



# PRONOUN GUIDE & WHY THEY MATTER



Are your pronouns he/him or she/her? You feel this is obvious, so why share them? Providing your pronouns is seen as a sign of respect, understanding and inclusivity. It says you want to welcome the 2SLGTBQIA+ community. Stating your pronouns normalizes the conversation surrounding gender and identity. Including gender pronouns in your email signature can be additionally helpful for those that have a gender-neutral name.



## WHY USE PRONOUNS?

Some people don't identify with the gender they were assigned at birth and choose to be identified differently. Gender identity is about how someone feels, not how they appear, so it is important to recognize which pronouns people use instead of making assumptions based on their name, hair, clothing choices, etc. It helps to view gender as a spectrum, whether male, female, both or neither – often referred to as non-binary.



**He/him:** For someone who identifies as male or masculine.

**She/her:** For someone who identifies as female or feminine.

**They/them:** For someone who doesn't identify with male or female pronouns and feels they fall somewhere in the middle of the gender spectrum

Additional ones may include:

- Ey/Em
- Zi/Hir
- Xe/Xem



## PRONOUN GUIDE

Using “they/them” is a good alternative if you are unsure of someone’s pronouns and can be particularly helpful in a public setting when working with residents, clients, etc.



Where can I learn more?



- [NPR: A guide to gender identity terms](#)
- [Egale: Inclusive and affirming language](#)
- [Egale: Pronoun usage guide](#)
- [M.I. Understanding: Pronouns - How to start a conversation](#)



## WHAT IF I ACCIDENTALLY “MIS-GENDER” SOMEONE?

Apologize and correct the error. The most important thing is that you recognize and respect someone’s preferred pronouns, even if it takes some time. If you are in a private setting and you’re unsure, ask. If you’re with a group, start by stating your pronouns, allowing everyone to re-assert their own.



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