

QT2SI+ Garment Drive Description

Plan B Co-op KW is trying on a new program for size. We are working with community organizations and campus groups in the region to help facilitate this program. Partnering groups will have information cards and drop off boxes available in their spaces during hours of operation. You are more than welcome to stop by and drop off items to whichever spot is easiest for you. If you have any other clothing that you would like to donate to queer, trans, two-spirit, or intersex+ folks, we would be more than happy to work with you to make this happen. We will be holding regular clothing swaps in the future for LGBTQ+ folks as a whole.

Some of the things we're intending to do with this program when we have the resources to hold swaps is:

- Hold specific times for Black or Indigenous People of Colour (BIPOC) and South East Asian People of Colour (SEA POC).
- Hold specific times for trans, non-binary, intersex, gender non-conforming folks or any inbetweeners
- Use wheelchair accessible spaces
- Encourage low to no scents in spaces by participants, the space itself, and organizers
- Encourage cis and/or straight allies to support events by setting up and taking down tables and folding items

We are looking for support in the launching and facilitation of this program. Are you part of a group or a business who can help collect garments or store a donation box? Are you looking to get involved in queer and trans organizing? Looking to give back and help create safer spaces for queer and trans folks? Awesome. Connect with us however works best for you!

Visit planbcoopkw.com for more information

Or contact planbcoopkw@gmail.com

QT2SI+ Garment Drive FAQ

What kind of things are we looking for?

We are looking for donations of new and gently used undergarments like underwear, boxers, briefs, socks, lingerie, or stockings. Specifically, we are seeking new and gently worn binders and gaffs. We are seeking these items because they are difficult for people to access, even at queer or trans specific clothing swaps. We would like to enable easier access to these items and give them directly to folks in need.

What is a binder and what is a gaff?

A binder or chest binder is a concealing garment that tucks or flattens a chest area. A gaff or a concealing gaff is a concealing garment that tucks or flattens a pelvic area. These two concealing garments can be extremely vital for questioning, transitioning, or low/unwaged persons needing to affirm and express their gender.

What is the purpose of this program?

This drive aims to highlight and challenge stigmas around accessibility and clothing in the wake of a world not built for queer and trans bodies; in a society silencing and limiting youth gender questioners; in a

hypercapitalist state reinforcing newness, in a settler nation colonizing Turtle Island; in a sexist and cissexist structure policing gender and bodies; in a realm that dismisses and invalidates the many different sizes bodies come in. We are challenging what it means to access the most intimate and oftentimes the most necessary pieces of clothing someone wears. There are a lot of reasons why we are developing this program.

QT2SI+ folks face disproportionate obstacles, violence and limitations in accessing vital services while trying to get basic human needs met. These obstacles are often amplified for trans femme black, indigenous, and people of colour. Youth under the age of 18 (or 16 with guardian consent) cannot go to a store that sells binders or gaffs because these items are classified as “adult”.

While binders and gaffs can be purchased online, an inability to appropriately size or try on these items makes this inaccessible to a variety of folks. Shopping online presents other barriers as well, such as not having a credit card, fixed incomes, living below the poverty line, and residing in unsafe homes/without safe mailing addresses. We are seeking these items out to provide physical and affordable resources to needing persons in Kitchener-Waterloo.

Why are we using the acronym QT2SI+ rather than just queer or trans, or the typical LGBTQ+ alphabet soup?

We are using the segmented acronym of QT2SI+ of queer, trans, two spirit, and intersex+ because we are working towards creating and developing intersectional programming that centres different marginalized identities within the rainbow community. This drive is not a clothing swap. It is a proactive approach seeking out specific garments in order to have a wider scope within queer and trans clothing swaps in the future. This drive is also aiming to challenge social stigmas, advocate for trans and intersex awareness, and to raise money and collect donations for gender affirming items.

Why are you looking to collect “underwear”?

That is a really valid question. It’s also a little uncomfortable to think about, isn’t it? While underwear isn’t on the top of our list, it is there. I mean, what about the holey, crotch worn underwear dabbed with menstrual blood? Why do we discard old ones or even wear them out until they’re in threaded shambles? Personal opinions vary greatly and that is okay, too.

What we are hoping to do is highlight the diverse and complex bodies that need to wear or even choose to wear underwear. A lot of different bodies menstruate. A lot of different bodies bind or tuck other parts of their bodies in different ways and in ways that may change from day to day. The issues here are about agency; having the power to choose and having the access to make these choices safer.

What steps are you taking to ensure cleanliness of these undergarments?

We are doing what we can to create cleaner environments and items to be rehomed by asking each participant to be aware and avoid fragrances like strong shampoos, deodorants, or perfumes. This is an access barrier on both sides: those with chemical or scent sensitivities, and those who do not have access to hypoallergenic cleaners or products. We cannot guarantee that items will be 100% allergen free.

With all of this in mind we are screening the garments that are donated to search for holes, stains, wear and tear, and to run them through hypoallergenic wash cycle using unscented and chemical free detergent. There is a risk if you have a severe allergy.

We recognize that some things may still have fragrances or animal and pet hairs. We also cannot screen and wash everything the day of events. This is why it is important to use the drop boxes or contacting us directly to make exchanges so that we can: a) run each item through a wash and screen check, and b) take an inventory for the size and type of garment so we can reach out for garments of different sizes or types that we are lacking in.

If I donate money, where does this go?

Monetary donations are placed into a pot that get funneled into a need by need basis to purchase brand new binders and gaffs from www.comeasyouare.com or a supplier of the person requesting the item. The committee helping facilitate this program will meet and help support the person(s) who request items on a need by need basis at this time.

What should I do if I have other clothes to donate but would like to give them to our local QT2SI+ community?

We are totally seeking specific undergarments right now, but our goal is to create spaces for LGBTQ+ clothing swaps. Contact us via email to set up an exchange or a drop off time and location to pass on your donations to us. However, due to time or space constraints in a rare case, we may encourage you to rehome your donations to oneROOF. Whichever the case, contact us at planbcoopkw@gmail.com.

I am a straight and/or a cis person (or a non-queer, non-trans or non-intersex person), what can I do to help?

Lots. You could have gently worn undergarments or very well have people in your life who do. Donate those things. Donate money to sponsor the purchasing of brand new undergarments, binders, and gaffs. Bus tickets and snacks are welcome, or volunteering to set up or take down spaces for swaps is appreciated. There is a lot you can do to foster safer spaces from outside the spotlight. Your time and support is valuable.

Didn't answer your questions? Contact us at planbcoopkw@gmail.com.