



**EXECUTIVE ORDER #122**

**Relating to the Use of Agency-Administered Funds for Services That Are Harmful to Minors**

**WHEREAS**, Wisconsin is committed to the principles of self-determination and celebrates the diversity and resilience of its people, including LGBTQ young people;

**WHEREAS**, the Trevor Project found that two in three LGBTQ youth have reported that someone has tried to convince them to change their sexual orientation or gender identity;

**WHEREAS**, conversion therapy, also known as reparative therapy, refers to any practice or treatment that is intended to promote heterosexuality by attempting to alter same-sex attractions or an individual's gender expression;

**WHEREAS**, according to research conducted by the Family Acceptance Project, adolescence conversion efforts contribute to higher risks of depression and suicide for LGBTQ youth, with levels of depression and suicide attempts nearly tripling for LGBTQ youth who reported home-based and formal intervention with a therapist or religious leader, and were prospectively associated with less educational attainment and lower income;

**WHEREAS**, expert medical associations and professional organizations oppose the practice of conversion therapy, finding that its use on minors "lack(s) scientific credibility and clinical utility" (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry), is contraindicated (American Academy of Pediatrics), is not only ineffective but causes emotional and physical harm, particularly to young persons (American College of Physicians), is based on an outdated belief that a person should change or "repair" their orientation (American Medical Association), risks depression, anxiety, and self-destructive behavior, and may reinforce feelings of self-hatred (American Psychiatric Association), and is downright unethical for certain licensed professionals to engage in (American Psychological Association, American Counseling Association);

**WHEREAS**, my administration is committed to ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of all young people, including LGBTQ young people, and taking action to stop the harmful practice of conversion therapy on minors in Wisconsin; and

**WHEREAS**, the State has a strong interest in ensuring that state funds are used for evidence-based services, and not used to facilitate unethical,

dangerous, contraindicated, or harmful practices that are no longer recognized as viable by practicing health professionals, especially where those services pose a particular risk of harm to minors and degrade our State's commitment independence and dignity in self-determination.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, TONY EVERS**, Governor of the State of Wisconsin, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the Laws of the State, hereby order the following:

1. "Conversion therapy" in this order refers to the practice of attempting to change an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity, including efforts to change behaviors or gender expressions or eliminate or suppress sexual or romantic attractions or feelings toward individuals of the same sex.
2. "Conversion therapy" in this order does not include: any practice or treatment that provides acceptance, support, or understanding to an individual, or any practice or treatment that facilitates an individual's coping, social support, or identity exploration and development, so long as such practices or treatments do not seek to change sexual orientation or gender identity; any practice or treatment that is neutral with regard to sexual orientation or gender identity and that seeks to prevent or address unlawful conduct or unsafe practices, or any practice or treatment that assists an individual seeking to undergo a gender transition or who is in the process of undergoing a gender transition.
3. The Department of Health Services (DHS), Department of Children and Families (DCF), and Department of Corrections (DOC) shall take appropriate steps to expressly disallow payment of state and federal funds allocated by their respective agencies for conversion therapy for individuals under eighteen (18) years of age to the extent allowable by state and federal law.
4. The DHS, DOC, and DCF shall update any relevant policies, procedures, standards, manuals, treatment guidance, and other materials related to child health care, child welfare, and juvenile justice services to reflect this prohibition on the use of state and federal funds for the practice of conversion therapy on minors and to, where fitting, convey the dangers associated with the practice of conversion therapy on minors, to the extent allowable by state and federal law.

**IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Madison this 1<sup>st</sup> day of June in the year of two thousand twenty-one.

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TONY EVERS  
Governor

By the Governor:

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DOUGLAS LA FOLLETTE  
Secretary of State