

# 5 Things You Should Know About LGBTQ+ Student Rights in Schools

*Did you know that nationally 59.1% of LGBTQ+ students feel unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation, 42.5% because of their gender expression, and 37.4% because of their gender? – GLSEN 2019 School Climate Survey*



## **LGBTQ+ discrimination is illegal in schools.**

The New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD) prohibits discrimination based on actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression in all public and non-religious private New Jersey schools. These protections apply during school hours and during school-sponsored activities that take place outside of school hours.



## **Schools must take an active role in combatting LGBTQ+ harassment.**

Under the LAD, New Jersey schools are required to address harassment based on a student's LGBTQ+ identity if they knew or should have known about the harassment. For instance, a school cannot allow a student to harass a classmate because of her sexual orientation.



## **You must be treated consistent with your gender identity and expression in school.**

Under the LAD, students are allowed to use restrooms and locker rooms or participate in extracurricular activities, including intramural or interscholastic athletics and physical education, that best correspond to their gender identity and expression. Students also have a right to self-identify and be addressed by their name, title, and pronouns.



## **LGBTQ+ student organizations must be treated the same as other organizations.**

The LAD requires school districts to treat LGBTQ+ student organizations just as it treats other student groups. For example, a school that provides funding to student-run groups must provide the same access to funding to an LGBTQ+ student organization as it does to other student organizations.



## **The LAD protects you against retaliation.**

No one can retaliate against you for complaining about discrimination or harassment to your school administrators; filing a complaint with your school, with the Division on Civil Rights, or in court; or exercising any other right associated with the LAD.

To find out more or to file a complaint, go to [NJCivilRights.gov](https://www.njcivilrights.gov) or call **973-648-2700**



NJ Office of the Attorney General  
[NJCivilRights.gov](https://www.njcivilrights.gov)

