

Introduced: 07-16-19  
Adopted: 09-10-19  
Effective: 09-18-19

CITY OF EAST LANSING  
ORDINANCE NO. 1467

AN ORDINANCE TO ADD ARTICLE IV – PROHIBITION OF  
CONVERSION THERAPY – TO CHAPTER 22 – HUMAN  
RELATIONS - TO THE CODE OF THE CITY OF EAST  
LANSING TO PROHIBIT THE PRACTICE OF CONVERSION  
THERAPY BY PROVIDERS ON MINORS.

WHEREAS being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ) is not a disease, disorder, illness, deficiency, or shortcoming; and

WHEREAS there is a long and severe history of discrimination against LGBTQ people in this country and state under which LGBTQ people have been subjected to violence and threats of violence, denied services of businesses, prevented from obtaining housing, forced from their homes, fired from their jobs, and denied job opportunities; and

WHEREAS portrayals of LGBTQ adults and youth as mentally ill, abnormal, or disordered due to their sexual orientation or gender identity are untrue and dehumanizing; and

WHEREAS it is now generally accepted in the medical and mental health professions, and elsewhere, that LGBTQ status is not abnormal or disordered, but instead a normal and positive variation of humanity; and

WHEREAS the consensus among medical and mental health professionals and organizations, and others, is that attempts to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity lack any specific basis and are in fact ineffective. Organizations who have made such policy statements or similar ones include: the American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American School Counselors Association, the American Counseling Association, the American Psychoanalytic Association, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, American College of Physicians, the American Medical Association, the Pan-American Health Organization (a regional office of the World Health Organization), the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, the American Bar Association, the American School Health Association, the National Association of Social Workers, the American Association of School Administrators, the American Federation of Teachers, the Interfaith Alliance Foundation, the National Association of School Psychologists, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the National Education Association, and the School Social Work Association of America; and

WHEREAS research studies and other available evidence show that conversion therapy or other treatment practices that attempt to change a young person's sexual orientation or gender identity pose a significant risk of serious emotional and physical harm to youth who undergo them, such as anxiety, depression, hopelessness, social withdrawal, illegal drug use, and suicide; and

WHEREAS LGBTQ youth in particular experience the harmful effects of stigma and discrimination when they are forced or coerced into undergoing “conversion,” “reparative,” or “reorientation” therapy because as minors they cannot effectively refuse or prevent conversion therapy wanted by parents or other authorities; and

WHEREAS the City has a compelling interest in protecting the physical and psychological well-being of LGBTQ minors by protecting them from conversion therapy in the City and limiting the risk of harms caused by exposure to conversion therapy.

## **THE CITY OF EAST LANSING ORDAINS:**

Article IV and sections 22-61, 22-62, 22-63 and 22-64 are hereby added to Chapter 22 of the Code of the City of East Lansing to read as follows:

### **ARTICLE IV. PROHIBITION OF CONVERSION THERAPY ON MINORS**

#### **Sec. 22-61 – Findings.**

Medical, mental health, and child welfare experts have denounced conversion therapy or reparative therapy as ineffective, unreliable, and unsafe for people, including LGBTQ minors, who undergo such treatment and inconsistent with the accepted standard of care. Conversion therapies or reparative therapies are based on the discredited premise that being LGBTQ is a mental disorder that can be cured or corrected. LGBTQ people must be free from ineffective and fraudulent conversion treatments that cause harm to mental health and wellbeing. Due to the serious and dangerous harms caused to minors subjected to conversion therapy or reparative therapy, the City finds and declares that a compelling interest exists in protecting the health and psychological well-being of minors by protecting them, including LGBTQ minors, from conversion therapy in the City and by limiting the risk of serious harm to LGBTQ minors caused by the exposure to conversion therapy.

#### **Sec. 22-62 – Purpose.**

The purpose of this article is to protect the health and well-being of LGBTQ minors from being exposed to the serious harm caused by conversion therapy and to provide a method of enforcement.

#### **Sec. 22-63 – Definitions.**

In addition to the definitions provided in Sec. 22-32 of this Chapter, the following words and terms when used in this article shall have the following meanings:

- A. *Conversion therapy or reparative therapy* means any practice or treatment that seeks to change an individual’s sexual orientation or gender identity against that individual’s will, including efforts to change behaviors or gender expressions or to eliminate or reduce sexual or romantic attractions or feelings towards individuals of the same gender. Conversion therapy shall not include counseling that provides support and assistance to a person undergoing gender transition, or counseling that provides acceptance, support, and understanding of a person or facilitates a person’s coping, social support, and development, including sexual orientation neutral interventions to prevent or address unlawful conduct

or unsafe sexual practices, as long as such counseling does not seek to change sexual orientation or gender identity.

- B. *Minor* means any person under eighteen (18) years of age.
- C. *Provider* means any licensed medical or mental health professional, including, but not limited to, licensed mental health counselors, mental health counselor associates, marriage and family therapists, marriage and family therapist associates, social workers, social worker associates, and any physicians, psychologists, psychotherapists, certified chemical dependency professionals, certified chemical dependency professional trainees, counselors, certified counselors, and certified advisers.

Sec. 21-64 – Prohibited Practices.

It shall be unlawful for any provider to provide conversion therapy or reparative therapy to a minor, regardless of whether the provider receives compensation in exchange for such services or not.

---

Mark Meadows, Mayor

---

Jennifer Shuster, City Clerk