



LGBTQ+ Business Climate Score

out of a possible 100 points

92.27

NO RISK

Connecticut

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/

Connecticut



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.

18.6_{/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.

18.0_{/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.

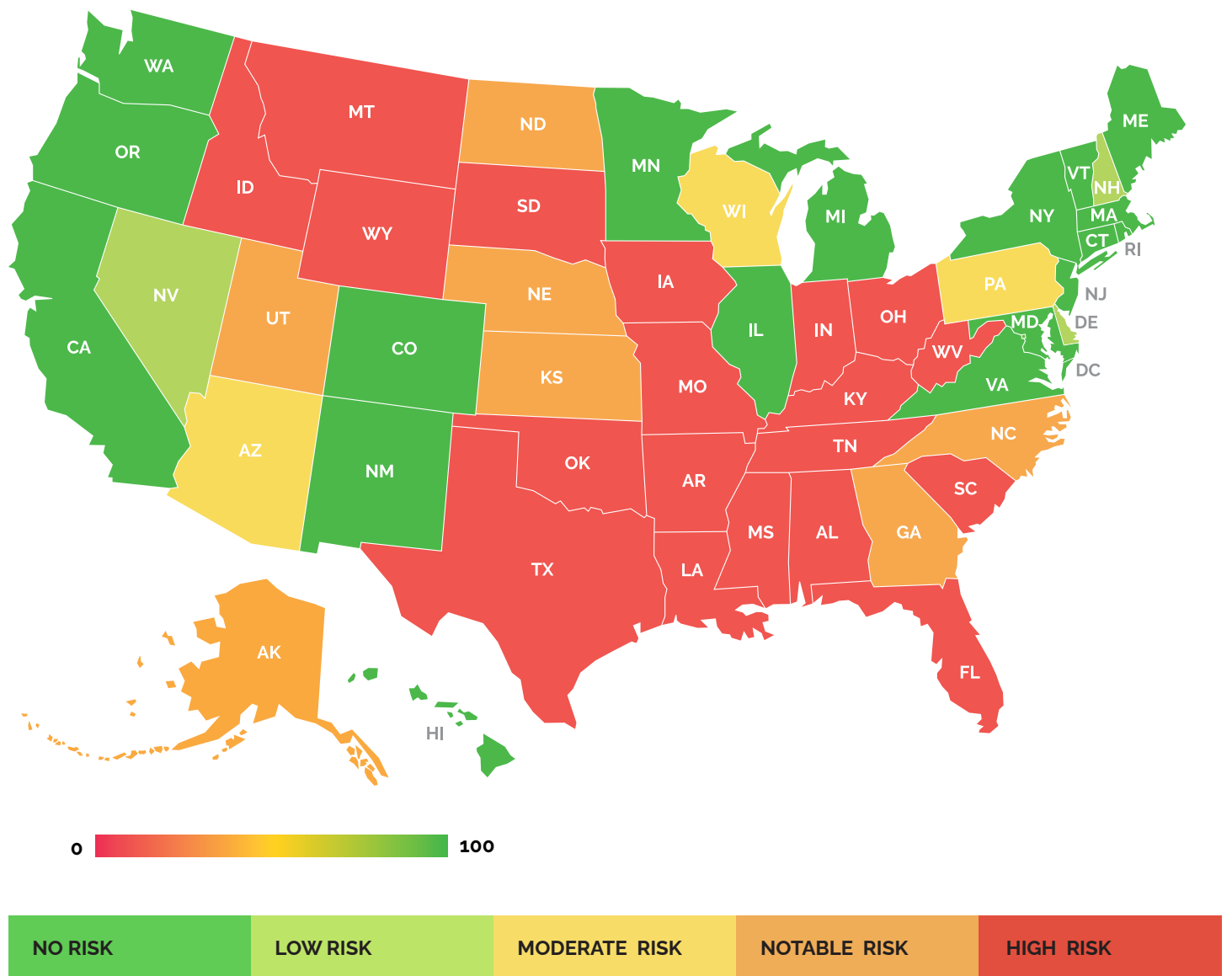
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A Note on Methodology

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.



Connecticut

Talking Points

6.0% of Connecticut residents identify as LGBTQ+. Conservatively, that's LGBTQ+ personal income of \$9.6 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 \$11,882 to replace an employee in Connecticut, and it can cost up to \$448,684 to replace senior executives. Connecticut and the businesses operating there have strong financial incentives to create inclusive workplaces in the interest of keeping these costs down.

Connecticut's comprehensive nondiscrimination law protects LGBTQ+ people, so the state is already experiencing the positive economic impacts of such policies. One estimate suggests that the state's economy may have grown 3%, or \$7.9 billion, thanks to its inclusive approach. That said, there's still a gap between policy and culture, and organizations in Connecticut have a business imperative to ensure that LGBTQ+ people feel welcome in their workplaces.

Connecticut has a favorable economic environment for business investment – but taking steps to make LGBTQ+ people feel safer and more included would better enable companies to attract top LGBTQ+ 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 Connecticut continue to foster a business environment where being inclusive is supported.

Regional Context

The Northeast

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.

The Northeast has the lowest percentage of those who are out at work (49.6%). LGBTQ+ workers in urban environments, however, do feel slightly more comfortable talking about their personal lives vs. urban LGBTQ+ workers for the rest of the country (17% more likely than nationwide). Workers in this region are more likely to hear or engage in negative conversations about LGBTQ+ people at work. Particularly for the non-LGBTQ+ group, which is 23% more likely to report observing or experiencing negative conversations about LGBTQ+ people vs the nation as a whole. Despite being more likely to hear negative conversations at work, workers in this region are the least likely to say that they hear this negativity from state leadership. They are 61% less likely to report that leadership in their state talks about LGBTQ+ people in predominantly negative terms. Like most regions, there is a strong difference between urban and rural audiences, especially for the self-rated importance of team diversity when looking for jobs. LGBTQ+ / Allies living in Rural areas care the least about diverse teams when looking for jobs (49% less likely than nationwide). Finally, audiences in the Northeast were 20% more likely to list "Supporting LGBTQ+ Pride celebrations" as one of their top three ways businesses can demonstrate their support for the community.

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 Northeast region included: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont.



Connecticut: 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

1

NO RISK

Companies incur no risk to their brands by operating in Connecticut, where there are comprehensive LGBTQ+ inclusive nondiscrimination protections and the state's governor and senators have strong pro-LGBTQ+ records.

Client Risk

1

NO RISK

There is no risk of LGBTQ+ or strong ally clients pulling their business from companies operating in Connecticut in light of the state's business climate or reputation.

Talent Risk

1

NO RISK

Connecticut has strong legal protections for LGBTQ+ people, making working there attractive to LGBTQ+ professionals.

Marketing Risk

1

NO RISK

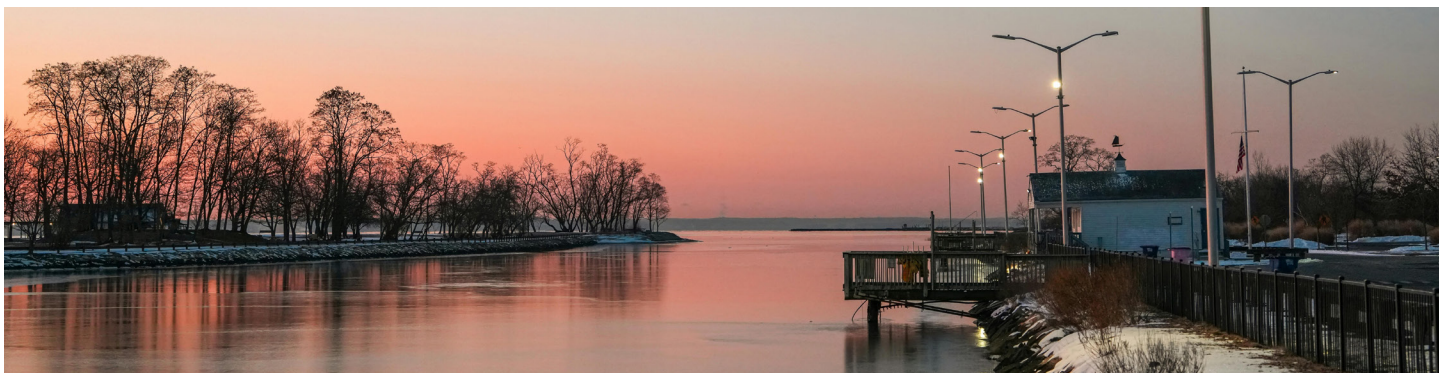
There is no risk involved in marketing to the LGBTQ+ community in Connecticut.

Future Risk

1

NO RISK

The state has comprehensive nondiscrimination protections in place and there seems to be low appetite to pursue discriminatory legislation. We currently see no risk of a future negative event.



Current Legal Status of LGBTQ+ People in Connecticut

Legal status of the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Community

Connecticut state laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

State anti-discrimination protections extend to people perceived to be LGBTQ+.

Some religious corporations, associations, and educational institutions in Connecticut may discriminate LGBTQ+ individuals for "the employment of individuals to perform work connected with the carrying on of their activities or with respect to matters of discipline, faith, internal organization or ecclesiastical rule, custom, or law."

Connecticut public schools must allow all children an opportunity to participate in school regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

State laws mention that the sexual orientation of prospective adoptive parents may be considered in adoption application approvals. But there is no evidence that adoption applications have been rejected due to sexual orientation.

Connecticut's Religious Freedom Restoration Act prohibits the state from burdening a person's freedom of religion, including any burden that results from a rule of general applicability, unless the state can prove its furthering a compelling government interest.

There are no state laws that explicitly criminalize HIV transmission or exposure in Connecticut.*

Hate crimes protections extend to sexual orientation and gender identity.

Conversion therapy for minors is banned in the state.

The state has comprehensive nondiscrimination laws protecting youths in foster care on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Legal Status of the Transgender Community

Connecticut has offered a nonbinary gender option on driver's licenses and birth certificates since January 2020.

Connecticut school districts require schools to respect transgender students' names and pronouns, their privacy regarding medical records, and to provide toilets in accordance with transgender students' gender identity.

To update the gender markers on a driver's license, applicants must submit a "gender designation change form," signed by a physician or social service provider and attesting to their gender identity.

To update the gender markers on a birth certificate, an applicant must submit an affidavit in which a physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or psychologist attests to their surgical, hormonal or other gender affirmation treatment.

In July 2018, Connecticut became the first state to legally ensure all individuals are treated consistent with their gender identity in prison.

Insurers in Connecticut are required to cover gender affirmation related healthcare costs.

Government Statements and Actions

The Connecticut Parentage Act, which extends parental status to non-biological, unmarried and same sex couples for children under their care without requiring adoption, went into effect in 2022.

The "gay panic defense" was unanimously repealed by the Connecticut General Assembly in June 2019. Governor Ned Lamont signed it into law in July 2019, alongside a law allowing minors to access PrEP without parental consent.

In 2018, the state's Department of Children and Families began actively recruiting for more LGBTQ+ foster and adoptive parents.

The state created an LGBTQ+ health network in 2019, with a budget to award grants to organizations filling community needs. It's the first state to do this via statute.

In 2019, the state passed the nation's most generous paid family leave law, earning praise for LGBTQ+-inclusive language.

In 2024, following Florida's removal of the LGBTQ+ section from its tourism website, Connecticut launched a campaign to let LGBTQ+ travelers know they were welcome in Connecticut.

Currently, the ACLU is tracking 10 anti-LGBTQ bills in Connecticut.



Socio-cultural Environment of LGBTQ+ People in Connecticut

Status of LGBTQ+ Organizing and Community

The state has a host of annual pride events, including Hartford PrideFest, New London's Pride Parade, Pride in the Park in Fairfield County and smaller town events.

Cultural Views of the LGBTQ+ Community

Three high school athletes filed a lawsuit in 2020 alleging that the state's policy that transgender students can participate in sports aligned with their gender identity puts cisgender competitors at a disadvantage. The suit was dismissed by a federal judge in April 2021 on a technicality: the trans student athletes had both graduated.

Connecticut was the second state in the nation to legalize marriage equality.

63% of Nutmeggers oppose religious exemptions for small businesses that would legalize LGBTQ+ discrimination.

77% of Connecticut residents favor LGBTQ+ nondiscrimination protections.



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.

