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SUBMISSION

DRAFT BILL TO END THE USE OF CONVERSION PRACTICES IN TASMANIA

July 2026

ABOUT US

For over two decades and counting TasPride has provided a voice and close knit community for LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians and their friends.

Today, we are stronger than ever! We're here to support, unite, champion and celebrate our lives, goals, achievements and love.

Every February we host the colourful TasPride Festival, Artfully Queer Exhibition and Arts Program, as well as several other events throughout the year. We also help promote a wide range of activities produced all year round by the many LGBTIQA+ organisations in Tasmania.

We're passionate and dedicated to celebrating, uniting and promoting the Tasmanian LGBTIQA+ community. We do this by providing opportunities for everyone to come together and share our collective pride!

Mission Statement

TasPride Inc. plans and delivers inclusive events and activities celebrating and strengthening the Tasmanian Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, intersex and Queer (LGBTIQA+) Communities TasPride Inc. is the new name for the Gay and Lesbian Community Centre Inc.

After more than 20 years it was agreed there was a need for a more inclusive Association name, which reflected the diversity of the whole LGBTIQ Community. All previous GLCC Inc. property, contracts, agreements and partnerships are automatically transferred to TasPride inc.

Objectives

- Facilitate events encouraging positive interaction between members of the Tasmanian LGBTIQ Communities,
- Promote harmonious and inclusive interaction between the Tasmanian LGBTIQA+ and wider communities
- Develop partnerships with like-minded organisations and groups to build capacity in TasPride Inc. and our community,
- Maintain transparent and accountable management processes to deliver the statutory responsibilities of TasPride Inc., and
- Promote awareness of TasPride Inc. and its activities across Tasmania

INTRODUCTION

TasPride welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the draft Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill 2026 as an important reform to protect Tasmanians from harmful practices directed at changing, suppressing or eradicating a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Bill represents a significant advancement on previous proposals and reflects the recommendations of the Tasmanian Law Reform Institute, experiences from other Australian jurisdictions, and extensive consultation with advocates, legal experts and people with lived experience.

The Bill appropriately recognises that conversion practices cause significant and long-lasting harm, while seeking to balance protection from harm with individual freedoms, therapeutic practice, parental engagement and religious expression.

Its combination of prevention, education, civil responses and targeted criminal offences provides a proportionate and modern regulatory framework

THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS BILL FOR THE TASMANIAN LGBTIQA+ COMMUNITY

- Conversion practices are based on the premise that being LGBTIQA+, or gender and sexually diverse is a problem that should be fixed. When such practices remain legal or tolerated, they can reinforce the belief that LGBTIQA+ identities are defective, unhealthy, or less legitimate than other identities.
- The absence of legal prohibition can signal social acceptance of efforts to suppress or reject LGBTIQA+ identities. This may contribute to exclusion in families, schools, workplaces, faith communities, and community organisations, making it harder for LGBTIQA+ people to participate fully and safely in society.
- Conversion practices are often promoted by family members, religious leaders, or trusted authority figures. This can create long-term conflict, loss of trust, family estrangement, and social isolation.
- Governments, schools, employers, and health services may be working to promote diversity and inclusion. Allowing conversion practices sends a contradictory message: on one hand affirming equality, while on the other permitting attempts to change or suppress a person's identity. This can weaken public confidence in anti-discrimination.
- When conversion practices are available through counselling, religious settings, or other services, some people may become reluctant to seek mental health or healthcare support due to fear of judgment or attempts to alter their identity. This can reduce trust in institutions and delay access to appropriate care.
- Evidence suggests that young LGBTIQA+ people exposed to conversion practices experience higher levels of suicidal ideation and suicide attempts. In a social context, the continued existence of these practices can make young people feel less accepted and less safe.
- From a human rights perspective, failing to prohibit conversion practices can be interpreted as treating LGBTIQA+ people differently from other groups who are protected from harmful or deceptive interventions.

STRENGTHENING THE BILL

Whist TasPride is in support of the Bill, TasPride believes that further consideration should be given to the following:

- **Obligation of organisations: there should be a positive duty to prevent conversion**

Consider strengthening the Bill by requiring organisations to take reasonable steps to prevent conversion practices. This would reduce the burden on survivors to initiate action after harm has occurred, align with existing Tasmanian anti-discrimination obligations, and ensure guidance issued by the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner is supported by a clear expectation of proactive compliance. Any duty could be proportionate to the size and resources of the organisation.

- **Civil redress for survivors**

Consider whether the Bill should enable survivors of conversion practices to seek civil remedies directly, including apologies or compensation. While the Bill provides enforcement mechanisms to stop unlawful conduct, it does not currently offer survivors a pathway to obtain redress for harm suffered. A civil cause of action would align with existing remedies available under Tasmania's anti-discrimination framework and complement the Bill's broader protective objectives.

- **Protection of asexual, aromantic and agender people**

The Tasmanian Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill 2026 relies on the definitions of sexual orientation and gender identity contained in the Anti-Discrimination Act. As these definitions do not expressly include asexual, aromantic and agender identities, uncertainty remains as to whether people with those attributes are protected by the Bill.

To ensure the Bill's protections extend equally and unambiguously to all people who may be vulnerable to conversion practices, the definitions of sexual orientation and gender.

- **Mandatory referrals**

Given Tasmania's legislative requirements in relation to institutional child sexual abuse, the bill should have a mandatory referral requirement from relevant bodies such as the state's Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, Ombudsman, Health Complaints Commissioner and Police.

CONCLUSION

TasPride endorses the draft *Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill 2026*, subject to the recommendations outlined above being incorporated to strengthen the legislation. This Bill represents an important and necessary reform that will help foster a safer, more inclusive, and affirming Tasmania for LGBTQA+ people.