



A Community Member's Guide: Encouraging business leaders to join Equality Means Business

What is Equality Means Business?

Equality Means Business is a program designed to showcase local businesses in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia that embrace diversity among employees and clientele. A safe and welcoming atmosphere in the workplace is incredibly important – and many business owners recognize that! These businesses sign a pledge not to turn away any customers or clients, or deny or restrict employment based upon their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Why should a business join?

With an estimated 500,000 LGBT individuals in these three states, all of whom have countless family members and friends -- joining makes good business sense!

Does the business need a non-discrimination statement?

No, all they need to do is sign the pledge. However, making a statement is easy – just direct the business leader to the VirginiaFairness.org website. They can click on the “FAQs” tab under the “Equality Means Business” heading. There they can view an example policy, plus receive answers to other frequently asked questions.

What will a business receive for joining Equality Means Business?

All business will be added to our online directory that will help consumers learn which local businesses are inclusive of the LGBT community. Plus, members will receive marketing material to inform the public that their business is a welcoming place to work and shop!

I want to help! How do I get started?

Here is a guide to reaching out to local businesses:

1. Choose a location to approach. We recommend starting with any business that is important to you, or whose ownership you have a relationship with.
2. Explain why Equality Means Business is important to you and to the LGBT community.
3. Provide them with a copy of the Equality Means Business membership form, or encourage them to print out the membership form which they can download from VirginiaFairness.org website.

If business owners have questions regarding the Equality Means Business program, they can visit www.virginiafairness.org or contact a staff member at (804) 643-4816 or info@equalityvirginia.org.



By Becoming a Member of Equality Means Business:

- You will join the ranks of other business leaders who respect and value the diversity of their customers and employees
- Your business name will be featured in an online directory identifying businesses that support diversity to improve Virginia's reputation as a welcoming place to live, work, and visit
- You will receive marketing material that can be used in communications, PR, recruiting, etc.

Name of Business Estimated number of employees

Printed name of Authorized Representative Title

Address

City State Zip Code

Email Address Phone Number

Website URL

OUR PLEDGE: My business is open to all potential customers and clients and we will not turn away service to anyone based upon their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

My business will never deny or restrict employment to anyone based upon their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

Signature of Authorized Representative Date

SEND THIS FORM TO:
Email: info@equalityvirginia.org Fax: 804-643-1554
P.O. Box 17860 Richmond, VA 23226