



MEMORANDUM

TO: City of West Allis License & Health Committee
FROM: Board of Health
DATE: August 27, 2020
SUBJECT: Communication in regard to Conversion Therapy

Conversion therapy refers to the practice that attempts to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

In regard to the matter of conversion therapy for minors, the below reflects the key findings of a report published by the SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration), a federal agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The report focuses on conversion therapy for minors and its recommendations are based on consensus statements of experts in the field who reviewed available research, expert clinical guidance, and professional health association reports.

Reference:

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Ending Conversion Therapy: Supporting and Affirming LGBTQ Youth. HHS Publication No. (SMA) 15-4928. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2015.

Key statements/findings:

- “• Same-gender sexual orientation (including identity, behavior, and attraction) and variations in gender identity and gender expression are a part of the normal spectrum of human diversity and do not constitute a mental disorder.
- There is limited research on conversion therapy efforts among children and adolescents; however, none of the existing research supports the premise that mental or behavioral health interventions can alter gender identity or sexual orientation.
- Interventions [conversion therapy] aimed at a fixed outcome, such as gender conformity or heterosexual orientation, including those aimed at changing gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation are coercive, can be harmful, and should not be part of behavioral health treatment. (Sources: *American Psychiatric Association, 2013b*; *American Psychological Association, 2010*; *National Association of Social Workers, 2008*).”

A review of conversion therapy practices occurring in our jurisdiction resulted in no published findings. A search of locations where an **ordinance/ban** has been enacted reveals the following:



20 States;
72 US counties, municipalities and communities:

- 9 Wisconsin locations
 - Milwaukee > April 4, 2018
 - Madison > July 10, 2018
 - Eau Claire > October 9, 2018
 - Cudahy > January 2, 2019
 - Shorewood > June 17, 2019
 - Racine > July 16, 2019
 - Sheboygan > August 5, 2019
 - Superior > August 20, 2019
 - Glendale > August 26, 2019

Source: Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia