

Columbus LGBTQ+ COVID-19 Response

The LGBTQ+ community is no stranger to adversity. From hateful and deadly homophobic laws, to the Stonewall riots, and throughout the fight for equal rights that continues to this day, our community soldiers on. In the 1980s, when others turned a blind-eye while our siblings' lives were decimated by the AIDS epidemic, our community rose to meet the crisis, we demanded our country's leaders take action, and we held them accountable. We have dealt with adversity directly within our own community; moments which have demanded accountability for actions and inactions. We acknowledge that we have not all always consistently responded to crises with consideration for ALL members of our community. We can do better. We will do better.

During times of greatest adversity, we have seen how strong we are when we leverage the resources of our entire community, and we are at our best when we rise up together to meet a challenge. We know how to fight an uphill battle because we have been here before.

Today, we face a global pandemic unlike anything we've seen in our lifetimes. Through collaboration and cooperation we are reaching out to meet the needs of our communities and those most impacted by this emergency. We will fight this challenge with deliberate, focused actions toward the most marginalized LGBTQ+ community members. We must help each other to ensure we all get through to the other side of this epoch moment in history.

Below is a growing list of community resources, including LGBTQ+ organizations, working to aggregate information/resources for the highlighted areas; this list is by no means exhaustive:

- **Public Health**
 - Equitas Health: <https://equitashealth.com/coronavirus-covid-19-updates/>
 - Columbus Public Health: <https://www.columbus.gov/coronavirus>
 - Franklin County Public Health: <https://covid-19.myfcph.org>
 - Ohio Department of Health:
<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/home>
- **Youth Housing Resources and Support**
 - Kaleidoscope Youth Center (Ages 12-24): www.kyco.org
 - Huckleberry House Inc (Ages 12-17): www.huckhouse.org
 - Star House (Ages 14-24): www.starhouse.us
- **Transgender Community Resources**
 - TransOhio: <http://www.transohio.org/>
 - OCTOPUS, LLC: contact Kimberly Sue Griffiths at griffithskimberlys@att.net
 - Transgender Children's Defense Fund: (general resources)
<https://www.defendtranskids.org/resources.html>
- **Human Services and Food Access Resources**
 - City of Columbus Human Services Resources:
<https://www.columbus.gov/COVID19resources/humanservices/>
 - Mid- Ohio Foodbank: www.midohiofoodbank.org

This statement will be distributed by any and all organizations that sign on.

- LifeCare Alliance: <https://www.lifecarealliance.org/>
- United Way of Central Ohio: <https://liveunitedcentralohio.org/>
- Human Rights Campaign Foundation: (general resources)
<https://www.hrc.org/campaigns/covid-19>
- **Physical Safety**
 - Buckeye Region Anti-Violence Organization (BRAVO): <http://bravo-ohio.org>
- **Family Resources**
 - Family Pride Network: www.familypridenetwork.org
 - The Neighborhood: A Virtual Hub for LGBTQ+ Families:
<https://www.familyequality.org/neighborhood/>
- **Addiction Services**
 - Safe Point: <https://safepointohio.org/>
 - Columbus & Franklin County Addiction Plan: <https://www.columbus.gov/CFCAP>
- **Legal Information**
 - Equality Ohio:
 - General COVID-19: <https://bit.ly/2WZH0H8>
 - Legal Clinic: <https://www.equalityohio.org/legal-clinic/intake/>
 - Voting: <https://www.equalityohio.org/voting-while-quarantined/>
- **Business Assistance**
 - City of Columbus Small Business Resources:
<https://www.columbus.gov/Templates/Detail.aspx?id=2147514574>
 - Ohio Chamber of Commerce:
<https://ohiochamber.com/coronavirus-business-resources/>
 - Thrive Columbus: (general resources) <https://www.thrivecolumbus.org/resources/>

Additional resources on these topics as well as links to **General Resources** will be updated and maintained by Stonewall Columbus at <http://www.stonewallcolumbus.org/covid-19>

We are being as intentional and as comprehensive in our reach as we can. In this effort, we need your help to ensure we are supporting all facets of our community. If you are in need of resources or have information and resources to share please contact Kathy Crowe (kcrowe@stonewallcolumbus.org).

Let's be sure to take care of each other and ourselves by:

- *If capable, staying at home except for essential trips (groceries and/or medicines)*
- *If comfortable, wearing protective facial covering*
- *Engaging in proper sanitary techniques*
 - *Wash our hands*
 - *Sneeze into our [respective] inner elbows*
 - *Don't touch our own faces [or those of others]*
 - *Adhere to these NEW safe-sex practices*
<https://stonewallcolumbus.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Corona-and-Sex.EH-and-City-of-Cols.pdf>

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- *Keeping appropriate physical distance*
 - *6 feet buffer when out of the home*
 - *No [cocktail and dinner included] parties*
 - *No playdates [for us or our kids]*
 - *No group sports [virtual is ok]*
- *Checking in with friends and family*
 - *Reach out with a phone call or video chat*

We will survive this together, as a community, by holding one another up and by helping each other out--as we meet the challenges ahead.

In solidarity,

The undersigned Columbus LGBTQ+ Community Organizations

- **Black, Out and Proud**—Eboni Partlow, *President*
- **Columbus Gay Men's Chorus**—Adam Burk, *Executive Director*
- **Equality Ohio**—Alana Jochum, *Executive Director*
- **Equitas Health**—Bill Hardy, *President & CEO*
 - BRAVO
 - Mozaic
 - Safe Point
- **Family Pride Network**—Joe Matessa, *President & Co-Founder*
- **Get The Vote Out**—Brad Henry, *Founder*
- **Board of Governor & Steering Committee Member**
- **Human Rights Campaign - Columbus Steering Committee**—Stefani Borg, *Board of Governors*
- **Kaleidoscope Youth Center**—Erin Upchurch, *Executive Director*
- **Legacy Fund of the Columbus Foundation**—Jennifer Brunner, *Chair*
- **Lesbians Benefitting the Arts, producers of the Ohio Lesbian Festival**—Chris Cozad, *President*
- **PFLAG Columbus**—Jaron Terry, *Board President*
- **OCTOPUS, LLC (Organizing Communities Transgender Outreach Promoting United Support)**—Kimberly Sue Griffiths, *Executive Director*
- **Stonewall Columbus**—AJ Casey, *Executive Director*
- **Stonewall Democrats of Central Ohio**—Stella Shaw, *President*
- **Thrive Columbus**—Mary B. Relotto, *Founder*
- **Transgender Children's Legal Defense Fund**—Ben Cooper, *Board President*
- **United Way of Central Ohio**—Lisa Courtice, *Chief Executive Officer*
- **Zettabytes.Today**—Rini Das + Lisa Kagy, *CoFounders*

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