

Changing Canada's Conversion Therapy Law

Conversion therapy is generally defined as any activity that tries to change someone's sexual orientation or gender identity.

Conversion therapy bans can be supported if they are well-defined and capture only coercive or medicalized practices such as shock therapy. But Canada's conversion therapy law, passed in 2021 through Bill C-4, has several major flaws that need fixing.



Issues with Canada's conversion therapy ban

1. **It is unclear and overly broad.** It threatens to capture legitimate body-affirming counseling in addition to the discredited, invasive procedures that should be banned.
2. **It endorses a contentious view of sexual morality and gender.** It goes so far as to label other views, including the biblical view, as "myths" and "stereotypes."
3. **It violates Canadians' freedom.** It tries to prevent citizens from expressing their beliefs and limits the ways people can seek help for gender dysphoria or unwanted same-sex attraction.
4. **It fails to prevent the harmful practice of medical transitioning.** It forces an "affirmative" model of care that restricts body-affirming counselling but allows invasive hormonal and surgical treatments that have an irreversible impact.

The government can fix the issues with the conversion therapy law by fixing the legal definition of what qualifies as conversion therapy.



SHOULD qualify as conversion therapy:

- > All non-consensual practices
- > All medical procedures aimed at "curing" same-sex attraction or gender dysphoria (e.g. lobotomies, drugs, electro-convulsive therapy, medical gender transitions through blockers, cross-sex hormones, or surgeries)



SHOULDN'T qualify as conversion therapy:

- > Counselling that encourages embracing one's biological sex
- > Counselling that encourages or discourages certain behaviour
- > Counselling that investigates past trauma, abuse, or neglect
- > Teaching or discussing gender and sexual ethics



Questions to ask your federal representative

- #1 Do you support body-affirming counselling for people struggling with gender dysphoria?
- #2 Do you believe people should be encouraged to love and accept the body they are born with?
- #3 Will you work to fix the definition of conversion therapy in Canada's current law to ensure Christian counsellors and pastors are able to freely help people seeking counseling in line with their religious beliefs?

For more information, check out ARPA Canada's policy report on Conversion Therapy at arpacanada.ca/publications