Lavender Law 365®

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The National LGBT Bar Association has put together this FAQ to help you make the case for how Lavender Law 365® can benefit your law firm, law school, or company. Educating on LGBTQ+ best practices is the first step to making a difference, and shows a commitment to investing in lasting institutional change. Please let us know if we can answer any questions you may have about the benefits of Lavender Law 365® and our mission to Value All People, Every Day.

1. Why would an organization need Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) training?

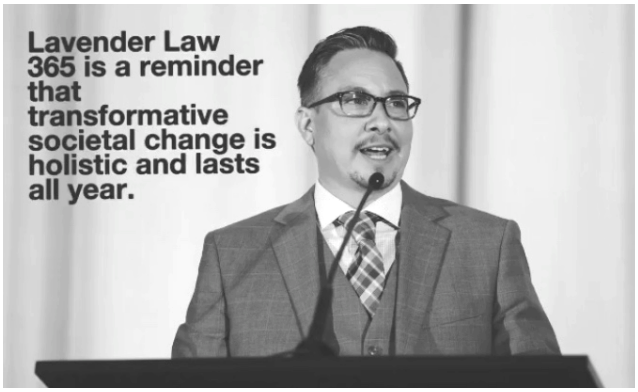
Inclusive company policy and culture can foster a space where employees are more likely to succeed, significantly boosting the bottom line. In fact, inclusive companies have an advantage in engaging their employee-base and retaining their loyalty: 84% of LGBTQ+ people and their allies at inclusive companies were more likely to state they were proud of their companies and "go the extra mile" for them (HBR). One study determined that 72% of allies were more likely to accept a job at an LGBTQ+ inclusive company, showing that inclusive efforts can help attract a full spectrum of talent (Out in the World). Moreover, worldwide LGBTQ+ GDP stands at $3.7 trillion (LGBT GDP/Capital), and 71% of LGBTQ+ people and 82% of allies say they are more likely to support LGBTQ+ inclusive companies. Appealing to that consumer buying power with demonstrated and effective internal DEI practices and a diverse employee base is smart business (Out in the World.

In the race to innovate in a massive market, an organization with an inclusive policy for all kinds of talented individuals gives itself the cutting edge. "Capital will always go where its welcome and stay where it's well treated… Capital is not just money. It's also talent and ideas" (Ineichen Research and Management).

Employee retention is one of the paramount issues of concern for organizations today, particularly for diverse employee talent. According to the National Association for Law Placement 2019 Report on Diversity (NALP 2019), significant drops in LGBTQ+ representation occur as lawyers move up the ladder, with 6.86% of summer associates in 2019 self-reporting as LGBT, yet only 2.07% reporting as such at the partner level. Access to a comprehensive DEI training and consulting program that constantly updates with the ever-changing best practice landscape is a key way for an organization to first form a base understanding of hidden biases in the workplace and then create effective policies to tackle them. Indeed, data shows that investment in deep and lasting DEI efforts can make a tremendous difference in employee workplace satisfaction, leading to higher rates of retention. When LGBTQ+ people are not free to be their authentic selves at work, the stress and anxiety caused by their inability to be "out" sees a rise in workplace complaints and health issues, resulting in an overall drop in productivity (Williams Institute). However, implementation of LGBTQ+ inclusive policies and

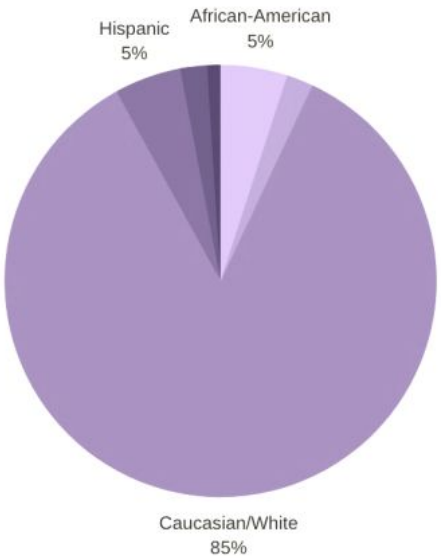
a change in workplace climate is directly correlated to positive workplace commitment and satisfaction, leading to lower employer costs and ultimately, higher profitability (Williams Institute).

The National LGBT Bar Association requires all sponsors of our Lavender Law® Conference--the largest LGBTQ+ legal conference in the world--to complete our "Recruitment Employee Benefit Index," which assesses a number of in-house diversity policies. The Bar also publishes a Law School Climate Survey/Campus Climate Toolkit to gather and present data regarding law school LGBTQ+ DEI practices. These tools are useful measures of baseline policies protecting LGBTQ+ people from overt discrimination. However, lists and numbers aren't enough to determine if DEI culture is being fostered in a way that upholds the standards set by policy and encourages retention of diverse employees. The best way to impact inclusion in the modern economic age is with tailored, deep-dive training with experts in the field. We are proud to have M. Dru Levasseur, with his decades of LGBTQ+ advocacy and education experience, as the presenter of a program that speaks to our legal audiences.



2. How can the legal profession, specifically, benefit from this training?

When it comes to gender, race, class, disability, and LGBTQ+ inclusion and representation, the legal profession is one of the least diverse. According to the American Bar Association's National Lawyer Population Survey, almost every minority category of attorneys has clocked in significantly lower than the US population equivalent every year since the survey first began. Despite growing DEI interest in the legal industry, hidden biases in the profession are pervasive and require targeted action to interrupt the bias. Year after year, statistics improve as a whole for representation, yet when viewing the numbers by experience and pay-grade, data shows that partners (especially equity partner levels) are typically less diverse as a group than lower attorney levels (NALP 2019). This information from the ABA and NALP is particularly valuable given that LGBTQ+ tracking is frequently missing from statistical analyses of representation within the industry at large.



3. Why Lavender Law 365®?

As a 35+ year old organization which serves as the official LGBTQ+ arm of the American Bar Association, the National LGBT Bar Association is a leading expert on best policies and practices for LGBTQ+ inclusion. Our Lavender Law 365® program puts the LGBTQ+ issues front-and-center, with a law-focused approach by lawyers, for lawyers and their support staff. Our Lavender Law 365® lead consultant, M. Dru Levasseur, Esq., is the Deputy Program Officer for the National LGBT Bar and previously served as Senior Attorney and Transgender Rights Project Director for Lambda Legal. His dedication to programmatic DEI training is informed by his background as an LGBTQ+ litigator, policy advocate, and DEI educator. As an openly transgender attorney

and expert in transgender rights law, he brings passion and nuance to the work. Lavender Law 365® is uniquely tailored for the desired audience to provide the tools necessary to create and maintain change 365 days a year, updating as new methods, policies, and studies come into the DEI sphere. We offer a yearly certification to keep up-to-date with a rapidly evolving field.

4. My company/law school/organization already scores high for inclusivity. What does this add?

As noted above, many companies have proactively implemented important baseline policies for LGBTQ+ people in the workplace, such as non-discrimination provisions and domestic partnership benefits, yet still struggle with long-term retention of valued LGBTQ+ employees. Lavender Law 365® will give your organization the tools to ensure that positive policies and intents are effectively translated into day-to-day lived equality and satisfaction for LGBTQ+ employees. Inclusive policy does not directly equal inclusive culture, therefore Lavender Law 365® wants to aid organizations in the creation of an inclusive environment to allow such policies to be implemented fully into the fiber of the organization. In a study conducting the success rate of diversity training (HBR), the conclusion was that in order for DEI practices to stick, data had to be consistently collected, and the training had to be diversified according to the responsiveness and specific needs of each organization. Accordingly, bias interrupters used in Lavender Law 365® trainings are intended to identify outliers, explain their outcomes, and help organizations successfully and consistently use the individual talent and expertise of every employee to contribute to a thriving, mutually-beneficial system that brings out the best in everyone.

How many people in your workplace or law school are openly LGBTQ+? Is there a reason why some employees may not be comfortable being open? Are your diversity metrics improving year to year, or are they stagnant? What culture changes are needed in order to make people feel comfortable being their full, authentic selves to their work? Most importantly, is there a reiteration of expected policies and inclusion practices by higher-ups?

Promoting a lasting productive, inclusive company culture requires the cooperation of organization leaders to continually bring in quality, ever-improving programs like Lavender Law 365® to help organizations stay up-to-date on developing diversity and inclusion initiatives. We've created this program to target these nebulous questions and hone in on results-oriented training that is committed to progressing with your workplace.

THE LGBT BAR