

Message for LGBTI+ Training Manual for Service Providers

Since 2013, the Foundation for Human Rights (FHR) has partnered with the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DOJCD) to form the LGBTI+ National Task Team (NTT). The NTT is a national body that was created by the Minister of the DOJCD at the request of LGBTI+ people and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) as a response to the high levels of violence experienced by LGBTI+ people in South Africa. NTT members include LGBTI+ CSOs, government departments and Chapter Nine institutions.

The NTT is based on an innovative structure with Provincial Task Teams (PTT) in every province, and a national Rapid Response Team (RRT) to coordinate the prosecution of cases and incidents involving LGBTI+ people throughout South Africa. The NTT and the RRT provide a unique example of civil society and government working together on a national level to address violence and discrimination.

A primary activity of the NTT is ensuring that the rights of LGBTI+ people are respected. As such, the NTT recently conducted a national training for service providers to sensitise front-line government officials on LGBTI+ rights. The trainings were one-day sessions sensitising government officials on the rights of LGBTI+ people, and the responsibility of government to treat all people in South Africa with dignity and respect.

Participants included representatives from various government departments, including:

- The South African Police Service
- The National Prosecuting Authority
- The Department of Home Affairs
- The Department of Health
- The Department of Basic Education
- The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development

The trainings were based on *Working with Diverse Communities – Understanding sexual orientation, gender identity and expression: A guide for service providers*.

FHR, in partnership with the DOJCD and the NTT has made this training manual publicly available. The manual may be used to raise awareness of LGBTI+ rights, and includes basic definitions to encourage understanding.

The manual contains basic definitions of different terms, including the difference between gender and sex, as well as a brief discussion of applicable legislation. The manual discusses hate crimes and provides examples of some of the forms of discrimination that LGBTI+ people face as well as guidelines for inclusive service delivery. The manual also includes the contact details of LGBTI+ organisations in South Africa that can assist LGBTI+ people to access their rights.

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