

Resolution Declaring the City of Worcester a Sanctuary City for Transgender and Gender Diverse People

Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Worcester, in City Council assembled, as follows:

WHEREAS, the trans, nonbinary, and LGBTQIA+ community in Worcester and nationally are being attacked by President Trump's executive action on January 22, 2025 stating that the U.S. government will now recognize only two sexes - male and female.

WHEREAS, on January 29, 2025, President Trump signed an executive order seeking to end gender-affirming medical treatments for children and teenagers under the age of 19; and

WHEREAS, on January 29, 2025, the US Office of Personnel Management released a memo to all federal agencies ending legal recognition of trans people by replacing all forms that request information about gender to information about sex; and

WHEREAS, transgender immigrants, refugees, and asylees also face additional persecution due to their immigration status; and

WHEREAS, the Human Rights Campaign reported in 2023, fatal violence against transgender and gender diverse people disproportionately impacts the BIPOC community, making up 85% of all victims identified since 2013. Almost two-thirds (61.8%) of all victims have been black trans women; and

WHEREAS, the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law reports that 17% of sexual minority adults have experienced homelessness in their lives, compared to 6% of cisgender straight people, and that 8% of transgender adults have experienced homelessness in the last year alone, while only 3% of cisgender people did; and

WHEREAS, a survey by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force reveals that trans people experience unemployment at twice the rate as the general population, with trans people of color impacted at a scale four times the national rate. Transgender survey respondents further reported that they experienced extensive discrimination as both renters and homeowners, 19% said that they had been denied a home or apartment because of their gender identity, and their homeownership rates were reported at only half the national rate; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2021 Youth Health Survey, conducted by Worcester's City Division of Public Health reported that students who identified as gay, lesbian, or bi reported nearly 3 times more than their heterosexual peers that they felt sad or hopeless, 4 times more likely to intentionally hurt themselves and 4 times more likely to seriously consider suicide; and

WHEREAS, as of the date of this legislation, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts law does not restrict access to gender-affirming healthcare and bans insurance exclusions for gender-affirming healthcare; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts passed Bill H.1190, an Act relative to abusive practices to change sexual orientation and gender identity in minors in May 2019 which bans harmful and abusive Conversion Therapy practices; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts passed Chapter 127 of the Act of 2022, which protects individuals seeking sanctuary from out-of-state prosecution and explicitly prohibits law enforcement agencies from knowingly making or participating in the arrest or extradition of an individual pursuant to an out-of-state arrest warrant based on another state's law against receiving gender-affirming healthcare in Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS, as recognized in M.G.L. c. 12 § 11I ½ access to gender-affirming health care services is a right secured by the constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS, as a result of anti-transgender legislation throughout our nation, many individuals and families are relocating to states such as Massachusetts that are more accepting and offer inclusive services; and

WHEREAS, healthcare professionals providing gender-affirming healthcare and persons seeking or receiving care or assisting another individual who is seeking or receiving care in the City of Worcester should be protected from attempts to impose criminal punishment, civil liability, administrative penalties, or professional sanctions based on the laws of other states when gender-affirming healthcare is lawful in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and meets standards for good professional practice; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Worcester hereby reiterates its commitment to transgender rights and equal protections for transgender community members and declares itself a sanctuary city and a place of safety for transgender and gender diverse people

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Worcester recognizes the importance of gender-affirming healthcare as a matter of health, privacy, and equality and to ensure, to the greatest extent permitted by law, that those rights are upheld for all residents and visitors within the City of Worcester

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the City Council of Worcester hereby maintains it should be the policy of the City of Worcester that no city resources, including, but not

limited to, time spent by employees, officers, contractors, or subcontractors while on duty, or the use of city property, shall be utilized for detaining persons for solely seeking or providing gender-affirming care, including gender affirmation surgery or gender hormone therapy; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the City of Worcester hereby maintains it should be a policy of the City of Worcester that no city resources be utilized for cooperating with or providing information to any individual or out-of-state agency or department regarding the provision of gender-affirming healthcare or gender-affirming mental healthcare performed in Worcester and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Worcester as a sanctuary city will not cooperate with Federal and State on policies aimed to harm transgender and gender diverse people and ensure transgender and gender diverse people have access to healthcare, housing, education, and employment without fear or discrimination.