



PRESIDENT TRUMP’S GENDER AFFIRMING CARE EXECUTIVE ORDER: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

January 31, 2025

On January 28th President Donald Trump issued [an executive order](#) attacking access to gender-affirming care. The purpose of this executive order is to direct federal agencies to develop and enforce new, revised, and existing regulations that would try to prohibit the provision of gender-affirming care to adolescents aged 18 and younger.

Executive orders are formal directions by the President to express their expectations regarding how the federal government will operate. These orders also express desires by the President for agency heads to create new regulations based on the President's political priorities.

It's important to remember that this action by the President does not change existing laws or court decisions. Instead, it calls for changes to how federal agencies enforce the laws that Congress passes and prompts some agencies to create additional regulations/policies within a recommended timeframe.

WHAT DOES THIS ORDER DO?

This executive order seeks to prohibit access to healthcare for many trans young people. It attempts to do this by restricting federal funding from being used for gender-affirming care. It continues the Trump Administration's extreme and unconstitutional attacks on trans and intersex people across the nation, who already face widespread discrimination. While it will take time to implement the provisions of this executive order, the ultimate goal of these attacks is to make it illegal for trans and intersex young

The order has already impacted the lives of trans people across the country and is unquestionably intended to greenlight the development of dangerous and harmful policies that will endanger the lives of transgender, nonbinary, gender diverse, and intersex people ages 18 and under.

We know you have questions about what this means for you, your families, and the people you care about. Please know that there are many organizations focused on understanding what this executive order does and doesn't do. We are also working hard to respond with lawsuits, community resources, and more. No matter what the policy of the federal government is, we uplift the value, dignity, and humanity of our communities. We will do whatever we can to keep one another safe.

people to work with the doctors and other healthcare providers who will support them in getting the medical care they need. Families of trans youth, including those who are intersex, want to help their children access the care they need to thrive. Policies like those called for in the executive order undermine adolescents' autonomy over personal healthcare decisions.

The dangers imposed by this order are both known and unknown. Some of its instructions are clear and direct,

while others imply a course of future hostile actions. Other threats may exist as potential risks based on how agencies interpret the often vague language of this order.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR TRANS ADOLESCENTS AND AFFIRMING FAMILIES?

On its own, this order **does not** directly implement changes to policies governing access to gender-affirming care. Instead, it directs federal agencies to take a series of actions that would severely restrict access to care in the future, including ending Medicaid, Tricare, and federal employee insurance coverage for gender-affirming care for people under 19. It would also restrict federal funding to hospitals, medical schools, and other institutions that provide this care, or conduct research on it.

Unfortunately, in the wake of this order, **we are already hearing reports** of certain clinics and hospitals ceasing to provide medically necessary gender-affirming care to patients within the age range covered by this order.

The definition of child/children/childhood that is used in the order is any person under the age of 19, which impacts anybody age 18 and younger. Terms like “children” and “pediatric” are used to refer to people aged 18 and younger and their healthcare. Other language used in this order attempts to mischaracterize gender-affirming care to hide the fact that this care is accessed by young people seeking to thrive as their authentic selves. This order aims to endanger the safety of trans adolescents and their affirming families. The order encourages the weaponization of custody disputes, suggesting that custody should be removed from family members who helped a young person access care.

Despite claiming that this order “protects” children, this executive order aims to create federal policies that put their physical and emotional well-being at risk. This order attempts to deny trans people their bodily autonomy and enforce conformity with the sex stereotypes expressed in Trump’s Day 1 Sex Discrimination & Gender Ideology executive order.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PROVIDERS AND FACILITIES?

This executive order does not roll out immediate changes to the policies governing access to gender-affirming care. Providers should therefore be cautious of over-reading the scope of this order and preemptively withholding care before agencies release implementing regulations and guidance. This executive order intends to create a path to potentially withdrawing multiple forms of federal funding for the provision of safe, evidence-based, medically necessary gender-affirming care, endangering the lives of tens of thousands of transgender adolescents under the

The types of policies that the executive order calls for may have adverse effects not only on trans young people but also on young people who are intersex (or have variations in their sex characteristics but may not describe themselves as intersex) who seek care that is within (or perceived to be within) the scope of the order. Intersex young people often work with the same providers as trans adolescents, as these providers are commonly the most knowledgeable about the range of endocrinological care (care related to the body’s hormones), and sometimes surgical care, that patients may need. In light of that overlap, adolescents with intersex variations may risk losing access to hormones or other vital care even if it is not related to transition. When **consensual care** is banned, all young people risk losing access to necessary healthcare.

The order also attempts to block people under 19 who are on federal employee health insurance from receiving health insurance coverage for gender-affirming care. It directs the Office of Personnel Management to tell insurers not to cover these benefits for people under 19 on federal employee health insurance plans. The order tells the Department of Justice to work with state governments and Congress to find ways to use law enforcement to discourage the provision of gender-affirming care, including by targeting affirming families of trans adolescents who receive gender-affirming care. **The order does not contain specific instructions for how this would be implemented, nor does it create new criminal laws.**

Furthermore, this order’s various directives would establish regulations and practices that could also disrupt and complicate access to this care even for trans and intersex people over 18.

age of 19. It also aims to criminalize the provision of this care by encouraging new, harmful interpretations of existing policies intended to protect minors.

Likely, the actions called for by this order will severely harm the financial stability of institutions that provide and study gender-affirming care for people 18 years and younger. For example, this order expresses a desire to prohibit providers and facilities from participating in programs like Medicaid and Medicare if they provide any form of gender-affirming care to trans adolescents

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE FIELD OF GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE?

This order is built on misinformation and anti-scientific rhetoric regarding this lifesaving field of healthcare. It refers to expert consensus and scientifically rigorous standards of care as “junk science,” completely ignoring that this affirming healthcare has been safely accessed by patients for over six decades.

Essential and long-standing healthcare for trans people is claimed to be “highly experimental” and “dangerous” in this order. This order bases its directives on unsubstantiated and fringe theories, which no legitimate group of medical experts has recognized. These claims have been widely discredited by every legitimate medical organization in the country. Despite what this order claims, trans adolescents know who they are. They are neither “impressionable” nor “confused.” The use of such politically charged language is an attempt to disrupt and damage the long-standing medical diagnostic framework for trans people in the U.S. That framework is built around “gender dysphoria.” The diagnosis of gender dysphoria is usually required for a trans person to obtain gender-affirming care, specifically if they’re seeking insurance coverage for that care. This has been standard for decades.

In contrast, this order attempts to replace this framework with “rapid-onset gender dysphoria,” a discredited theory claiming that social influences, like

having trans friends, somehow “cause” adolescents to be trans. This fringe theory is dangerous because it is wrong, it implies being trans is a disease, and it leads to harmful conversion therapy practices.

Shifting away from affirmative models of care to centering conversion therapy practices would be extremely dangerous for our young people.

Despite the consensus among leading medical professional groups such as the American Medical Association about the medical necessity of gender-affirming care, the order instructs federal agencies to reject guidance from the leading standards of care from the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH). It instead directs agencies to study unproven and discredited theories that are rejected by all leading medical organizations.

This order also directs agencies that provide research and education grants to make medical institutions stop providing gender-affirming care to people under 19 as a condition of receiving funding.

At several points, this order says that certain instructions should be or are “consistent with applicable law.” This is untrue. As the administration does things that violate applicable law, there will be opportunities to challenge this order in court.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? WHAT CAN I DO?

Your first priority is to take care of yourself! If you lose access to gender-affirming care from your local provider, reach out to one of the many legal helplines detailed at the bottom of this page for help. They may be able to advise you about how to file a complaint under applicable.

You should also educate those around you such as friends, neighbors, and coworkers about the order and why it matters to you and your family. Cisgender people are often unaware of how vital and lifesaving this healthcare is for trans and intersex people, and especially for trans youth.

You should also consider reaching out to your Senators and Representative in Congress, and to state and local lawmakers, and insist they take immediate action to protect access to gender-affirming care.

It is vitally important that healthcare providers do not stop providing gender-affirming care to trans, nonbinary, and intersex patients unless they are directly and explicitly required to do so. Gender-affirming care is lifesaving and necessary. It is also still ethical and legal to provide, and an executive order cannot change that.

RESOURCES

Informational Resources

- [A4TE's Action Centers](#)
- [GLSEN's Know Your Rights Guide](#) for students and educators
- [Movement Advancement Project's Equality Maps](#)

Legal Resources

- [ACLU Intake Email](#)
- [GLAD Law Answers](#)
- [interACT: Advocates for Intersex Youth](#)
- [Lambda Legal Helpdesk](#)
- [Nat'l Center for Lesbian Rights Helpline](#) (800-528-6257)
- [LGBT National Hotline](#) (888-843-4564)
- [Transgender Law Center Legal Information Helpdesk](#)

Talking Resources

- [Trans Lifeline](#) (877-565-8860)
- [LGBT National Youth Talkline](#) (800-246-7743)
- [LGBT National Senior Hotline](#) (888-234-7243)
- [The Trevor Project](#)