



**EXECUTIVE ORDER #121**

**Relating to State Agency Use of Gender-Neutral Language**

**WHEREAS**, once-conventional use of gender-specific language is imprecise, anachronous, and contravenes Wisconsinites' interests;

**WHEREAS**, gender-neutral language removes bias and presumption often embedded, though unintended, in commonplace terminology, and meaningful change is borne at both the personal and institutional levels;

**WHEREAS**, accuracy in language disseminated from government avoids ambiguity, increases efficiency, and reinforces basic principles of fairness;

**WHEREAS**, it remains the commitment of my administration to respect and honor all people of the State of Wisconsin; and

**WHEREAS**, all Wisconsinites expect and deserve accurate and respectful engagement from State Agencies.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, TONY EVERS**, Governor of the State of Wisconsin, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the Laws of the State, hereby direct the following:

1. In this order:
  - a. "Cabinet Agency" means an executive agency headed by an individual appointed by the Governor.
  - b. "External documents" means documents created by a Cabinet Agency for use by the general public or a class of people, and it includes administrative rules, guidance documents, manuals, websites, and similar documents.
2. Direct each Cabinet Agency to use gender-neutral language whenever practicable in external documents, including but not limited to: using gender-neutral terms and pronouns, drafting to eliminate the need for pronouns, omitting superfluous gendered words, and making any reference to gendered family relations, to the extent allowable by state and federal law.
3. Direct the Department of Administration to provide written guidance to affected agencies which shall serve as a resource for implementation of this order.

**IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Madison this 1<sup>st</sup> Day of June in the year of two thousand twenty-one.

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TONY EVERS  
Governor

By the Governor:

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DOUGLAS LA FOLLETTE  
Secretary of State