

## Fact Sheet – Executive Order 97

*Governor Roy Cooper signed Executive Order No. 97 to help protect LGBTQ minors from the harmful practice of conversion therapy. This executive order directs the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services to take appropriate steps to prohibit payment for conversion therapy for minors by any provider receiving state or federal funds allocated to DHHS.*

### **What is conversion therapy?**

[Conversion therapy](#), also known as “reparative therapy,” “sexual orientation change efforts,” or “gender identity change efforts,” is the practice of attempting to change an individual’s sexual orientation or gender identity. Conversion therapy methods may include aversion therapy, talk therapy, shaming, hypnosis, or other techniques.

### **Who opposes conversion therapy?**

Major medical and scientific associations including the American Medical Association, American Academy of Pediatrics and National Education Association [have strongly and uniformly rejected](#) conversion therapy for minors. These medical professionals and experts have concluded that the practice lacks scientific credibility, puts minors at risk of serious harm, and operates under the scientifically false belief that being LGBTQ is a disorder that requires treatment.

### **What does Executive Order No. 97 do?**

Executive Order No. 97 directs that no state taxpayer dollars can be used for conversion therapy for minors. It orders the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services to take the appropriate steps to prohibit payment for conversion therapy by any health care provider receiving state or federal funds, such as North Carolina Medicaid and North Carolina Health Choice. State and federal funds for medical and mental health care should provide services that, unlike conversion therapy, are intended to prevent, diagnose, correct, or cure recognized medical conditions.

### **Why is Executive Order No. 97 necessary?**

Governor Cooper is committed to promoting and implementing actions that protect the wellbeing of all North Carolina residents, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Conversion therapy has been shown to [pose serious health risks to LGBTQ individuals](#), including depression, [increased suicide](#), and substance abuse. There are no restrictions currently in place in North Carolina to protect individuals from this harmful practice.

### **How common is conversion therapy?**

The [Williams Institute reports](#) that more than 698,000 LGBTQ adults (ages 18-59) in the United States have been subjected to some form of conversion therapy, including around 350,000 LGBTQ adults who received it as adolescents. According to a recent [survey by the Trevor Project](#), 2 in 3 LGBTQ youth report that someone has tried to convince them to change their sexual orientation or gender identity. The survey also showed that 42 percent of LGBTQ youth, and 57 percent of transgender and non-binary youth, who were subjected to conversion therapy attempted suicide.

### **Do other states have restrictions or bans on conversion therapy?**

Yes. [18 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia](#) have passed laws prohibiting licensed mental health and medical professionals from performing conversion therapy on minors. More than 50 local jurisdictions across the United States have also banned the practice on minors.