



City of Duluth Communications Office

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SUBJECT: Duluth receives highest Municipal Equality Index score in its history

BY: Kate Van Daele, Public Information Officer

Duluth receives highest Municipal Equality Index score in its history

[Duluth, MN] The City of Duluth is proud to announce that it earned its highest score to date from the annual Human Rights Campaign Municipal Equality Index (MEI). The City earned a score of 92 out of 100, which was an increase of two points from 2020. The two points were gained under the municipality as an employer section of the scorecard. The City previously had not received any points for being an inclusive workplace and received the full two possible points for that section this year.

The MEI examines how inclusive municipal laws, policies, and services are of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ+) people who live and work in cities across the country. Cities are rated based on non-discrimination laws, the municipality as an employer, municipal services, law enforcement, and the city leadership's public positions on equality. The MEI rates 506 cities annually. The cities that participate include:

- The country's 200 largest cities
- The five largest cities in each state
- The cities in each state's where the two largest public universities are located

"I am pleased to continue to see the City of Duluth's score increase because of our work internally to be more inclusive to LGBTQ+ employees," said Human Rights Officer Carl Crawford. "We work very hard every day at the City to make sure that employees are heard, included, and advocated for. This important work happens regardless of a score and is a big part of the values that the City invests in."

This is the tenth year that the Human Rights Campaign has evaluated how cities support the LGBTQ+ people living in communities across the country. Seven cities in Minnesota participate in the evaluation, including Bloomington, Duluth, Eden Prairie, Minneapolis, Rochester, Saint Cloud, and Saint Paul. Minnetonka had been included in the cities representing Minnesota; however, they were not included in 2021.

Out of the cities that participated, only 74 received a score of 85 or higher. Minneapolis and Saint Paul both earned a perfect score. Duluth has consistently held the third-highest score in the state. Saint Cloud scored the lowest with a score of 50. The national city score average was 67 out of 100. This was an increase of three points from the year prior.

"I am so proud of the work we are doing to be intentionally inclusive of staff and residents," Mayor Emily Larson said. "Evaluating and improving alignment of internal policies, non-discrimination laws, services, programs and language is time intensive and important work. It really matters for people to feel seen, heard and valued by their local government."

Thanks to the leadership of Carl Crawford and others, we continue to advance how city government can show up in a meaningful way for people – inclusive of every single part of their identity."

Duluth joined the MEI Index in 2015. The first score that the City received was 71 out of 100. The City scored 66 points in 2016 and 2017, 57 points in 2018, 86 points in 2019, and 90 points in 2020 respectively.

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