



Prohibited Businesses Bylaw bans the practice and promotion of conversion therapy in Calgary

The City of Calgary strives to be a welcoming city for all people, regardless of gender and sexual orientation; committed to supporting equality and human rights.

The Prohibited Businesses Bylaw (20M2020) bans the practice and promotion of “conversion therapy” in Calgary. These regulations protect Calgarians from “conversion therapy,” which has been deemed a harmful and unscientific practice. All levels of government are required to play a role in protecting people from the harms associated with it.

The bylaw includes a fine for those advertising or offering “conversion therapy” services within Calgary.

The practice of “conversion therapy”

By definition, “conversion therapy” means a practice, treatment or service designed to change, repress or discourage a person’s sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, or to repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour.

To protect Calgarians, the bylaw prohibits the business practice of promoting or offering “conversion therapy” services in Calgary.

Businesses include:

- A commercial, merchandising, or industrial activity or undertaking.
- A profession, trade, occupation, calling, or employment.
- Activity providing goods or services.
- Not-for-profit, co-operatives or associations, however organized or formed.

Exemptions

Personal gender or non-binary exploration

The bylaw does not influence a practice, treatment or service that relates to a person's social, medical or legal gender transitions; or to a person's non-judgmental exploration and acceptance of their identity or development.

Personal conversations or discussions

The Prohibited Businesses Bylaw does not prevent or restrict religious thoughts or beliefs, nor does it prevent the right to worship. Open and non-judgmental faith-based conversations or discussions and leadership counsel are not regulated within this bylaw.

This bylaw places reasonable limits on any practice, treatment or service attempting to change, repress or discourage a person's sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, or to repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour.

Businesses providing general counsel

General counselling services are protected if the services are providing non-judgmental exploration and acceptance of a person's identity or development that do not fall within the bylaw definition of conversion therapy.



Transactional proof of engagement or operation

In a prosecution for contravention of this bylaw, proof of one transaction in the business or that the business has been advertised is sufficient to establish that a person is engaged in or operates the business. An example of transactional proof would be monetary exchange for a service as defined.

How to report and ask questions

The bylaw will operate on a complaint basis – individuals or businesses known or suspected to be engaged in this process can be reported by calling 311. Every call will be taken seriously and will be investigated.

For any questions on the bylaw or exemptions, call 311.

Enforcement

Where an officer believes that a person has contravened any provision of the bylaw, the officer may commence proceedings against the person by issuing a violation ticket.

The bylaw carries a \$10,000 fine for contravention.

