



The Legal and Political Rights of Transgender People

Hate Crimes and Hate Crime Laws

- Since 1989, about one person a month on average has been reported to have been killed in the U.S. because of their perceived gender identity. Many more murders are not reported or are not classified as anti-transgender hate crimes.
- In 2005, there were 14 known anti-transgender murders in the U.S., and another 14 reported elsewhere in the world.
- While 46 states have hate crimes laws, only 10 states (California, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, and Vermont) and the District of Columbia include the category of gender identity or expression.
- Only Minnesota, California, and New Jersey currently have laws that ban harassment against students in public schools based on their gender identity or expression.

Anti-Discrimination Laws

- Only 6 states—California, Minnesota, New Mexico, Illinois, Rhode Island, and Maine—ban discrimination based on gender identity and expression in housing, public accommodation, and employment (Hawaii covers only housing discrimination).
- More than 75 municipalities protect the rights of gender-variant people, from large metropolises (including New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Dallas, San Diego, Denver, Seattle, San Francisco, Atlanta, New Orleans, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh) to small cities (including New Hope, PA [population 2,252] and Huntington Woods, MI [population 6,151]).
- Ohio, Idaho, and Tennessee deny transsexuals the right to change the sex designation on their birth certificates, while courts in Texas and Kansas have refused to recognize the new birth certificates of transsexuals.

Anti-Discrimination Policies

- Since 1996, more than 45 colleges and college systems have added gender identity/expression to their nondiscrimination policies, including the University of California, the City University of New York, the Ohio State University, the University of Iowa, American University, Brown University, the University of Washington, the University of New Hampshire, Knox College, Kalamazoo College, and DePauw College.
- More than 80 Fortune 500 corporations have added gender identity/expression to their nondiscrimination policies, including Aetna, American Airlines, Apple Computers, AT&T, Bank One, Citigroup, Ford, IBM, Eastman Kodak, Lucent Technologies, JP Morgan Chase, NCR, Nationwide, Nike, PepsiCo, S.C. Johnson and Sons, and Xerox.

Medical Care

Most private medical plans, the Medicaid statutes of 26 states, and federal Medicare explicitly exclude coverage for transsexual surgeries and related treatments, including the cost of hormones, based on the misguided belief that such procedures are cosmetic and therefore unnecessary. Increasingly, though, transgender advocates are successfully challenging the denial of basic health care services to transsexuals by using claim appeal processes and by filing suits against insurers and state Medicaid agencies.

Developed by Brett Genny Beemyn
Director, The Stonewall Center, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Gender and Sexuality Center
Student Services Building