



# Advancing Intersectional Social Justice

Give Voice. Take Action. Build Networks.



## EMPOWERING BLACK PEOPLE!

ADVANCE YOUTH EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

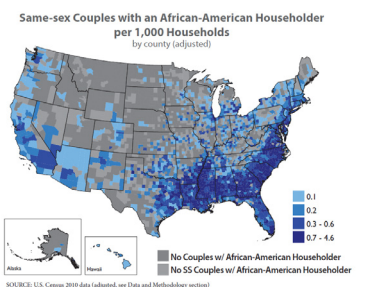
SUPPORT BLACK PEOPLE OF TRANS\* EXPERIENCE

CHAMPION LGBTQ/SGL ELDERS

The National Black Justice Coalition (NBJC) is a civil rights organization dedicated to the empowerment of Black lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and same gender loving (LGBTQ/SGL) people, including people living with HIV/AIDS. With a particular focus on federal public policy, NBJC is charged with the mission to end racism, homophobia, and LGBTQ/SGL bias and stigma. We work to: **GIVE VOICE** to the lived experience of Black LGBTQ/SGL people; **TAKE ACTION** to eradicate racism and LGBTQ/SGL bias/stigma; and **BUILD NETWORKS** with stakeholders, from the grassroots to the national stage, to support the empowerment of our communities. NBJC works at the intersection of the racial justice and LGBTQ/SGL equality movements by advocating for the unique needs of Black people that are too often ignored or rendered invisible. The following policy priorities must be addressed by elected officials to ensure the health, wellness and ultimate liberation of Black families and communities: Health & Wellness; Family & Relationship Recognition; Criminal Justice; Employment Non-discrimination and Housing. In addition, NBJC has programmatic investments in the following three areas, which have policy implications: advancing educational opportunities; empowerment of Black People of Trans\* Experience; and supporting LGBTQ/SGL elders.

### STRATEGIC FOCUS: 2019 POLICY EMPOWERMENT GOALS

Black LGBTQ/SGL Americans represent a significant subset of Black families with 3.7 percent of all Black Americans (more than one million people) identifying as LGBTQ/SGL (Williams Institute; 2013). The challenges facing Black LGBTQ/SGL individuals and families are compounded, in part, due to stigma and marginalization associated with the social construction of race/ethnicity and surrounding gender identity and sexuality. In an effort to empower Black LGBTQ/SGL people and their families, NBJC has prioritized three policy goals in 2019: 1) Pass the Equality Act to ensure all LGBTQ/SGL Americans are federally protected in all public accommodations from being discriminated on account of gender identity or sexual orientation; 2) Ensure a Fair & Accurate 2020 Census is completed so that Black families and other historically marginalized groups receive their fair share of federal dollars back to their communities and are represented in Congress equitably; 3) Protect ACA & Expand Health Care to ensure every American in all 50 states and territories has access to health insurance and ability to receive quality, culturally competent care.



### 2020 US CENSUS

At the root of NBJC's public policy priorities is advocating for robust, culturally competent data collection to inform public policies that address the vital needs of Black LGBTQ/SGL people crafted and codified in Washington, DC and in state capitals across the nation. Essential to this effort is an accurate US Census in 2020. Census data is critical information used to determine federal, state and local investments. This information determines the distribution of more than \$600 billion annually. It also serves as the basis for the redrawing of both congressional and state legislative districts in the years to come.

## THE FOLLOWING PRIORITIES ARE A FEW OF THE ISSUES INCLUDED IN NBJC'S PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA

### HEALTH & WELLNESS

NBJC envisions a world where all people are fully-empowered to participate safely, openly and honestly in family, faith and community, regardless of race, class, disability, gender identity or sexual orientation. For the Black LGBTQ/SGL community, this vision is far from ensured. NBJC's work includes protecting and expanding critical investments in resources for the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS and advancing studies of health disparities like cancer that impact Black LGBTQ/SGL people disproportionately. In addition, the sustainable health and wellness of our communities includes the ability to gain equal access to the ballot box and our nation to implement humane immigration policies.



### FAMILY & RELATIONSHIP RECOGNITION

Family comes in many forms including biological families and those we choose. Most safety net programs use an archaic definition of family, restricting many people from receiving benefits that would allow them to support their entire family, including chosen family. Black LGBTQ/SGL people are more likely to raise children in states that lack critical protections for non-traditional parents/guardians and fail to establish policies that recognize chosen family. Our nation's laws must invest in policy-based initiatives that strengthen families, communities, and ultimately, the country.



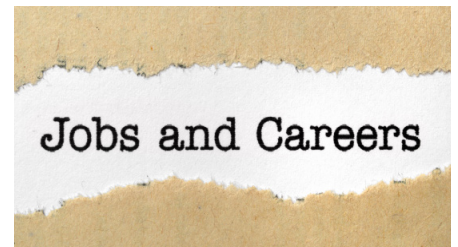
### CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Prisons, profit, policing, and poverty are intimately connected. For Black LGBTQ/SGL people, experiences with law enforcement, the justice system, and the lack of resources for ex-offenders to rebuild their lives are inextricably linked to racism and LGBTQ/SGL discrimination and bias. Research shows that LGBTQ/SGL people of color are overrepresented in US jails and prisons. In addition, LGBTQ/SGL people of color are disproportionately impacted by discriminatory HIV criminalization laws and policies that promote hyper-surveillance often resulting in the incarceration of sex workers or those assumed to be sex workers.



### EMPLOYMENT NON-DISCRIMINATION

Employment non-discrimination laws protect people from being unfairly discriminated against in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. 28 states, primarily located in the South, do not have employment non-discrimination laws that cover sexual orientation or gender identity. The limited data we have on the Black LGBTQ/SGL community shows we live primarily in states where it is legal to fire someone because they are or are perceived to be LGBTQ or same-gender loving. In 3 states (North Carolina, Tennessee and Arkansas), state law prohibits local jurisdictions from passing local statutes to protect our community. Ensuring that Black LGBTQ/SGL individuals have access to the skills, and acquire the credentials and relationships needed to thrive is critically important to strengthen the Black community as well as our national economy.



### HOUSING

Housing and health are intrinsically linked. Where and how people live has a direct impact on how healthy they are and how well they live. Housing insecurity continues to be a core concern for Black America, with Black LGBTQ/SGL people disproportionately impacted by the lack of affordable quality housing. In addition, research shows that housing is the greatest unmet service need for people living with HIV, which disproportionately impacts Black LGBTQ/SGL people (National Center for Biotechnology Information; 2012). NBJC advocates for inclusive housing policies that prohibit discrimination and promote housing stability for marginalized populations.



### SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

Education is the great equalizer. Accordingly, NBJC is committed to advocating for robust educational opportunities for Black Americans of all ages. In the PreK-12 public education system, youth who are Black and identify as LGBTQ too often experience both racial harassment and anti-LGBTQ discrimination. As a result, Black LGBTQ youth and young adults are at-risk of poor academic performance, entering the school-to-prison or school-to-sex-trafficking pipeline and lack the support required to thrive. NBJC is committed to ensuring that the environments charged with supporting the cognitive, social and emotional development of Black LGBTQ/SGL youth are equipped to meet their unique needs. In addition, NBJC works to empower Historically Black Colleges and Universities with the tools to create an inclusive and affirming environment on campus for their LGBTQ/SGL population.



*The priority issues listed above are further expounded upon in the NBJC policy agenda. Visit [www.NBJC.org](http://www.NBJC.org) for the full agenda and additional resources designed to support advocacy for Black people, families and communities.*