

<http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/self-identification-of-lgbt-employees>



## Self-Identification of LGBT Employees

Unlike other diversity categories, such as race and gender, employers are not required to collect statistics on the number of LGBT people they employ.

Employers have sought to determine the number of their employees who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender while balancing privacy concerns. Some employers use LGBT employee group membership numbers to generate estimates, but this method is limited by the scope of such voluntary groups over a highly dispersed workforce.

More recently, employers have gathered statistics through anonymous employee engagement or satisfaction surveys, which can include upward of 100 questions, and through confidential and secure employee records.

In both cases, whether an employee discloses their gender identity or sexual orientation is optional and voluntary and any reporting or direct access to the data is designed to ensure confidentiality of the employee.

Employee engagement surveys can include optional questions that allow LGBT employees to self-identify based on gender identity or sexual orientation. This is almost always done anonymously to ensure employee privacy, but LGBT employees may nonetheless remain fearful of the repercussions of disclosure.

In the HRC Corporate Equality Index 2015 survey of 781 employers, 46 percent allow employees to voluntarily disclose their sexual orientation and gender identity on anonymous surveys or confidential Human Resource records, compared with 141 of the 519 employers (27%) in the 2008 survey and just 17 percent in the 2006 survey.