



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

---

**Department:** BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
**DISTRICT 5**  
**File #:** 23-137

Board Meeting Date: 3/14/2023

---

**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors  
**From:** Supervisor David J. Canepa, District 5  
Supervisor Dave Pine, District 1  
**Subject:** Resolution Promoting Gender-Inclusive and Gender-Neutral Language

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt a resolution promoting gender-inclusive language and gender-neutral language in county legislation, regulations, and resolutions.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The State of California recognizes that many transgender, nonbinary, and gender non-conforming individuals living in the state and that there is a necessity for gender inclusivity in state-issued identification documents, legislative drafting guidelines, anti-discrimination laws, and policies related to employment, healthcare, and public facilities.

In 2018, the State of California passed a resolution (ACR-260) for the use of gender-neutral pronouns and gender-inclusive language in the drafting of legislation and for state agencies to participate in efforts to use gender-neutral pronouns and avoid the use of gendered pronouns when drafting policies, regulations, and other guidance. On June 15, 2020, the United States Supreme Court determined that gender identity is a protected characteristic under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

It is now a more familiar and increasingly suggested practice to use gender-neutral and gender-inclusive language in drafting legislation, regulations, and resolutions where appropriate. Furthermore, misgendering someone (using the wrong pronouns) can negatively impact their mental health, self-confidence, and sense of inclusion.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The County of San Mateo is committed to advancing its residents' and employees' rights, protections, dignity, and inclusion.

This resolution underwent multiple reviews, including by an adhoc committee, the County of San Mateo Human Resources Department, the County of San Mateo Office of Equity, and the San Mateo County Pride Center. At its meeting on February 21, 2023, the San Mateo County LGBTQ Commission officially recommended by unanimous vote that the resolution in its current to form be sent to the Board of Supervisors for its approval.

The use of gender-inclusive and gender-neutral language in any new legislation, regulations, and resolutions, where appropriate, will advance equity and inclusion for all individuals and promote a culture of equity and belonging.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

None.