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# What rights do transgender students have at school? What can I do if I'm getting bullied or harassed?

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## Your Rights

- **LGBTQIA+ discrimination is illegal in schools.** [The New Jersey Law Against Discrimination](#) (LAD) prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression in all public and non-religious private New Jersey schools.
- **You must be treated consistently with your gender identity and expression in school.** Students are allowed to use restrooms and locker rooms or participate in extracurricular activities, including intramural or interscholastic sports, 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.
- **Schools and school districts must take action to stop harassment based on gender identity and gender expression.** For instance, school leadership cannot refuse to take action if they know or should have known that a student is being repeatedly harassed, insulted, or name-called by classmates because of how they express their gender.
- **School districts are required to create a safe, supportive, and non-discriminatory environment for transgender students** and have received [detailed guidance](#) from the NJ Department of Education.

If you are experiencing bullying, discrimination or harassment, there are several ways to report it including taking legal action or calling the police.

Learn more below or refer to the [NJ Division on Civil Rights' fact sheet on LGBTQIA+ student rights](#).

## School Policies

School districts [must comply](#) with New Jersey laws that prohibit harassment, intimidation, and bullying, and require each district Board of Education to implement a policy prohibiting harassment, intimidation, or bullying at school, school-sponsored events, and school buses.

In addition, schools must take action to end harassment and prevent it from occurring.

School districts are also required to create a safe, supportive environment for transgender students including:

- School districts shall ensure that a transgender student is addressed at school by the name and pronoun chosen by the student, regardless of whether a legal name change or a change in official school records has occurred.
- A school district shall accept a student's asserted gender identity. Parental consent is not required and no documentation is required to have a student's gender identity recognized by the school district.
- A transgender student shall be allowed to dress in accordance with their gender identity.
- All students are entitled access to restrooms, locker rooms, and changing facilities in accordance with their gender identity to allow for involvement in various school programs and activities.
- During gender-separated classes or athletic activities, all students must be allowed to participate in a manner consistent with their gender identity.
- School districts shall issue school documentation for a transgender student, such as student identification cards, in the name chosen by the student.
- School district personnel are not required to notify a student's parent or guardian of the student's gender identity or expression.

For more details, refer to the [NJ Department of Education's transgender student guidance for school districts](#) or the Department's [guidance for parents on the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act](#).

**Take Action**

If you or your parents believe your school or school district is not following the required policies, [report it to your county's Office of Education](#) and they will investigate. Garden State Equality provides [trainings](#) to create a more inclusive space for LGBTQ students and families.

[Teach and Affirm](#) is a program in New Jersey designed to empower schools to be safe and affirming learning spaces for all students, including LGBTQ students, students of different racial/ethnic backgrounds, and students with disabilities.

Free LGBTQ-Inclusive, [robust lesson plans and resources](#) are available to all New Jersey educators.

If you or your parents believe your civil rights were violated, [file a complaint](#) with [DCR](#) within 180 days of the incident.

To learn more about your civil rights and your legal protections, [refer to this article](#).

*Note: Schools operated by a religious institution may be subject to different requirements under the NJ Law Against Discrimination.*

**Contacting The Police**

If you or your parents believe a law has been broken, you may choose to call the police. If the incident happened at school or could affect you at school, you can also inform school officials so they can take the proper precautions to protect you.

Sources:

- <https://nj.gov/education/students/safety/sandp/transgender/Guidance.pdf>;
- <https://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib/ParentGuide.pdf>;
- <https://www.njsiaa.org/sites/default/files/documents/2020-10/transgender-policy-approved-11-15-17.pdf>

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