



Unified Statement on Anti-LGBTGEQIAP+ Legislation

As of March 11, 2022, more than 150 pieces of legislation targeting queer and trans people have been introduced in state legislatures across the country (ACLU, 2022). Just four months in, this has already been a watershed year for anti-LGBTGEQIAP+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender expansive, queer, intersex, asexual, pansexual+) legislation. These bills currently exist in 31 states, and this threatens the future for individuals in the community nationwide. While anti-LGBTGEQIAP+ legislation is not a new phenomenon, the state level attack against equality follows a number of improvements at the federal level. These attacks place transgender, non-binary, and other gender non-conforming youth amongst the most targeted groups at this time. While not all issues for all members of the LGBTGEQIAP+ community are the same, they all share oppression and are targeted by this legislation

We know that 94% of LGBTQ+ youth have reported that recent political attacks have negatively impacted their mental health (Trevor Project, 2021). LGBTGEQIAP+ youth are already at a heightened risk of experiencing depression, anxiety and other mental health disorders (NAMI, 2022). Research also shows that LGBTGEQIAP+ youth are significantly more likely than their heterosexual, cisgender peers to experience suicidal ideation and attempts at suicide (NAMI, 2022). Half of all LGBTQ+ youth of color reported discrimination based on their race/ethnicity in the past year, including 67% of Black LGBTQ youth and 60% of Asian/Pacific Islander LGBTQ youth (Trevor Project, 2021). As professional counselors, we are committed to the well-being of these communities. These bills, and those like them, threaten these communities and stand in opposition to our core professional values:

1. enhancing human development throughout the lifespan;
2. honoring diversity and embracing a multicultural approach in support of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of people within their social and cultural contexts;
3. promoting social justice;
4. safeguarding the integrity of the counselor–client relationship; and
5. practicing in a competent and ethical manner (ACA, 2014, p. 3).

The following divisions and affiliate organizations of the American Counseling Association (ACA), Association of Counseling Sexology and Sexual Wellness (ACSSW), the Society for Sexual, Affectional, Intersex,



and Gender Expansive Identities in Counseling (SAIGE), the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD), the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW), the International Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (IAMFT), the Association for Child and Adolescent Counseling (ACAC), the Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC), the American College Counseling Association (ACCA), the Association for Humanistic Counseling (AHC), the Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (AARC), Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ), and The International Association of Addictions and Offender Counselors (IAAOC) stand in solidarity with ACA's nondiscrimination statement:

The American Counseling Association is committed to nondiscrimination and to the prevention of harassment in all forms—verbal, physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological—including protections for transgender, gender non-conforming, and LGBTQ+ individuals. Every human being on earth is unique and uniquely important. Each person embarks on the adventure of life guided by their own spirit, outlook, and traits of character. These facets help to shape and guide the course of every human journey. Everyone is equal on this path.

The ACA Governing Affairs Resources:

<https://www.counseling.org/government-affairs/public-policy>

The ACA Code of Ethics:

<https://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf>

The CSJ Code of Ethics:

Ibrahim, F.A., Dinsmore, J.A., Estrada, D., & D'andrea, M. (2011). The Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ) Code of Ethics.

LGBQQIA Competencies:

[Counseling Competencies for LGBQQIA People in pdf](#)

Transgender Competencies:

[Counseling Competencies for Transgender Clients in pdf](#)

Multicultural Social Justice Counseling Competencies (MSJCC):

<https://www.multiculturalcounselingdevelopment.org/competencies>

Resources for Further Support:

[Human Rights Campaign](#)



[How To Teach LGBTQ History](#)

www.glsen.org

Crisis Help: The Trevor Project | 24 Hour Telephone (866) 488-7386 | [We're here for you Now – The Trevor Project](#) | Trans Lifeline (877) 565-8860 Peer support phone service run by and for transgender people.

TransSOCIAL (Transgender-led organization): [TransSOCIAL, Inc.](#). Services and resources include: Name and gender marker change assistance, case management, peer support and social groups, and affirming medical and mental health referrals.

National Queer & Trans Therapists of Color Network (Healing justice organization): [National Queer and Trans Therapists of Color Network](#) | Services and resources include: Mental Health Practitioner Directory and an online assistance to help connect queer and trans people of color to queer and trans practitioners of color and supplemental financial assistance for psychotherapy (Mental Health Fund).

Glimmer: [Glimmer](#) | Platform for helping LGBTQIA+ people connect with affirming wellness professionals.

Statement crafted by Christina McGrath Fair, chair of ACSSW Social Justice & Advocacy committee. Special thanks to Tamekia Bell (SAIGE), Devika Dibya Choudhuri (ASGW), Angela Cocker (AMCD), Delilah Owens (CSJ), Deborah Rubel (ACES), Angela Schubert (ACSSW), Carol Smith, and Shon Smith (CSJ) for feedback and contributions to this statement.