LGBTQ Youth: Anti-Bullying Laws

No updates required since September 19, 2022

**Anti-Bullying Laws**: These laws protect students from being bullied by other students, teachers, and school staff on the bases of characteristics such as, but not limited to, sexual orientation and gender identity. Some states also prohibit bullying on the basis of association with someone with a listed characteristic, such as bullying a non-LGBTQ student because they have a friend or family member who is LGBTQ.

While some states, districts, and schools have non-enumerated anti-bullying laws or policies—policies that generally prohibit bullying, but do not list specific characteristics like race or sexual orientation upon which a student might be bullied—research by GLSEN finds that such general laws have no impact on rates of bullying. Therefore, only policies that explicitly enumerate sexual orientation and/or gender identity are included here.

**Anti-Enumeration Laws**: These laws prevent schools and districts from listing or enumerating any type of protected classes (such as sexual orientation, gender identity, race, disability, and more) in their anti-bullying or nondiscrimination policies. Research shows that such generic laws are not effective at protecting marginalized students from bullying or discrimination.

See also a list of additional resources at the end of this citation sheet.

---

**Alabama**
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

**Alaska**
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

**Arizona**
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

**Arkansas**
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- State law prohibits bullying on the basis of association with someone with a listed characteristic
- See ACA § 6-18-514 and SB892 (2011)
California
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- State law prohibits bullying on the basis of association with someone with a listed characteristic
- See Cal. Edc. Code § 234.1(b) and AB9 (2011, effective 7/1/2012)

Colorado
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- See CRS 22-32-109.1, CRS 22-32-109(1)(l)(i)(A) (characteristics), and HB11-1254 (2011)

Connecticut
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- State law prohibits bullying on the basis of association with someone with a listed characteristic

Delaware
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- See DCA Title 14 § 4161, DCA Title 14 § 4164(b)(2), and HB 268 (2012)

District of Columbia
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- State law prohibits bullying on the basis of association with someone with a listed characteristic
- See DC Code § 2–1535.01 and DC Law 19-167 (2012)

Florida
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

Georgia
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

Hawai`i
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- State law prohibits bullying on the basis of association with someone with a listed characteristic
- See HB 688 (2011), as well as HAC §8-19-2 (see definition of harassment), Hawai`i State Board of Education’s Policy 305-10, and Student Safety and Welfare Policy 4211 (2008)

Idaho
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

Illinois
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- State law prohibits bullying on the basis of association with someone with a listed characteristic
- See 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7 and SB3266 (2010)
Indiana
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

Iowa
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- See Iowa Code § 280.28 (2007)

Kansas
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

Kentucky
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

Louisiana
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

Maine
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- State law prohibits bullying on the basis of association with someone with a listed characteristic
- See MRS 20-A §6554 and LD1237 (2012).

Maryland
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- See MCA §7-424 and HB199 (2008).

Massachusetts
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- State law prohibits bullying on the basis of association with someone with a listed characteristic
- See MGL 71 § 37O and H3909 (2014)

Michigan
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

Minnesota
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- See Minn. Stat. § 363A.08 and SF783/HF826 (2014)

Mississippi
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

Missouri
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity
- State law prohibits schools or districts from adding LGBTQ protections to their anti-bullying and anti-discrimination policies. See Mo. Rev. Stat. § 160.775.3 and SB894 (2006)
Montana
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

Nebraska
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

Nevada
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- State law prohibits bullying on the basis of association with someone with a listed characteristic
- See NRSA § 388.122 and S.B. 504 (2015)

New Hampshire
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- State law prohibits bullying on the basis of association with someone with a listed characteristic
- See NH RSA § 193-F and HB1523 (2010)

New Jersey
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity

New Mexico
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- State law prohibits bullying on the basis of association with someone with a listed characteristic
- See NMAC 6.12.7.7 and S.B. 288 (2019)
- Formerly, school regulation or teacher code prohibited bullying on the basis of sexual orientation only. See New Mexico Administrative Code § 6.12.7 (2006)

New York
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender (defined to include gender identity)
- See NY EDN § 11 and A.B. 3661 (2010)

North Carolina
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- State law prohibits bullying on the basis of association with someone with a listed characteristic
- See NC General Statutes § 115C-407 (2009)

North Dakota
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

Ohio
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity
Oklahoma
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

Oregon
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation, defined to include gender identity

Pennsylvania
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

Rhode Island
- Law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity

South Carolina
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

South Dakota
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity
- State law prohibits schools or districts from adding LGBTQ protections to their anti-bullying and anti-discrimination policies. See S.D. Codified Laws § 13-32-14 (2012)

Tennessee
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

Texas
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

Utah
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity
- Previously, school regulation or teacher code prohibited bullying on the basis of sexual orientation only.

Vermont
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- State law prohibits bullying on the basis of a family member with a listed characteristic
Virginia
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity
- State law (HB 145 (2020) and SB 161 (2020)) require school boards to adopt a policy “consistent with” or “more comprehensive than” the state’s model policy on the treatment of transgender students, which includes “prevention of and response to bullying and harassment” (§22.1-23.3 (2020)). The VA Department of Education’s 2021 model policy was evidence-based and explicitly include both sexual orientation and gender identity in its anti-bullying protections. However, within that first year, relatively few school districts fully adopted the model policy (see here), and in September 2022, the newly elected governor rescinded those protections and instituted a new model policy. The 2022 model policy omits protections for sexual orientation and gender identity and instead specifically requires that students’ participation in school programs and facilities should be based on biological sex. The 2022 model policy has a planned effective date of 10/27/22. Read more here.

Washington
- State law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- See RCW 28A.300.285 and RCW 9A.36.080, amended to include sexual orientation in 2002 and amended to include gender identity in 2009

West Virginia
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity
- School regulation or teacher code prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation, gender identity, and association with someone with a listed characteristic
- See 126 CSR 99, also known as Policy 4373 (July 2012)

Wisconsin
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

Wyoming
- State anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity

U.S. Territories

American Samoa
- Territory anti-bullying law does not enumerate sexual orientation or gender identity
- See American Samoa’s Compilation of School Discipline Laws and Regulations (2021)

Guam
- Territory law prohibits bullying based on sexual orientation only
- See Bill 41-31 (2011)

Northern Mariana Islands
- Territory law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- See § 60-20-403 (2011)
Puerto Rico
- Territory law prohibits bullying on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity
- In 2012, Puerto Rico passed the Students’ Bill of Rights, which guarantees equal educational opportunity to all students and explicitly includes sexual orientation and gender identity. The Puerto Rico Department of Education, which operates all public schools has adopted a policy prohibiting discrimination and bullying based on sexual orientation and gender identity (2017).

U.S. Virgin Islands
- Territory law prohibits bullying based on sexual orientation only (2014)

---

Additional Resources

StopBullying.Gov. Includes state-by-state information.


GLSEN. 2015. From Statehouse to Schoolhouse: Anti-Bullying Policy Efforts in U.S. States and School Districts.

GLSEN. 2019. The 2019 National School Climate Survey: The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Youth in Our Nation’s Schools.