



Lawrence Township Celebrates Pride Month 2022

June 2022 marks the 52th anniversary of the first celebration of LGBTQ+ Pride Month. The first Pride march took place in New York City on June 28, 1970 -- the one-year anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising -- and events have continued to grow and take on new meaning since.

During Pride Month, the LGBTQ community and its members are celebrated for their contributions to communities across the country, the positive impact they have had on our lives, and their achievements in a wide array of fields. This month is also meant to draw attention to ongoing barriers to equity experienced by the LGBTQ+ community, including discrimination by individuals, businesses, and legislatures. Furthermore, pride month celebrates people who have lost their lives to hate crimes, HIV/AIDS, and poverty- issues that have and continue to impact the LGBTQ+ community. Finally, LGBTQ+ pride month seeks to call attention to ongoing challenges facing the LGBTQ+ community and ways in which allies can help. Though our current climate has changed the way this commemoration of LGBTQ+ rights and freedoms look this year, there is still much to celebrate, memorialize, and strive for.

As we reflect on the progressive strides we've made, let's not lose sight of the fact that it was only this month the United States Supreme Court ruled that a business cannot fire an employee due to their sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression. Now every LGBTQ+ worker throughout the country will enjoy the same rights and protections as New Jerseyans have experienced since the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination was signed into law in 1991. In 2006, the New

Jersey Law Against Discrimination was further amended to add more inclusive protections covering gender identity and expression. While the United States Supreme Court's action was a victory for LGBTQ+ rights, sadly, it means we as a nation are still having conversations about basic human dignity, requiring the involvement of the highest courts in the land.

It's a jarring fact that the national unemployment rate among the transgender population is three times the national average of the general population. We can and we must do better.

So as another Pride Month comes to a close, please continue to find ways -- both within and in the work you do -- to join us in supporting our LGBTQ+ community.