

# Municipal Ban Common FAQ's

Provided by OutFront MN

## Terminology

### ***Q: What is conversion therapy?***

A: Conversion Therapy is when someone tries to change another person's sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression.

Conversion Therapy is also sometimes referred to as "reparative therapy," "ex-gay therapy," or "sexual orientation change efforts." Conversion therapy can include a variety of ineffective and unsafe practices aimed at changing a person's sexual orientation or efforts to change a person's gender identity or expression.

### ***Q: What is gender identity?***

A: Gender identity is an important part of identity, and can be expressed through appearance and behavior. Gender identity is how we perceive ourselves, and how we wish to be perceived by others. A person may identify as male, female, non-binary, Two-Spirit, gender non-conforming, among others.

### ***Q: What is sexual orientation?***

A: A part of someone's identity that includes their sexual, romantic, and/or emotional attraction to another person(s). A person may identify as gay, straight, bisexual, lesbian, asexual, pansexual, aromantic, demisexual, among others.

### ***Q: Is conversion therapy harmful?***

A: The practice of conversion therapy has been found to be dangerous to an individual's mental and physical wellbeing. There is no scientifically valid evidence that supports the practice of conversion therapy. In fact, the American Psychological Association, the American Medical Association, and the American Academy of Pediatrics both oppose and condemn conversion therapy.

## Legal

### ***Q: Should we use uniform ordinance language, or create our own?***

A: It's best to use the language that has been passed in other cities. Each one of these ordinances has language derived from the Denver Ban. This ordinance was deliberated on by many lawyers and policy makers. It is the most legally sound and ethical for survivors of conversion therapy.

### ***Q: Why a fine rather than a criminal charge?***

A: There are a few reasons why it is best to **only** use administrative fines as consequences. First and foremost, it is the most ethical means for justice. If this were a criminal charge, survivors of conversion therapy would have to seek justice through the police department. Aside from the long, fraught history between the LGBTQ+ community and police-- it can be

traumatizing for young people and vulnerable adults to have to press charges and potentially testify in court simply to report conversion therapy. We want conversion therapy to be reported. And, we want conversion therapy to actually stop. We know that by making the process difficult, inaccessible, and possibly traumatizing-- we are not doing any of these things. Please contact Wendy Murphy, Deputy City Attorney at City of Bloomington, MN for more insight on this.

Second, proposing criminal charges is a threat to the integrity of the ordinance. While this ordinance does not propose sanctions on religious based services, attaching criminal consequences to this therapy heightens our opposition's radar. It is possible that straying away from administrative consequences could lead to a lawsuit if not from the high courts.

Seriously, please stick to criminal consequences.

## **Reporting**

An important step to consider before proposing an ordinance is-- how will survivors report? Will they make a report through the city council? The city clerk's office? The city attorney's office? If the plan is poorly thought out or executed, you may risk causing more harm to survivors of conversion therapy. It is important to figure out these steps before the ordinance is passed so that survivors can seek justice immediately.

### ***Our recommendation:***

We appreciate the Duluth model that grassroots community members created. In this model, survivors can make a report in person or online.

**Website:** The [Duluth Website](#) has loads of information and an FAQ page that is accessible and trauma informed.

**Reporting Mechanism:** [The online portal](#) asks questions in an accessible, trauma informed manner. A survivor can easily access this portal and file a report on their own, or with a trusted adult.

**Advocacy:** Duluth also has an option to go through the reporting process accompanied by a contracted, trusted community advocate. Duluth is currently working with Lifehouse, a trusted local organization that explicitly works with LGBTQ+ youth in crisis. This allows for the survivor to be aware of all of their options while working with someone who understands their unique needs.