



NTPC PERSONAL PRONOUN TIP SHEET

What are pronouns?

Pronouns are words that refer to either the people talking (I or you) or someone that is being talked about (she, he, and them). Gendered pronouns are integral to who we are and how we wish to be identified. They are a form of gender expression which is one of many protected grounds included in the NWT Human Rights Act.

Why is it important to share our pronouns with others?

We share pronouns because we want to avoid assuming someone's pronouns based on factors like appearance or having our own pronouns used incorrectly based on a similar assumption. By normalizing pronoun sharing, we encourage others to do the same and demonstrate that we understand the importance of pronouns to self-identity. Using someone's correct pronouns is an important way of affirming someone's identity and is a fundamental step in being an ally.

Assuming someone's pronouns based on how they look reinforces harmful stereotypes about gender expression. For example, that masculine-looking people always use he/him/his pronouns. This is not always the case, and it is important to understand and respect each individual's identity. This is why we want to ask, not assume, someone's pronouns and make a habit of introducing ourselves with our pronouns.ⁱ

What pronouns are people using?

She/Her: "She is a writer and wrote that book herself. Those ideas are hers. I like both her and her ideas."

He/Him: "He is a writer and wrote that book himself. Those ideas are his. I like both him and his ideas."

They/Them: "They are a writer and wrote that book themselves. Those ideas are theirs. I like both them and their ideas." Please note that although "they" pronouns here are singular and refer to an individual, the verbs are conjugated the same as with the plural "they" (e.g., "they are"). Also note that in this singular pronoun set many use "themselves" rather than "themselves," although both are typically acceptable.ⁱⁱ

The pronouns listed above are most commonly used however there are a variety of pronouns that exist, and none are more valid than others. For examples of other pronouns, check out the [Rainbow Coalitions of Yellowknife's "Handy Guide to Pronouns"](#).

Avoid using the term "preferred pronouns" or "chosen pronouns" as these suggest an element of choice or that someone's identity is not real or less valid. Someone's name and pronouns are not suggestions and are not preferred over something else. They are inherent to who we are.

How do we share pronouns?

Before others are asked to share their pronouns make sure that you share your own. By sharing your own pronouns, you provide others with the space to share theirs. Sharing of pronouns should always be optional. No one should ever be forced to share their pronouns but be invited to do so.

Here are some examples of how pronouns can be shared in the workplace:

1. Meeting someone one on one: “Hi, my name is Sam, and I go by ‘they/them’ pronouns. How would you like to be referred to?”
2. Round table introductions in a meeting: “Welcome, before we begin, we’d like to go around and share our names and pronouns. I’ll go first...”
3. On name tags or name plates: Pronouns listed directly below or beside the person’s name.
4. Adding Pronouns to email signatures – there is no wrong way to list your pronouns however the following example may assist you in getting started:

Employee Name

Pronouns: she / her

Job Title

Northwest Territories Power Corporation

Address

(867) 87X-XXXX (office)

(867) 87X-XXXX (cell)

(867) 87X-XXXX (fax)

Reference Materials:

[NWT Human Rights Commission](#)

[Rainbow Coalitions of Yellowknife’s “Handy Guide to Pronouns”](#)

[GNWT 2SLGBTQIA 101: Inclusive Workplace Awareness Training](#)

ⁱ[LGBTQIA Resource Center - Pronouns and Inclusive Language \(ucdavis.edu\)](#)

ⁱⁱ[MyPronouns.org Resources on Personal Pronouns](#)