

**City of Miami
LGBTQ+ Advisory Board**



**Annual Report
2021**

Board Members

Orlando Gonzales (Chair) – *D3*
Nicole Alvarez – *Mayor*
Officer Vanessa Gonzalez – *D5*
Abigail Mahony – *D2*
Damian Pardo – *At-large*
Vacancy – D1
Vacancy – D4

City Liaison

Michael Roman

Assigned Attorney

Pablo Velez

Mission

To serve as a vehicle for systematic and periodic assessment and to advise the City of Miami Commission for the betterment of quality life of all LGBTQ+ residents and visitors to the City with mindful care for providing a voice and platform for underrepresented individuals and communities.

Purpose

- To serve as a vehicle for systematic and periodic assessment of the quality of life of LGBTQ residents and visitors to the City
- To foster mutual understanding, tolerance, and respect for the LGBTQ community in the City
- To cooperate in the development of educational programs dedicated to the improvement of the lives of LGBTQ residents and visitors by eliciting support from public and private entities engaged in the inculcation of ideals of tolerance, mutual respect and understanding for the LGBTQ community
- To make recommendations to the City Commission with respect to all issues affecting or relating to the LGBTQ community
- To recommend solutions to the social, economic, cultural and political problems in the LGBTQ community, as well as to serve as liaison between the LGBTQ community and the City community at large
- To encourage and attract LGBTQ businesses to the City, to assist LGBTQ businesses located in the City, and to promote economic development, especially job creation in the City
- To promote positive images and concepts of the LGBTQ community as well as promote their many contributions to our society
- To conduct studies through fact-finding and analysis of problems encountered by the LGBTQ community
- To examine and recommend revisions in Miami policies and procedures having potentially negative consequences for LGBTQ individuals
- To serve as a forum to which individuals and groups can express concerns related to issues of homophobia and transphobia
- To continue to strengthen ties with the larger Miami community
- To conduct outreach to other entities and the community, including but not limited to the City's LGBTQ community
- To perform such other duties as may from time to time be assigned to it by the City Commission.

Prioritization

The Advisory Board has prioritized the following areas:

Engagement Outreach and Input

- Education for Commission re: economic impact - Section 2-1352 (B)
- Serve as forums related to phobias and strengthen ties - Section 2-1352 (J/K)
- Tolerance and Respect efforts/campaign - Section 2-1352 (C)
- Cooperate in the development educational programs and solicit support and propose solutions - Section 2-1352 (C)

Recommendations and proposals

- To serve as a vehicle for systematic and periodic assessment of the quality of life of LGBTQ residents and visitors to the City - Section 2-1352 (A)

Systematic or Bi-Annual

- Revisions in City of Miami Policy and Procedures – Annually in connection with Municipal Equity Index (MEI) score - Section 2-1352 (D)
 - Gender language
 - Police reform

Start Date

The City of Miami LGBTQ+ Advisory Board began meeting in April 2021.

Legislation

On October 28, 2021, City of Miami Commission passed a [resolution](#) directing the City Manager to take any and all actions to raise the City's Municipal Equality Index Score.

Update

Pursuant to City Code Sec. 2-890 (Annual report of City boards and committees), the following information concerning the board is required:

- 1) Whether the board is serving the purpose for which it was created.

The Board is serving the purpose for which it was created and has prioritized the purpose set forth by the City of Miami Commission.

- 2) Whether the board is serving current community needs.

The Board is serving current community needs by implementing policies that improve the quality of life for LGBTQ+ residents, businesses, and visitors.

- 3) A list of the board's major accomplishments.

Since April, the Advisory Board has established its mission, created and implemented all meeting procedures, prioritized efforts to align with the ordinance creating the Advisory Board, raised the pride flag at City buildings during Pride month and created a landing page with LGBTQ resources on the City's website (www.miamigov.com/lgbtq)

The Board's most significant accomplishment is the score increase of the City's Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Municipal Equality Index (MEI). The MEI examines how inclusive laws, policies, and services are of LGBTQ+ people who live and work in a municipality. Cities are rated based in five areas including: non-discrimination laws, the municipality as an employer, municipal

services, law enforcement, and leadership on LGBTQ+ equality. The index is a product of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a national LGBTQ organization based in Washington, DC.

Early in the formation of the Advisory Board, and through the authorizing legislation of the board, the group sought to make improvements to the City of Miami's MEI score a top priority. In 2020, the City of Miami's score was 75. Over the last six months with the assistance of *Safeguarding American Values for Everyone (SAVE)* and *4Ward Miami (GayOcho Festival)*, a gap analysis was completed to identify where additional points could be garnered by proactively passing policies to strengthen the city's position or to clarify areas where the city was not credited appropriately for pro-equality work that had already been completed. We submitted a memo to HRC with information to accurately demonstrate that the work and information provided was accurate and credible.

We are very proud to report that the new 2021 MEI score for City of Miami is 89. This is an increase in 14 points. Mainly the city was able to garner additional points for leadership on LGBTQ equality. The most points were received because of leadership's public position on equality and pro-equality legislative and policy efforts.

- 4) Whether there is any other board, either public or private, which would better serve the function of the board.

No other Board can better serve the function of the City of Miami LGBTQ+ Advisory Board.

- 5) Whether the ordinance creating the board should be amended to better enable the board to serve the purpose for which it was created.

To recommend betterments and solutions to the social, economic, cultural and political challenges in the LGBTQ community. As the LGBTQ+ community is an intersectional community (Hispanic LGBTQ / Black LGBTQ / White LGBTQ), it engages with every group and neighborhood in the City of Miami. This Board, through its work, views its mission as, not only improving the lives of LGBTQ+ people, but improving the quality of life for all residents in the City of Miami.

- 6) Whether the board's membership requirements should be modified.

Currently, the time frame of vacant seats can cause hurdles with meeting quorum and producing solid deliverables in a timely manner. We propose to allow Existing Board members to provide recommendations to respective elected officials with vacant seats and/or provide a time frame for an elected official to fill a vacancy. Current vacancies are District 1 and District 4.

- 7) The cost, both direct and indirect, of maintaining the board.

There are currently no costs associated with maintaining the Board. Small funds should be available to assist with community outreach.

We have a lot to be proud of with the increased MEI score and our goal to get a perfect score remains. Together with your support, we look forward to working closely with the Mayor and Council Members to strengthen our policies to reflect the values of our community as a diverse and inclusive city.

MIAMI LGBTQ+ ECONOMIC IMPACT

PURCHASING POWER

LGBTQ+ Annual Purchasing Power in South Florida is \$8 Billion



POPULATION

15,777 in City of Miami

MARRIAGES

5,131 Married Same-Sex Couple in Miami



US RANKING

Ranked 17th of Largest U.S. Metro Areas with LGBTQ+ Populations