

# ALL-GENDER RESTROOMS

## WHAT IS AN “ALL-GENDER” RESTROOM?

All-gender restrooms are restrooms open for anyone to use regardless of gender. Some public facilities have all-gender bathrooms that are single stall. These are also commonly referred to as “unisex” or “family” restrooms. However, in many public facilities, the only available restrooms are *gendered* – or labeled as being for men or women. This includes many of the buildings that house services or resources for people surviving violence, such as hospitals and medical centers, court houses, shelters, and social service organizations.

## WHY DO ALL-GENDER RESTROOMS MATTER?

People who do not identify as men or women, and people who are perceived as not conforming to gender norms, face barriers in navigating public spaces. Lack of adequate access to restrooms can diminish safety and human dignity and limits access to community supports and social services for survivors. Human service organizations should ensure that every facility has well-marked, ADA-compliant, single-stall all-gender restrooms. This increases access to and privacy in the restroom for everyone.

Providers should know where single-stall and all-gender bathrooms are located in their buildings, as well as at referral sites. Advocates can take steps within their organization to advocate for bathroom access and universal design. We’ve included some basic ideas on the next page.

## CAN WE KEEP OUR GENDERED RESTROOMS?

The organization should ideally change all restrooms to all gender facilities. In the case where the organization maintains a gender system, organizations should take steps to ensure staff and clients can use the restroom they choose based on their own sense of identity and personal safety. Posting signs that prohibit discrimination may be helpful, but organizations should also take steps to educate staff and clients about gender diversity. Such efforts should be holistic (rather than exclusively focused on restrooms). It can be helpful to work with a skilled [technical assistance provider](#) or local LGBTQ anti-violence organization.

# ALL-GENDER RESTROOMS

## TAKE ACTION:

### ☐ REPLACE SIGNS

Replace gendered bathroom signs with all gender bathroom signs on existing single-stall restrooms. This will increase access for everyone to simply use the first available restroom. Search online for “all gender bathroom signs.”

### ☐ CREATE AN ALL-GENDER, SINGLE-STALL RESTROOM

Transform multi-occupancy restrooms into a single-stall restroom by simply installing a lock for the outside door. This is a great option for smaller, low traffic restrooms. Otherwise, a thoughtful renovation can often turn a larger multi-stall restroom into multiple single-occupancy stations, often with no impact on traffic.

### ☐ CREATE AN ALL-GENDER, MULTI-OCCUPANCY RESTROOM

Existing multi-occupancy restrooms can also be transformed into all-gender restrooms. In these restrooms, everyone uses private individual stall, but shares communal sinks and other amenities. Stalls can be retrofitted to increase privacy for everyone (e.g. floor to ceiling doors, continuous hinges, etc.). Removing the outside door of the bathroom may be feasible and help heighten a sense of safety. Staff should be provided with an opportunity to learn more about why this change is important and how it has been successfully implemented in other organizations and businesses.

### ☐ BE CONSISTENT WITH OFF-SITE EVENTS

Establish an agency policy or directive to ensure that all-gender restrooms are available at events or programming held off-site. Ideally, the organization should prioritize venues with an all-gender restroom. You might also negotiated with the site to post temporary all-gender signs on gendered bathrooms for the duration of the event. Be sure to talk to the facilities personnel in advance in order to prevent problems on the day of the event and in order to advocate for permanent changes at off-site venues.

### ☐ PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Create an agency directive to make all-gender restrooms a priority for future renovations or relocations.