



STATE OF WASHINGTON
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**DIRECTIVE OF THE GOVERNOR
16-11**

June 23, 2016

To: Washington State Cabinet and Small-Cabinet Agencies

From: Governor Jay Inslee

Subject: LGBTQ Inclusion and Safe Places Initiative

The state of Washington has a long and proud history of honoring diversity. Our own law against discrimination predates the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and we were one of the first states to extend civil rights protections to our LGBTQ neighbors, friends, and family members. In Washington we know that the diverse families, expressions of personal identity, and experiences of all our residents enrich our future.

We traditionally celebrate June as LGBTQ Pride Month. I believe that as public leaders and servants, though, our commitment to diversity and inclusion extends beyond a single month of recognition; and the recent violence in Orlando, Florida, highlights the need for us to sustain our efforts year round. Every person in the state of Washington has the right to feel safe, enjoy the benefits of public services, and fully participate in civic life. Accordingly, I am asking you to support me in the following initiatives:

- **Employee Resource Group.** I have always valued the insight and experience of our own employees in creating better workplaces and services. This is true as well in promoting diversity and inclusion. Accordingly, I am directing OFM's State HR Division to work with agencies to create a statewide LGBTQ employee resource group to advise and develop strategies for creating safe, diverse, and inclusive workplaces for our LGBTQ employees and customers.
- **Best Practices.** Many of you are already doing great work building safe and inclusive environments for our LGBTQ employees and customers. I believe that most of these efforts can be replicated. Therefore, I am also asking OFM's State HR Division to work with agencies, institutions, and the LGBTQ employee resource group to identify and share these best practices, so we can all benefit from each other's innovation.

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- **Safe Place WA.** The Seattle Police Department recently created a “Safe Place” program, in which local businesses and organizations can signal to the public that they serve as locations for members of the LGBTQ community to find safe and secure spaces to request and wait for police assistance. Businesses and organizations throughout Seattle, including Starbucks and Seattle Public Schools, are participating in this program. I believe that our public-facing state offices should also be safe places where people can connect with emergency and related support services. Consequently, I am also asking my Policy Office and OFM to work with agencies and the new employee resource group to develop a similar state program.

Thank you in advance for your support. Staff from my Policy Office and OFM State Human Resources will be reaching out to all of you shortly to begin work on these initiatives. Together we will build a better future for all Washingtonians.