



LGBT Law Enforcement Community Liaison Program Accreditation Guide

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Introduction

These accreditation standards for LGBT Law Enforcement Community Liaison Programs were developed based on research conducted in 2020 by Out to Protect on existing liaison programs operating in law enforcement agencies around the United States. While we found there to be many programs, few of them had any written policies or procedures guiding them. We also found no formalized training for LGBT Liaisons.

In 2022, we developed an LGBT Liaison Academy in order to help agencies create and operate a liaison program based on the best practices we collected in our research. We also established the National LGBT Liaison Network and a leadership team comprised of experienced LGBT liaisons from around the country. We used this leadership team to validate a set of standards based on our research and best practices. These standards are the basis for this accreditation program.

The Purpose of Accreditation

The goal of this accreditation program is to encourage agencies to create LGBT liaison programs based on what we know are best practices and to reward agencies that operate a program based on these standards. Accreditation provides credibility that contributes to the legitimacy of the liaison program and the law enforcement agency overall. We believe this is an effective way of growing trust with the community.

Seeking accreditation can also enable an agency to obtain grant funds from government and local agencies and organizations that support the pursuit of accreditation. This funding can pay for the development and operation of an LGBT liaison program.

The Accreditation Process

Any law enforcement agency in the United States is eligible to apply for accreditation of the agency's LGBT Law Enforcement Community Liaison program. Applications must include evidence of how the agency has met the standards described in this document. The application and evidence shall be peer-reviewed by three members of the National LGBT Liaison Network Leadership Team. In addition, the peer review team will meet at least once with the agency's LGBT Liaison. The goal is always to help the agency achieve accreditation.

Accreditation is valid for three years. An annual update is required to maintain accreditation. This annual update includes reporting on achievements and challenges of the previous year and submitting a 12-month action plan for the coming year.

Re-accreditation is required every three years and includes updating the full accreditation application. This application will be peer-reviewed by three members of the National LGBT Liaison Network Leadership Team. A meeting with the agency's LGBT Liaison may be requested at the discretion of the peer review team.

What Accredited Agencies Receive

Law enforcement agencies awarded accreditation will receive a plaque and certificate of accreditation for display in the law enforcement agency. The agency will be listed on a dedicated webpage on the Out to Protect website. Notice of accreditation will be shared on social media and in a press release. Accredited agencies may also have access to decals and stickers that can be used to highlight the agency's accreditation status within the community.

How to Apply for Accreditation

Agencies wishing to receive accreditation of their LGBT Law Enforcement Community Liaison Program must submit an application and evidence of how the agency is meeting each of the accreditation standards. The application is available online at outtoprotect.org. The application fee is \$500 for the initial accreditation and \$500 to renew accreditation every three years. This fee includes the processing of annual updates. Fees can be submitted online via credit card at outtoprotect.org.

Standards noted as "required" must be met in full. All other standards shall be evaluated on the following scale:

5	Meets or exceeds standard
3 to 4	Approaching the standard
1 to 2	Below standard
0	Does not meet standard or no evidence submitted

A total of 115 points are possible. A score of 105 is required to earn accreditation.

How Standards Are Modified

Any change to these standards shall be made at the recommendation of the National LGBT Liaison Network Leadership Team and participating accredited agencies. Changes may be proposed based on changes in law or recognized best practices.

Proposed changes shall be distributed to each member of the National LGBT Liaison Network Leadership Team for a vote that requires a two-thirds majority to pass. A second vote requiring a simple majority shall be cast by participating accredited agencies. If both votes are successful, the new standards shall become effective immediately and applied to new and renewal applications for accreditation.

Standard One

The LGBT Law Enforcement Liaison Program is institutionalized and sustainable.

☐ 1.1 A written position description for the LGBT Liaison is in place and approved by the chief executive. **Required**

☐ 1.2 The selection process is formal and mirrors the process used for other ancillary assignments in the agency.

☐ 1.3 The LGBT liaison is at least functionally accountable to the chief executive or second-in-command. **Required**

The position description is written in a format consistent with those for other ancillary positions in the agency. It at least includes lines of reporting including at least functional accountability to the chief executive. It includes a list of key tasks identifying the specific responsibilities of the liaison.

Describe how the LGBT liaison is selected and how that selection process compares to the selection process for other special and ancillary assignments in the agency.

This can be documented in a department policy or procedure or within the job description. For larger agencies that are decentralized or that have more than 2000 sworn officers, the LGBT liaison can report to a second-in-command.

Standard Two

The LGBT Liaison builds community relationships and trust.

□ 2.1 The LGBT Liaison meets at least four times a year with LGBTQ community leaders representing schools, faith organizations, LGBT centers, Pride organizations, and LGBTQ business leaders.

□ 2.2 The LGBT Liaison maintains a current list of LGBTQ+ community leaders and organizations. **Required**

Meetings with community leaders should occur throughout the year. Evidence of these meetings can include meeting minutes or summaries that include the date, time, and the name of the organization participating in the meeting.

Submit a current roster of LGBTQ+ community leaders that includes the name and contact information for the point of contact in each organization. Include any and all types of LGBTQ+ groups and organizations within the jurisdiction.

Standard Three

The LGBT Liaison has established communications pathways.

☐ 3.1 The LGBT Liaison has a dedicated email address that is available internally and externally. **Required**

☐ 3.2 The LGBT Liaison has a dedicated phone number with voicemail available internally and externally. **Required**

☐ 3.3 The LGBT Liaison uses different Internet platforms for communication that also allow for communication to and from the community.

☐ 3.4 The LGBT Liaison uses a variety of media forms to regularly communicate with the community.

The dedicated email address is specific to the LGBT liaison position, but not to an individual named employee. (e.g., LGBTLiaison@nameofcity.gov)

The dedicated phone number is specific to the LGBT liaison, but not to an individual employee. The number has a voicemail dedicated to the LGBT liaison position. The number is published for the public and internal use.

There is a dedicated webpage for the LGBT Liaison program with a short and usable URL that is easily communicated. The webpage contains the dedicated email and phone number of the LGBT Liaison. The LGBT Liaison program uses at least one other Internet platform with two-way communication allowing community members to message the Liaison and the Liaison to message the community. A LinkTree can serve as the form of social media and method of providing a shortened URL for a webpage.

Provide examples of communications on different media forms from throughout the year submitted by the LGBT Liaison. This can include an introductory video, video

messages, crime prevention information, or anything specific to the function of the LGBT Liaison.

Standard Four

The LGBT Liaison is engaged with the community throughout the year.

☐ 4.1 The LGBT Liaison participates in LGBTQ community events at least five different months during the year.

☐ 4.2 The LGBT Liaison provides an information booth at PRIDE events and other LGBTQ community events.

☐ 4.3 The LGBT Liaison participates in recruitment activities for the law enforcement agency.

☐ 4.4 The LGBT Liaison provides crime prevention programming for the community.

Participation in community events can include anything from Pride celebrations to “coffee with a cop”, recruitment activities, or tabling as the LGBT Liaison at other non-LGBT community events. Submit evidence of participation at events occurring during five different months of the year.

Submit examples of crime prevention programming that could include presentations or media produced specifically addressing crime prevention within the LGBTQ+ community. Evidence can include video or print media and or records of crime prevention presentations.

Standard Five

The LGBT Liaison is a resource for the law enforcement agency.

□ 5.1 The LGBT Liaison provides LGBT awareness and hate crimes training for agency personnel (including the agency training academy and citizen academy programs).

□ 5.2 The LGBT Liaison supports investigators of hate crimes and other crimes as needed impacting the LGBTQ+ community.

□ 5.3 The LGBT Liaison leads support for LGBTQ+ employees within the agency and advocates for the community.

□ 5.4 The LGBT Liaison advises human resources personnel on LGBTQ+ issues.

Provide a summary of all LGBT awareness and hate crimes training delivered by the LGBT Liaison within the agency (including programs such as citizen academies) and/or at the basic training academy. Include in the documentation of how many employees in the agency have received LGBT awareness and hate crimes training.

Provide a summary of how the LGBT Liaison supported investigations of any hate crimes or other crimes occurring in the LGBTQ+ community.

Provide a summary of how the LGBT Liaison works with the agency's human resources department on LGBTQ+ issues. Do not provide any details that would be considered confidential. Include examples of how the LGBT Liaison supports LGBTQ+ employees within the agency.

Standard Six

A full-time employee is currently assigned and trained to serve as the LGBT Liaison.

- ☐ 6.1 The assigned LGBT liaison is a sworn officer.
- ☐ 6.2 The LGBT Liaison has completed an LGBT awareness training-for-trainers' class. **Required**
- ☐ 6.3 The LGBT Liaison has completed a hate crimes investigations class. **Required**
- ☐ 6.4 The LGBT Liaison has completed a class on how to operate an LGBT Liaison program. **Required**
- ☐ 6.5 The LGBT Liaison has at least 20% of their regular duty time assigned to perform LGBT liaison functions.
- ☐ 6.6 A full-time employee is currently assigned to serve as the LGBT Liaison. **Required**

Provide a roster of all employees designated as an LGBT Liaison and their status as sworn or civilian, full-time or part-time. In cases where more than one Liaison has been appointed, note if there is a leader of the team.

Describe the training each LGBT Liaison has completed related to providing LGBT awareness training, investigating hate crimes, and operating as an LGBT Liaison. This includes any update training courses completed. Include the length of each course and the training provider.

Document the percentage of work time (time away from regular duties) allocated to performing the duties of LGBT Liaison.

Optional Exemplary Practices

☐ The law enforcement agency has a “Pride patch” that includes use of at least the six-colors of the Pride flag. [+3 points]

☐ Employees of the law enforcement agency are permitted to wear the Pride patch year-round. [+1 point]

☐ LGBT Liaisons have some type of designation on their uniform identifying them as an LGBT Liaison such as the title on a name tag. [+1 point]

☐ LGBT Liaisons have a business card that includes the title of LGBT Liaison printed on the card. [+1 point]

☐ The law enforcement agency has a marked “Pride” police vehicle that is used by the LGBT Liaison to be present at Pride and other community events. [+3 points]

☐ The LGBT Liaison operates the department’s participation in the Safe Place program. [+3 points]

☐ The law enforcement agency recruits applicants specifically from the LGBTQ+ community. [+2 points]

☐ The law enforcement agency’s School resource officer(s) completed LGBT awareness training tailored to supporting and protecting LGBTQ+ students in educational environments. [+3 points]

Provide a picture of the agency Pride patch and any documentation in department policies, procedures, or uniform specifications describing how and when the patch can be worn on the regular uniform.

Provide a picture of the designation worn on the uniform, such as a name tag with the title of LGBT Liaison. Include any documentation in department policies, procedures, or uniform specifications authorizing the wear of that designation.

Provide a picture of the business card showing the title of LGBT Liaison on the card of the assigned LGBT Liaison.

Provide a picture of the Pride police vehicle at an event in the community.

Provide evidence that the agency operates a Safe Place program modeled after the Seattle Police Department program and that this is led by the LGBT Liaison.

Provide a copy of a recruitment poster, video, or job announcement that is specific to the LGBTQ+ community. Describe how the recruitment targets LGBTQ+ applicants.

Provide certificates of training for school resource officers who completed LGBT awareness training specific to the role of school resource officer. This could include the Out to Protect School Resource Officer LGBTQ+ Ally certificate.

Attestation By Agency Chief Executive

Law Enforcement Agency Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Chief Executive's Name And Title: _____

I have read the LGBT Community Liaison Accreditation Standards and attest that my agency meets each of the standards checked on the LGBT Law Enforcement Community Liaison Accreditation Guide. I have reviewed the narrative information and evidence submitted with this application and attest to its accuracy. I understand that accreditation is awarded for a three-year period and that annual updates are required in order to maintain accreditation throughout this period.

Signature: _____ Date: _____