



3 October 2025



Ref: OIA-2025/26-0177

Tēnā koe

### Official Information Act request relating to DPMC LGBTQIA+ initiatives

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request, received by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) on 5 September 2025. You requested:

*"I would like to make the following IOA request;*

- 1) It would seem self evident that knowing what a women is would be important in your work. Therefore what is the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet working definition of a woman?*
- 2) Has the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet undertaken any LGBTQIA+ training and if yes can I see a copy of said training?*
- 3) Has the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet undertaken any LGBTQIA+ initiatives? If yes what are they and what was their cost?*
- 4) Does the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet use 'intersectionality' in any way? If yes can I see copies of its use?*
- 5) Can I see the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet DEI plan and initiatives for 2025?*
- 6) Does the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet use any other form(s) of affirmative action? If yes what are they?"*

Responses to each of your questions are provided below.

*1) It would seem self evident that knowing what a women is would be important in your work. Therefore what is the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet working definition of a woman?*

DPMC staff can self-identify their gender or choose not to disclose it.

When DPMC officials prepare policy advice and analysis, Stats NZ data and definitions are used for statistical information.

*2) Has the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet undertaken any LGBTQIA+ training and if yes can I see a copy of said training? and*  
*3) Has the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet undertaken any LGBTQIA+ initiatives? If yes what are they and what was their cost?*

DPMC officials have access to our online learning system. Currently this includes a course *"Including the Rainbow Community."* There are no costs associated with these materials as the online training has been provided to us by another government agency.

Please find **attached** a copy of the learning module.

The DPMC Rainbow Network is one of our eight staff-led networks. It focusses on creating a safe, inclusive and supportive space for staff who identify as part of the rainbow community

and their allies. This year, two staff have been supported to attend a Cross Agency Rainbow Network Conference at a cost of \$920. We also pay \$1,000 per annum for corporate membership of Rainbow Wellington to access its engagement and support services.

*4) Does the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet use 'intersectionality' in any way? If yes can I see copies of its use?*

We have understood this part of your request to be seeking any DPMC corporate documents relating to the use of the term 'intersectionality', rather than about the word being included in any documents that may be held by DPMC.

DPMC do not have a list of words for use. Therefore, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act on the basis that the requested information does not exist.

*5) Can I see the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet DEI plan and initiatives for 2025?*

DPMC's "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan 2024/25" is available on the DPMC website at: [www.dPMC.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2024-10/dPMC-dei-plan-2024-25.pdf](http://www.dPMC.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2024-10/dPMC-dei-plan-2024-25.pdf).

*6) Does the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet use any other form(s) of affirmative action? If yes what are they?*

DPMC reports on our employment approaches in our Annual Reports, which are available at [www.dPMC.govt.nz/publications](http://www.dPMC.govt.nz/publications). DPMC publications can be filtered by selecting "Annual Report" under "Publication category" to locate individual annual reports.

Parts 5 and 6 of your request are therefore refused under section 18(d) of the Act as the requested information is already publicly available.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Nāku noa, nā



Alan Cassidy  
**Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate and Chief People Officer**



# Including the Rainbow Community

Kia ora and Welcome!

As DPMC and NEMA employees, and as human beings in general, it's important to make everyone around us **feel safe, comfortable and included**.

The aim of this module is to **provide an introduction to and help grow your knowledge of the rainbow community**. The goal is not to know absolutely everything, but by gaining **better understanding of sexuality, gender and the best language to use**, you can help to create a safer and more welcoming environment for everyone - at work, with whānau and friends, and in the wider community.

☰ Let's get started!

☰ Identities: captured by words and baked goods

☰ Up with the lingo

☰ Inclusive language

☰ What next?

# Let's get started!

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## What is the Rainbow community?

The word 'Rainbow' is used to describe people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, Takatāpui, transgender, intersex, queer and asexual (LGBTQIA+).

Rainbow also includes all other sexual and gender minorities and underrepresented communities such as non-binary, pansexual and Fa'afafine.

To avoid the 'alphabet soup' terminology, **the word 'Rainbow' is often used as an umbrella term** to cover and include all sexual and gender minorities and underrepresented communities.



Continue on to learn about the four gender constructs.

CONTINUE

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# Identities: captured by words and baked goods

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Gender is one of those things everyone will know something about, but there is often a lot more to it than people may realise.

For example, gender is a social construct, and it isn't binary – it's not either-or for everyone. For many people, it can be both, or neither-this-nor-that, or something in-between. Gender can be a bit of this, and dash of that...

This tasty little guide below is to help you grow your gender understanding.


Hover your mouse over the Genderbread Person to **find the four gender constructs**:

 Thumbnail

**Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Anatomical Sex and Sexual/Romantic Attraction.**

All of these four constructs exist on continuums, where everyone sits somewhere between 0 and 100 on each.

Let's learn a bit more about this by having a play with the continuums and **clicking on the icons** to learn more:

 Thumbnail

## What did we learn?

Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Anatomical Sex and Sexual/Romantic Attraction are all different and all sit on continuums.

Give it a go!

Match each gender construct with its definition:

⋮ Gender Identity

⋮ Gender Expression

How you (internally) define your gender

How you (externally) present your gender

⋮ Anatomical Sex

Your physical 'sex' characteristics

⋮ Sexual/Romantic Attraction

How you find yourself drawn to other people

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CONTINUE

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## Up with the lingo

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You may have heard a number of different terms used by members of the Rainbow community. While these have evolved to be more inclusive over the years, let's take a moment to look at some of the key terms.

Click on each 'i' below to learn more:



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# LGBTQIA+

## Lesbian

'L' is for Lesbian.

A Lesbian is a woman whose primary sexual and affectional orientation is toward people of the same gender.

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# LGBTQIA+

## Gay

'G' is for Gay.

Gay is used to describe sexual and affectional orientation toward people of the same gender.

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# LGBTQIA+

## **Bisexual**

'B' is for Bisexual - often used interchangeably with "Pansexual".

A bisexual or pansexual is a person emotionally, romantically, sexually and relationally attracted to multiple sexes/genders, though not necessarily simultaneously. They may not be equally attracted to a particular gender/sex, and the degree of attraction may vary during the course of their life, or they may be attracted towards people regardless of their gender.

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# LGBTQIA+

## **Transsexual, Transgender or Takatāpui.**

"T" can be for Transgender, Transsexual or Takatāpui.

Transgender and transsexual is related to people who identify differently from the gender they were assigned at birth and may take steps to transition to their felt/authentic gender.

Takatāpui is a traditional term meaning 'intimate companion of the same sex.' It has been reclaimed to embrace all Māori who identify with diverse genders and sexualities such as whakawāhine, tangata ira tāne, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex etc.

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# LGBTQIA+

## Queer or Questioning

'Q' can be for queer or questioning.

Queer is an umbrella term for those whose sexual and/or gender identity is not heterosexual or cisgender.

Questioning is the process of exploring one's own gender identity, gender expression, and/or sexual orientation.

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# LGBTQIA+

## Intersex

'I' is for Intersex.

Intersex is an umbrella term that includes over 30 scenarios where the sexual anatomy or the chromosomes are not the binary male or female.

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# LGBTQIA+

## Asexual

"A" is for asexual.

Asexuality is an umbrella term that describes a variety of ways in which a person might identify.

While most asexual people have little interest in having sex, they may experience romantic attraction. Others may not. Asexual people have the same emotional needs as everyone else. Most will desire and form emotionally intimate relationships with other people. Asexual people may be attracted to the same sex or other sexes.

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# LGBTQIA+

## Plus

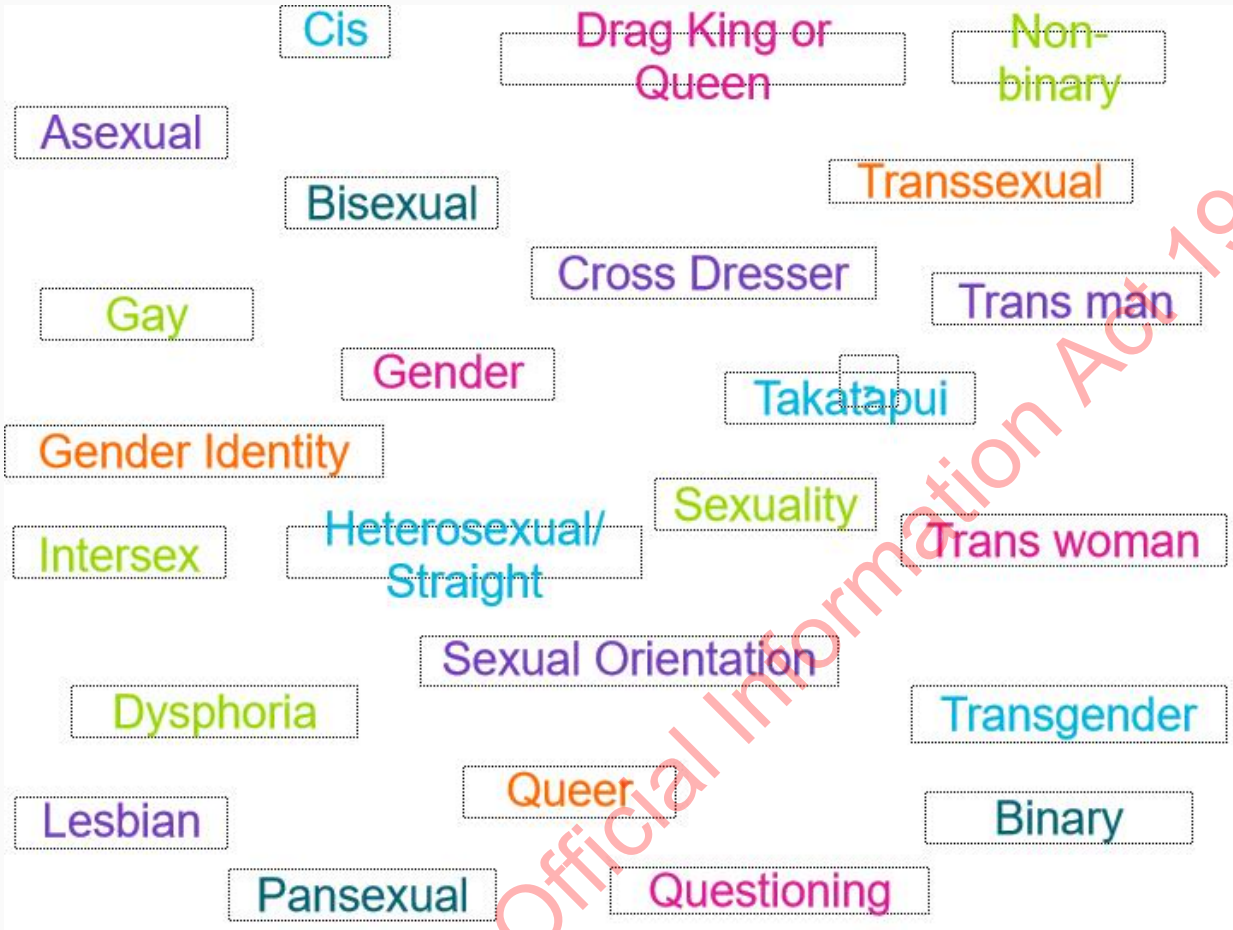
'+' is for Plus.

This represents all other sexual and gender identities not covered in the earlier letters e.g. pansexual, fa'afafine etc.

Let's take a look at some more terms.

Hover over the terms below to see what they mean or check your understanding:

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Let's see what we know!

Match the words with their definition:

⋮ Intersex

Where the sexual anatomy or the chromosomes are not the binary male or female.

⋮ Takatāpui

The process of exploring one's gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation.

⋮ Questioning

A person whose sense of identity and gender corresponds with their birth sex.

⋮ Cis

Te reo Māori word for those who identify with diverse genders and sexualities.

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# Inclusive language

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## Our language

The language we use is hugely important in terms of whether we are creating supportive and inclusive environments, or making people feel unsafe, excluded and judged.

The Rainbow community have had a long history of experiencing discrimination, violence and in some cases, criminalisation. This continues to this day.

While sometimes we don't intend to cause harm with the words we use, it's important to think about the impact of our words.

Check out this great example created by New Zealand RainbowYOUTH:

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If It's Not Gay, It's Not Gay | RainbowYO...



*Video contains embedded closed captions.*

There are some words that are better to use than others.

Let's have a go at categorising some language. Drag and drop the terms below to the correct answer.



*Note: The activity in this section contains examples of unacceptable, discriminatory language for learning purposes only. This language might be triggering for some people that have experienced bullying and discrimination. You do not have to complete this section and can skip forward to the next one if you prefer.*

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Bi or bisexual

Ok!

Best to avoid...

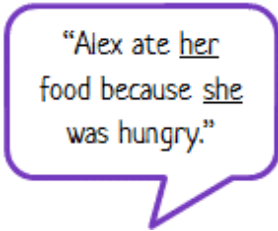
Using an individual's own pronouns (eg. he, she, they, ia etc.) is a matter of acknowledgement and respect. It's important to always use the correct pronouns for everyone. If you're unsure of their pronouns, ask them (and introduce yours).

Let's take a look at some FAQs regarding pronouns:

## What is a pronoun? —

A pronoun is a word that refers to either the people talking (I or you) or someone or something that is being talked about (like she, them, and this). Individual pronouns (he/she/they/ze/ia etc.) specifically refer to people that you are talking about.

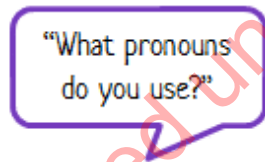
For example: If Alex's pronouns are 'she' and 'her', you could say "Alex ate *her* food because *she* was hungry."



## How do I ask someone what pronouns they use? —

Try asking: "What pronouns do you use?". It can feel awkward at first, but it is not half as awkward as making a hurtful assumption.

If you are asking as part of an introduction exercise and you want to quickly explain what gender pronouns are, you can try something like this: "Tell us your name, where you come from, and your pronouns. For example, I'm Xena, I'm from Amazon Island, and I use the pronouns 'she' and 'her'. So you could say, 'she went to her car' if you were talking about me."



## Why is it important to respect people's pronouns? —

You can't always know what someone's pronouns are by looking at them. Asking and correctly using someone's pronouns is one of the most basic ways to show your respect for their gender identity.

When someone is referred to with the wrong pronoun, it can make them feel disrespected, invalidated and dismissed.

It is a privilege to not have to worry about which pronoun someone is going to use for you based on how they perceive your gender. If you have this privilege, yet don't respect someone else's gender identity, it can be hurtful and oppressive.

### What are some commonly used pronouns? —

She/her/hers and he/him/his are a few commonly used pronouns. Some people call these "female/feminine" and "male/masculine" pronouns, but many avoid these labels because not everyone who uses "he" feels like a "male" or "masculine."

There are also lots of gender-neutral pronouns in use. Here are a few you might hear:

- They/them/theirs (Shea ate their food because they were hungry.) This is a pretty common gender-neutral pronoun and it can be used in the singular.
- Ze/hir/hir (Tyler ate hir food because ze was hungry.) Ze is pronounced like "zee" can also be spelled zie or xe, and replaces she/he/they. Hir is pronounced like "here" and replaces her/hers/him/his/they/theirs.
- Use their name (Ash ate Ash's food because Ash was hungry). Some people prefer not to use pronouns at all, using their name as a pronoun instead.

Never refer to a person as "it" or "he-she" as this is incredibly offensive.

### What if I'm not sure and I can't ask? —

Where possible, use gender-neutral pronouns such as they/them/theirs (e.g. Shannon drank *their* drink because *they* were thirsty).

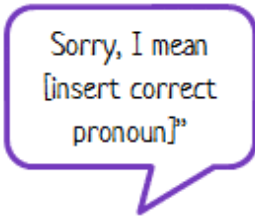
You could also stick with using their name to replace the pronoun (e.g. Ash drank Ash's drink because Ash was thirsty).

### What if I make a mistake? —

It's okay! Everyone slips up from time to time. The best thing to do if you use the wrong pronoun for someone is to say something right away, like "Sorry, I mean (insert correct pronoun)".

If you realise your mistake after the fact, respectfully apologise and move on.

A lot of the time it can be tempting to go on and on about how bad you feel that you messed up or how hard it is for you to get it right. Please don't! It is inappropriate and makes the person who was misgendered feel awkward and responsible for comforting you.



### Why do people include their pronouns in their email signature? —

Adding your pronouns to your email signature and meeting introductions is an easy way to normalise the use of pronouns and make trans and gender diverse people feel safe, included and supported.

You can learn more about using pronouns in your email signature on the [Te Kawa Mataaho | Public Service Commission website](#) and [how to update your own email signature on Te Taura](#).

If you are unsure of the correct pronouns to use for a person and can't ask, what pronouns should you use? *(Select all that apply)*

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- The gender they were assigned at birth
- Neutral pronouns such as "them" or "they"
- Their name

"He-she" or "it"

SUBMIT

CONTINUE

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## What next?

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This brings us to the end of the module. Let's check what you know...

- I know the difference between Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Anatomical Sex and Sexual/Romantic Attraction.
- I know what some of the key LGBTQIA+ terms mean.
- I know what pronouns are and how to ask someone what their pronouns are if I'm not sure.

CONTINUE

### Pride Pins

Wearing a Pride Pin shows your support for and is a reflection of your understanding and respect of people who have diverse sexualities and gender identities. They are available to anyone and everyone regardless of their identity. You could pin it to your lanyard, clothing or backpack! How will you wear yours?

To keep the Pride vibe going all year round and to show your support for the LGBTQIA+ community, order an awesome, fully inclusive Pride Pin by completing and submitting [this form](#).

Proceeds from each pin supports LAGANZ: Te Pūrangā Takatāpui o Aotearoa and its project to commission a digital archive to preserve Aotearoa's LGBTQIA+ histories and taonga.



### **Did you know...**

The original rainbow flag was created in 1978 and continues to be a symbol of hope and inclusion for queer people. Over the years it's evolved as the LGBTQIA+ community grew and identities emerged. The latest version of the flag now specifically includes and acknowledges intersex folks, represented by yellow with a purple circle in the centre.

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**While this is the end of the module, the learning doesn't have to stop here!**

If you're an ally, completing this module or wearing a Pride Pin are just a couple of ways you can show your support. Check out our other learning opportunities.

**DPMC | NEMA Rainbow Network**

This is an employee-led network that provides a safe and inclusive space for LGBTQIA+ staff (including parents of and allies) to connect.

[TAKE A LOOK](#)

**Diversity & Inclusion information & resources**

Visit our Kāinga page where you can find resources to help support you and your team to develop an inclusive and supportive culture.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

### **DPMC Diversity & Inclusion plan**

This is our Diversity & Inclusion plan which includes shared actions with NEMA and drives this important mahi.

[LEARN MORE](#)

### **Inclusive Language guide**

Language is powerful. Our choice of words can unite or divide, include or exclude. Using inclusive language promotes a safer, more respectful workplace where everyone feels enabled to contribute and be engaged.

[CHECK IT OUT](#)

### **Takatāpui**

A resource hub for takatāpui and their whānau.

[EXPLORE](#)

### **Rainbow Organisations – Te Ngākau Kahukura**

Some of the key rainbow organisations that provide support and information to LGBTI+, takatāpui, MVPFAFF+ and other rainbow people across Aotearoa.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

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**Rainbow Voices of Aotearoa New Zealand: A Documentary Short Film | NZ Parliament**

From staring down thousands of protestors, to Parliament narrowly passing bills giving fundamental rights to LGBTQ+ people, this documentary showcases personal stories of New Zealand's turbulent Rainbow history.

GO WATCH

**Nice one!**

Thanks for completing the module. If you have any feedback or suggestions, you are welcome to contact DPMC's [Organisation Direction and Development](#) team.

Click the button to exit the module and return to eTipu. Haere rā!

EXIT THE MODULE

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