

Lane County Community Resilience Toolkit: Nonconforming Gender Populations Executive Summary



Introduction:

The Nonconforming Gender Populations Team consists of representatives from community-based and governmental organizations, including behavioral health providers, community advocacy organizations focused on diverse populations, and Lane County Health & Human Services. The Team identified both strengths and needs associated with recovery from COVID-19 and the resulting economic downturn, as well as resources and recommended practices. The Team also identified the stresses and loss points that most affect this population. The work of the Team will continue with periodic updates and additional material added to the Toolkit as the pandemic continues.

Major Conclusions:

1. The COVID-19 pandemic and 2020 economic downturn has created additional stress for those whose gender does not fit limited categories.
2. People with the fewest resources have the greatest need for services and assistance for basic needs such as housing, food and utilities.
3. This population is highly varied and has varied needs for technology resources such as smartphones, computer hardware and adequate broadband.
4. Communication channels for those who do not speak English as their primary language are limited and may result in additional stress.
5. Social justice protests have illuminated law enforcement disparities in the demeaning and threatening way people of non-conforming gender may be treated by law enforcement, and which often affects people of color in this population more than people with white skin.
6. The pressures of quarantine, social distancing, limited travel, and disrupted work/school schedules may result in increased relationship and family conflict and resultant traumatic stress.

Identified Stress/Loss Points for Ethnic/Racial Minorities and Immigrants:

- Isolation and loneliness may be increased due to quarantine, and may result in increased depression and anxiety
- Relationship stressors due to limited contact may increase feelings of hopelessness
- Nonemergency medical procedures needed for transgender individuals have been delayed

- Gender dysphoria due to limited personal care services such as hair removal
- Lack of feeling connected to others in this population, which may be greatest for adolescents and older adults
- Feeling unsafe utilizing faith-based and other community services due to judgements of others
- Police brutality, protests and news stories are frightening and create powerlessness
- Trauma may be experienced in many different ways, including numbness to emotional stress, anger or suicidal thinking
- Social media may be helpful but can also lead to bullying and harmful contact
- Employment layoffs, job insecurity, income reduction, and limited workforce training and internships impact economic stability
- Uncertainty for the future is putting a great deal of stress on individuals in this population