

**From Stonewall to Stonewalled: Recognizing and
Addressing LGBTQ+ Barriers in Rural and Urban
Human Trafficking Service Models**

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- They/She/He pronouns
- Genderfluid/Nonbinary
- Graduating with my MSW and MPA in August 2023
 - Focused on program design, policy analysis, and inclusivity with a focus on LGBTQ+ persons
- IRC Anti-Trafficking Housing Specialist
- *Housing the Queer Community: Come on Honey, Let's Get Inclusive*



Pictured: A person with collarbone length curly hair wearing a black button down

Background

Human Trafficking

ACTION

MEANS

PURPOSE

Fair Housing Act

Law passed in 1968 intended to eliminate discrimination in the renting and selling of homes

Housing

Can range from people living in a place , in emergency shelter, permanent supportive housing, homeless prevention initiatives, half-way housing, diversion housing, vouchers, and permanent housing.

LGBTQ+

Existed in the context of all human life for all recorded history and extends to other components of the animal kingdom

Vocabulary

LGBTQ+

LGBT, LGBTQ+, LGBTIQA+,
LGBTQ2, GLBT

Queer

Slur or acceptable? The reclamation
of the term

Transgender/Trans

An umbrella term for a broad sub-
community

“Cis”

An abbreviation for the term
cisgender

“Het”

An abbreviation for the term
heterosexual

Enby vs. NB

Delineation between nonbinary (enby)
and Non-Black (NB)



LGBTQ+ Community and Poverty

- The current poverty rate for cisgender, heterosexual people sits at 16% (Williams Institute)
 - 22% of LGBTQ+ People
 - 30% for transgender people
 - 30% for Bisexual women
- Queer people are more likely to be fired or laid off from their jobs according to The Williams Institute researchers O’neill, Wilson and Herman.
 - Especially if they are people of color
 - A recent CNBC report found that resumes with They/Them pronouns are more frequently passed over
 - 8% less interest, less requests for interviews, and less call backs
 - 64% of the companies in the study were Equal Opportunity Employers

Queer People and Homelessness

- LGBTQ+ people are twice as likely to become homeless in the United States as their cis-het counterparts. (Harper et al., 2022)
 - Black queer people represent the highest rate of homelessness
 - Transgender people make up large rates of unsheltered rates and even more so when coupled with racial minority identities

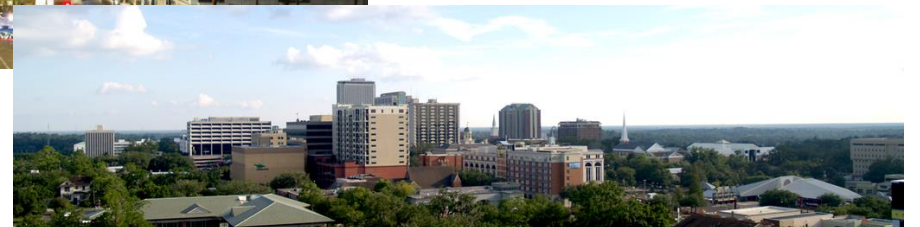


LGBTQ+ Community and Resources

- Queer youth make up disproportionate rates of youth living homeless and in the foster care industry (Mountz, Capous-Desyllas, Perez, 2020)
 - Disproportionately youth of color
 - Many queer former foster youth have called for more specialized care and cited complications that stemmed from a lack of specialization in their ability to obtain permanent housing
- Queer community members have reported anxiety, fear, and discomfort stemming from traditional service providers
 - Especially if they are people of color
 - Especially if they are transgender

Urban Versus Rural Providers

- The Big Bend Continuum of Care
 - Serves the Tallahassee metropolitan area serving 8 counties including Leon county.
 - Outside of Leon county, the seat of Tallahassee, the remaining counties are highly rural with few service providers
 - ~433,251 people live in this area
- San Diego Regional Task Force on Homelessness
 - Serves the County of San Diego
 - ~3,286,000 people live here
- Point in Time Counts
 - Can capture gender, but sexuality was just introduced into the system in 2022



Rates of Queer Homelessness in Big Bend CoC

Up to 23 individuals served were gender minorities

- Folks may identify as multi-racial
- Cannot run unduplicated

Tallahassee Point in Time Count						
	Black	Latine	Indigenous	Asian	Pacific Islander	White
Transgender	3	2	2	2	0	8
No Single Gender	2	0	0	0	0	1
Questioning	1	0	0	0	0	2

2,384 people obtained assistance through the Continuum's program

Rates of Queer Homelessness in San Diego

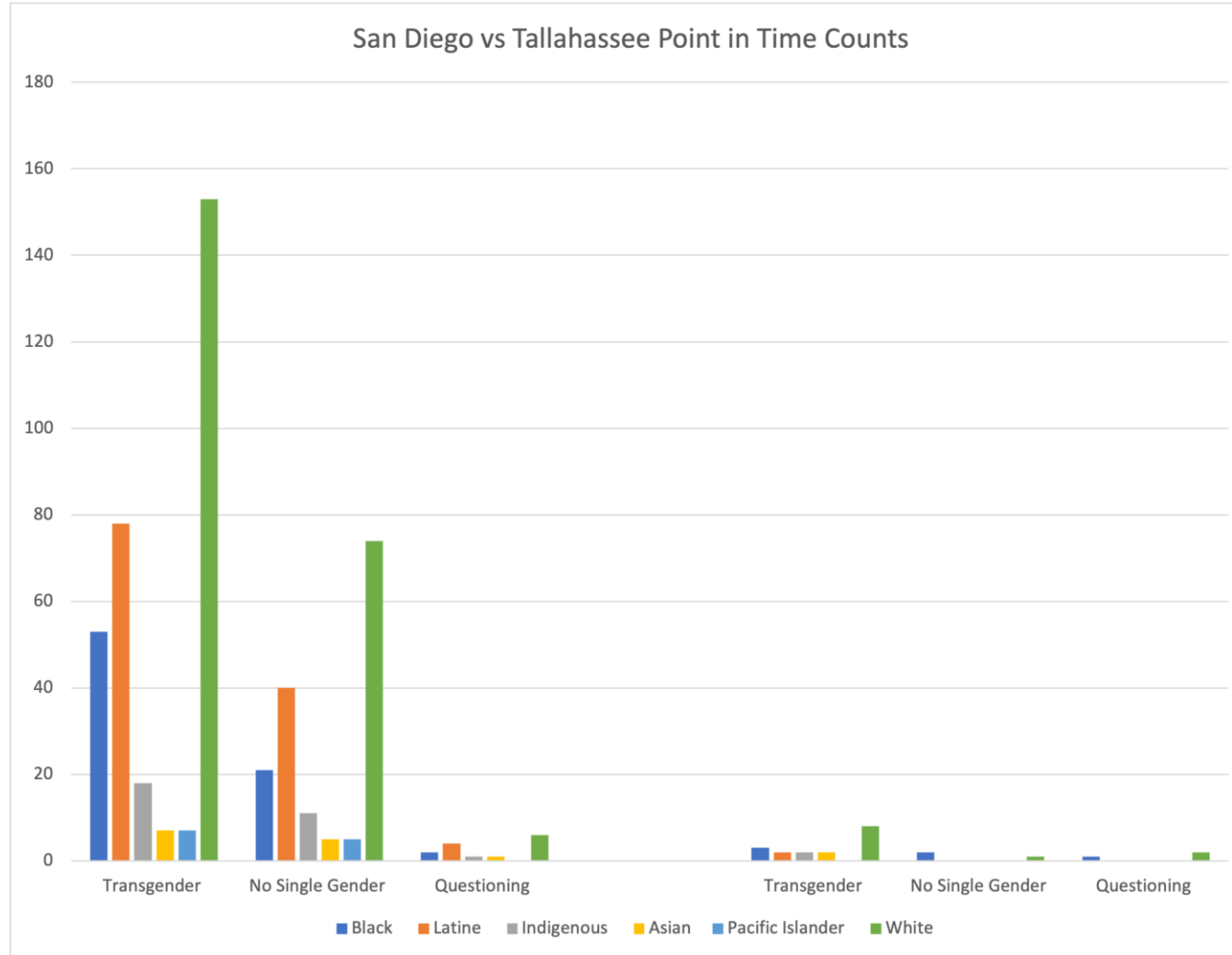
Up to 486 individuals served were gender minorities

- Folks may identify as multi-racial
- Cannot run unduplicated

San Diego Point in Time Count						
	Black	Latine	Indigenous	Asian	Pacific Islander	White
Transgender	53	78	18	7	7	153
No Single Gender	21	40	11	5	5	74
Questioning	2	4	1	1	0	6

42,537 total people received assistance from the CoC

Comparative Chart





Transgender clients still represent a relatively small percentage of our homeless universe (barely over double digits systemwide for last year)

Eric Layton, Data and Training Director Big Bend CoC



Emergency Shelter Providers

CESC

Kearney Center and HOPE
Community in Tallahassee serving
individuals and families

Refuge House

In several of the big bend's counties
serving survivors of trafficking and
domestic violence

San Diego LGBT Center

Serves LGBT+ people with
emergency shelter of all ages

Interfaith Shelter

Emergency Shelter for all in San
Diego

San Diego Rescue Mission

Woman and children unhoused in
San Diego

Catholic Charities

Emergency Shelter for women in San
Diego

Shelter Comparison

Kearney Center

Emergency Shelter

Serve all individuals (Fair Housing)

Primary shelter for the region

Offer rehousing assistance

San Diego LGBT Center

Emergency Shelter

Serve all, specialize in LGBT+

Only specialized shelter in the region for LGBT

Offer rehousing assistance

What is holding back services? The Agency

There was a study conducted by Parent, Brewster, Cook and Harmon that sought to understand the impact of stress, the identity of a minor, and satisfaction with service. They understood these as co-influencing factors.

They studied this within the concept of faith, faith providers, and the client.

They studied individuals who identified with a specific faith, or denomination, and their satisfaction of results of their service when obtained from a service provider who was of a different faith than their own.

- For example, a Methodist client obtaining services from Catholic Charities.

1. Folks of a faith different than their agency reported more dissatisfaction with the services they received
2. They found the service provision to more stressful than those of a different faith
3. Even if the client's faith was not a minority faith in the broader community, being a minority within the agency caused more stress

Further evidence of provider- induced stress

Many providers are faith based, especially so in rural areas as they fill in the gaps that policies don't attend to.

Researcher Fuist, conducted a study to understand the power imbalances of faith providers, the faith community, and LGBTQ people.

Built out of the long history that faith has been used, incorrectly, as a tool of hate and ostracization against the LGBT community. There are many faiths out there that are encompassing to the LGBT community, however for many queer individuals, they are clouded by a history of discrimination.

Fuist looked at the relationship between the queer person and their identity, and the power dynamic with the faith provider. Three outcomes were observed, and it was indicated that power imbalances are subjective to the person's understanding of faith, and it influences people different.

1. Queer people feel obligated to reconcile their identity with the faith provider. Either explaining it away, attempting to excuse it or seeking forgiveness from the provider.
2. Queer people would be selective on sharing their identities or withhold it entirely from the provider
3. Some showed no change in identity and were forth coming in their identity with the provider



Expert Interviews

What is happening at the shelters?

Vicki Butler

Director of Center Operations for the Kearney Center in Tallahassee

Identifies as LGBT

Victor Esquivel

Director of Housing and Youth Homeless Services

LGBTQ status did not come up during the interview process

[Anonymous]

Individual with lived experience of being homeless, transgender, and within an urban area

Individual requested to remain anonymous

Johnna Coleman

Executive Director for the Big Bend Continuum of Care

LGBTQ Status did not come up during interview process

[Anonymous]

High ranking official working in the homeless services. Requested to remain anonymous due to political nature of their opinions

LGBTQ status did not come up

Vicki Butler, Kearney Center

- Transgender and gender diverse clients are offered private rooms with their own restroom facilities as they are available. Alternatively, if none are available or they don't want to be separated from the general population, the care team have discussions with the individual as to whether the men's wing or the women's wing would be best for the client.
- Butler cited anxiety relating to the idea about specialized care facilities for queer, and subsequently transgender clients, in emergency shelter she was apprehensive to the idea. Predominately for fear of their safety
 - Human rights watch has notated higher rates of violence for transgender people, with the highest vulnerability being Black trans women.
 - Butler fears that a single agency would saturate where folks would go to and provide a space for their targeting
- Butler also offered the notion that keeping these communities together, those in need of shelter, promotes the sharing of stories, community building, and reduces "othering"

Victor Esquivel, San Diego LGBT Center

- They are the only queer centered emergency shelter in the entire county. Queer people can choose to go to other shelters here because of the Fair Housing Act. He noted that as he understands they are served similarly to the way clients are served in Butler's shelter, with the only difference being they have a separate wing for non-binary people in the city's shelter.
- They create teams that work with folks that have intersecting identities and have created advisory teams, and internal programs that assist with advocacy, community building, and inclusion for Black folks, trans and/or nonbinary folks, and Latine people.
- Discussed the nuances of oppression that occur that lead to the need for creation of specialized agencies and the difference in politics for the regions.
 - Surge in clients recently



Anonymous formerly homeless individual

- Experienced homelessness as a transgender individual in the urban west. There were no queer service providers in the area know about.
- They explained that one of the foundational reasons for choosing not to go to a traditional shelter was anxiety around not knowing if the provider were an “ally” and the cost of being “out” could result in differential treatment from staff or being turned down for service.
- Discussed issues related to providing transgender individuals with the opportunity to choose as not being a beneficial choice in either direction.
- Specialized agencies? Strategic planning on where to place them, but that the need was higher in places like Florida.
 - Can’t prevent violence, but would show community the need of the community



Johnna Coleman

- Are all communities prepared for the creation of a specialized agencies? Allowing some time for jurisdictions to acclimate to accommodating their individual needs.
 - Until then, working with our existing providers to best meet the need of these communities as best we can
- Educating providers who don't serve specialized groups, and providing them with the tools to keep their clients and staff safe
 - This will facilitate these marginalized communities to come forward and work with existing providers and facilitating their growth

Anonymous Service Provider

- Partaking in active activism to ensure new government leadership were put into place to ensure policies were progressing in a way that is conducive to marginalized communities and their services.
 - Breaking biases instead of reinforcing them. Political, not politicized, issue
- The slow trend of areas doing what they can. Tactful placements of Black lives matter murals from cities that end up in the Black neighborhood where they will be better received
 - Gradual introduction of introducing Black issues in the rural south by slow exposure
 - Performing the same opportunities with LGBTQ+ providers





Account for Environment

Other Contributing Factors

Trans Healthcare

Florida's Agency for Health Care Administration banned Medicaid from covering HRT costs for trans individuals

Anti-Drag Laws

Tennessee, Florida, Montana, North Dakota, Arkansas, & Texas either explicitly restrict drag or "adult performances".

Florida's SB 254

A piece of legislation in Florida that strips parental rights from people that support their children's transition

Arkansas' SB 270

Virtually makes it illegal for transgender people to use public restroom and delineates the areas based on sex at birth.

N. Dakota's HB 1489

Bans transgender people from participating in the sport's team that correlates with their gender.

Kansas SB 180

Illegal to identify with the gender that does not correlate with the sex assigned at birth.

Fear of Police

Polaris Project notes higher reported rates of fear, discrimination, and violence from police to trans people. ~60% of them.

Culmination of Trafficking

Atmosphere, Need, and Fear

Codified Policies our communities have voted for

Systemic poverty, housing insecurity

Harmful providers, and fear of welcoming ones

Need for support, and affirmative needs

Queer and Trafficked

What is happening

33.8% sex trafficked youth are
LGBTQ

Vastly underreported

Continued assaults from
community

Continual fear of harmful
legislation

Remain in issues with
employment difficulties

Exploited to get access to
necessary medication

No where else to go

Continual trauma

| How do we help?

The Non-LGBTQ+ Provider

Revamp Services

Gender Affirming Products

Appropriate intakes and verbiage

Confidentiality

Facility

Inclusion

Hire diverse staff

Community Events and Outreach

Offer your identity with the community

Educate on diversity

The LGBTQ Provider

Trafficking Outreach

Partnering with trafficking agencies

Including AMP assessments

Further Specializing Services

Welcoming outside providers

Expanding Network

Sub-grantee partnerships

Training rural providers

Certifying rural providers

The Individual Community Member

Give back

Financial Contributions

Volunteering time

Education on both issues

Talking with peers



**No pride for some of us without
liberation for all of us**

-Marsha P Johnson, LGBTQ Activist