

Wyoming

LGBTQ+ Business Climate Score

out of a possible 100 points

48.57

HIGH RISK

Out Leadership's Business Climate Index for the 50 United States is an assessment of states' performance on LGBTQ+ inclusion. It measures the impact government policies and prevalent attitudes have on the LGBTQ+ people residing in each state, quantifying the economic imperatives for inclusion and the costs of discrimination. It equips business leaders and policy makers with a clear sense of the most impactful steps states can take to make themselves more hospitable to forward-thinking, innovative, inclusive businesses.

Color Coding



For more context around these scores, and to learn more about the criteria we used to assess how state laws, actions and attitudes toward LGBTQ+ people create business and talent risks, please visit outleadership.com/driving-equality/us-state-ceo-briefs/

Wyoming



Legal & Nondiscrimination Protection

The Legal and Nondiscrimination Protections section includes two subsections: The **Personal Legal Scale** assesses the state's laws directly impacting LGBTQ+ individuals. This includes processes for transgender people to change their gender markers on birth certificates and driver's licenses, as well as protections for individuals in housing, the workplace, public spaces, foster care, and more. **Two Nondiscrimination Protections Scales** assess the extent to which LGBTQ+ people are protected under state law. One evaluates nondiscrimination laws related to employment and the other evaluates any nondiscrimination laws related to housing, public accommodations, credit and lending.



Youth & Family Support

The Youth and Family Support section contains three subsections. The **Family Support Scale** measures how supportive the state is of LGBTQ+ people who are in or wish to start families. Elements of this scale include: the percentage of LGBTQ+ families raising children, and whether state family leave laws cover same-gender couples and allow workers to care for the children they are raising. The **Children and Youth Scale** assesses the resources available to LGBTQ+ children and youth in the state, including whether the state has non-discrimination laws and policies for LGBTQ+ students. The **Targeted Laws** section evaluates states on whether they ban discussion of same-gender marriage in schools, and whether they ban conversion therapy for minors.





Political & Religious Attitudes

The Political and Religious Attitudes section contains two subsections. Taken together, these scales assess the tone of the state's conversation around LGBTQ+ rights. The **Religious Protections Scale** assesses the extent and impacts of a state's constitutional or statutory religious exemption laws, and whether state law provides for targeted religious exemption from laws governing child welfare services, private wedding services, and the provision of medical care. The **State Leadership Scores** are Out Leadership's unique measures evaluating the state's most senior elected officials – the Governor and the two U.S. Senators – and assessing how they've represented their views of LGBTQ+ people in speeches and in their political platforms, and in terms of how they've acted with regard to laws impacting LGBTQ+ equality.

11.0_{/20}



Health Access & Safety

The Health Access and Safety section contains two subsections. The **Health Scale** assesses LGBTQ+ people's access to insurance and medical care in each state, giving particular emphasis to the most economically precarious and vulnerable members of the community. The **Safety Scale** is based on two significant laws protecting or criminalizing behaviors affecting LGBTQ+ people. It asks whether the state protects LGBTQ+ people in its hate crime laws. It also assesses whether the state criminalizes exposure to or transmission of HIV.

10.5_{/20}



Work Environment & Employment

The Work Environment and Employment section contains two subsections. The **Work Environment Scale** assesses transgender individuals' experiences at work, including incidences of verbal harassment, sexual assault, and other mistreatment. The **Employment Scale** is based on assessments of LGBTQ+ employment in the state. This scale includes the percentage of LGBTQ+ people making less than \$24,000 annually (approximately the current Federal poverty line), and the differences in unemployment rates and food insecurity between LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ identified individuals.

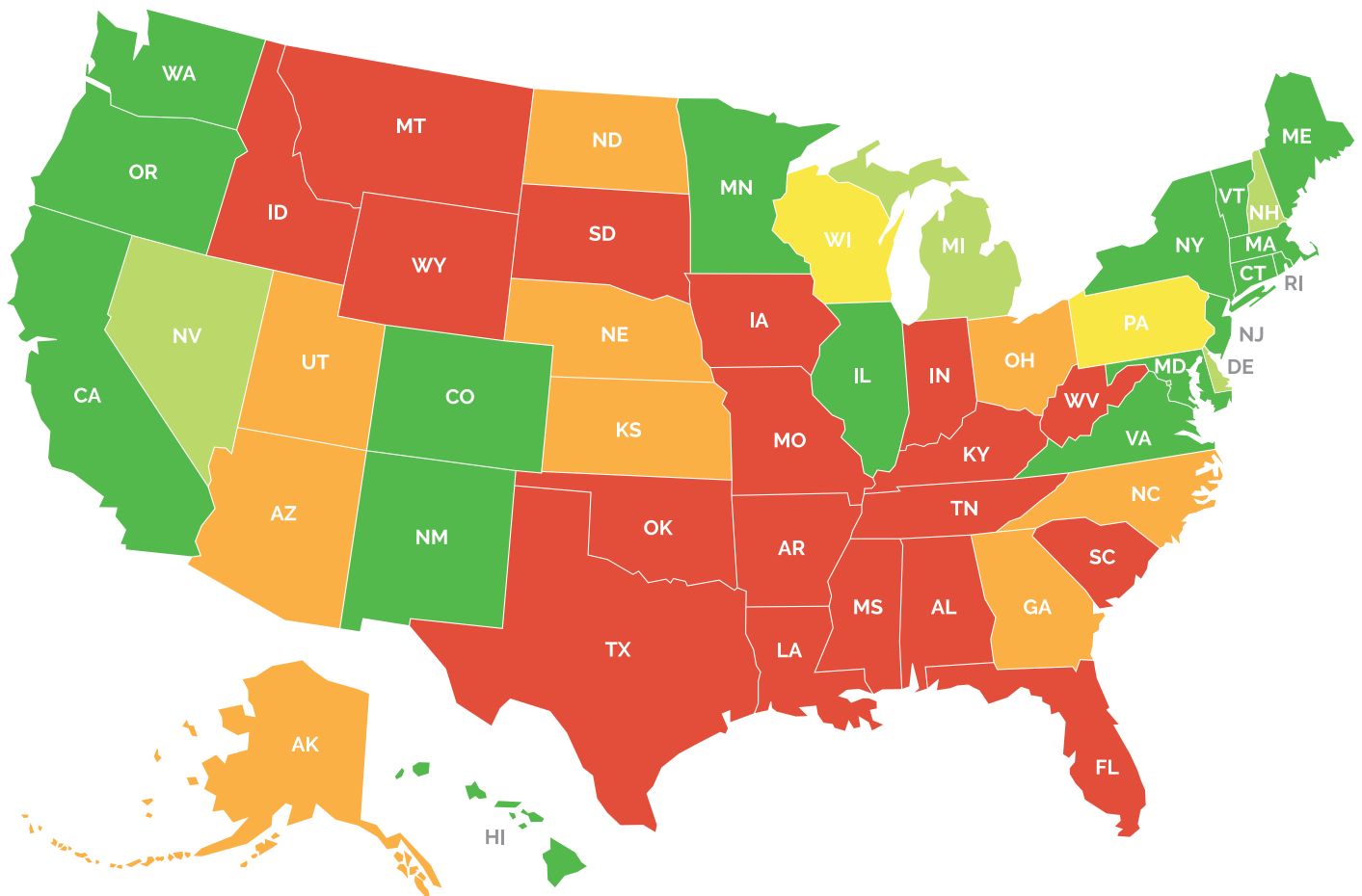
8.0_{/20}

A Note on Methodology

Download this report to learn how and why Out Leadership created the LGBTQ+ Business Climate Index for the 50 U.S. States, with important details about our methodology, including our data standards and practices. NOTE: *HIV criminalization laws are discriminatory and ineffective. These laws fail to account for advances made in treating and controlling HIV, may deter people from getting tested and seeking treatment, and can exacerbate the stigma targeting people living with HIV and LGBTQ+ people.

United States Heat Map

The legal and cultural situation for LGBTQ+ people varies widely across the country. This map, based on each state's total Business Climate Score, illustrates the states where LGBTQ+ people are empowered to participate more fully and openly in the economy, and the states that are lagging behind.





Wyoming Talking Points

5.9% of Wyoming residents identify as LGBTQ+. Conservatively, that's LGBTQ+ personal income of \$1.2 billion – it's a market my business can't afford to ignore.

When LGBTQ+ employees don't feel welcome at work, they're less likely to stay, and employee turnover is a drag on the state economy and business competitiveness.

It costs companies an average of \$9,530 to replace an employee in Wyoming, and it can cost up to \$279,000 to replace senior executives. Wyoming and the businesses operating there have strong financial incentives to create inclusive workplaces in the interest of keeping these costs down.

Nondiscrimination policies allow LGBTQ+ people to participate more fully in the economy.

Increased hostile policy toward the LGBTQ+ community will have a negative impact on companies ability to attract and retain top talent.

Millennial and Gen Z consumers prefer to do business with companies with LGBTQ+ friendly advertising and policies – 54% say they're more likely to choose an LGBTQ+ inclusive brand over a competitor – which is why it's important that Wyoming begins to foster a business environment where being inclusive is supported.

Regional Context

The West

Out Leadership and FCB partnered on original market research into the attitudes of American workers on LGBTQ+ inclusion, which fielded in 2019 and 2020. These briefs as a whole will be updated on an ongoing basis by Out Leadership because we recognize the ever-changing nature of policy on the local, state, and national level.

Overall, 52.5% of LGBTQ+ workers in the West are out at work. However, urbanicity has a big impact on whether LGBTQ+ workers feel comfortable sharing personal information at work (LGBTQ+ workers are 26% less likely to share when in rural areas vs 4% less likely to share in urban areas compared to national average). There is also a big impact when it comes to age and being open to managers, with older LGBTQ+ workers in this region being more likely to share with their managers than any other age group nationwide (52% more likely). West workers are also 14% more likely to report microaggressions at work which may be why LGBTQ+/Allies are also 15% more likely to say they want to work with companies that are more supportive of LGBTQ+ rights. Even though there are reports of microaggressions in the workplace, workers in this region were 35% less likely to say that the state's leadership talked negatively about LGBTQ+ issues.

Unless otherwise noted, all comparisons for more or less likely are compared to the National results. Regional results are based off of 1,500 respondents (LGBTQ+ and Non-LGBTQ+ responses have been weighted to be age-representative for each audience in each region). National results are based off of 600 respondents representative of each audience (LGBTQ+ vs Non-LGBTQ+).

States in the Western region included: Alaska, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming.

Impact of LGBTQ+ Discrimination on Business Talent

1

NO RISK

2

LOW RISK

3

MODERATE RISK

4

NOTABLE RISK

5

HIGH RISK

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Brand Risk

5

HIGH RISK

Companies incur high risk to their brands by operating in Wyoming, where there are no statewide LGBTQ+ inclusive nondiscrimination protections and the state's governor and senators have negative voting records on LGBTQ+ issues, and stand vocally against LGBTQ+ interests.

Client Risk

4

NOTABLE RISK

There is notable risk of LGBTQ+ or strong ally clients pulling their business from companies operating in Wyoming in light of the state's business climate and reputation.

Talent Risk

2

LOW RISK

LGBTQ+ talent are likely to consider Wyoming's legal and social environment unfriendly. There is no statewide LGBTQ+ inclusive nondiscrimination law or hate crime protections, both of which make working in Wyoming unattractive to LGBTQ+ professionals.

Marketing Risk

5

HIGH RISK

There is high risk involved in marketing to the LGBTQ+ community in Wyoming.

Future Risk

2

LOW RISK

While a few discriminatory bills have been filed over the years, state lawmakers appear to have little appetite for advancing discriminatory legislation. The risk of a future negative event is low.



Current Legal Status of LGBTQ+ People in Wyoming

Legal status of the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Community

There is no statewide ban on discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Multiple attempts to pass anti-discrimination laws have failed in the Wyoming state house, both in the House of Representatives in 2011 and the state Senate in 2013.

The state failed to pass a nondiscrimination law in 2015 that would have protected sexual orientation or gender identity, though the bill contained a religious exemption.

The municipalities of Jackson and Laramie have protections based on sexual orientation or gender identity; Casper and Gillette prohibit discrimination in city employment based on sexual orientation.

The state does not prohibit housing or public accommodation discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Children in foster care have anti-discrimination protections on the bases of gender and sexual orientation but not gender identity or expression.

There is no religious exemption for denying LGBTQ+-parent adoption, but adoption reports currently require listing a Mother/Parent and Father/Parent on the petition for adoption.

Wyoming has a statute requiring the establishment of paternity on a child's birth certificate. If the "father" is someone other than the man a woman was married to during conception or pregnancy, that person must submit an affidavit denying that he is the father of the child.

There are no statutes explicitly criminalizing HIV transmission or exposure in Wyoming. Defendants accused of crimes involving the "exchange of bodily fluids" must submit to a test for a sexually transmitted disease, and the results of the test are admissible in a criminal prosecution for the "criminal infliction of or exposure to a sexually transmitted disease."

Wyoming is one of few states without a hate crime law on the books protecting any class of people. Therefore, Wyoming does not have a law that addresses hate or bias crimes based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

There is no ban on conversion therapy in Wyoming.

Legal Status of the Transgender Community

Wyoming will amend a birth certificate with a court order stating that the sex of an individual has been changed. The applicant must present a certified copy of the court-ordered gender marker change and a letter from a doctor stating that gender surgery has been completed.

A name change in Wyoming requires a petition in the individual's county district court. The individual must be a resident of the county for at least two years before filing. The applicant must publish a notice in a newspaper once a week for a required period, but the publication can keep an applicant's address confidential if the individual is a victim of domestic violence. After receiving the court order, an applicant must appear in person with it to surrender their old ID.

To change the gender markers on a driver's license or other state ID, applicants must fill out a form that requires a signature and affidavit from a physician, therapist or counselor, psychiatric social worker, or other medical or social service provider.

Wyoming's Medicaid policy explicitly excludes transgender care.

There is no insurance protection under state law for transgender anti-discrimination.



Government Statements and Actions

In 2024, Gov. Mark Gordon signed a bill that bans gender-affirming care for minors.

In 2023, a new law was passed in Wyoming that will prohibit transgender girls from competing in middle- and high-school girls' sports events. The law is set to go into effect in July 2023.

This marks a change from previous years where every single bill that would limit the civil rights of LGBTQ+ people in Wyoming had been defeated.

In response to a Washington Post query in July 2019, Wyoming's health department claimed it removed its Medicaid transgender coverage exclusion but that nobody has tested the claim by requesting authorization for a gender confirmation surgery yet.

A bill was introduced in the State House in 2019 that would make it illegal to fire people on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, but it died after it wasn't taken up for voting.

In 2018, the State House watered down its own anti-discrimination policy, removing any mention of protected groups, including LGBTQ+ people.

HB0037 Passed in April 2021 adding rights for adoptive and surrogate parents but explicitly excluded single parents and LGBTQ+ parents. This was a major loss. 12 anti-LGBTQ+ bills are currently making their way through the legislature.

Socio-cultural Environment of LGBTQ+ People in Wyoming

Status of LGBTQ+ Organizing and Community

There are several Pride events that take place in Wyoming. Some of these events include Laramie PrideFest, Casper Pride, and Rock Springs Pride. These events typically take place in June and include a variety of activities such as pride marches, drag burlesque shows, dances, and community gatherings.

In 2018, the head of Equality Wyoming, Sara Burlingame, won a seat in the State House. She ran for re-election in the 2020 cycle and lost by less than 50 votes.

Cultural Views of the LGBTQ+ Community

The state still lives under a cloud from the 1998 murder of gay college student Matthew Shepard. A national hate crimes act was named after him in 2009 and his parents continue to advocate for state-level protections across the country. Wyoming is one of three states without hate crimes laws.

41% of Wyoming residents favor allowing small businesses religious exemptions to discriminate against LGBTQ+ people.

64% of Wyoming residents favor LGBTQ+ nondiscrimination laws.



Partners

Our partnerships make our work possible. The first State LGBTQ+ Business Climate Index released in 2019 was funded by a grant from the Gill Foundation. The Index is based on data graciously shared by the Movement Advancement Project and the Williams Institute. Ropes & Gray is our pro bono legal partner for the CEO Business Briefs globally, and their research informs this Index. FCB partnered with us to conduct original market research into American attitudes toward LGBTQ+ workplace inclusion, informing the Regional Context section of the State CEO Briefs. America Competes supported the development of the scoring for the Risk Assessments, particularly for the Future Risk score.

