

LGBTQ+ Policy in Tennessee 2026

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CAMPAIGN FOR
SOUTHERN
EQUALITY



Introductions & Plan for Our Evening

- **About us and our organizations**
- **Tonight**
 - Current Policy Landscape for LGBTQ+ Tennesseans
 - Broader National Landscape & Federal Issues
 - What You Can Do

The Current Policy Landscape for LGBTQ+ Tennesseans

● LGBTQ+ Youth

- Ban on Transgender Youth Sports Participation
- Ban on Transgender Youth Using School Facilities
- “Don’t Say LGBTQ+” School Censorship Law
- [Forced Outing Bill](#)
- [Pronoun bill](#)

● Nondiscrimination

- TN has law preventing the passage or enforcement of local nondiscrimination ordinances

The Current Policy Landscape for LGBTQ+ Tennesseans

● Healthcare

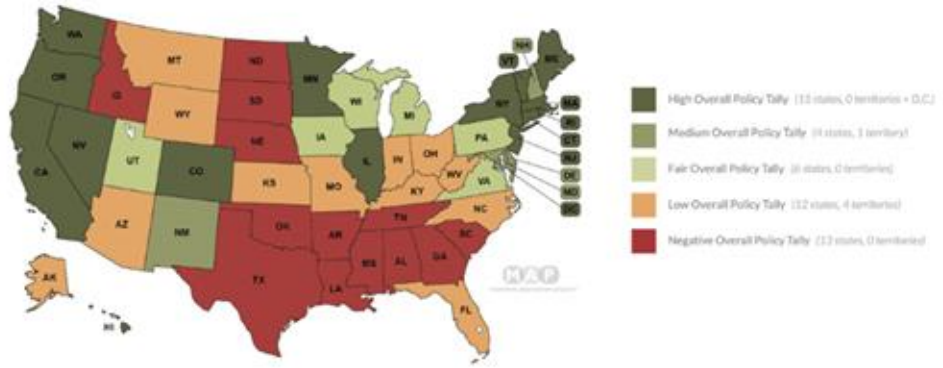
- Ban on Medical Care for Transgender Youth
- State Medicaid policy explicitly excludes transgender-related health care for all ages
- State explicitly excludes gender-affirming care from its state employee health benefits
- TN criminalizes transmission of HIV and may require sex offender registration

● ID Documents for Transgender Individuals

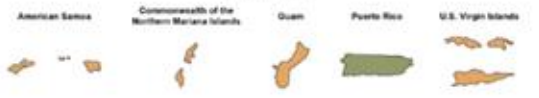
- TN does not allow people to amend the gender marker on their birth certificate or driver's license

How Tennessee Fits Into the Nation

June 2020



U.S. Territories



February 2026



U.S. Territories

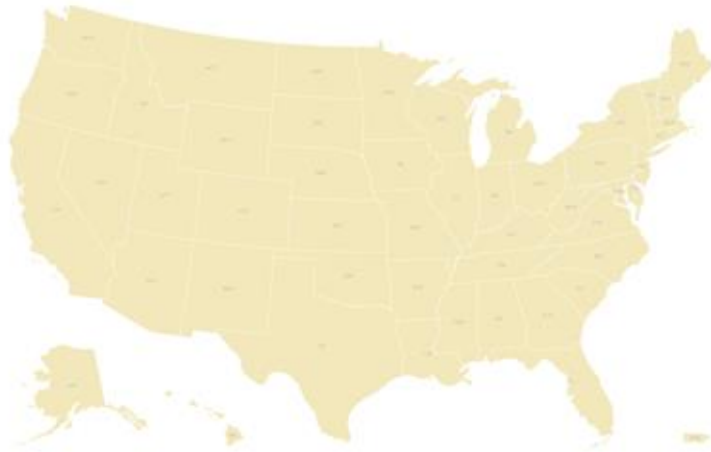


Rapid Progression of Anti-Trans State Laws



State Bans on Medically Necessary Care for Transgender Youth

End of 2020: 0 states



Recent Federal Actions



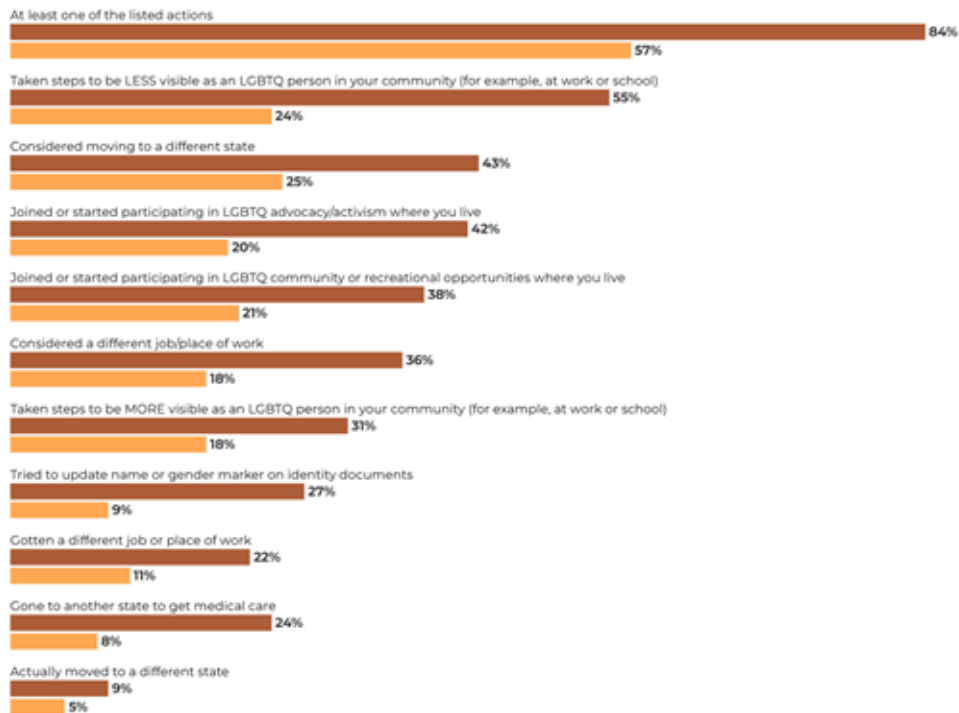
More than 8 in 10 Transgender & Nonbinary People, And the Majority of All LGBTQ People, Have Made Life Decisions Due to LGBTQ-Related Politics Since the November Election

% of respondents saying that LGBTQ-related politics or laws have made them or their family take each action since the November 2024 election

All actions

Enter series to show

■ Transgender & nonbinary people
■ All LGBTQ people



Source: MAP/NORC survey of 1,055 LGBTQ U.S. adults, conducted May 29 - June 13, 2025.

Anti-LGBTQ+ Bills Advancing in the 2026 Legislative Session

LGBTQ+ Youth

SB1 665/HB 1666

Sen. Rose and Rep. Maberry

As introduced, includes "honorifics" in the ban on requiring a student, teacher, employee, or contractor to use or provide a person's name or pronouns at school.

Anti-LGBTQ+ Bills Advancing in the 2026 Legislative Session

Nondiscrimination

SB 1745/HB 1472

Sen. Bowling and Rep. Bulso

Referred to as the “Banning Bostock Act”, this bill attempts to eliminate nondiscrimination protections on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation.

Anti-LGBTQ+ Bills Advancing in the 2026 Legislative Session

Healthcare

SB1664/HB1665

Sen. Rose and Rep. Maberry.

Prohibits healthcare providers from asking gender-related questions to youth under 18 unless a parent or guardian is present and provides written consent.

Anti-LGBTQ+ Bills Advancing in the 2026 Legislative Session

Healthcare

SB 2031/HB 1872
Sen. Lowe and Rep. Zachary.

Increases liability for providers of gender-affirming care by allowing patients or their parents/guardians to file civil action against providers if they believe they were coerced into receiving the healthcare.

Anti-LGBTQ+ Bills Advancing in the 2026 Legislative Session

Healthcare

SB 2045
Sen. Taylor

Aims to increase state surveillance of gender-affirming care by requiring that healthcare provider regulatory authorities report to the state department of health the number and type of disciplinary actions taken against a healthcare providers who offer gender-affirming care to youth. **Gender-affirming care is already banned for youth in Tennessee.**

Anti-LGBTQ+ Bills Advancing in the 2026 Legislative Session

Healthcare

SB 2118
Sen. Lowe

Prohibits TennCare from covering medical care “for the purpose of enabling the individual to identify with, or live as, a purported identity inconsistent with the individual's sex, or treat purported discomfort or distress from a discordance between the individual's sex and asserted identity.” **Gender-affirming surgery and medications are already excluded from TennCare coverage.**

Anti-LGBTQ+ Bills Advancing in the 2026 Legislative Session

Relationships & Families

SB 1746/HB 1473

Sen. Bowling and Rep. Bulso

States that private citizens and organizations are not required to recognize the marriages of same-sex couples. Allows individuals to refuse to officiate a marriage for a same-sex couple.

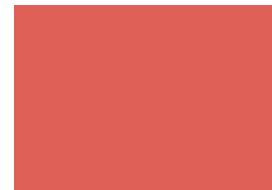
Anti-LGBTQ+ Bills Advancing in the 2026 Legislative Session

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Anti-LGBTQ+ Bills Advancing in the 2026 Legislative Session

Relationships & Families

SB 1989/HB 2082

Sen. Bowling and Rep. Bulso

Specifies that a parent or guardian's refusal to affirm their child's gender identity does not constitute child abuse, child neglect, or child endangerment, and must not be considered as a negative factor by a court in determining a custody arrangement.

Anti-LGBTQ+ Bills Advancing in the 2026 Legislative Session

Other

HB 1474

Rep. Bulso

Referred to as the “No Pride Flag or Month Act”, this bill bans state agencies from displaying Pride flags or recognizing Pride Month, and puts in place civil penalties for violations.

Anti-LGBTQ+ Bills Advancing in the 2026 Legislative Session

Other

HB 0884/SB 1424

Rep. Bulso

Requires that any business that hosts a drag event be categorized as an “adult-oriented establishment”.

Redefining What Success Looks Like

- Stopping bills from advancing
- Reducing harms of bad legislation
- Working in coalition and growing the tent
- Opportunities outside of the legislative, regulatory process
- Caring for each other

Redefining What Success Looks Like

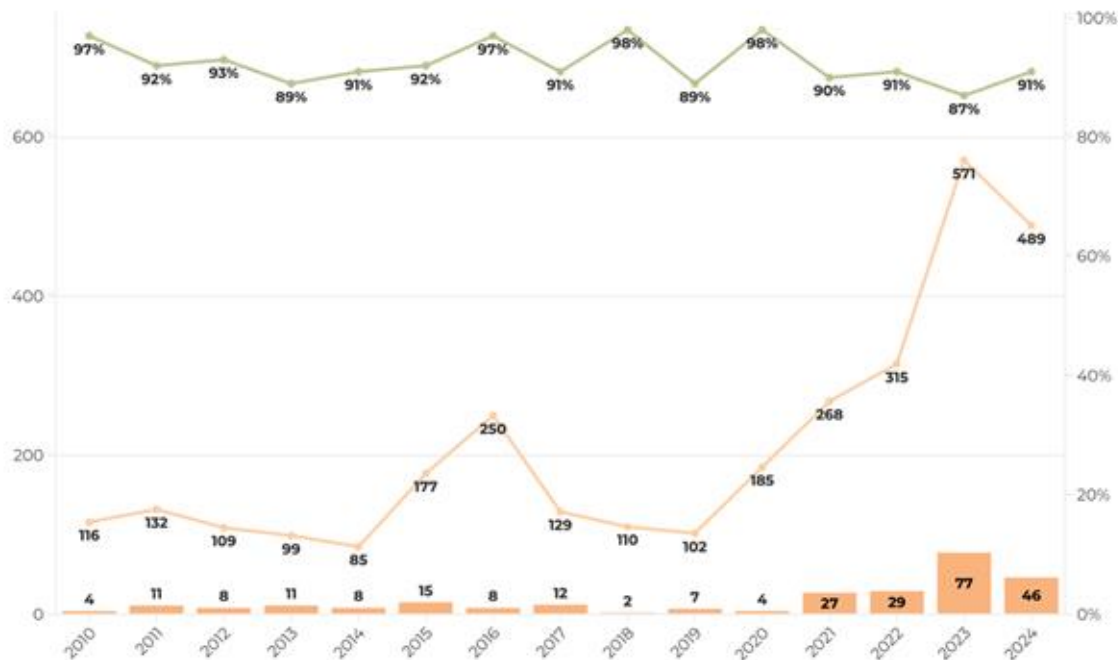
State Legislative Attacks on LGBTQ People Have Dramatically Escalated—But the LGBTQ Movement Consistently Defeats An Average of 92% of Anti-LGBTQ Bills Each Year

State Anti-LGBTQ Bills % Defeated Introduced Passed

We defeated approximately

92%

of anti-LGBTQ bills on average over the last 15 years.



Data from HRC and Equality Federation's State Equality Index. Visual adapted by MAP

Note: In 2024, Texas, Montana, North Dakota, and Nevada were not in session.

Get Involved with LGBTQ+ Legislative Work in Tennessee

Tennessee Equality Project

- An organization working for the equality of LGBTQ people in Tennessee with weekly campaigns during the legislative session.
 - Website: tnep.org
 - Facebook, Instagram, Bluesky, Tiktok: @tnequality



Resources for LGBTQ+ Tennesseans from Campaign for Southern Equality Trans Youth Emergency Project



Patient Navigation to unimpacted providers through 1-on-1 calls



Travel Grants of \$500, renewable every 3 months



Network of Care & Information for families of trans youth





Support Group for Parents & Caregivers of Trans Youth

The Trans Youth Emergency Project hosts a monthly online youth and parent support session led by mothasistah™ and Mandy Giles of Parents of Trans Youth.

Next session: Sunday, February 15th

southernequality.org/tyepparentsupport/



Resources for LGBTQ+ Tennesseans from Campaign for Southern Equality Supportive Schools

- **Support local organizing** We support students, families, and educators in their efforts to build LGBTQ+ inclusive schools.
- **Provide trainings & workshops** We develop workshops and trainings that enable educators and families to create a more supportive school environment for LGBTQ+ students
- **Share policy guidance** We provide guidance on LGBTQ+ inclusive policies and best practices for classrooms, schools, and school districts.
- **Challenge anti-LGBTQ+ policies** We collaborate with local and national partners to promote LGBTQ+ affirming legislation and challenge discriminatory policies.

