

3-23-2021

## Municipal Equality Index (MEI) for Nevada Cities and Municipalities

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### Repository Citation

Thymianos, K., Solano-Patricio, E. D., Salahi, S., Saladino, C. J., Brown, W. E. (2021). Municipal Equality Index (MEI) for Nevada Cities and Municipalities. *Cities & Metros Fact Sheet No. 1* 1-3.

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## Municipal Equality Index (MEI) for Nevada Cities and Municipalities

Cities & Metros Fact Sheet No. 1 | March 2021

Prepared by: Kristian Thymianos, Elia Del Carmen Solano-Patricio, Saha Salahi, Caitlin J. Saladino, and William E. Brown, Jr.

### PURPOSE:

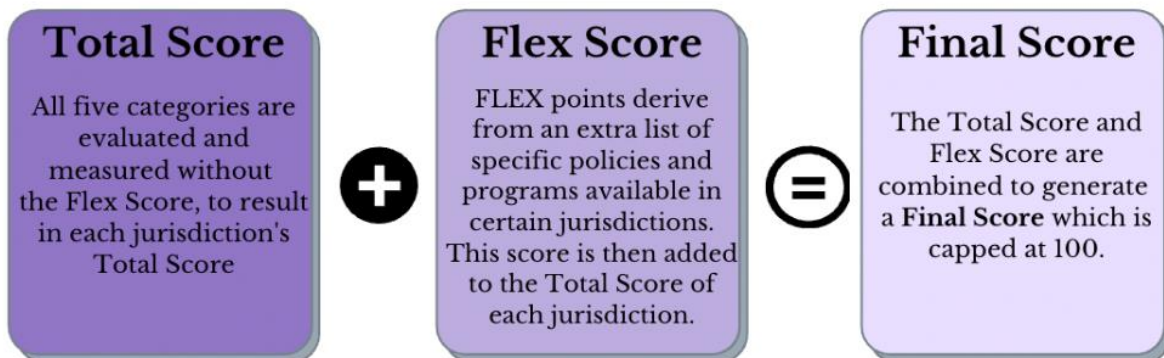
The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) and Equality Federation Institute compiled a 2020 Municipal Equality Index (MEI) that creates a scorecard measuring inclusivity and livability for members of Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans Queer Intersex and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) communities who live and work in major U.S. cities and municipalities. For the purposes of this fact sheet, data for 10 Nevada municipalities are examined and ranked.<sup>1</sup>

### ABOUT THE DATA:

The original report offers municipal equality metrics for 40 state capitals, 200 of the largest cities in the U.S., the five largest municipalities in each state, the cities with each state's two largest public universities, 98 cities selected by HRC and Equality Federation, and 75 cities with the highest proportions of same-sex couples. The cities with highest proportions of same sex couples were drawn from an analysis of the 2010 Census results by the Williams Institute that ranked the 25 large cities (population exceeding 250,000), 25 mid cities (population between 100,000 and 250,000), and 25 small cities (population below 100,000) that had the highest proportion same sex couples. There is overlap between these criteria. The MEI rates the inclusion of municipal laws, policies, and services in cities based on the following "indicators":

1. the adoption of non-discrimination laws
2. whether or not the city employs members of LGBTQ communities
3. how human rights commissions ensure municipal services
4. the level of enforcement of non-discrimination ordinances by police
5. the city leadership's public position on equality

Municipalities receive a Total Score for each of the five indicators. Added to the Total Score are bonus points referred to as "Flex Score." Flex scores are policies or actions that municipalities can undertake that are pro-LGBTQ but are not common enough to use as a comparison between all municipalities. The Total Score and Flex Score are added together to reveal the Final Score, which is capped at 100 possible points.



<sup>1</sup> Human Rights Campaign MEI 2020: See Your City's Score (<https://www.hrc.org/resources/mei-2020-see-your-city-score>)

**KEY FINDINGS:**

1. In Nevada, Reno, Enterprise, Las Vegas, and Paradise all receive the maximum final score of 100 points for Municipal Equality; Mesquite has the lowest score among Nevada municipalities at 31.
2. For Nevada municipalities with a population over 100,000, North Las Vegas has the lowest final score (56 points) for municipal equality.
3. No Nevada municipalities with a population under 100,000 received above 50 points for their final score in the municipal equality index.
4. Within Nevada, Reno (15) and Las Vegas (15) are tied for the highest number of municipal equality index “bonus points” via flex score metrics.

Table 1 shows scores that Nevada cities and municipalities earned on the MEI and April 1, 2010 census population values.<sup>2</sup> Among Nevada municipalities, Reno received the highest Total Score at 96. For municipalities with a population over 100,000 North Las Vegas received the lowest score at 56. Mesquite has the lowest Total Score at 29. Reno and Las Vegas have the highest Flex Score values at 15, while North Las Vegas is the only municipality with a population over 100,000 with a Flex Score under 9. All municipalities under 100,000 have a Flex Score value of 2. For Final Scores, Reno, Enterprise, Paradise, and Las Vegas all have a max score of 100.

The Non-discrimination Laws category evaluates whether discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity is prohibited by the city, county, or state in areas of employment, housing, and public accommodations. Every Nevada municipality scored a 28 out of 30 and only received points due to state laws.

The Municipality as Employer category considers non-discrimination policies in city employment, transgender-inclusive healthcare benefits, city contractor non-discrimination ordinances, and inclusive workplaces. Reno, Enterprise, and Paradise all scored maximum values of 28 for the Municipality as an Employer category. North Las Vegas is the only municipality with a population over 100,000 that does not have a score over 20.

The Municipal Services category assesses efforts to ensure LGBTQ constituents are included in city services and programs with policies like a Human Rights Commission, enforcement of policies by Human Rights Commission, and an LGBTQ Liaison in City Executive’s office. Reno scored the maximum of 10. Enterprise, Paradise, Las Vegas, and Henderson all scored 5; and North Las Vegas, Carson City, Elko, Sparks, and Mesquite all scored 0.

The Law Enforcement category notes if there is an LGBTQ liaison or task force in the Police Department, and if law enforcement reported hate crime statistics to the FBI in 2018. Reno, Enterprise, Paradise, Las Vegas, and Henderson all scored the maximum of 22; North Las Vegas scored 12 and Carson City, Elko, Sparks, and Mesquite scored 0.

The Leadership on LGBTQ Equality category reports if leadership in the municipality has a public position on LGBTQ Equality and if the leadership has undergone pro-equality or legislative policy efforts. Reno, Enterprise, and Paradise earned a maximum score of 8; North Las Vegas, Carson City, Elko, Sparks, and Mesquite all scored 0.

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<sup>2</sup> United States Census Bureau (April 1, 2010) <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/AGE775219>

**Table 1: Municipal Equality Index Scores for Nevada Cities and Municipalities**

Nevada City or Municipality	Population	Non-Discrimination Laws (30 points max)	Municipality as Employer (28 points max)	Municipal Services (12 points max)	Law Enforcement (22 points max)	Leadership on LGBTQ Equality (8 points max)	Total Score	Flex Score	Final Score
Las Vegas	583,756	28	26	5	22	6	87	15	100
Henderson	257,729	28	24	5	22	6	85	9	94
Reno	225,221	28	28	10	22	8	96	15	100
Paradise	223,167	28	28	5	22	8	91	10	100
North Las Vegas	216,961	28	14	0	12	0	54	2	56
Enterprise	108,481	28	28	5	22	8	91	10	100
Sparks	90,264	28	14	0	0	0	42	2	44
Carson City	55,274	28	20	0	0	0	48	2	50
Elko	18,297	28	20	0	0	0	48	2	50
Mesquite	15,276	28	0	0	0	1	29	2	31

\*Adapted from original data source: Human Rights Campaign Municipal Equality Index (2020) Nevada City's Score

Table 2 shows the number of Flex Score points earned by Nevada municipalities. Henderson is the only city in Nevada to receive points for single-occupancy all-gender facilities. Only Las Vegas and Reno offer city employees domestic partner benefits and are the only cities with openly elected or appointed LGBTQ leaders. Henderson and Las Vegas are the only Nevada municipalities to receive flex score points for services to the transgender community. Reno (15) and Las Vegas (15) are tied for the highest number of municipal equality index “bonus points” via flex score metrics.

**Table 2: Flex Scores for Nevada Cities and Municipalities, by Municipal Equality Index Indicator Group**

Flex Score items, by Municipal Equality Index indicator group	Carson City	Elko	Enterprise	Henderson	Las Vegas	Mesquite	North Las Vegas	Paradise	Reno	Sparks
Single-Occupancy All-Gender Facilities (+2)				✓ <sup>1</sup>						
Protects Youth from Conversion Therapy (+2)	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>
City Employee Domestic Partner Benefits (+1)					✓ <sup>1</sup>				✓ <sup>1</sup>	
Youth Bullying Prevention Policy for City Services (+2)									✓ <sup>2</sup>	
City Provides Services to LGBTQ Youth (+2)			✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>			✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	
City Provides Services to LGBTQ People Experiencing Homelessness (+2)			✓ <sup>2</sup>		✓ <sup>2</sup>			✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	
City Provides Services to LGBTQ Older Adults (+2)			✓ <sup>2</sup>		✓ <sup>2</sup>			✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	
City Provides Services to People Living with HIV or AIDS (+2)			✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>			✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	
City Provides Services to the Transgender Community (+2)				✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>					
Openly LGBTQ Elected or Appointed Leaders (+2)					✓ <sup>2</sup>				✓ <sup>2</sup>	
City Tests Limits of Restrictive State Laws (+3)										
<b>Total Flex Score Points Awarded</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>

\*Adapted from original data source: Human Rights Campaign Municipal Equality Index (2020) Nevada City's Score