

# ALLY GUIDE FOR SPORTS LEADERS

## CHAMPION RESPECT

As leaders in sports – whether you are a coach, athletic director, athletic trainer, or other key part of the community – you play a major role in creating inclusive team spaces by setting an expectation of and modeling respect for everyone. A leader's attitudes and values are often mimicked by players. As such, your attitudes and actions matter. Championing respect and inclusion starts with your own inclusive philosophy. Be mindful and intentional. For examples of LGBTQI+-inclusive team codes of conduct, see [Athlete Ally's 10 Policies for LGBTQI+ Inclusion](#).

## WORDS MATTER

Homophobic, transphobic, sexist, and any kind of discriminatory language should be banned on and off the field. Be mindful of the language you use when working with players, parents and coaches, and/or other leaders in and around the team environment. If you hear homophobic, transphobic or sexist language, jokes, or innuendos on or off the field, immediately address it with players and explain why it won't be tolerated. Expressing that you will not tolerate such language establishes a clear boundary of respect and fosters an inclusive atmosphere.

## GET TRAINED

In sports, you can't improve unless you're willing to acknowledge and work on your weaknesses. Not sure what to do if a player, coach or staff member comes out? Want to know how to create safe, LGBTQI+-inclusive spaces? Ask those hard questions and get trained. LGBTQI+ inclusion training helps create spaces where all players can thrive, and where teams/organizations can flesh out their values. For more information about LGBTQI+ inclusion trainings, contact us or visit [athleteally.org/coi](http://athleteally.org/coi) for our free online curriculum.

## STAY INFORMED

Traveling to a new venue, program, or city to compete? Make sure you are informed of the area's LGBTQI+-related laws and policies (or lack thereof). For example, will your players and colleagues be able to use bathrooms and locker rooms consistent with their gender identity? Will your LGBTQI+ athletes or their family members have equal access to restaurants without facing discrimination? This knowledge allows you to help curate an inclusive experience for all players, and helps you, your players, your colleagues, and their families to make informed decisions when traveling and competing.

## CHAMPION CHANGE

Change comes from within. Organizations, schools and leagues become more inclusive when leaders support positive change on team and administrative levels. If your school or organization lacks LGBTQI+-inclusive policies or practices, speak up and advocate for change. Inclusive policies can spark a chain reaction. Your commitment to diversity and inclusion for LGBTQI+ athletes, fans, coaches and athletic staff can extend far beyond just your team or league. For examples of best practices and policies, see [Athlete Ally's 10 Policies for LGBTQI+ Inclusion](#).