



## MAYOR GINA-LOUISE SCIARRA

City of Northampton

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### **City of Northampton Obtains a Perfect Score on the Human Rights Campaign's 2022 Municipal Equality Index for the Fifth Year in Row**

NORTHAMPTON - Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra joins the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) to announce that the City of Northampton has scored a perfect score (100) on the 2022 Municipal Equality Index (MEI). The MEI is the nation's premier benchmarking tool designed to inform municipal officials, policymakers, and business leaders on how well cities across the nation embody LGBTQIA+ inclusion in its laws, policies, and services. It has been published every year since 2012.

Since 2018, the MEI has evolved dramatically by instituting new benchmarks ensuring equal access to single-user facilities in public spaces, requiring trans-inclusive health benefits, as well as protecting LGBTQIA+ youth from bullying in city services and from dangerous so-called "conversion therapy. However, even with these more stringent MEI requirements, Northampton has joined with other Massachusetts communities like Provincetown, Arlington, Cambridge, Boston, Worcester, and Salem, to receive a perfect score. Northampton is the only community in western Massachusetts that received this important distinction.

"The City of Northampton and the Mayor's office have worked hard to institute the changes necessary to raise its MEI from 89 in 2017 to attain a perfect score for the past five years," said Court Cline, Mayor Sciarra's Executive Liaison to the LGBTQIA+ Community.

Since the MEI's debut in 2012, the number of cities earning perfect scores has increased more than sevenfold, with more than 110 scoring a perfect score in 2022. Today, at least 25 million people live in cities with more comprehensive, transgender-inclusive non-discrimination laws than their state. The City of Northampton is honored to be considered part of this number.

The MEI rated 506 cities, including the 50 state capitals, the 200 largest cities in the United States, the five largest cities or municipalities in each state, the cities home to the state's two largest public universities, 75 municipalities that have high proportions of same-sex couples and 98 cities selected by the HRC and Equality Federation state group members and supporters. It assesses each city on 49 criteria covering citywide

nondiscrimination protections, policies for municipal employees, city services, law enforcement, and city leadership's relationship with the LGBTQA+ community.

Northampton's scorecard is attached, and the full report, including detailed scorecards for every city, as well as a searchable database, is available online at [www.hrc.org/mei](http://www.hrc.org/mei).

For more information, contact the Mayor's Office at 413-587-1249 or [mayor@northamptonma.gov](mailto:mayor@northamptonma.gov).

## I. Non-Discrimination Laws\*\*

This category evaluates whether discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity is prohibited by the city, county, or state in areas of employment, housing, and public accommodations.

	STATE	COUNTY	MUNICIPAL	AVAILABLE
Employment				
Housing				
Public Accommodations				
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>30 out of 30</b>			
<b>FLEX</b> Single-Occupancy All-Gender Facilities				
<b>FLEX</b> Protects Youth from Conversion Therapy				

## II. Municipality as Employer

By offering equivalent benefits and protections to LGBTQ+ employees, awarding contracts to fair-minded businesses, and taking steps to ensure an inclusive workplace, municipalities commit themselves to treating LGBTQ+ employees equally.

	COUNTY	MUNICIPAL	AVAILABLE
Non-Discrimination in City Employment			
Transgender-Inclusive Healthcare Benefits			
City Contractor Non-Discrimination Ordinance			
Inclusive Workplace			
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>20 out of 28</b>		
<b>FLEX</b> City Employee Domestic Partner Benefits			

## III. Municipal Services

This section assesses the efforts of the city to ensure LGBTQ+ residents are included in city services and programs.

	COUNTY	MUNICIPAL	AVAILABLE
Human Rights Commission			
NDO Enforcement by Human Rights Commission			
LGBTQ+ Liaison in City Executive's Office			
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>12 out of 12</b>		
<b>FLEX</b> Youth Bullying Prevention Policy for City Services			
<b>FLEX</b> City Provides Services to LGBTQ+ Youth			
<b>FLEX</b> City Provides Services to LGBTQ+ People Experiencing Homelessness			
<b>FLEX</b> City Provides Services to LGBTQ+ Older Adults			
<b>FLEX</b> City Provides Services to People Living with HIV or AIDS			
<b>FLEX</b> City Provides Services to the Transgender Community			

## IV. Law Enforcement

Fair enforcement of the law includes responsible reporting of hate crimes and engaging with the LGBTQ+ community in a thoughtful and respectful way.

	MUNICIPAL	AVAILABLE
LGBTQ+ Liaison/Task Force in Police Department		
Reported 2020 Hate Crimes Statistics to the FBI		
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>22 out of 22</b>	

## V. Leadership on LGBTQ+ Equality

This category measures the city leadership's commitment to fully include the LGBTQ+ community and to advocate for full equality.

	MUNICIPAL	AVAILABLE
Leadership's Public Position on LGBTQ+ Equality		
Leadership's Pro-Equality Legislative or Policy Efforts		
<b>SCORE</b>	<b>8 out of 8</b>	
<b>FLEX</b> Openly LGBTQ+ Elected or Appointed Leaders		
<b>FLEX</b> City Tests Limits of Restrictive State Law		

**TOTAL SCORE 92 + TOTAL FLEX SCORE 8 = Final Score 100**  
CANNOT EXCEED 100

\*\* On June 15, 2020, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia* that sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination are prohibited under federal sex-based employment protections. Nevertheless, it is imperative that localities continue enacting explicitly LGBTQ+-inclusive comprehensive non-discrimination laws since it will likely take additional litigation for *Bostock* to be fully applied to all sex-based protections under existing federal civil rights law. Moreover, federal law currently lacks sex-based protections in numerous key areas of life, including public spaces and services. Lastly, there are many invaluable benefits to localizing inclusive protections even when they exist on higher levels of government. **For these reasons, the MEI will continue to only award credit in Part I for state, county, or municipal non-discrimination laws that expressly include sexual orientation and gender identity.**

PTS FOR SEXUAL ORIENTATION PTS FOR GENDER IDENTITY FLEX PTS for criteria not accessible to all cities at this time.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CITY SELECTION, CRITERIA OR THE MEI SCORING SYSTEM, PLEASE VISIT [HRC.ORG/MEI](https://hrc.org/mei). All cities rated were provided their scorecard in advance of publication and given the opportunity to submit revisions. For feedback regarding a particular city's scorecard, please email [mei@hrc.org](mailto:mei@hrc.org).