

APA RESOLUTION on Transgender, Gender Identity, and Gender Expression Non-Discrimination

2008

WHEREAS transgender, gender variant and gender non-conforming people frequently experience prejudice and discrimination and psychologists can, through their professional actions, address these problems at both an individual and a societal level;

WHEREAS the American Psychological Association opposes prejudice and discrimination based on demographic characteristics including gender identity, as reflected in policies including the Hate Crimes Resolution (Paige, 2005), the Resolution on Prejudice Stereotypes and Discrimination (Paige, 2007), APA Bylaws (Article III, Section 2), the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (APA 2002, 3.01 and Principle E);

WHEREAS transgender, gender variant and gender non-conforming people benefit from treatment with therapists with specialized knowledge of their concerns (Lurie, 2005; Rachlin, 2002), and that the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct state that when scientific or professional knowledge ...is essential for the effective implementation of their services or research, psychologists have or obtain the training....necessary to ensure the competence of their services..." (APA 2002, 2.01b);

WHEREAS discrimination and prejudice against people based on their actual or perceived gender identity or expression detrimentally affects psychological, physical, social, and economic well-being (Bockting et al., 2005; Coan et al., 2005; Clements-Nolle, 2006; Kenagy, 2005; Kenagy & Bostwick, 2005; Nemoto et al., 2005; Resolution on Prejudice Stereotypes and Discrimination, Paige, 2007; Riser et al., 2005; Rodriguez-Madera & Toro-Alfonso, 2005; Sperber et al., 2005; Xavier et al., 2005);

WHEREAS transgender people may be denied basic non-gender transition related health care (Bockting et al., 2005; Coan et al., 2005; Clements-Nolle, 2006; GLBT Health Access Project, 2000; Kenagy, 2005; Kenagy & Bostwick, 2005; Nemoto et al., 2005; Riser et al., 2005; Rodriguez-Madera & Toro-Alfonso, 2005; Sperber et al., 2005; Xavier et al., 2005);

WHEREAS transgender, gender variant and gender non-conforming people may be denied appropriate gender transition related medical and mental health care despite evidence that appropriately evaluated individuals benefit from gender

transition treatments (De Cuypere et al., 2005; Kuiper & Cohen-Kettenis, 1988; Lundstrom, et al., 1984; Newfield, et al., 2006; Pfafflin & Junge, 1998; Rehman et al., 1999; Ross & Need, 1989; Smith et al., 2005);

WHEREAS transgender, gender variant and gender non-conforming people may be denied basic civil rights and protections (Minter, 2003; Spade, 2003) including: the right to civil marriage which confers a social status and important legal benefits, rights, and privileges (Paige, 2005); the right to obtain appropriate identity documents that are consistent with a post-transition identity; and the right to fair and safe and harassment-free institutional environments such as care facilities, treatment centers, shelters, housing, schools, prisons and juvenile justice programs;

WHEREAS transgender, gender variant and gender non-conforming people experience a disproportionate rate of homelessness (Kammerer et al., 2001), unemployment (APA, 2007) and job discrimination (Herbst et al., 2007), disproportionately report income below the poverty line (APA, 2007) and experience other financial disadvantages (Lev, 2004);

WHEREAS transgender, gender variant and gender non-conforming people may be at increased risk in institutional environments and facilities for harassment, physical and sexual assault (Edney, 2004; Minter, 2003; Peterson et al., 1996; Witten & Eyler, 2007) and inadequate medical care including denial of gender transition treatments such as hormone therapy (Edney, 2004; Peterson et al., 1996; Bockting et al., 2005; Coan et al., 2005; Clements-Nolle, 2006; Kenagy, 2005; Kenagy & Bostwick, 2005; Nemoto et al., 2005; Newfield et al., 2006; Riser et al., 2005; Rodriguez-Madera & Toro-Alfonso, 2005; Sperber et al., 2005; Xavier et al., 2005);

WHEREAS many transgender, gender variant and gender non-conforming children and youth face harassment and violence in school environments, foster care, residential treatment centers, homeless centers and juvenile justice programs (D'Augelli, Grossman, & Starks, 2006; Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network, 2003; Grossman, D'Augelli, & Slater, 2006);

WHEREAS psychologists are in a position to influence policies and practices in institutional settings, particularly regarding the implementation of the Standards of Care published by the

World Professional Association of Transgender Health (WPATH, formerly known as the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association) which recommend the continuation of gender transition treatments and especially hormone therapy during incarceration (Meyer et al., 2001);

WHEREAS psychological research has the potential to inform treatment, service provision, civil rights and approaches to promoting the well-being of transgender, gender variant and gender non-conforming people;

WHEREAS APA has a history of successful collaboration with other organizations to meet the needs of particular populations, and organizations outside of APA have useful resources for addressing the needs of transgender, gender variant and gender non-conforming people;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that APA opposes all public and private discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived gender identity and expression and urges the repeal of discriminatory laws and policies;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that APA supports the passage of laws and policies protecting the rights, legal benefits, and privileges of people of all gender identities and expressions;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that APA supports full access to employment, housing, and education inclusive of gender identity and expression;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that APA calls upon psychologists in their professional roles to provide appropriate, nondiscriminatory treatment to transgender, gender variant and gender non-conforming individuals and encourages psychologists to take a leadership role in working against discrimination towards transgender, gender variant and gender non-conforming individuals;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that APA encourages legal and social recognition of transgender individuals consistent with their gender identity and expression, including access to identity documents consistent with their gender identity and expression which do not involuntarily disclose their status as transgender for transgender people who permanently socially transition to another gender role;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that APA supports access to civil marriage and all its attendant benefits, rights, privileges and responsibilities, inclusive of gender identity or expression;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that APA supports efforts to provide fair and safe environments for transgender, gender variant and gender non-conforming people in institutional settings such as supportive living environments, long-term care

facilities, nursing homes, treatment facilities, and shelters, as well as custodial settings such as prisons and jails;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that APA supports efforts to provide safe and secure educational environments, at all levels of education, as well as foster care environments and juvenile justice programs, that promote an understanding and acceptance of self and in which all youths, including youth of all gender identities and expressions, may be free from discrimination, harassment, violence, and abuse;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that APA supports the provision of adequate and necessary mental and medical health care treatment for transgender, gender variant and gender non-conforming individuals;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that APA recognizes the efficacy, benefit and medical necessity of gender transition treatments for appropriately evaluated individuals and calls upon public and private insurers to cover these medically necessary treatments;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that APA supports access to appropriate treatment in institutional settings for people of all gender identities and expressions; including access to appropriate health care services including gender transition therapies;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that APA supports the creation of educational resources for all psychologists in working with individuals who are transgender, gender variant and gender non-conforming;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that APA supports the funding of basic and applied research concerning gender expression and gender identity;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that APA supports the creation of scientific and educational resources that inform public discussion about gender identity and gender expression to promote public policy development, and societal and familial attitudes and behaviors that affirm the dignity and rights of all individuals inclusive of gender identity or gender expression;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that APA supports cooperation with other organizations in efforts to accomplish these ends.

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Originally approved by the APA Council of Representatives in 2008.
Resolution was amended in August 2019 by the Council to reflect current terminology.