designer Daniel Quasar has sought to resolve with a vividly-modified redesign of the iconic flag....Quasar's proposed flag includes the colors of the trans flag, as well as black and brown stripes harkening back to other designs that sought to further represent the queer and trans identities of black and brown people. Quasar's design attempts to integrate the full scope of all queer and trans folk, and account for multifaceted histories within the community.



There is still a lot of work to do in our community. We know discrimination exists. We also know that people hold multiple identities – race, ethnicity, gender, age, abilities – our work as a community gets to focus on making our spaces and places welcoming for all the different people that make our community home.

These ‘Ithaca is Inclusive’ window clings represent a project and partnership of the Tompkins Chamber, Visit Ithaca, the Downtown Ithaca Alliance, and the Tompkins County Health Department. Each organization values diversity, inclusion, and respect, and seeks to offer resources to businesses and organizations in our community.

Thank you to the Ithaca is Love organization, which developed the initial version of this program and inspired our organizations to continue to create and distribute these resources

What resources are available to train my team, or where can I get non-legal advice about specific situations that may arise?

There are many resources available online, and right here in Ithaca, to learn more. Those resources include:

Cornell University LGBTQ Resource Center
scl.cornell.edu/LGBTRC

Ithaca College Center for LGBT Education, Outreach & Services
www.ithaca.edu/lgbt

Multicultural Resource Center
multiculturalresourcecenter.org

Out for Health LGBTQ Health & Wellness Program
Outforhealth.org

Tompkins County Human Rights
tompkinscountyny.gov/humanrights

Teaching Transgender - Gender Specific Terminology
teachingtransgender.org

Partner Organizations Contact Information

Tompkins Chamber
tompkinschamber.org, (607) 273-7080

Visit Ithaca
visitithaca.com (607) 272-1313

Downtown Ithaca Alliance
downtownithaca.com (607) 277-8679

Tompkins County Health Department
tompkinscountyny.gov/health/about (607) 274-6600