

Reaffirming our commitment to the LGBTQ+ community of WNY: from the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Task Force (SOGI-TF) on Recent Trump Administration Executive Orders Targeting LGBTQIA+ Populations

Finalized March 2025

Introduction: Orders and Actions that Violate the Human Rights of Gender Diverse People

Since taking office on January 20, 2025, President Donald Trump has issued executive orders and taken executive actions that have targeted the LGBTQ+ community and which intend to eliminate protections and support of LGBTQ+ people and end the promotion of equity, inclusion, and which advance policies that result in discrimination based on gender. Thus far, the orders have resulted in:

1. Passport restrictions that require a person to use their sex assigned at birth, disallowing travel of anyone whose passport name and gender do not match their birth certificate¹; This has the effect of reducing the ability of gender diverse people to travel and increasing their vulnerability while they are traveling.
2. The reinstatement and expansion of the military ban on transgender service members.² This has the effect of terminating the employment of thousands of gender diverse people on the basis of their gender.
3. The prohibition of transgender girls from participating in school sports teams that align with their gender identity.³ This disenfranchises youth from educational and economic opportunities based on gender. It also subjects all female athletes to scrutiny, possibly invasive required verification of their biological sex, and exposes all athletes to possible harassment and discrimination.
4. Blocking funding for reproductive healthcare organizations worldwide.^{4 5} This disproportionately affects LGBTQ+ people, women, and girls.
5. Blocking federal funding to institutions that provide gender-affirming medical care to people under 19 years of age.⁶ This has caused disruptions and possible elimination of medical care that has been judged medically necessary by clinicians and patients based on gender.

¹<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/passport-help/sex-marker.html>

²<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/prioritizing-military-excellence-and-readiness/>

³<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/02/keeping-men-out-of-womens-sports/>

⁴<https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2025/01/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-enforces-overwhelmingly-popular-demand-to-stop-taxpayer-funding-of-abortion/>

⁵<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/13/world/africa/trump-funding-freeze-womens-health.html>

⁶<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/protecting-children-from-chemical-and-surgical-mutilation/>

6. Eliminating research funding addressing research with a gender component.⁷ This will have the effect of people not getting information relevant to their biological needs and not getting evidence-based interventions in cases where gender impacts treatment or care.
7. Attempting to eliminate or control information available about sexuality and gender that could empower LGBTQ people and women. Attempts include scrubbing government websites of information about women’s healthcare, reproductive health and sexual and gender diversity, and eliminating historical references to people overcoming gender discrimination.^{8 9 10 11}
8. An executive order that explicitly directs the US attorney general to work with local officials to investigate and prosecute teachers and counselors at K-12 schools who “unlawfully facilitate social transition of a minor student.”¹² Per this order, teachers and counselors are not permitted to use preferred pronouns and names, or recognize students as nonbinary, or permit students to use their preferred restroom. This order attempts to make recognition of gender identity unlawful. Research robustly indicates that gender diverse youth experience significantly less stress and symptoms and are at significantly less risk for harm when their preferred gender identity is acknowledged by parents and teachers.^{13 14 15}

While some of these executive orders have taken effect immediately, others require legislative processes to implement and are already facing legal challenges.

Much of the Administration's policies are built around the suppositions framed in an Executive Order, which was executed by Trump January 20th, entitled “Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government.”¹⁶ This order asserts that there are only two sexes, and two genders, and gender is determined by sex assignment at birth. The order further states that any discourse that discusses gender in another manner is “gender ideology” and “gender ideology” is harmful to women.¹⁷ This and subsequent orders attempt to promote and mandate an understanding of sex and gender that does not reflect scientific consensus or the lived experiences of women and gender diverse people. As noted above, an attempt to mandate a specific viewpoint and eliminate or even criminalize divergent

⁷<https://www.science.org/content/article/trump-s-ban-funds-promote-gender-ideology-could-threaten-hundreds-nih-research-projects>

⁸<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-health-agencies-scrubbing-websites-remove-gender-ideology-2025-01-31/>

⁹<https://apnews.com/article/trump-gender-ideology-sex-pronouns-order-transgender-2d7e54837f5d0651ed0cefa5ea0d6301>

¹⁰<https://www.yahoo.com/news/army-navy-remove-pages-highlighting-163000696.html>

¹¹<https://apnews.com/article/trump-dei-tuskegee-airmen-women-war-history-88a92c8485281d7c088c5eafe5dbf002>

¹²<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/ending-radical-indoctrination-in-k-12-schooling/>

¹³<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6165713/>

¹⁴<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27544457/>

¹⁵<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34920935/>

¹⁶<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/defending-women-from-gender-ideology-extremism-and-restoring-biological-truth-to-the-federal-government/>

¹⁷<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/defending-women-from-gender-ideology-extremism-and-restoring-biological-truth-to-the-federal-government/>

research, practice and discussion will be detrimental to our understanding of gender and our ability to support people of all genders. Orders that mandate people submit to binary categories, and that set in place policies that disproportionately impact people based on gender by definition promote gender-based discrimination and increase likelihood of human rights violations based on gender.

The Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Task Force (SOGI-TF) has serious concerns about the executive orders issued by President Donald Trump that require U.S. citizens to legally identify with only a male or female sex at birth designation; denying transgender, nonbinary and intersex¹⁸ individuals the right of self-expression and lived experiences along with previously-guaranteed protections. The SOGI-TF strongly supports individuals' right to self-determination, contends that the executive orders signed by President Trump represent social violations which attempt to disregard basic human rights and enable violence toward gender diverse peoples and women. President Trump's executive orders that specifically target gender diverse people throw fire on already contentious issues that divide rather unite people and increase misunderstanding and fear. The results of these executive orders, and their consequences will affect transgender and other marginalized gender diverse groups and their families and the professional community that focuses on research and patient care. Throughout history, in the United States and around the world, gender diverse people have faced increased harassment and discrimination. Rather than improve the circumstances for gender diverse people, these orders explicitly restrict the activities and opportunities for gender diverse people and increase the likelihood of harm.

Trump's executive orders regarding gender diversity are blunt, black and white, tools that stifle honest debate and discussion among professionals and advocates who want such communication. Further, these orders do not take into account the nuances of research and care that professionals researching and caring for such individuals know from their experience.

We Reject Scientific Misrepresentation and Fear-Based Rhetoric

Contrary to the language in the recently enacted executive orders, extensive research in psychology and allied fields demonstrates that affirmation of sexual orientations and gender identities is an essential and legitimate aspect of human diversity.¹⁹ As a group of psychologists, we stand confidently in the position that affirming values and approaches are psychologically beneficial and essential to the preservation of life. A person's sexual orientation and gender identity is rooted in the interplay of multiple factors (which may include biological, psychological, spiritual, and social realities) that are well documented across time and cultures.²⁰ Trump's definition of gender ignores decades of scientific evidence, history,

¹⁸ Author's note from Dr. Tom Mazur: Intersex conditions pose problems for the binary and some scholars have attempted to address this issue while still stating that sex is binary. One way is that intersex "proves the rule." This is correct in that most people are either XX or XY with corresponding fertility potential. There are other conditions that negate fertility in men and women but most are XX or XY, and that virtually all trans individuals are XX or XY. Still I am not totally satisfied with this answer and from what I read there is not a better explanation. This should not take away from how people should be accepted and treated as we indicate this piece. But such knowledge if hidden or not received may pose problems for proper medical care.

¹⁹<https://academic.oup.com/analysis/article/83/4/801/7204699>

²⁰<https://www.apa.org/topics/lgbtq/transgender-people-gender-identity-gender-expression#:~:text=Gender%20identity%20and%20sexual%20orientation%20are%20not%20the%20same..during%20the%20process%20of%20transition>

philosophy, and interdisciplinary research and inquiry that recognize the legitimacy of gender diversity. To pronounce gender and sex as binary also unjustly denies the lived realities of TGGD peoples, and promotes pseudoscience that exacerbates fear and misunderstanding of gender diverse communities. In President Trump's narrowed definition of gender, the historic progress made toward gender equity becomes negated, narrowing masculinity and cisgender men into inflexible and isolative roles, which our field's research has also shown to have undesirable mental health outcomes for men. The executive orders put into place by President Trump are already having negative consequences for people across genders with particularly damaging impacts on LGBTQ+ individuals. Full execution of these orders would result in gender-based human rights violations that would explicitly restrict travel, education, healthcare, research and employment based on gender.

The fear stoked against the gender diverse community also distracts from the real threats toward gender protections in schools and workplaces, and our rights to reproductive health. Recognizing and affirming sexual orientation and gender diversity benefits all by asserting the rights of individuals to self-identify, promoting inclusivity, reducing stigma, and fostering social equity.

We Reject Policies that Promote Gender-Based Harm and Violence

President Trump's executive orders, which attempt to reduce lived experience to a false binary, put into motion the erasure of transgender and gender diverse (TGGD) individuals. Such social erasure is dehumanizing and psychologically devastating; any attempts to make gender diverse communities invisible and subhuman are attempts to sanction, enable, and promote harm and violence toward transgender and gender diverse peoples. The language in these executive orders vilifies and dehumanizes transgender and gender diverse populations, framing their existence as a threat. Such efforts to demean a community of people contribute to increased stigma, discrimination, and violence—both systemic and interpersonal—against TGGD individuals, creating linkages to significant mental health and other health disparities, including increased risks of anxiety, depression, violent targeting, substance use, and heightened risks for suicide.

The SOGI-TF recognizes that policies based on fear and pseudoscience actively promote both psychological and physical violence against TGGD individuals, and as such, we reject the points outlined in Trump's executive order. In our commitment to justice and to our APA professional Code of Ethics, we steadfastly reject falsehoods of the gender binary pseudoscience which result in social oppression and violence targeting TGGD peoples. Attempts to pit cisgender males and females against TGGD individuals are rooted in harmful stereotypes and false narratives that have no place in policies grounded in the science and ethics of psychology.

We are Committed to Support People of all Gender Expressions

The SOGI Task Force's mission is to be aware of the latest research in the world, the controversies, the best practices at the time and the ongoing challenges faced by the LGBTQ+ community. It is our mission to communicate this information to PAWNY members and to our clients and the WNY community through support, education, and period updates to PAWNY (such as the recent guidance we reviewed on gender affirming medical care for youth by reviewing the Cass report). We are committed to honest debate realizing that agreement is not always possible but it is possible to be respectful of all people, their humanity, how they chose to live their lives and help them better integrate into society. In this spirit, we are also supportive of DEI and its mission.

As providers of psychological services to youth and adults, and as university educators and administrators, we are dedicated to the advancement of sound, evidence-based, and peer-reviewed psychological research and practices that affirm the full humanity and diversity of all peoples. We are uniquely positioned to help meet community needs while ensuring the highest standards of care within our profession. We will maintain a professional space that affirms the true and celebrated existence of various sexual orientations and gender identities and will combat false narratives that portray these individuals as subhuman or as social threats. Furthermore, we commit to combatting inequities and social patterns that marginalize people of diverse genders. We vow to uphold a standard where all genders have opportunity, recognition, and encouragement to participate in our task force and in the profession of psychology within a community characterized by true collegiality. We vow to uphold a standard of accountability for challenging ourselves and our colleagues to critically address pseudoscientific narratives that threaten the existence of LGBTQ+ communities. The SOGI-TF will uphold the rigors of sound psychological science which affirm human dignity and act to protect human life.

In this moment of our country’s narrative, we are pulled to act with compassionate and decisive collective action. The core values of the profession of psychology call us to respond with immediacy, compassion, assertion, and with a commitment to justice and sound scientific practice. We urge you to join us in this mission.

Drafted by the Psychological Association of Western New York (PAWNY) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Task Force (SOGI-TF)

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For further information:

[ACLU LGBTQ Rights](#)

[APA Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Sexual Minority Persons](#)

[APA Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Transgender and Gender Nonconforming People](#)

[APA Policy Statements on LGBT Concerns](#)

[United Nations Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights, About Gender Equality and the Human Rights of Women and LGBTI Persons](#)