

LGBTQ+ Business Climate Score

SPEED
LIMIT
25

out of a possible 100 points

86.93

NO RISK

New Mexico

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

NO RISK	LOW RISK	MODERATE RISK	NOTABLE RISK	HIGH RISK
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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/

New Mexico



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.

19.6_{/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.

15.0_{/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.

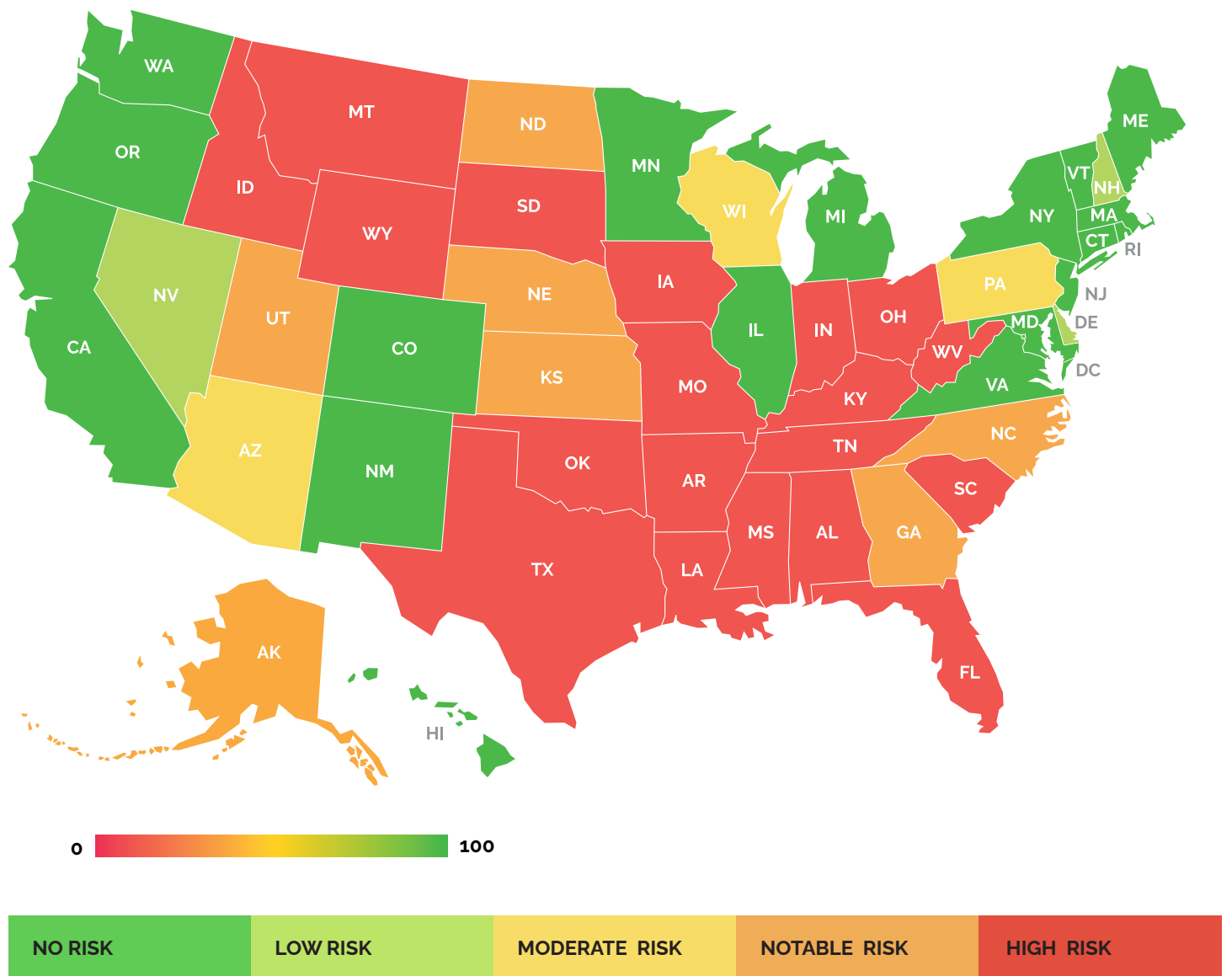
14.0_{/20}

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.



New Mexico

Talking Points

5.5% of New Mexicans identify as LGBTQ+. Conservatively, that's LGBTQ+ personal income of \$3.8 billion – it's a market my business can't afford to ignore.

New Mexico'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 \$2.8 billion, thanks to its inclusive approach. That said, there's still a gap between policy and culture, and organizations in New Mexico have a business imperative to ensure that LGBTQ+ people feel welcome in their workplaces.

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 \$8,968 to replace an employee in New Mexico. The state and the businesses operating there have strong incentives to create inclusive workplaces in the interest of keeping down costs.

New Mexico 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 New Mexico continue to foster a business environment where being inclusive is supported.

Regional Context

The Southwest

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 Southwest region had the lowest percent of non-LGBTQ+ respondents being willing to self-identify as an ally (44%), but, surprisingly, had the highest percentage of respondents classifying as LGBTQ+ friendly (slightly over 90%). Over half of the of LGBTQ+ workers in the Southwest are out at work (54.4%, second behind the Southeast region) and LGBTQ+ workers in this region are also 14% less likely to feel they need to engage in covering behaviors around their sexual orientation at work to be successful. However, state leadership in this region is not seen as very inclusive, and workers were 36% more likely to say that their leadership speaks about LGBTQ+ in predominantly negative terms. This region was also 43% more likely to list "including visibly LGBTQ+ people in advertising and communications" as one of the top ways that business could demonstrate their support. However, the non-LGBTQ+ respondents in this region were the least likely to list public demonstrations of support as one of the top ways that businesses could express their commitment to the LGBTQ+ community. Particularly around marketing to LGBTQ+ customers and public advocacy (77% and 50% less likely respectively).

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 Southwest region included: Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas

New Mexico: 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 New Mexico, 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 New Mexico, in light of the state's business climate and reputation.

Talent Risk

1

NO RISK

New Mexico has strong legal frameworks protecting LGBTQ+ people, which makes working in New Mexico attractive to LGBTQ+ professionals.

Marketing Risk

1

NO RISK

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

Future Risk

1

NO RISK

New Mexico has no recent history of negative bills filed, and we would not expect that to change in the foreseeable future. We assess this state as currently having no risk of a negative, headline-making event.

Current Legal Status of LGBTQ+ People in New Mexico

Legal status of the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Community

The New Mexico Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination in housing, public accommodations, and consumer credit. It applies to all employers with more than 4 employees.

Discrimination based on sexual orientation is prohibited under New Mexico's administrative regulations.

Foster agencies are required to educate prospective and current foster or adoptive families on how to create a safe and supportive home environment for youth in foster care regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Both parents in a same-sex couple can be represented on a birth certificate.

New Mexico's Hate Crimes Act includes a sentencing enhancement if a defendant's crime was "motivated by hate." The statute extends protections to victims who were targeted because of their "actual or perceived" sexual orientation or gender identity.

Therapists and other licensed professionals are prohibited from providing conversion therapy to minors.

New Mexico permits same-sex couples — married or unmarried — as well as individuals to adopt, subject to the same requirements imposed on all prospective adoptive parents. There do not appear to be specific non-discrimination protections for prospective LGBTQ+ parents.

In 2019, New Mexico's state legislature extended bullying prevention laws to explicitly cover harassment of students on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

Legal Status of the Transgender Community

As of June 2019, trans people can change the gender markers on their birth certificate by signing an affidavit.

Businesses and public facilities in New Mexico with single-occupancy restrooms are required to use gender-neutral signage and to make them available to any person regardless of gender identity.

A name change requires a petition to district court. Before petitioning, the individual must publish notice of the intent for two weeks unless the court finds that the

publication of the name change will jeopardize the applicant's personal safety.

Trans people can amend their gender markers on driver's licenses by submitting a Gender Designation Change Request to the DMV.

New Mexico offers "male, female, and undesignated (x)" gender options on drivers licenses and birth certificates.

Coverage exclusions for gender dysphoria care violate the New Mexico Insurance Code, and coverage exclusions for gender identity or gender dysphoria-related treatment violate the New Mexico Human Rights Act. There is no explicit policy regarding transgender health coverage and care for Medicaid.

Government Statements and Actions

In March of 2025, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham signed SB 417, which amended New Mexico's Adoption Act and the New Mexico Uniform Parentage Act to establish provisions for confirmatory adoptions.

In February 2025, HB 518 was introduced in the New Mexico House of Representatives. The bill would designate the fourth Tuesday of January in each odd-numbered year as "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Expansive Day" in New Mexico. The bill passed the House in March of 2025 and is currently being heard in the Senate.

In 2023, Governor Grisham signed the "Name Change Modernization Act" and the "Human Rights Act Expansion" into law, which streamlines the legal name change process and amends the state's anti-discrimination law to include LGBTQ+ individuals.

A trans women sports ban and legalization of LGBTQ+ discrimination in healthcare both failed in the state legislature in 2021, but so did a proposal to ban the gay panic defense and to mandate collection of LGBTQ+ demographic information on government documents.

There is currently a record of six openly LGBTQ+ state legislators in office.

In December 2018, Senators Martin Heinrich and Tom Udall were two of the three senators to call upon the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement and US Customs and Border Protection to release documents related to the case of a transgender Honduran woman with HIV who died in their custody.

In 2013, Heinrich became the first senator to pose for the NOH8 campaign.

As ranking member on the Subcommittee on National Parks, Heinrich welcomed the designation of the nation's first designated national monument honoring the LGBTQ+ movement in 2016.

The ACLU is currently tracking 7 anti-LGBTQ+ bills in New Mexico.



Socio-cultural Environment of LGBTQ+ People in New Mexico

Status of LGBTQ+ Organizing and Community

Albuquerque has had a pride parade since 1976, when about 25 people participated. Now it draws over 30,000 people. PrideFest 2025 is scheduled to be held in June.

Cultural Views of the LGBTQ+ Community

New Mexico has a Religious Freedom Restoration Act that prohibits restricting a person's freedom of religion as long as their practice doesn't discriminate against other religions or hinder an essential government function.

In 2013, the New Mexico Supreme Court ruled that enforcement of the state's Human Rights Act does not violate the New Mexico Religious Freedom Restoration Act, as it is only violated if a government agency restricts a person's free exercise of religion, and a "government agency," as defined in the statute, does not include the legislature or the courts.

After Arkansas passed a host of transphobic laws in 2021, the Spurrier family, who have a trans teenager, decided to move to New Mexico. They set up a GoFundMe to help offset costs, and a group of mostly New Mexican donors gave \$14,000.



Partners

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