

Findings of the

NATIONAL TRANSGENDER DISCRIMINATION SURVEY

by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force



Massachusetts Results

There were 283 respondents from Massachusetts.

Workplace Discrimination

Rates of discrimination were alarming in Massachusetts, indicating widespread discrimination based on gender identity/expression:

- 76% reported experiencing harassment or mistreatment on the job
- 20% lost a job
- 17% were denied a promotion
- 39% were not hired

Harassment and Discrimination at School

- Those who expressed a transgender identity or gender non-conformity while in K-12 settings reported alarming rates of harassment (79%), physical assault (31%) and sexual assault (11%)
- Harassment was so severe that it led 11% to leave a school in K-12 settings or leave higher education

Economic Insecurity

Likely due to employment discrimination and discrimination in school, survey respondents experienced poverty at over three times the rate of the general population:

- 15% of respondents had a household income of \$10,000 or less, compared to 4% of the general population¹

Housing Discrimination and Instability

Survey respondents experienced blatant housing discrimination, as well as housing instability, much of which appears to stem from the challenges they face in employment.

- 6% were evicted
- 17% were denied a home/apartment
- 10% had become homeless because of their gender identity/expression
- 22% had to find temporary space to stay/sleep
- 18% had to move back in with family or friends
- 25% reported owning their home compared to 67% of the general population²

Harassment and Discrimination in Accommodations and Services

Survey respondents experienced discrimination in public accommodations and services, including from government agencies and police, because of their gender identity/expression.

- 58% were verbally harassed or disrespected in a place of public accommodation or service, including hotels, restaurants, buses, airports and government agencies
- 22% were denied equal treatment by a government agency or official
- 9% were denied equal treatment or harassed by judges or court officials
- 24% of those who have interacted with police reported harassment by officers
- 50% reported being uncomfortable seeking police assistance when needed

Health Care Discrimination and Health Outcomes

- 14% were refused medical care due to their gender identity/expression
- 1.42% were HIV positive, compared to the general population rate of 0.6%³
- 25% postponed needed medical care, when they were sick or injured, due to discrimination
- 35% reported attempting suicide at some point in their life, 22 times the rate of the general population of 1.6%⁴

Bias-Motivated Violence

In questions related to experiences in educational settings, at work, in interactions with police and with family members, at homeless shelters, accessing public accommodations, and in jails and prisons, respondents were asked about physical violence and sexual violence committed against them because of their gender identity/expression. There was no general question asked about whether respondents had ever experienced any bias-motivated violence in other areas of life, such as while walking down the street.

- 18% had been physically assaulted in one of these contexts because of their gender identity or expression
- 7% were sexually assaulted in one of these contexts because of their gender identity or expression

Note: In the full report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey, we found that discrimination was pervasive throughout the entire sample, yet the combination of anti-transgender bias and persistent, structural racism was especially devastating. One of our most important findings was that people of color in general fared worse than white participants across the board, with African American transgender respondents faring far worse than all others in nearly every area examined. Due to the sample size of respondents from this state, we were unable to break these state results down by race/ethnicity without creating small sample size problems. However, we expect that people of color in Massachusetts would exhibit the same national pattern.

“Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey,” which provides the national results, is in press and will be available in February 2011 online at www.thetaskforce.org and www.transequality.org.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, “Current Population Survey,” Annual Social and Economic Supplement (Washington, DC: GPO, 2008).

² U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, “U.S. Housing Market Conditions, 2nd Quarter, 2009” (Washington, DC: GPO, 2009): http://www.huduser.org/portal/periodicals/ushmc/summer09/nat_data.pdf.

³ United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and World Health Organization (WHO), “2007 AIDS Epidemic Update” (2007): http://data.unaids.org/pub/EPISlides/2007/2007_epiupdate_en.pdf.

⁴ “U.S.A. Suicide: 2002 Official Final Data,” prepared for the American Association of Suicidology by John L. McIntosh, Ph.D. Official data source: Kochanek, K.D., Murphy, S.L., Anderson, R.N., & Scott, C. (2004). Deaths: Final data for 2002. National Vital Statistics Reports, 53 (5). Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics DHHS Publication No. (PHS) 2005-1120. Population figures source: table I, p.108. of the National Center for Health Statistics (Kochanek et al., 2004), see http://www.sprc.org/library/event_kit/2002datapgv1.pdf