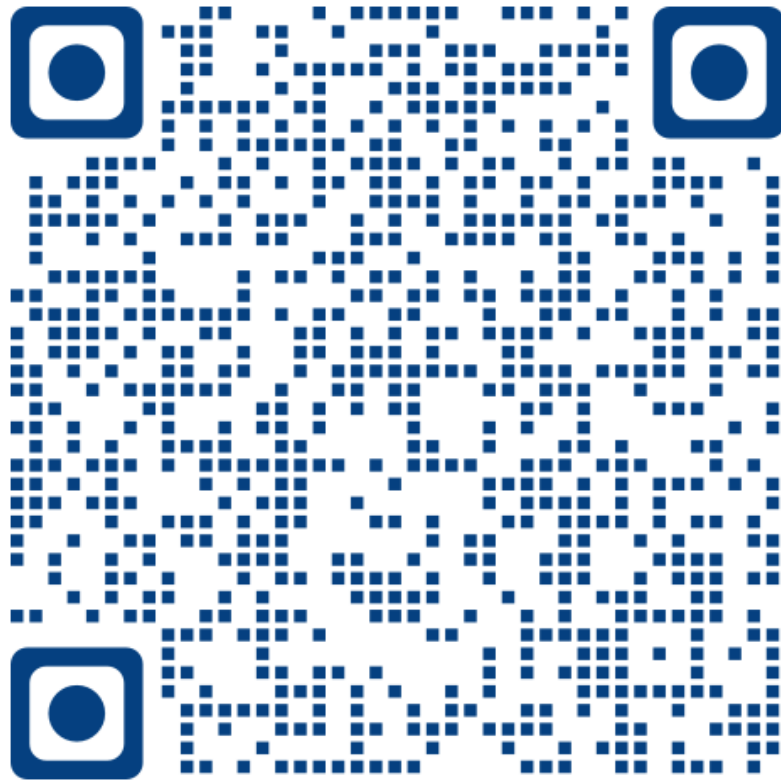




# Creating Safe Shelter Spaces for LGBTQ+ Survivors

**Presented by:**  
**Amy Bellm (she/her)**  
**&**  
**Amanda Gould (she/they)**

*This project described was supported by Grant Number 90EV0535-01-01 from the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.*



[Lgbtqipvinstitute.org/on-going-learning-center](https://lgbtqipvinstitute.org/on-going-learning-center)



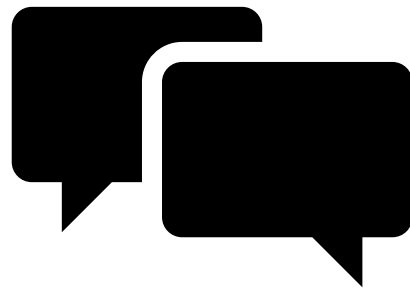
## **Content/trigger warning**



**Content includes: homo/bi/transphobia, domestic violence, and sexual assault**

**We encourage you to do what you need to do to take care of yourself, including:**

- **Taking breaks**
- **Grounding activities**
- **Mindful breath**
- **Whatever that looks like for you!**

What do you think are some of the biggest issues that the LGBTQ survivors face when seeking shelter?





# **Creating Agency-Wide Change**

"We accept  
everyone"

"LGBTQ  
survivors  
don't call us"

Cultural  
specificity  
matters

You are already  
working with  
LGBTQ survivors

# I The Context and History

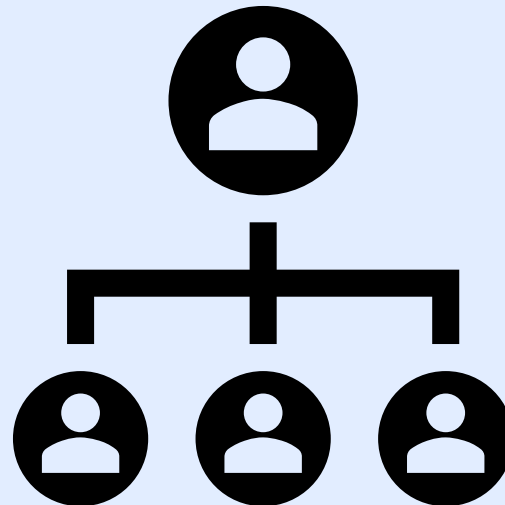
- The framing of DV related interventions as "women's issues" has left out LGBTQ+ survivors
- Addressing the needs of LGBTQ+ survivors requires specialization and knowledge
- Lack of representation and visibility makes it difficult for survivors to recognize their relationship as abusive





# I Top Down Change

- Commitment from leadership
- Not just one advocate at the organization carrying the burden of LGBTQ inclusivity

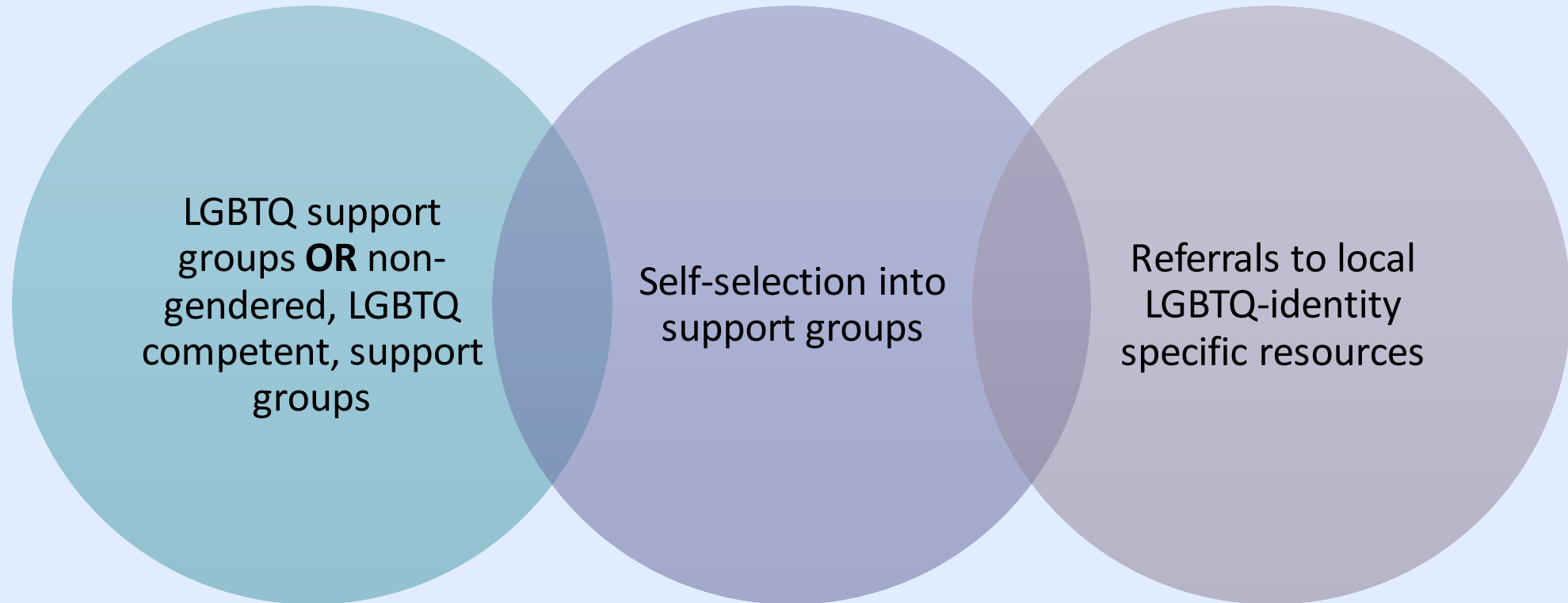


# Creating Visual and Verbal Cues

- Accessible bathrooms
- Staff language
- Inclusive written materials
- Social media and external messaging
- Intake forms

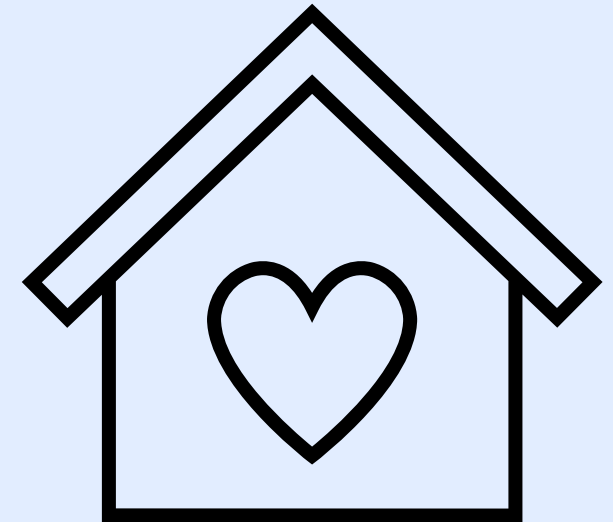


# I Improving Support Groups



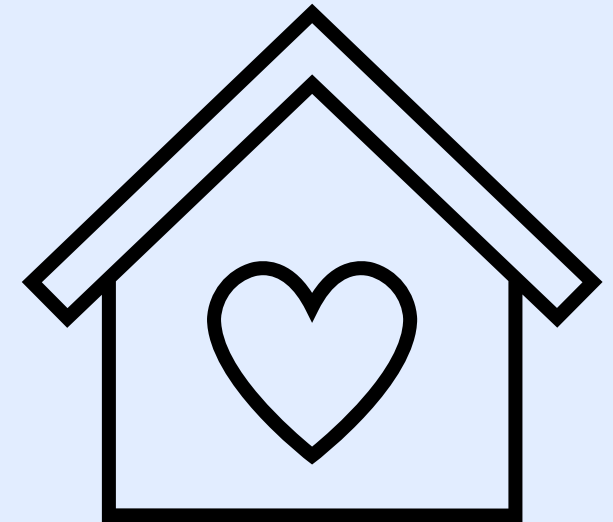
# Creating Safe Shelter Options

- ✓ LGBTQ+ survivors should have the same level of on-site access to advocates
- ✓ DV shelter space is non-gendered **OR** has multiple options



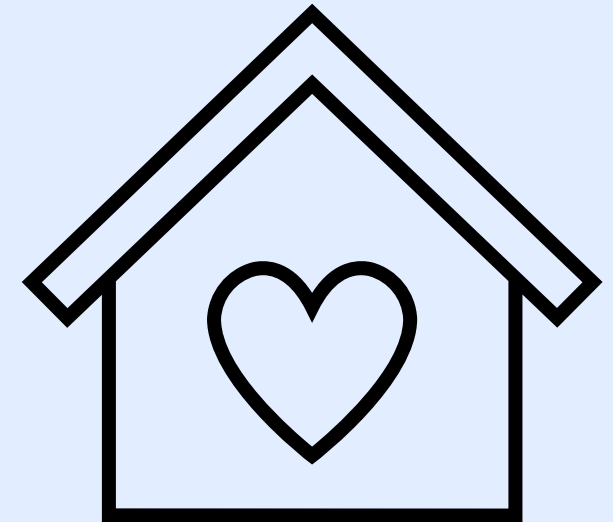
# Working with the Constraints of Funding or Space

- Private studio spaces
- Communal or dorm style
  - Privacy screens or barriers
  - Separate shelter spaces for men, women, LGBTQ survivors
- Hoteling separately



# Cultivating a Welcoming Environment

- Display visual cues
- Set expectations during shelter orientation
- Address bias or discrimination when it comes up



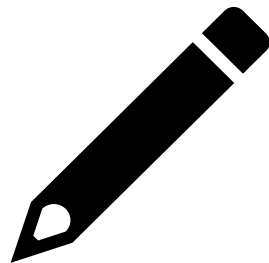
# Best Practice Tips

- ✓ Ensure that leadership is invested in LGBTQ inclusivity efforts
- ✓ Provide gender inclusive bathrooms
- ✓ Use gender neutral language (partner and they/them) unless other pronouns and information are given
- ✓ Examine materials to ensure that everything is gender inclusive and LGBTQ inclusive
- ✓ Offer LGBTQ support groups OR non-gendered LGBTQ inclusive groups
- ✓ Implement short-term inclusive shelter practices
- ✓ Identify long-term shelter practices that your agency can work towards



# Breakout Exercise

1. What are some ways you could see these principles being incorporated at your agency?
2. What are some quick and easy changes you can make?
3. Which changes will take more time and planning?
4. What barriers come to mind?







# **Navigating language, data, and intakes**

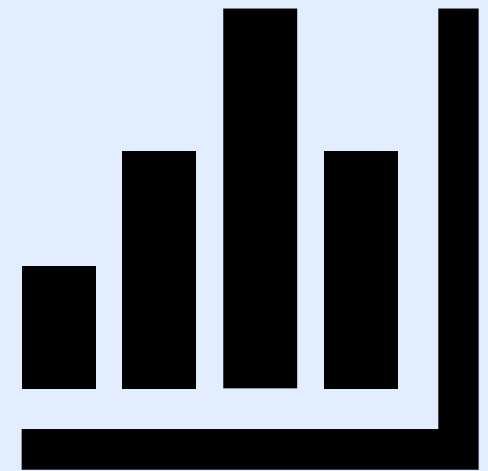
# I The Importance of Language

Language is the way we make sense of the world, ourselves, and our relationships

For LGBTQ survivors, language and identity labels can be a core way of ensuring that they feel seen and understood

# I Intakes and Data Collection

- Demonstrate cultural responsiveness
- Include sexual orientation, gender identity, and pronouns
- Include multiple choice *and* fill in the blank
- Analyze data to identify barriers, obstacles, and accessibility
- Combat limitations of grant reporting by addressing any limitations with the grantor



# How to Handle Possible Questions

## Client asks

"Why are you asking me that question?"



## Response

"We are an LGBTQ inclusive provider and work with individuals from many experiences and backgrounds, therefore we collect a wide array of information and data on everyone."

# How to Handle Possible Questions

## Client asks

"Why does that question matter for me to receive services?"



## Response

"Please know that all of the questions are totally optional to answer and not required to receive services. All of the information that you choose provide to us is helpful in determining how best we can support you."

# How to Handle Possible Questions

## Client asks

"What is a pronoun?" or  
"What does that mean?"

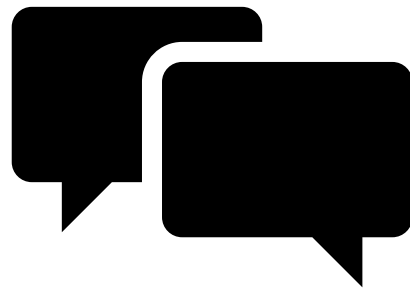


## Response

"A pronoun is just what you would like us to refer to you with when we don't use your name."

Break out session:

**Determine who will be the *Intake Person* and who will be the *Potential Client*. After completing the exercise once, switch roles and repeat the exercise again.**



# Intake Questions

**“If you do not wish to answer certain questions, you may decline to answer. However, the more information that you provide, the better we can determine how best to support you.”**

**“Please allow me read all options before answering.”**

- 1. What name do you wish to be called by? \_\_\_\_\_**
- 2. What is your legal name, if different? \_\_\_\_\_**
- 3. What are your pronouns? \_\_\_\_\_**
- 4. How do you identify your sexual orientation?**

(I will read the list, and you can select more than 1 answer)

- Gay –
- Lesbian –
- Bisexual –
- Queer–
- Questioning –
- Pansexual –
- Self-ID –
- Decline to answer –

## **5. How do you identify your gender identity? (Read the list)**

- Woman –
- Man –
- Transgender Woman –
- Transgender Man –
- Nonbinary –
- Gender Non-Conforming –
- Self-ID –
- Decline to answer –

## **6. How do you identify your relationship status? (Read the list)**

- Single –
- Dating –
- Partnered –
- Domestic Partnership –
- Legally Married –
- Polyamorous –
- Self-ID –



# Best Practice Tips

- ✓ Ask *all* clients about their sexual orientation, gender identity, and pronouns during their intake process (verbally or written) in an *optional* way.
- ✓ Include expansive options for all three categories along with room for a client to choose an option not listed.
- ✓ Analyze data collected to identify critical information about barriers and accessibility of services.
- ✓ Always use gender neutral language until or unless the potential client provides other pronouns.
- ✓ Always use the language that the potential client uses when referring to themselves and their relationships.

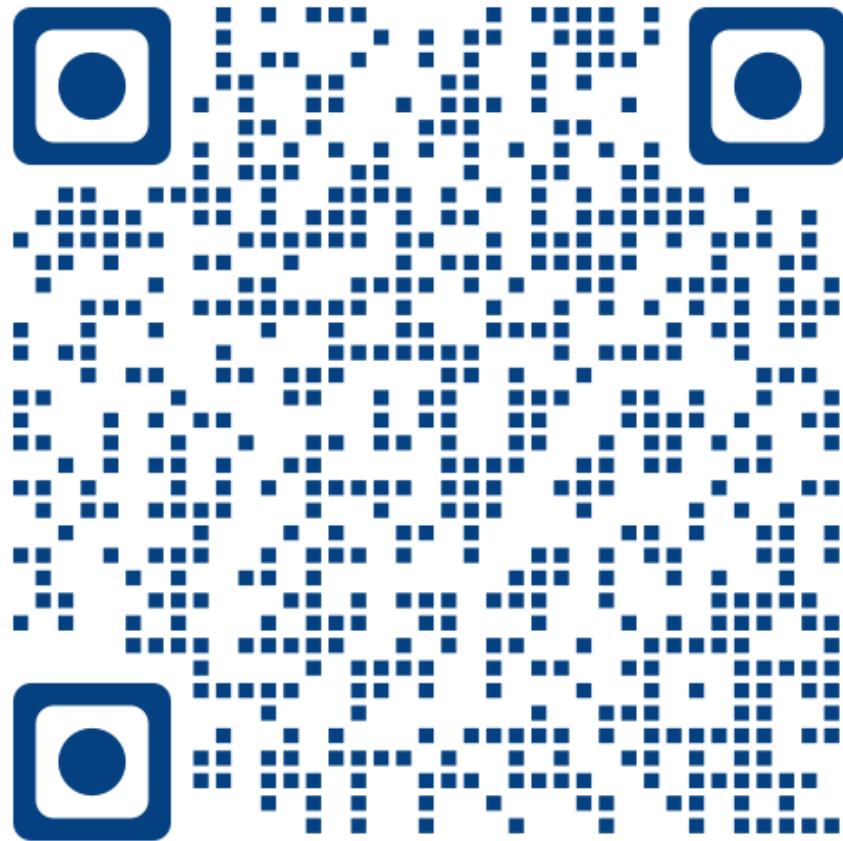




**Share...**

Identify one best practice you will incorporate into service provision to increase access for LGBTQ+ survivors

Please take our  
post-survey:



# Next Steps

Bring what you've learned here to your agency

Join our 2 hour core training

Join our 5 hour advanced capacity building training

Sign up for technical assistance for your agency

Keep up with our online Ongoing Learning Center



National LGBTQ Institute on Intimate Partner Violence

A PROJECT OF THE LOS ANGELES LGBT CENTER

In partnership with the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs and In Our Own Voices, Inc.

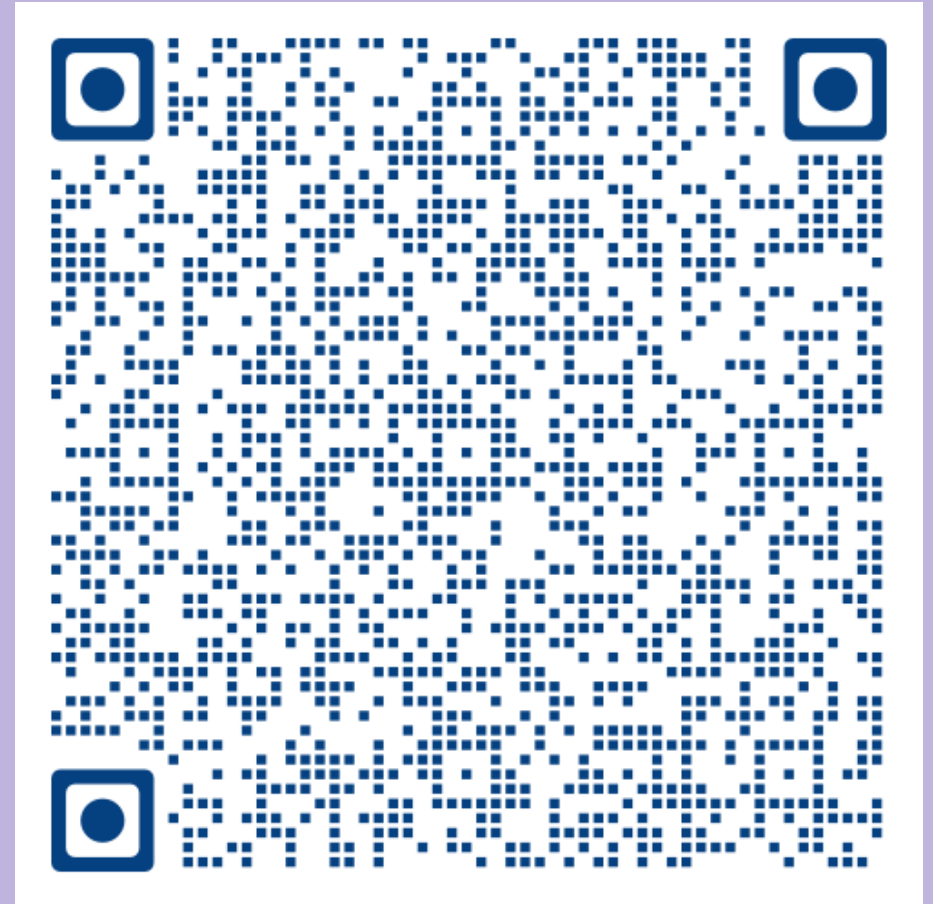
## Serving & Supporting LGBTQ+ Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence

A 2-hour interactive workshop designed  
to equip participants with essential information  
on the unique and specific experiences  
of LGBTQ+ survivors of IPV.

Thursday, March 30th  
11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (PST)

Webinar link will be provided  
upon date arrival.

[lgbtqipvinstitute.org](http://lgbtqipvinstitute.org)



# Questions?





# National LGBTQ Institute on Intimate Partner Violence

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- *The LGBTQ Center Long Beach*
- *Network La Red*
- *Waymakers*
- *Legal Aid Association of California*

*For their content, knowledge, and contributions to this presentation.*



# Resources

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) 2010 data on intimate partner and sexual violence among LGB people [www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/nisvs](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/nisvs)
- FORGE-FORWARD Self-Assessment Tool: “Is Your Agency Ready to Serve Transgender and Non-Binary Clients?” <http://forge-forward.org/wp-content/docs/self-assessment-tool-rev-04-01-2019.pdf>
- SHADES OF CHANGE: A Guide For Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Service Providers Working With Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People of Color <http://www.ccasa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Shades-of-Change-LGBT-Best-Practices-Guide.pdf>
- Department of Justice: Ensuring Access for LGBT Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Dating Violence and Stalking <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/blog/ensuring-access-lgbt-victims-domestic-violence-sexual-assault-dating-violence-and-stalking>