

Know Your Rights!

The New York State Ban on “Conversion Therapy”

What is the ban on “conversion therapy”?

This law prohibits mental health professionals from using the practice of conversion therapy on patients under the age of 18. Conversion therapy is a practice that attempts to change someone’s sexual orientation, behaviors, gender identity, or gender expression, or reduce attractions or feelings towards people of the same sex. This ban only applies to mental health professionals licensed within New York State. It does not apply to non-licensed individuals, including clergy or other individuals at faith-based or non-profit organizations.

Effective as of January 25, 2019. The full text of the law is available at nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2019/s1046. How can I learn more?

Learn about ongoing advocacy efforts.

- Born Perfect: National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR)’s campaign to end conversion therapy. Learn more at nclrights.org/explore-the-issues/bornperfect/.
- 50 Bills 50 States: The Trevor Project’s international campaign to protect LGBTQ youth from conversion therapy. Learn more at thetrevorproject.org/50B50S.

Listen to survivors’ stories.

- Organizations are raising awareness about the harms of conversion therapy by empowering survivors to speak out about their experiences. Survivors have shared their stories here:
 - nclrights.org/bornperfect-survivor-stories-and-survivor-network
 - beyondexgay.com/narratives.html
- The movie Boy Erased tells the true story of Garrard Conley’s experiences growing up as the gay son of a conservative Baptist preacher and being pressured to participate in conversion therapy.

Read the research.

- The American Psychological Association has published research on the harms and dangers of “conversion therapy” around sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The American School Counselor Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Association of Social Workers, the American Counseling Association Governing Council, the American Psychoanalytic Association, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and the Pan American Health Organization have all concluded that conversion therapy is dangerous.

What can I do if my rights have been violated?

File a complaint.

- You can file a complaint directly with the New York State Division of Human Rights at dhr.ny.gov/complaint.
- You can also file a complaint with the mental health provider’s licensing entity.

Get legal help.

- If you have been forced into conversion therapy, you can get legal help.
 - Albany: Empire Justice Center's LGBT Rights Project, 518-462-6831.
 - Hudson Valley: Legal Services of the Hudson Valley, LGBT Legal Unit, 877-574-8529.
 - Livingston County: Law Office of Milo Primeaux, Esq., 585-612-1071.
 - NYC: New York Legal Assistance Group's LGBT Law Project, 212-613-5000 x5107.
 - Rochester: Empire Justice Center's LGBT Rights Project, 585-454-4060.
 - Syracuse: Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County, 315-849-9234.

Find affirming spaces.

- If you are a young person in crisis, feeling suicidal, or in need of a safe and judgment-free place to talk, call the TrevorLifeline at 1-866-488-7386. Their trained counselors are available to support you 24/7.
- You can also call Trans Lifeline at 877-565-8860. This hotline is run by trans people for trans and questioning callers. Their operators are located all over the U.S. and Canada, and are all trans-identified. If you are in crisis or just need someone to talk to, even if it's just about whether or not you're trans, call them. They will do their best to support you and provide you resources.
- Find an affirming mental health provider who will provide acceptance, support, and understanding around your sexual orientation and gender identity:
 - Psychology Today has a searchable database that can be narrowed down by location and the sexual orientation of licensed providers. For LGBTQ therapists in NY, visit psychologytoday.com/us/therapists/gay/new-york.
 - If in-person isn't an option for you, counseling is also available online from LGBTQ-specific platforms such as pridecounseling.com or talkspace.com.
- If you have been personally impacted by conversion therapy, contact NCLR for help at bornperfect@nclrights.org. If you want to share your story, you can do so at nclrights.org/bornperfect-survivor-stories-and-survivor-network/.
- Join an online community, such as Conversion Therapy Survivors (facebook.com/conversiontherapysurvivors) or Beyond Ex-Gay (beyondexgay.com).

Locate other resources.

- Still not finding what you need? Reach out to The New York State LGBT Health & Human Services Network for another referral. Contact network@gaycenter.org.



THE NETWORK

The New York State LGBT Health
& Human Services Network



nyslgbtnetwork



gaycenter.org/thenetwork