

City of Racine: Racine Achieves Score of 100 on Municipal Equality Index (MEI)

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Today, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) released its 2022 Municipal Equality Index (MEI). The MEI is the only nationwide assessment of LGBTQ+ inclusion in municipal law, policy, and services; more than 500 cities nationwide are rated. For the first time, the City of Racine has achieved a perfect score of 100 on the MEI. In 2018, the City's score was just 41. The City of Racine has one of the highest city score increases of any City scored nationwide.

"I am thrilled that the City has now achieved a perfect score of 100 on the MEI," **said City of Racine Mayor Cory Mason.** "We have made dramatic progress in making sure the City is more inclusive to the LGBTQ+ community."

Racine demonstrated its leadership on equality in recent years by expanding its non-discrimination ordinance, enacting protections against the harmful practice of so-called "conversion therapy," appointing LGBTQ liaisons in the Mayor's office and the Racine Police Department, expanding health coverage to trans and nonbinary employees, and improving hate crime reporting procedures.

Barb Farrar, Executive Director of the LGBT Center of SE Wisconsin, noted, "When Mayor Mason came into office, the City's MEI score was 41, and today Racine is on the map as one of the most welcoming cities in the State with a score of 100." She continued, "This score symbolizes a commitment to equity that is critical to the future of Racine."

"I am extremely happy and proud of the work the elected officials and staff of Racine put into achieving a 100 on the Municipal Equality Index. I know this is a

goal Mayor Cory Mason set for his team and the community,” **said Wendy Strout, the Human Rights Campaign Wisconsin State Director.** “Thank you to the Mayor, his team, the City Council, the LGBT Center of SE Wisconsin, and strong community allies for working so hard to make Racine an inclusive and welcome place for the LGBTQ+ community and their families,”

Mayor Mason concluded, “We want Racine to be a community that is inclusive and equitable for everyone. While there is still work to be done, I am proud of the progress we’re making.”

In recognition of this achievement, the City of Racine and the LGBT Center of SE Wisconsin will host a celebration on **Wednesday, December 14th from 5:30-7pm at the LGBT Center of SE Wisconsin in Racine.** More details to come.

The City of Racine scorecard, along with all other participating cities, can be found here: <https://www.hrc.org/resources/municipal-equality-index>