



**CITY OF CLEVELAND**  
Mayor Frank G. Jackson

**From: Office of the Mayor**

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## **Cleveland Earns Top Score on Human Rights Campaign's 2019 Municipal Equality Index**

**CLEVELAND** – Mayor Frank G. Jackson announced today that the City of Cleveland earned the highest score achievable, a 100, on the *Human Rights Campaign's (HRC) 2019 Municipal Equality Index*.

“The City of Cleveland thanks the Human Rights Campaign for this recognition. Cleveland has a long legacy of inclusion and welcomes people of all backgrounds,” said Mayor Frank G. Jackson. “Today, HRC recognizes Cleveland’s hard work to be inclusive and our efforts in collaboration with the LGBTQ community that have earned us high marks in 2019.”

HRC is America’s largest civil rights organization working to achieve lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer equality. HRC today released its annual report evaluating the hard work, or lack thereof, of municipalities across the country in building equality. This is the second consecutive year that the City of Cleveland has achieved a Municipal Equality Index (MEI) score of 100. In 2018, Cleveland was among a record-setting 78 cities across the nation that earned a perfect score with meeting and exceeding HRC’s standards with innovative measures for advancing LGBTQ-inclusive laws and policies.

“Cleveland has always been a city with an open heart and an open mind and I’m proud of our designation of 100 percent in this annual index. I’m also am proud of the work we’ve undertaken to get to this perfect score,” said Council President Kevin Kelley. “I’ve signed over 10,000 ordinances in my time as Council President and the only one I remember by number is 1446-13 which extended equality to our transgender brothers and sisters.”

Added Councilman Kerry McCormack, “Our City only grows stronger when we expand equal rights to as many of our citizens as possible. Today marks another milestone of hard work done by Cleveland City Council, the Jackson administration and community partners to protect and celebrate our LGBTQ+ community.”

In 2018, Mayor Jackson named Kevin Schmotzer as the City’s first LGBTQ Liaison at Cleveland City Hall and Cleveland Division of Police Commander Deirdre Jones as the LGBTQ Liaison for the Department of Public Safety.

“This is tremendous news for our City including our LGBTQ brothers and sisters,” said Schmotzer. “Today, residents, small businesses, non-profit organizations, tourists and corporations are compiling their relocation decisions which include how cities rate with their respective HRC MEI score.”

HRC first completed its research and data collection for the MEI score in 2012. This is the only nationwide rating system of LGBTQ inclusion in municipal law, policy and services.

“The Department of Public Safety is thrilled to receive this perfect score but acknowledges more work needs to be done,” said Commander Jones, “We will continue to improve our relationship with and want our LGTBQ citizens and employees to know that we stand behind you.”

### **About the City of Cleveland**

The City of Cleveland is committed to improving the quality of life for its residents by strengthening neighborhoods, delivering superior services, embracing diversity and making Cleveland a desirable, safe city in which to live, work, play and do business. For more information on the City of Cleveland, visit online at [www.city.cleveland.oh.us](http://www.city.cleveland.oh.us), Twitter at @cityofcleveland or Facebook at [www.facebook.com/cityofcleveland](http://www.facebook.com/cityofcleveland).

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