



Pollworker Tips

Interacting Respectfully with Transgender, Genderqueer and Gender Non-Conforming (GNC) People

Definitions:

- **Transgender:** Umbrella term individuals, whose self-understanding of their gender, behavior, and how they present themselves in the world, is different from what society expects based on their assigned sex at birth.
- **Genderqueer/Gender Non-Conforming:** Term for individuals, whose presentation in the world is different than societal expectations regarding how they “should” present themselves.

Respectful Interaction at the Polling Place:

1. At the poll, if you are greeting a transgender/GNC person, you may recognize that their identity card does not match their presentation. If all other legal requirements are met, transgender/GNC people are entitled to their right to vote.
2. Do not assume if a person is male or female.
3. Never use words such as “it” or “whatever” when referring to someone who is transgender/GNC.
4. When you are not sure what pronoun to use, stick to the person’s first name or use the pronouns “they/them/theirs.” (i.e. “This is *John*’s ballot” or “This is *their* ballot.”)
5. Never ask a transgender/GNC person what is their “real name.”
6. If you make a pronoun mistake, acknowledge the mistake and apologize. Being honest about your non-familiarity with transgender/GNC people shows respect. It also lets the person know moving forward that you will recognize them as people exercising their right to vote, and will also use their preferred pronoun.
7. When you learn about an individual’s transgender/GNC identity, keep that private. It is privileged information. You should not “out” people by revealing their identity to others.
8. Validate how people present themselves by treating them respectfully just as you would for everyone else.
9. If you are a pollworker serving with a transgender/GNC pollworker, use non-gender specific language in conversation.