

IOM GUIDANCE ON INCLUSIVE FACILITIES FOR MIGRANTS WITH DIVERSE



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PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

This document provides guidance for staff members who are assisting migrants on IOM premises and in other IOM-managed facilities such as transit centers. Its purpose is to detail the protection considerations related to LGBTIQ+ migrants. This document is based on the Division of Resettlement and Movement Management's longer *Operational Guidance on Protection and Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) for IOM Premises*, which details protection guidance related to age, gender and diversity (AGD), including LGBTIQ+ considerations.

This guidance is meant to be applied at all IOM missions globally, regardless of the type of office, facility, or beneficiary accommodation available, or the local context. In locations in which the standards established in this document are not possible due to space or logistical constraints, for instance, a limited number of toilet facilities, all reasonable measures should be taken to adhere to the guidelines as closely as possible.

OVERVIEW

IOM offices, transit centers and facilities of temporary accommodation can pose significant risks for LGBTIQ+ adults and children, particularly those who are transgender, gender non-conforming, intersex, or LGBTIQ+ families with small children. Harmful language and actions can be perpetrated not only by other migrants, but also by untrained or poorly trained IOM staff members and security personnel, rendering what are meant to be protective spaces high-risk areas for LGBTIQ+ individuals. Risk factors are further exacerbated by intersectional factors such as skin color, disability, age, gender and social status.



There are seven areas in which IOM can seek to make our offices, transit centers and other facilities safer and more inclusive for LGBTIQ+ individuals: personnel and training; sanitation facilities; accommodation; non-food item distribution; medical care; accommodation for nursing parents; and safe space messaging.

PERSONNEL AND TRAINING

It is critical all IOM personnel understand the importance of treating LGBTIQ+ beneficiaries with dignity. IOM personnel serving at our offices, transit centers and other facilities may be hired through direct employment or a third-party contractor. In either case, they should be appropriately trained to work with LGBTIQ+ individuals, especially regarding how to communicate and respond to issues appropriately and respectfully. The training can then be adapted to the personnel attending. For instance, security guards need to learn how to take action when ID cards don't match a beneficiary's gender expression, and how to respond appropriately to any incidents that arise. Movement operations staff, on the other hand, need training on the specific issues that can arise surrounding travel and transit.

Basic training on the types of beneficiaries visiting an IOM office or another facility, or staying in an IOM transit center, and their various protection concerns (especially in relation to gender, age, disability, and LGBTIQ+ individuals) can be incorporated into orientation sessions for personnel. LGBTIQ+-specific training is available in-person or by webinar through a network of trained facilitators using IOM's training package *Working with People with Diverse SOGIECS*. For more information on training, please contact: LGBTIFocalPoint@iom.int.

Other measures that can be taken in relation to staffing include:

- Ensure there is staff diversity and gender balance. If possible, engage staff members who are transgender or gender non-conforming in addition to staff identifying as male and female.
- Offer individuals at IOM offices, transit centers or other facilities the option of speaking with a staff member of another gender, if they would like.
- Ensure trained staff are available during normal working hours at IOM offices and other facilities, and 24 hours each day at transit centers.
- Ensure staff use the preferred names and pronouns of beneficiaries.



SANITATION FACILITIES

The human right to sanitation entitles everyone, without discrimination, to: “have ... access to sanitation, in all spheres of life, that is safe, hygienic, secure, and socially and culturally acceptable, and that provides privacy and dignity” (UN, 2015). Sanitation facilities should be designed to meet the needs of all users regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, sex characteristics, age, size, ability or disability – whether they are IOM personnel, residents, frequent or first-time visitors.

For some LGBTIQ+ individuals, and especially those who are transgender, gender non-conforming, inter-sex, or LGBTIQ+ families with small children, sanitation facilities can be particularly high-risk because they can bring visibility to an individual’s family status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics. The goal of providing safe and secure sanitation facilities, then, is to ensure the basic right to sanitation is upheld in a way that does not bring unnecessary visibility or insecurity to the individuals involved.

Toilets

In addition to male/female binary toilet or restroom facilities, single-use toilets should be provided. A single-use toilet is an enclosed room with a toilet that is designed to be used by one individual or one family at a time. Single-use toilets should offer a safe space for individuals who may experience discomfort, discrimination or harassment when using gender-segregated facilities.

Single-use toilets are used by a range of individuals, including transgender or gender non-conforming individuals, LGBTIQ+ families with small children, children who are transiting with a male caregiver and thus cannot use the female-only toilets, as well as elderly people or people with disabilities who require assistance when using sanitation facilities. A single-use toilet should be discreet in order to mitigate stigma towards those using them. They should be accessible to people with disabilities and labeled with simple toilet symbols rather than gendered symbols. If single-use toilets cannot be made available for structural reasons, IOM should work with the individuals to identify other solutions.

IOM personnel should support beneficiaries in using the toilet that best corresponds with their gender identity and/or expression, as stated by the beneficiary.

Showers

Where there are showers available, it is also important there be single-use showers in addition to gender-segregated facilities. This is an enclosed shower room that is designed to be used by only one individual or family at a time. Single-use showers offer a safe space for individuals who may experience discomfort, discrimination or harassment when using gender-segregated facilities.



Like toilets, single-use showers are used by a range of individuals, including transgender, gender non-conforming or intersex individuals, LGBTIQ+ families with small children, children who are transiting with a male caregiver and thus cannot use the female-only toilets, as well as elderly people or people with disabilities who require assistance when showering.

Single-use showers should be discreet in order to mitigate stigma towards those using them. They should be accessible to people with disabilities and labeled with simple shower symbols rather than gendered symbols. If single-use showers cannot be made available for structural reasons, IOM should work to identify other solutions, such as establishing hours when shared facilities are closed to the general population but open to those with special protection needs.

IOM personnel should support beneficiaries in using the shower facility that best corresponds with their gender identity and/or expression, as stated by the beneficiary.

Signage

Clear, unambiguous signage for sanitation facilities is key to ensuring that the facilities are, in fact, safe and secure. Signs should use recognized symbols or pictograms that convey meaning without the use of language. Please visit the IOM intranet, About Us – Diversity and Inclusion in IOM Programming, Visual Materials section for the materials.

If creating signage, please keep in mind that single-use toilets and showers should be labeled with *toilet and shower symbols*, not with half male/half female symbols, which are offensive. Safe space signs should indicate verbally, using respectful local terms, that individuals may use the facilities that best correspond with their gender identity. Have translations reviewed by a local LGBTIQ+ organization to ensure they contain no inappropriate or offensive language.

ACCOMMODATION

In its transit centers and other facilities, IOM has a duty to ensure the accommodation is safe, accessible, maintains the dignity of those being provided temporary housing, and avoids causing unintended harm to beneficiaries. Housing at transit centers and other facilities should be flexible and mixed, including:

- Gender-segregated housing: sleeping areas that accommodate women and children, separated from the sleeping areas for men; and sleeping areas which accommodate men, separated from the sleeping areas for women and children.
- Family housing options: sleeping areas that allow families – including extended and same-sex families, if safe – to stay together.



- Accommodation for individuals at risk: including same-sex couples and their children, transgender and gender non-conforming people, and individuals with other factors that make sharing accommodation with the general population dangerous or uncomfortable. These spaces should be secure, discreet, and have a door with a lock.

In several instances, accommodation for individuals at risk has been placed near security guard stations to provide heightened security for the individuals staying there. In this case, all security personnel should be properly trained on protection considerations in relation to IOM beneficiaries.

NON-FOOD ITEM DISTRIBUTION

When non-food item distribution takes place at IOM offices, other facilities or transit centers – including, but not limited to, hygiene items, sanitary napkins and clothing – attention should be paid to the fact that not all individual needs will be met with gender-segregated kits, especially if the kits are distributed based on an individual’s gender as listed on their official documentation. For example, transgender men may have a menstrual cycle and require sanitary napkins, while transgender women may require personal care items related to shaving, such as razors. Scented hygiene items and gendered clothing may be distributed inappropriately to individuals who are transgender or gender non-conforming.

The IOM personnel distributing NFIs should ensure that there is a wide range of items available to individuals of all genders and that there is a discreet and safe way for individuals to approach IOM personnel and request additional items they may need.

The above guidance is also applicable to NFI distribution to migrants in detention.

MEDICAL CARE

In relation to medical care, personnel providing routine care, check-ups or pre-departure medical exams should be trained to work with LGBTIQ+ beneficiaries and understand how to use respectful terminology (for instance, transgender rather than gender identity disorder). Medical personnel should also understand that certain medications, such as hormone treatments, need to be maintained by individuals in transition who are in transit. Medical personnel may need to provide support in the form of medication, prescriptions or documentation asking authorities to allow beneficiaries to travel with medication and syringes.

The above guidance is also applicable to medical care given to migrants in detention.



ACCOMMODATION FOR NURSING PARENTS

A lack of privacy in IOM offices, other facilities and transit centers may restrict a parent’s ability to comfortably nurse or express milk and may heighten the individual’s stress level. For this reason, every attempt should be made to dedicate space that is separate and private for parents to nurse their babies or express milk during their stay. This is especially important for LGBTIQ+ individuals who may be nursing or expressing milk.

It is important to keep in mind that not every individual who nurses or expresses milk identifies as female or a mother. Individuals who are transgender, gender non-binary or gender non-conforming may identify using other terms, such as “parent”, “chestfeeding” or “bodyfeeding.” For that reason, the facility should avoid using the term “breastfeeding” in writing, spoken references and on any signage, and instead use the universally-accepted terms “nursing,” “lactation” and the term “express milk” (e.g. “...if an individual needs to nurse or express milk.”) The facility should also avoid using signage that is female-oriented, but instead use gender-neutral symbols to indicate a nursing area. Please visit the IOM intranet, About Us – Diversity and Inclusion in IOM Programming, Visual Materials section for the signage.

Nursing/lactation areas or room should be clearly signed so that all beneficiaries, not only those who are nursing or expressing milk, are aware of the space. In addition to clear signage, IOM staff should inform all beneficiaries of the private nursing area and ensure that parents know how to access it during their stay. The rooms or areas should ideally include dividers (such as cubicle walls) to create spaces for different individuals to nurse or express milk at the same time privately.

SAFE SPACE MESSAGING

In its IOM offices, transit centers and other facilities, IOM should regularly transmit safe space messages in all relevant languages. The purpose of doing so is two-fold: first, to inform relevant beneficiaries that they are protected within those walls and can approach IOM personnel as needed; and second, to ensure all beneficiaries know that IOM is committed to respecting diversity and will not tolerate discrimination or harassment within its offices or other facilities.

Safe space messaging can take the form of posters, safe space signs, flyers, informational handouts, newsletters, buttons, stickers, lanyards, spoken and/or recorded announcements, videos, and computer wallpapers, amongst others. A wide range of messaging mediums should be used to ensure that individuals who are pre-literate are exposed to the messaging. An example of diversified messaging is an office which has safe space posters affixed to walls in common areas, a safe space video playing in the waiting room,



personnel who share safe space information during meetings, and safe space content in flyers and other handouts.

IOM has a well-designed set of diversity and safe-space materials in the three official IOM languages, as well as safe space signs from US Refugee Admissions Program Resettlement Support Centers in many other languages. These materials include posters, computer wallpapers, buttons, stickers, lanyards and bookmarks. There are also examples of safe space videos available. IOM missions should encourage the dissemination of these materials to create stationary and mobile safe spaces. Please visit the IOM intranet, About Us – Diversity and Inclusion in IOM Programming, Guidance section for the materials.

Another tool that offices, transit centers and facilities can to convey safe space messages is to use is a list of the rights of individuals who are visiting or staying there. Here is an example from IOM Kenya:

1. You have the right to enquire about, and to understand, all aspects of your [inset program] processes.
2. You have the right to be treated with respect, humanity and dignity.
3. You have the right to information in the language you best understand.
4. You have the right to access IOM offices and meet with IOM staff for assistance.
5. [Transit Centers] You have the right to visitation by relatives and friends during visitation hours and in designated areas.
6. You have the right to share your opinions regarding how IOM staff can improve their services. This can be done through [insert mechanism – e.g. survey or suggestion box.]
7. You have the right to services that respect you and meet your needs in relation to your age, gender and diversity. If you have special concerns you would like to speak to IOM about, you can do so by [insert mechanism here – e.g. asking to speak to a counselor.]
8. [Transit Centers and some offices and other facilities] You have the right to decent and culturally appropriate meals.
9. You have the right to report any solicitation or suspected fraud, exploitations or abuse to [insert mechanism here, e.g. email address.]
10. You have the right to practice your religious faith, such as prayers.
11. You have the right to a clean, safe and secure environment.