

Florida Publix Refuses to Write 'Trans' on a Cake, Citing Company Policy

The employees told the customers that acknowledging trans joy is taking a stand on a political issue, which company policy forbids.

Publix, the grocery chain, has apologized to an LGBTQ+ customer after an associate at a store in [Florida](#) refused to make a cake with "trans" written on it.

Yasmin Flasterstein directs Peer Support Space, which supports people in Central Florida facing mental illness, substance misuse challenges, neurodivergence, disability, grief, trauma, or other obstacles to their mental wellness. The organization focuses on marginalized communities.

Last month, she and co-founder Dandelion Hill were looking for a cake to be made for a Trans Joy Care Package event meant to show support for the transgender members of the community, according to a Facebook post by Flasterstein.

The pair requested that the bakery at an Orlando-area Publix store make a colorful cake with icing that read, "Trans people deserve joy."

However, the pair were told that their request couldn't be honored because using the word 'trans' is considered a political statement, and those are not permitted to be written on sweet treats by company policy.

"Publix let us know that they could not write our requested message," Flasterstein wrote. "We spoke to multiple managers within the store, and they all said the same thing: 'Corporate won't let us write it because it's taking a stance.'"

Bakery staff suggested a solution of writing "people deserve joy," leaving a spot before the p and providing extra icing so the customers could write "trans" themselves later on.

"We very politely pleaded, literal tears in our eyes, to please write the message," she said. "They refused."

Flasterstein [told](#) *The Washington Post* that she spoke to a bakery manager and a store manager who insisted corporate policy prohibited them from adding political messages to cakes that take a stance.

"A stance?!" Flasterstein wrote on Facebook. "That any community deserves joy is a stance? So let me get this right, it was okay to write 'people deserve joy' but not 'trans people deserve joy.'"

Hill added, "It's literally NOT controversial — we obviously deserve freedom, joy, abundance — 'neutrality' is not neutrality here, there's no riding the fence," according to the *Post*.

As comments on Flasterstein's Facebook post joined in their disappointment, Publix's corporate account apologized and offered to make the cake they requested.

"We are sorry that our associates did not handle your request appropriately," the company said. "Please message us for more details, and we will gladly make the cake."

In a follow-up email, Flasterstein received a further apology from the Publix public affairs department explaining the company's policy for writing on cakes.

“Our policy indicates that our associates may write statements that are not copyrighted or trademarked, support a charitable cause, are factual, and considered to have a positive connotation,” Publix said in an email to Flasterstein. “As we indicated in our Facebook conversation, our associates should have fulfilled your request.”

Flasterstein isn't satisfied with the response and demands a public and direct apology.

“We'd like to see more empathy for our transgender colleague who faced the brunt of this incident and broke down in sobs in front of other shoppers,” she told Publix. “Dandelion is owed a direct apology; our community is owed an apology.”