

State of New Mexico

CHILDREN, YOUTH and FAMILIES DEPARTMENT

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CYFD Updates Nondiscrimination Policy to Better Serve All Youth

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SANTA FE — The New Mexico Children, Youth & Families Department announced a new directive to help better support LGBTQIA+ youth in care. The nondiscrimination policy is the most inclusive and robust the Department has followed to date.

“We know LGBTQIA+ youth are overrepresented in the child welfare system, and unfortunately are still shunned by family members at an alarming rate just because of sexual orientation or other factors,” Secretary Brian Blalock said. “As an agency, we want to send the clear message that we support all of our youth. We are here with open arms.”

The directive clarifies that CYFD will not discriminate against any child or youth involved with any aspect the system on the basis of race; creed, religion; sex or gender; gender identity; gender expression; sexual orientation; marital status or partnership; familial or parental status; pregnancy and breastfeeding or nursing; disability; genetic information; intersex traits; citizenship or immigration status; national origin; tribal affiliation; ancestry; language; political affiliation; military or veteran status; medical condition, including HIV/AIDS; status as a survivor of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking; and housing status, including homelessness; or any other non-merit factor.

The official, signed directive is available here: [Directive in English](#) | [En Español](#)

The directive, effective June 29, includes CYFD as well as contracted services and programs. All new and current employees will receive training on nondiscrimination, professionalism, and boundaries.

The directive was written with input from community stakeholders, including Lambda Legal, NMCAN, True Colors United, Family Equality, and Equality New Mexico.

The new policy crosses all CYFD divisions and bureaus, including Protective Services, Juvenile Justice Services, and Behavioral Health Division.

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