

FEMA Celebrates LGBTQI+ Pride Month

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WASHINGTON -- This month, FEMA joins the Biden-Harris Administration in recognition of Pride Month, honoring the diverse members of the LGBTQI+ community and their vast contributions to our agency and our nation.

FEMA's core values of compassion, fairness, integrity and respect guide every aspect of our service to the nation and its communities, including the LGBTQI+ community, and FEMA will continue to elevate programs and efforts to support them.

This Pride Month, FEMA will host a number of events at its headquarters in Washington, D.C., and nationwide through its regional offices, to provide an opportunity for LGBTQI+ community members and their allies to meet and talk about issues pertaining to their identities, get to know each other, build rapport and create a supportive LGBTQI+ Family.

"Administrator Criswell has charged us with putting people first in all that we do, and that includes members of the LGBTQI+ community," said FEMA's director of the office of External Affairs Justin Ángel Knighten. "It is critical that before, during and after disaster we are taking steps to reduce barriers to accessing our programs and building up levels of disaster resilience nationwide, and that starts with meeting people where they are. As a member of this vibrant and diverse community, I am proud of the steps FEMA has taken to support us, but we have more work ahead to ensure we have the resources and information needed before disaster strikes."

On June 1, FEMA leadership raised the inclusive Rainbow Flag at agency headquarters and will display the flag at all FEMA offices. Later this month, on June 15, the FEMA Pride Employee Resource Group will host an event to celebrate LGBTQI+ achievements and contributions to history, as well as multiple forums throughout June to facilitate discussion and education with representatives of the LGBTQI+ community. Other events and commemorations during the month



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will support this effort to highlight gender-inclusivity and the benefits of valuing diversity in emergency preparedness, response and recovery.

These events build on efforts that FEMA has already taken to support the LGBTQI+ community, including virtual roundtables co-hosted this year by FEMA, DHS Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and Out for Sustainability (Out4S). The roundtables focused on helping [the LGBTQI+ community prepared for disasters](#) and [response and recovery considerations](#) for this community after disaster strikes. Featured speakers included private nonprofits, emergency management, local and state governments, faith-based organizations and other stakeholders that work in disaster preparedness and relief.

[The White House Proclamation for 2023 Pride Month](#) noted the enduring struggles in the LGBTQI+ community for “freedom, justice and equality.” It is no secret that hate crimes and other hostile transgressions greatly impact our LGBTQI+ friends and colleagues who only desire to live and love freely in the nation that they call home. The actions we take in support of each other demonstrate our commitment to the values we share.

To ensure that we live our values and support this community and others, FEMA made equity one of the top goals in our [2022-2026 Strategic Plan](#). Our understanding of each other creates an environment where we can improve our work before, during and after disasters but also strengthen the entire emergency management community.

