

BRIEFING ROOM

FACT SHEET: President Biden to Sign Historic Executive Order Advancing LGBTQI+ Equality During Pride Month

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President Biden believes that no one should face discrimination because of who they are or whom they love. Since President Biden took office, he has championed the rights of LGBTQI+ Americans and people around the world, accelerating the march towards full equality.

As President Biden said during his first joint address to Congress, the President has the back of LGBTQI+ people across the country. That is why he taking these bold actions and continuing to fight for full equality for every American – including urging Congress pass the Equality Act and provide overdue civil rights protections for LGBTQI+ people.

Today, to mark Pride Month, President Biden will sign an Executive Order Advancing Equality for LGBTQI+ Individuals, and he will welcome LGBTQI+ families, advocates, elected officials, and leaders to the White House for a reception.

President Biden’s Executive Order builds on the historic progress he has made for LGBTQI+ people by:

- Addressing discriminatory legislative attacks against LGBTQI+ **children** and families, directing key agencies to protect families and **children**;
- Preventing so-called “conversion therapy” with a historic initiative to protect **children** from the harmful practice;

- Safeguarding health care, and programs designed to prevent youth suicide;
- Supporting LGBTQI+ children and families by launching a new initiative to protect foster youth, prevent homelessness, and improve access to federal programs; and
- Taking new, additional steps to advance LGBTQI+ equality.

ADDRESSING DISCRIMINATORY LEGISLATIVE ATTACKS

Over 300 anti-LGBTQI+ laws have been introduced in state legislatures over the past year, and many of them specifically target transgender children and their parents by banning access to medical care and support at school. President Biden is addressing these harmful, hateful, and discriminatory attacks head-on – not only by speaking up for America’s families, but taking action to stand up to the bullies targeting LGBTQI+ people.

To help support impacted families, President Biden is charging the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) with protecting

LGBTQI+ **children** and families from attacks on their access to health care, and has instructed HHS to release new sample policies for states on how to expand access to comprehensive health care for LGBTQI+ patients. The President is also directing the Department of Education with addressing the impacts of state laws that target LGBTQI+ students, and has charged the department with releasing a sample school policy for achieving full inclusion for LGBTQI+ students.

ADDRESSING “CONVERSION THERAPY”

As a candidate, President Biden pledged to help end so-called “conversion therapy” – a discredited and dangerous practice that seeks to suppress or change the sexual orientation or gender identity of LGBTQI+ people. Today, President Biden is using his executive authority to launch an initiative to protect **children** across America and crack down on this harmful practice, which every major medical association in the United States has condemned.

Children who are exposed to so-called “conversion therapy” face higher rates

of attempted suicide and trauma.

Numerous states across the country have already passed bipartisan laws to prevent exposure to so-called “conversion therapy,” with Republican and Democratic governors signing state bans on conversion therapy into law. Yet despite these efforts, many people in the United States and around the world are still subjected to this practice.

President Biden is charging HHS with leading an initiative to reduce the risk of youth exposure to this dangerous practice. HHS will explore guidance to clarify that federally-funded programs cannot offer so-called “conversion therapy.” HHS will also increase public awareness about its harms, provide training and technical assistance to health care providers, and expand support for services to help survivors.

President Biden is also encouraging the Federal Trade Commission to consider whether the practice constitutes an unfair or deceptive act or practice, and whether to issue consumer warnings or notices. And, he is directing the Secretaries of State, Treasury, and HHS to develop an action plan to promote an

end to so-called “conversion therapy” around the world and ensure that U.S. foreign assistance dollars do not fund the practice.

SAFEGUARDING HEALTH CARE AND PREVENTING LGBTQI+ YOUTH SUICIDE

Because of discrimination and bullying, nearly half of LGBTQI+ youth seriously considered suicide last year. LGBTQI+ people of all ages also face significant barriers to accessing health care, and LGBTQI+ patients face significant health disparities. To safeguard access to health care for LGBTQI+ patients and address the LGBTQI+ youth mental health crisis, President Biden is charging HHS with taking steps to address the barriers and exclusionary policies that LGBTQI+ individuals and families face in accessing quality, affordable, comprehensive health care, including mental health care, reproductive health care, and HIV prevention and treatment. The President’s Order charges HHS to work with states to promote expanded access to gender-affirming care. It also charges HHS to help prevent LGBTQI+ suicide by

expanding youth access to suicide prevention resources, and to issue new guidance through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration on providing evidence-informed mental health care for LGBTQI+ youth.

SUPPORTING LGBTQI+ CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

LGBTQI+ children and families deserve the same dignity and respect as all American families. But LGBTQI+ children and families continue to face significant barriers and discrimination. For LGBTQI+ young people, family rejection can lead to disproportionately high rates of homelessness and overrepresentation in foster care. And for LGBTQI+ parents and households, significant barriers remain in accessing vital government benefits and services, and achieving housing security. Providing these young Americans and families with the resources and support they need will help ensure more children and families have access to loving homes that decrease the risk of abuse and suicide. President Biden's Executive Order will:

- **Address discrimination and barriers faced by LGBTQI+ youth, parents, caretakers, and families in foster care.** Although LGBTQI+ parents play a vital role in ensuring that every child in America has a loving home, and are seven times more likely to adopt a child from foster care, these parents continue to face barriers and biases in the child welfare system. To address these disparities, President Biden is charging HHS with strengthening LGBTQI+ non-discrimination protections in the foster care system. His Executive Order also charges HHS with launching a new initiative to partner with state child welfare agencies to improve outcomes for LGBTQI+ youth in care; increase training for child welfare personnel on best practices for supporting LGBTQI+ youth; promote placements of children into environments that will support their sexual orientation and gender identity; and study and address the disproportionate rates of child removals that LGBTQI+ parents face, especially women of color.
- **Support families with LGBTQI+ youth.** When youth come out as

LGBTQI+, parents and family members often seek help to learn how to best support their **child**. When **children** face rejection by their families, they risk higher rates of homelessness and attempted suicide. To support families with LGBTQI+ **youth**, President Biden is directing HHS to expand access to voluntary family counseling and support programs to help support **youth** and families. The President's Executive Order also charges the Center for Disease Control and Prevention with researching the impacts of family rejection on the mental health and long-term wellbeing of LGBTQI+ individuals.

- **Review access, and barriers, for families to federal programs and benefits.** In spite of important progress in ensuring that same-sex married couples can access federal programs, many LGBTQI+ families continue to face barriers in accessing vital benefits and services. For LGBTQI+ people who have faced family rejection and rely on family structures without legal or blood ties, these barriers can be particularly pronounced. To strengthen supports for all families, the President's

Executive Order directs HHS to conduct a study of how current eligibility standards for federal programs impact LGBTQI+ and other households, and issue recommendations for more inclusive standards. The Executive Order also directs the Office of Management and Budget to coordinate with agencies as they seek opportunities to implement those recommendations in their programs and services.

- **Address LGBTQI+ homelessness and housing instability.** President Biden is directing the Department of Housing and Urban Development with launching a new Working Group on LGBTQI+ Homelessness and Housing Equity. That Working Group will lead new efforts to identify and address the barriers to housing faced by LGBTQI+ people, provide guidance and technical assistance to housing providers on serving LGBTQI+ individuals, and seek new funding opportunities for culturally appropriate services that address barriers to housing for LGBTQI+ individuals.
- **Support LGBTQI+ students in our Nation's schools and educational**

institutions. The President's Executive Order directs the Department of Education to establish a new Working Group on LGBTQI+ Students and Families, which will advance policies for states, school districts, and other educational institutions to promote safe and inclusive learning environments in which all students thrive.

- **Support LGBTQI+ youth in juvenile justice systems.** The Executive Order charges the Attorney General with establishing a new clearinghouse within the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to provide effective training, technical assistance, and other resources for jurisdictions to better serve LGBTQI+ youth involved in the juvenile justice system.

ADDITIONAL STEPS TO ADVANCE LGBTQI+ EQUALITY

President Biden's Executive Order also includes additional new steps to advance LGBTQI+ equality, including:

- **Strengthen supports for LGBTQI+ older adults.** Older LGBTQI+ people face significant rates of

discrimination, isolation, and poverty. The President's Executive Order directs HHS to publish a "Bill of Rights for LGBTQI+ Older Adults" and new guidance on the non-discrimination protections for older adults in long-term care settings. It also charges HHS with exploring new rulemaking to establish that LGBTQI+ individuals are included in the definition of populations of "greatest social need" under the Older Americans Act.

- **Promote expanded federal data collection on sexual orientation and gender identity.** To strengthen the federal collection of sexual orientation and gender identity ("SOGI") data, the President's Executive Order establishes a new federal coordinating committee on SOGI data, which will lead efforts across agencies to identify opportunities to strengthen SOGI data collection, while safeguarding privacy protections and civil rights for LGBTQI+ individuals.

BUILDING ON HISTORIC PROGRESS

Today's announcements build on the

Biden-Harris Administration's historic progress to advance LGBTQI+ equality since taking office, including:

- **Strengthening civil rights protections.** On his first day in office, President Biden signed an [Executive Order](#) on preventing and combatting discrimination against LGBTQI+ Americans.
- **Ending the ban on transgender servicemembers, and supporting LGBTQI+ service members and veterans.** President Biden rescinded the discriminatory ban on transgender servicemembers, and the Department of Defense announced that HIV-positive service members with an undetectable viral load will no longer be categorically barred from deploying worldwide or commissioning, nor will they be discharged or separated, solely on the basis of their HIV-positive status. The Department of Veterans Affairs also strengthened services and supports for LGBTQI+ veterans, including by removing the outdated ban on comprehensive gender-affirming care for transgender veterans.

- **Fighting back against state-level attacks on LGBTQI+ children.** The Department of Justice has intervened and filed statements of interest in lawsuits across the country challenging state laws that seek to ban transgender children from accessing gender-affirming health care and participating in school activities as unconstitutional.
- **Advancing human rights for LGBTQI+ people in America's foreign policy.** President Biden signed a [Presidential Memorandum on Advancing the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Persons Around the World](#), and appointed the first Special Envoy to Advance the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Persons at the State Department.
- **Strengthening supports and protections for transgender Americans.** The State Department now offers an "X" gender marker option to ensure nonbinary Americans can access an accurate federal ID. The Department of Homeland Security announced reforms to address barriers and heightened screening that transgender travelers often face in

U.S. airports. The Department of Housing and Urban Development also restored key protections to ensure that transgender people experiencing homelessness can access emergency shelters consistent with their gender identity.

- **Fighting for passage of the Equality Act.** President Biden continues to call on the Senate to swiftly pass the Equality Act, legislation, which will provide long overdue federal civil rights protections to LGBTQI+ Americans and their families.
- **Renewing the U.S. government's commitment to ending the HIV epidemic at home and around the world.** President Biden released a new National HIV/AIDS Strategy to lead us toward ending the HIV epidemic in the United States by 2030. The President reestablished the White House Office of National AIDS Policy, and has made historic investments in ending the HIV epidemic globally.
- **Appointing LGBTQI+ leaders to the highest levels of our**

government. President Biden has appointed a historically diverse Administration, including Secretary Pete Buttigieg, the first openly gay Cabinet Secretary; Assistant Secretary for Health Admiral Rachel Levine, the first openly transgender person ever confirmed by the U.S. Senate; Ambassador Chantale Wong, the first open lesbian to achieve the rank of Ambassador; and the first openly gay White House Counsel, Stuart Delery. Fourteen percent of the President's appointees identify as LGBTQI+.

- **Ensuring the federal government is a model employer for LGBTQI+ public servants.** President Biden signed an [Executive Order on Advancing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce](#), with key provisions for LGBTQI+ public servants.
- **Celebrating Pride at home and around the world.** Pride is back at the White House and federal buildings throughout the country are proudly flying Pride flags this month. The State Department announced it will allow U.S. embassies and

diplomatic outposts to fly the Pride flag on the same flagpole as the U.S. flag at their embassy or consulate.

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