July 2024 MEI Webinar:

Intro to the MEI Process and Navigating the 2024 MEI Survey

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WHAT IS THE MEI?

- The Municipal Equality Index (MEI) examines how inclusive municipal laws, policies, and services are of LGBTQ+ people who live and work there.
- We rate 506 cities and towns across the country, whose sizes range from small, medium, and large in total population.
WHY DO WE DO IT

- Roadmap of best practices for LGBTQ-inclusive laws and policies.

- Cities can often enact protections faster than states and the federal government.

- Inclusivity drives economic growth.
506 TOTAL MUNICIPALITIES

- 25 Small cities with highest proportion of same-sex couples
- 200 Largest cities in the country
- 25 Midsize cities with highest proportion of same-sex couples
- 5 Largest cities in each state
- 25 Large cities with highest proportion of same-sex couples
- 98 Cities selected by HRC & Equality Federation state groups members & supporters
- 99 Cities home to each state’s two largest public universities including undergraduate & graduate enrollment
- 50 State capitals
The Municipal Equality Index rates municipalities of varying sizes drawn from every state in the nation.

2023
506 CITIES
92,638,278 TOTAL POPULATION
Standards for Credit
STANDARDS FOR CREDIT

I. Non-Discrimination Laws 30 points
II. Municipality as an Employer 28 points
III. Municipal Services 12 points
IV. Law Enforcement 22 points
V. Leadership on LGBTQ+ Equality 8 points

Total: 100 points

22 flex points are built into the scorecard for additional protections and flexibility

For more information, visit our website: https://www.hrc.org/resources/standards-for-credit-on-the-mei
SECTION I: CRITERIA OVERVIEW

- Non-Discrimination in Private Employment
- Non-Discrimination in Housing
- Non-Discrimination in Public Accommodations
- \textit{Flex: All-Gender Single-Occupancy Facilities}
- \textit{Flex: Protects Youth from Conversion Therapy}

30 Standard Points + 4 Flex Point = 34 Points
SECTION II: CRITERIA OVERVIEW

• Non-Discrimination in City Employment 14 pts.
• Transgender-Inclusive Healthcare Benefits 6 pts.
• City Contractor Nondiscrimination Ordinance 6 pts.
• Inclusive Workplace 2 pts.
• Flex: City Employee Domestic Partner Benefits 1 pt.

28 Standard Points + 1 Flex Point = 29 Points
## SECTION III: CRITERIA OVERVIEW

- Non-Discrimination Ordinance Enforcement by Human Rights Commission: 2 pts.
- LGBTQ+ Liaison in the City Executive’s Office: 5 pts.
- *Flex*: Youth Bullying Prevention Policy for City Services: 2 pts.
- *Flex*: City provides services to/supports
  - LGBTQ+ Youth: 2 pts.
  - LGBTQ+ People Experiencing Homelessness: 2 pts.
  - LGBTQ+ Older Adults: 2 pts.
  - People Living w/ HIV/AIDS: 2 pts.
  - Transgender Community: 2 pts.

12 Standard Points + 10 Flex Point = 22 Points
**SECTION IV & V: CRITERIA OVERVIEW**

- LGBTQ+ Police Liaison or Task Force 10 pts.
- Reported 2022 Hate Crimes Statistics to FBI 12 pts.

**22 Standard Points + 0 Flex Point = 22 Points**

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- Leadership’s Public Position on LGBTQ+ Equality 0 - 5 pts.
- Leadership’s Pro-Equality Legislative or Policy Efforts 0 - 3 pts.
- Flex: Openly LGBTQ+ Elected or Appointed Municipal Official 2 pts.
- Flex: City Tests Limits of Restrictive State Law 3 pts.

**8 Standard Points + 5 Flex Point = 13 Points**
Process and Timeline
**PROCESS**

**Research Period:** Based on the criteria for each section, the MEI team draws data from publicly available sources to make determinations on whether laws, administrative policies, court decisions, or services and actions qualify for credit.

**Preliminary Scorecard:** The MEI team compiles all the data into a preliminary scorecard for each city and shares them to members of the Equality Federation as well as each city.

**Feedback Period:** Cities have the opportunity to review the standards for credit, ask any questions, give input, and provide additional sources for the MEI team to consider through the new 2024 MEI Survey.

**Feedback Deadline:** Friday, August 9th

**Finalization:** Cities will have an opportunity to respond to any noted deficiencies – within an expected response window of two weeks before scores are finalized.
RESEARCH PERIOD

- The MEI team researches cities and allots points based on publicly available sources
  - Municipal code, state laws, court decisions, etc.
  - City website
  - News articles and media outlets
  - Meeting minutes from city council meetings or HRC meetings

- MEI team tries to keep documentation and corresponding points year-to-year
  - Cities will still need to submit new documentation if past documentation is outdated or expired
FEEDBACK PERIOD

● New process - 2024 MEI Survey
  ○ Streamline communication, increased organization and security
  ○ Allows participants to save their work and return if needed
  ○ Allows multiple people to submit information in centralized location
  ○ Submit feedback and share updates *prior* to receiving a draft scorecard
  ○ Walks through every criteria item, giving tips on what we are looking for and how to gain credit

● What’s Staying the Same?
  ○ Inbox ([mei@hrc.org](mailto:mei@hrc.org)) will be active
  ○ Cities will be able to contest scores and provide additional documentation/feedback
  ○ Cities can book office hours appointments
FEEDBACK PERIOD

- 2024 MEI Survey
  - Contest scores and provide feedback
  - Submit supporting documentation
  - Submit contact information
  - Share general information regarding your city’s structure
  - Permit the MEI team to use your stories in the report or as best practice examples
  - Book office hours appointments
  - MORE!
2024 MEI SURVEY - LOGIN CREDENTIALS

HRC sent login credentials to the Mayor, City Manager, and designated contacts via email and certified mail

If you did not receive credentials or are having issues logging in, please email our team at mei@hrc.org

You can access your city-specific 2024 MEI Survey by using the login information below at https://t.ly/ME[CITY]:

Username: mei*****
Password: hrc*****
2024 MEI SURVEY - LOGIN PAGE

Login to continue to the MEI 2024 Survey

Username

Password

Current Survey Status: Not Started
2024 MEI SURVEY - LOGIN PAGE

Technology Requirements: Please use Chrome, Firefox or Safari browsers while completing the MEI 2024. There are known compatibility issues with Internet Explorer/Microsoft Edge and we recommend avoiding these browsers, if possible.
2024 MEI SURVEY - LOGIN PAGE

MEI 2024 Communications

ALL 2024 MEI Surveys are due Friday August 9th, 2024.

Please visit hrc.org/mei for more information and MEI Survey help or use the Helpful Resources linked on the right-hand side of this page.

The MEI Team will be holding a webinar in July entitled Intro to the MEI Process and Navigating the 2024 MEI Survey. To ensure an invite, login to your city’s survey and submit contact information for your Webinar Invitee.

Technology Requirements: Please use Chrome, Firefox or Safari browsers while completing the MEI 2024. There are known compatibility issues with Internet Explorer/Microsoft Edge and we recommend avoiding these browsers, if possible.

Helpful Resources

- 2024 MEI Survey Help Guide
- Template 2024 MEI Scorecard
- 2024 MEI Standards for Credit
- See Your City Score from 2023
Welcome

Welcome to the Municipal Equality Index (MEI)--we’re looking forward to working with you!

Our team invites you to provide additional information and supporting documentation to supplement our team's assessment of your municipality's laws and policy.

Before you get started, please take a moment to review our MEI 2024 Standards for Credit which outlines each scored question and the documentation that is required to earn credit. You may also find it helpful to download and see your city's scorecard from the previous year. We hope that you find this useful to help you gather the materials that are necessary to submit feedback and additional documentation for our team’s review.

Questions about the 2024 MEI? Please attend one of our Office Hours which will be open through the survey deadline of Friday, August 9, 2024.

Book Office Hours time with us here!

Thank you for your commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion!
Visual Cues: Keep an eye out for these images and indicators throughout the survey.

* An asterisk indicates a required, non-scored question (you will primarily find these in the General Information section).

**SCORED Q REQUIRED** This image indicates that the question is a scored question that is required to achieve a score of 100 standard points. Please note that some matrix-style questions may contain more than one scored question.

**SCORED Q FLEX** This image indicates that the question is a scored flex question that counts towards credit for the section, but will not result in any deductions if left unanswered.

**REQUIRED FOR VALIDATION** This image indicates that you must provide some additional information or upload a document to validate a scored question.
Use the same login credentials if multiple people are working on the survey.

**Table of Contents:** You can move to different sections of the survey using the table of contents menu on the top left or go to the table of contents page by clicking the button on the bottom.

**Multiple Users:** Multiple people may work on this survey. However, please note that multiple people working on the survey on different computers at the same time may cause issues with saving. Please only have one person working on the survey at a time.

**Saving and Returning:** The survey will automatically save your responses each time you move to a new question. You do not need to complete the survey in one session. Please make sure to click the SAVE & CONTINUE button at the end of the page prior to leaving the survey to ensure that your responses have been saved. When you return to the survey you will be taken to the page where you or one of your colleagues last left off. You can use the table of contents to move to the section that you would like to work on.

**File Types:** This survey is set to accept the following document or image types: PDF, DOC, DOCX, TXT, JPG, PNG, GIF. Please convert any other file types to a PDF or another one of these file types prior to uploading.

**Help Guides:** Need help navigating the survey? Want to know how to submit the survey once you have filled it out? We have created some resources to help answer these questions. Click here for our MEI Survey Help Guide where you will find user tip sheets and answers to these questions and more.

**Reminder:** As you fill out the 2024 MEI Survey, please remember that documentation is required for every question in order to receive credit.

For each question, participants are only allowed to upload one document. To overwrite uploaded documents, just drag and drop another document. There is no way to delete or view your attachment.
2024 MEI SURVEY - SURVEY CONTRIBUTORS

Must submit at least ONE survey contributor in order to continue.

If you wish to leave a field blank, please enter N/A.
● MEI Survey Primary Contact
  ○ Serves as the main point person to interface between the municipality and the MEI team.
  ○ MEI team will work with them when reviewing the city's MEI survey and will be provided with the preliminary scorecard and an opportunity to provide additional materials and resources.
  ○ The MEI Survey Primary Contact will receive all emails about the MEI survey process. Ideally, there will be one or two primary contacts per city, but we can allow up to three.
2024 MEI SURVEY - SURVEY CONTRIBUTORS

- **MEI 2024 Survey Contributor**
  - A team member from the municipality that actively participates in helping to complete the MEI 2024 survey.
  - Survey contributors will receive occasional emails and reminders about the MEI survey process and will serve as a point of contact if the MEI team is unable to reach the Official 2024 MEI Survey Submitter or Survey Primary Contact.
2024 MEI SURVEY - SURVEY CONTRIBUTORS

- **Official 2024 MEI Survey Submitter**
  - Will select this option/entry at the end of the survey.
  - Will work with them when reviewing the city's MEI survey, will be provided with the preliminary scorecard and an opportunity to provide additional materials and resources.
  - Will receive all emails about the MEI survey process
  - Will be asked to attest to the fact that all of the responses submitted to this survey are true, complete, and accurate to the best of their knowledge.
  - Must be an employee of the city and may not be an intern, fellow, temporary employee, or consultant.
2024 MEI SURVEY - GENERAL INFORMATION

● OPTIONAL
● Includes questions regarding:
  ○ General Email Inbox for the City
  ○ Mayor & City Manager Contact Info
  ○ Mailing Address
  ○ # of full-time employees
  ○ Information on the primary survey contributor
  ○ City size, structure, demographics, etc.

General Information

This section captures general information about your city. Please complete and/or verify the city’s information below. All questions in this section are OPTIONAL. The following questions are informational only (i.e. not scored) and intended to help our team get a better understanding of the cities we work with and serve.

We suggest you complete this section first before entering other parts of the survey and welcome your comments.
2024 MEI SURVEY - NAVIGATING THE SURVEY

Moving forward, the table of contents will be on the left hand side once you reach the end of the General Information section.

Use the table of contents to move between sections.
2024 MEI SURVEY - NAVIGATING THE SURVEY

Use the Previous Page and Save & Continue buttons to move back and forth between questions within a section.

You do not need to answer every question if only providing feedback for certain criteria.

Click the link in the footer to book office hours time with our team.

Questions? Book Office Hours time with us!
We are available for 1-1 meetings to discuss the MEI scorecard, feedback provided in this survey, and other questions or concerns regarding the MEI.
● After the General Information section, the survey will walk you through Sections I. - V. of the MEI Scorecard

● Each section is structured to end the same to help save your work and give participants an opportunity to share additional information
2024 MEI SURVEY - SECTION END QUESTION

Please share any feedback, notes, or additional information for HRC on Part I. Non-Discrimination Laws.

Please attach any additional documents you’d like us to have related to this section.

Drop files or click here to upload

At the end of each section, there will be space to share any additional information and attach supplemental documentation if needed.
At the end of each section, you will be asked to mark the section as DRAFT or FINAL.

If you are marking the section as FINAL, questions including the "Required for Validation" image must be completed.
To provide feedback, the MEI survey will walk you through each criteria item of each section.

Q2. Does your city offer at least one municipal employee health insurance plan that expressly covers transgender healthcare needs, including gender-affirming surgical procedures, hormone therapy, mental health care, and all related medical visits and laboratory services? The lack of express exclusions for these services is not sufficient for credit because this care is routinely not covered.

Effective Date: For credit, transgender-inclusive benefits must be announced to employees and must be in place as an available benefit by the MEI feedback deadline. For most cities, the benefit year will begin at the start of the calendar year. If your benefits will not be in place until after the MEI feedback deadline, we cannot provide credit for this question. Please contact mei@hr.org with any questions or concerns about the timing of your benefits.
Based on responses, the survey may ask you to upload required documentation, ask follow up questions, or alert you of a score deduction.

Q2a. To receive credit, please attach a copy of your ENTIRE city employee health insurance plan benefits booklet (Submissions lacking appropriate documentation will be ineligible for credit).

Finding the right answer: This document details what benefits are available to employees and must include information on the provision of transition-related care. If your document does not contain information about care options for transgender individuals, it will not be accepted. We will not accept copies of email exchanges, benefit booklets from previous years, or news articles for this question.

Drop files or click here to upload
Based on responses, the survey may ask you to upload required documentation, ask follow up questions, or alert you of a score deduction.
2024 MEI SURVEY - PROVIDING FEEDBACK

Based on responses, the survey may ask you to upload required documentation, ask follow up questions, or alert you of a score deduction.

Score Deduction Alert: Because you answered that you do not have transgender-inclusive healthcare benefits, your city will lose 6 points in the Transgender-Inclusive Healthcare Benefits criterion.
Keep an eye out for “Finding the right answer” – we try our best to provide helpful context and tips.
2024 MEI SURVEY - PROVIDING FEEDBACK

- Drag and drop to attach OR click the box to upload from your files
- There is no way to delete or view your attachment
- However, to overwrite uploaded documents: just drag and drop another document
- This survey is set to accept the following document or image types: PDF, DOC, DOCX, TXT, JPG, PNG, GIF.
Section I. Non-Discrimination Laws

Non-Discrimination in Private Employment, Housing, and Public Accommodations
(Upto 30 points)
This category evaluates whether a city has an enforceable non-discrimination ordinance that expressly covers sexual orientation and gender identity and applies to private employment, housing, and public accommodations citywide. In each category (private employment, housing, and public accommodations), cities receive 5 points for explicitly prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and 5 points for expressly prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender identity. A 5-point deduction is applied for cities that are not compliant.

Q2. Reported 2022 Hate Crimes Statistics to the FBI (12 points).
To qualify for points in this section, the city must report hate crimes statistics to the FBI in all categories, including sexual orientation and gender identity, and either:
Report a positive number of hate crimes in any category in 2022 (i.e. report more than “0” for hate crimes reported in any one or more of the protected categories),

OR

Report zero hate crimes in 2022 AND have reported a positive number of hate crimes in any category in any of the past five years of data.

Statistically, it is highly unlikely to report a positive number of hate crimes in one year. In one year, it is highly likely to report zero crimes.

Finding the right answer: This section is evaluated based on independent research conducted by our team. Participants are welcome to provide feedback and contest points awarded below, but scoring will reflect applicable and enforceable laws.

Finding the right answer: This section is evaluated based on independent research conducted by our team. While participants are welcome to provide feedback and contest points awarded below, answers to this section are will reflect data reported by the FBI.
2024 MEI SURVEY - SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

- Includes questions regarding:
  - Anticipating imminent changes to law or policy that would impact your city’s score before Friday, August 9th
  - Permission to use materials submitted in this survey
  - Sharing your impact story and testimonial

* Q1. In order to receive credit for the 2024 MEI, cities must provide documentation that demonstrates fully codified municipal ordinance(s) or city policy. Does your city anticipate any changes to municipal code or policy that would be relevant to your city’s score?

NOTE: Our team will not accept documentation of any municipal code or policy changes submitted after our feedback deadline: Friday, August 9th COB.

- Yes, we anticipate changes
- No, we do not anticipate any changes

* Q2. We like to share examples of materials and best practices in our MEI Resource Guide. Do you give us your permission to share examples of any of the RFL/CITY...
Preliminary Scorecards

We thank you for your participation and contribution to the 2024 Municipal Equality Index! Please continue to the next page in order to submit your feedback for our team’s review and validation. We ask for your kind patience as we review all feedback.

After feedback has been reviewed and validated, cities can expect to receive a preliminary scorecard by Friday, August 30. Cities will have a 2-week window after receiving their preliminary scorecard to respond to any noted deficiencies.

If you have questions or concerns regarding your city’s scorecard, please feel free to email our team at mei@hrc.org or schedule office hours with our team below. Our team will try our best to review submitted feedback prior to scheduled office hours.

Book Office Hours time with us here!
PRELIMINARY SCORECARD

• Once research is complete and feedback is reviewed, the MEI team will send a preliminary scorecard via email to the city’s: survey primary contact and official submitter, Mayor, and City Manager by the end of August.

• Preliminary scorecards are subject to change and strictly confidential.

• Cities will have a 2-week window to respond to any noted deficiencies.

• Preliminary scorecards, unless noted otherwise, will be considered final after the 2-week window has ended.
2024 MEI SURVEY - OFFICIAL SUBMITTER

- Verify that all survey contributors have been captured before submitting
- If you need to go back to the Contributor section, use the Table of Contents
If you confirm that all contributors have signed in, you will be asked to identify the **Official 2024 MEI Survey Submitter**

- Will be asked to attest to the fact that all of the responses submitted to this survey are true, complete, and accurate to the best of their knowledge
- Must be an employee of the city and may not be an intern, fellow, temporary employee, or consultant
2024 MEI SURVEY - SURVEY SUBMISSION

- Survey will show a summary of your completion status
- If a section is still marked as DRAFT or BLANK, you will not be able to submit
- Submission form will be available when all sections are saved as "FINAL" and the "Submitter and Contributor Information" section is marked as "YES" for complete
- Please use the Table of Contents button to navigate and finalize required section(s).
2024 MEI SURVEY - SURVEY SUBMISSION

- Once all sections are FINAL, there are two more steps:
  - 2024 MEI Official Submitter will sign and attest that all of the responses submitted to this survey are true, complete and accurate to the best of their knowledge
  - Click SUBMIT SURVEY

- ALL SURVEYS ARE DUE FRIDAY, AUGUST 9TH – we will not accept any surveys after this date
2024 MEI SURVEY: HOW TO GET STARTED

- **START EARLY!** Feedback Deadline: **Friday, August 9th**
- Identify contributors and their roles
- Use the survey as a guide to our standards for credit and scorecard
- Collect documentation and combine files when possible
- Review our Survey Help Guide
- Book office hours
FINALIZATION & LAUNCH

- Cities will have a 2-week window to respond to any noted deficiencies
- Preliminary scorecards, unless noted otherwise, will be considered final after the 2-week window has ended
- Scores are subject to change and strictly confidential until launch
- More information about our launch date will be forthcoming
Questions?

Email: mei@hrc.org or Book Office Hours with Us