



# Trans\* Identification in Alberta: A brief analysis to Alberta Human Services

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Submitted to Alberta Human Services Associate  
Minister Sandra Jansen, Family and Community  
Safety, regarding changes to the *Alberta Vital  
Statistics Act* (2014)

by Jan Buterman on behalf of the

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## Introduction

The Trans Equality Society of Alberta (TESA) is pleased to present our analysis, *Trans\* Identification in Alberta*, to Alberta Human Services Associate Minister Sandra Jansen, Family and Community Safety. TESA's mission is to be a witness to and a voice for matters concerning trans\*-identified Albertans. TESA engages in advocacy and education in three primary areas: government, outreach, and community development. Our meeting of May 15, 2014 marks the first known instance of an elected official of the province of Alberta reaching out to the trans\* community for formal consultation on matters concerning trans\* Albertans.

TESA thanks the Honourable Minister for this opportunity for discussion and consultation for the mutual benefit of all Albertans.

The impetus for this analysis is a change to the *Alberta Vital Statistics Act* that passed third reading on May 8, 2014; our analysis also provides a brief overview of adjunct legislation that tends to negatively impact trans\* Albertans. In addition to our recent publication, *State of Trans\* in Alberta: Trans Day of Visibility Report 2014*, TESA is pleased to provide this analysis towards developing dialogue and consultation for a more complete inclusion for trans\* people within Alberta. This analysis contains recommendations related to each area identified for consideration, elaborating on issues raised by and connected to changes to the *Vital Statistics Act*.

This analysis is by no means exhaustive.

## Service Alberta Acts & Regulations

### *Vital Statistics Act*

TESA has long held concerns regarding Alberta's *Vital Statistics Act*, noting publicly through media interviews at our formation in 2009 that without access to then-delisted SRS/GRS (Sex/Gender Reassignment Surgery), trans\* Albertans would no longer qualify to amend either their birth certificates or their operator's (driver's) licences, thus trans\* Albertans would face serious difficulty in obtaining employment as they were unlikely to have sufficient congruent government-issued identification to avoid being 'outed' without consent. At that time, having access to SRS/GRS was the only legally-valid way for trans\* Albertans to have their identification amended, a process that was instituted in amendments to Alberta's *Vital Statistics Act* in 1973 (Manitoba Law Reform Commission, 1976, p. 17).

TESA is also concerned that such requirements were additionally reflective of an extension of practises embedded within the *Sexual Sterilization Act* (1928). Such practises are often believed to have ended at the time of the abolishment of the Alberta Eugenics Board in 1972, yet the experiences our

contemporary trans\* communities with regards to amending birth certificates under the *Vital Statistics Act* in Alberta evidences otherwise.

Recently, an Alberta Court of Queen's Bench ruling by Justice Burrows struck down provisions of Alberta's *Vital Statistics Act* as unconstitutional (*C.F. v. Alberta (Vital Statistics)* at paragraphs [63] and [64], 2014). Justice Burrows noted, "The *VSA [Vital Statistics Act]* birth registration system, and in particular the parts of it which relate to the issuing of birth certificates contribute to the disadvantage experienced by transgendered persons by perpetuating the prejudice and stereotyping to which they are subject" (at paragraph [59]).

Alberta's *Bill 12, Statutes Amendment Act* (2014) passed third reading on May 8, 2014. Surprisingly, despite Justice Burrows' declaration of the *Act's* provisions to amend birth certificates for transgender people in Alberta to be unconstitutional, *Bill 12* made no attempt to revise the *Act* itself to be consistent with this decision. Instead, a paragraph was inserted after the unconstitutional provision that stated:

(1.1) The Registrar may, in a circumstance provided for in the regulations and subject to any conditions in the regulations, amend the sex on the person's record of birth and may, with the consent of the other party to the marriage, amend the sex on the record of a subsisting marriage, if any, of the person that is registered in Alberta. (*Bill 12*, first instance of p. 27)

As regulation requires no public scrutiny--unlike introducing or amending acts through the process of three readings in the Legislature and the possibility of deeper investigation by committee--TESA submits that leaving the *Act*, for all intents and purposes, untouched, is grossly inappropriate. All Albertans should be capable of accessing applicable law and be able to know and understand the law or laws governing them: with the successful passage of *Bill 12*, Albertans would be forgiven if they were to believe the requirement for surgery in advance of amending a modern citizen's most important, foundational document--the birth certificate--still stands.

Ontario and Québec have already amended legislation regarding this matter. Both British Columbia (*Bill 17-2014*) and Manitoba (*Bill 56*) are currently debating amendment bills in their respective legislatures. Important to note is that all such provinces have amended or are amending their respective vital statistics *Acts*, not pushing such processes into the murky and uncertain territory of regulation.

Of all provinces undertaking these amendments, British Columbia's is the most succinct and appears to allow both the Registrar and the trans\* individual to know clearly that they have met the terms needed to amend their sex designation.

With regards to "amendment to sex designation," British Columbia's *Bill 17* (2014) states that the British Columbia *Vital Statistics Act* will repeal the existing section and instead read,

Amendment to sex designation

27 (1) This section applies if a person's birth has been registered in British Columbia and an amendment to the registration is desired respecting the person's sex designation.

- (2) A person may apply to the registrar general for an amendment to the sex designation on the person's birth registration by providing all of the following in the form required by the registrar general:
- (a) an application setting out the desired amendment;
  - (b) a declaration, made by the applicant, stating that the applicant has assumed, identifies with and intends to maintain the gender identity that corresponds with the desired sex designation;
  - (c) a statement from one of the following persons that confirms that the sex designation on the applicant's birth registration does not correspond with the applicant's gender identity:
    - (i) a practising registrant of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia;
    - (ii) a practising registrant of the College of Psychologists of British Columbia;
    - (iii) in the case of an applicant who resides outside British Columbia, a person who is practising and who is authorized, in another province or territory, to practise a health profession equivalent to that practised by a person referred to in subparagraph (i) or (ii);
  - (d) in the case of a minor, the consent of all parents having guardianship and all other guardians of the minor.
- (3) The minister may waive or modify a requirement of subsection (2)
- (a) on application in the form required by the minister, made by the person desiring the amendment to the person's birth registration, and
  - (b) if satisfied that the waiver or modification would be in the person's best interests.
- (4) On being satisfied that an application under subsection (2) is made in good faith and on payment of the prescribed fee, the registrar general must amend the person's birth registration.
- (5) A birth certificate issued after the making of an amendment under this section must be prepared as if the person's original birth registration had been made containing the sex designation as amended.
- (*Bill 17, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act [BC], 2014, online, no page numbers*)

British Columbia's proposed amendment is concise, is specific, and is measurable: that is to say, it is possible for all people rationally connected to the process of amending sex designations on birth certificates in British Columbia to know clearly that all aspects of the process have been met successfully.

British Columbia's amendment also notes the need for minors to have access to birth certificate sex designation amendments (S.27(2)(d)) rather than assuming only adults may need to have this essential foundational document to reflect accurately the person the birth certificate identifies. Transitioning for minors is generally limited to social transition and some hormone changes (if indicated): no trans\*

youth would be able to meet the surgical burden demanded by prior vital statistics *Acts* across Canada. Trans\* youth then face the difficulty of being unable to have correct information registered for the purposes of public education, wherein the youth's personal, private information may be shared with many dozens of people, from classroom teachers to school administrators. TESA strongly supports the right of Albertans to obtain correct government-issued identification, recognising the role of parents and guardians in ensuring minors will have appropriate identification for school, international travel, and other necessary elements of modern life. The British Columbia model supports parents and guardians in this essential role, affirming the right of youth to correct foundational identification.

British Columbia's proposed amendment--while involving a third-party professional such as a physician, surgeon, or psychologist--requests only that such a third-party professional provide affirmation "that the sex designation on the applicant's birth registration does not correspond with the applicant's gender identity" (S.27(2)(c)). In other words, British Columbia would allow their trans\* citizens the ability to make amendments to the sex designation on their birth certificates without having to disclose personal medical diagnoses to people other than their doctors. TESA notes that while it is common practise to demand medical diagnostic information from trans\* people before allowing trans\* people to obtain official documentation (for example, to obtain a correct Alberta operator's licence or a Canadian passport), TESA does not support such practises: disclosing personal medical information should be at the discretion of the individual, not the whim of any given department or ministry at any level of government.

While TESA strongly supports the model proposed by British Columbia, TESA remains concerned that such models require validation by a third-party. TESA believes trans\* individuals should--by default--be accepted as competent to swear a declaration or other oath, just as any Albertan is accepted as competent to do so, excepting situations wherein an individual's capacity to understand and make decisions about personal matters has been assessed to be insufficient (Office of the Public Guardian, 2008, p. 2). Accepting the competence of trans\* individuals would abrogate the need for a third-party to affirm the validity of a trans\* individual's declaration.

### **Recommendations:**

- (a) TESA recommends that portions of the *Vital Statistics Act* found to be unconstitutional be struck from the *Act*.
- (b) TESA recommends that changes to the process for amending the sex designation on an Alberta birth certificate be contained within the *Alberta Vital Statistics Act*, rather than regulation.
- (c) TESA recommends that Alberta amends the *Vital Statistics Act* to reflect a process similar to that of British Columbia.
- (d) TESA recommends that any statements made by third parties (such as a medical professional) be limited to an affirmation of the conflict between the sex designation on the birth certificate and the individual's lived identity.
- (e) TESA recommends that Alberta accept trans\* individuals as competent to make

declarations without requiring third-party affirmation.

Finally, TESA notes that quite outside the processes in place for amending the sex designation on an Alberta birth certificate, the *Vital Statistics Act* still retains Section 26 regarding publication of legal change of name in the *Alberta Gazette* by the Registrar. While S.26(2) states that "The Registrar or the Court of Queen's Bench may dispense with the requirement for publication of the notice ... if, in the Registrar's or Court's opinion" that "(c) the person whose name is being changed would be unduly prejudiced or embarrassed or may be harmed by the publication of the notice," TESA is unaware of any trans\* Albertans successfully invoking this section to prevent publicly-accessible information about a person's former and current legal name without professional legal assistance.

**Recommendation:**

- (a) TESA recommends that Alberta also amend the *Vital Statistics Act* to make the publication of any change of name in the *Alberta Gazette*--whether or not the individual undertaking the change of name is trans\*--to be removed from databases accessible online.

## ***Operator Licensing and Vehicle Control Regulation***

The regulation governing the sex designation on Alberta operator's licenses is the *Operator Licensing and Vehicle Control Regulation* (pp. 19-20), part of the *Traffic Safety Act*. Section 20(1) allows for a temporary change of sex designation provided the trans\* individual can produce a letter from an accredited psychologist or psychiatrist. However, Section 20(2) notes that such a change is temporary and will revert to the original designation if the trans\* individual does not happen to have completed surgery, required by the next section, Section 20(3). Section 20(3) of the Regulation contains the same phrasing of the unconstitutional requirements found in the overturned portion of Alberta's *Vital Statistics Act*, with the addition of a 90-day time limit for a permanent change to the sex designation to be accepted.

TESA applauds the Alberta government for amending the *Operator Licensing and Vehicle Control Regulation* in 2010 to allow for the temporary change of sex designation, after the provincial de-listing of SRS/GRS meant that most trans\* Albertans would never be able to meet the statutory requirements for any of their provincial government-issued identification to be amended to the correct sex designation, as the cost of unfunded SRS/GRS was beyond the means of most Albertans. However, in light of the decision in *C.F. v. Alberta (Vital Statistics)* (2014), it is clear that allowing any of these restrictions to remain is likewise unconstitutional.

**Recommendation:**

- (a) TESA recommends that Alberta also amend the *Operator Licensing and Vehicle*

*Control Regulation* in accordance with similar amendments already discussed regarding the *Vital Statistics Act*. Keeping in mind that many Albertans may not have been born within our province, it is important that licensing maintain a clear structure for sex designation amendment as drivers may not have the ability to obtain congruent foundational documents such as birth certificates from their place of birth.

## Other Policy and Legislative Frameworks

On March 31, 2014, TESA released its inaugural *State of Trans\* in Alberta: Trans Day of Visibility Report 2014* to assess conditions for trans\* Albertans across seven domains: identification, health care, education, social discourse, income and social status, social support networks, and housing. Some of the issues surrounding Alberta-based identification--birth certificates and operator's licenses--has already been addressed in this analysis; we now turn to other matters concerning identification and a brief overview of the remaining domains as they relate to legislation or regulation rationally governed by the province of Alberta.

### Identification

While Alberta appears willing to accept the judgement that surgical requirements for amending birth certificate sex designations is unconstitutional, changing requirements to rely upon access to a particular medical professional or a narrow portion of a particular medical profession continues to pose serious concerns for trans\* Albertans. Repeated requests for formal letters from a psychologist or psychiatrist can be both expensive and difficult to obtain, in part due to the limited accessibility of such professionals by trans\* Albertans. Changes to any legislation or regulation related to obtaining identification that also relies upon affirmation by a medical professional should reflect the needs of a physically large province that remains underserved for medical professionals both generally and even more so specifically for trans\* medical access. Ideally, Alberta should be able to rely on its citizens to make legal declarations without the need for a medical professional to confirm the validity of such a declaration.

### Recommendation:

- (a) TESA recommends Alberta accept a sworn declaration by a trans\* individual without requiring affirmation by third parties.

### Health Care

Currently only two physicians in Alberta offer transition-related psychiatric services. Both doctors are located in the Edmonton-area and have lengthy waiting lists, often at least for one year. Limited

location and long waiting lists present an unacceptable lack of access to trans\* health care; additionally, the costs of travel and overnight accommodations for such care pose a significant barrier for trans\* Alberta living outside the Edmonton-area.

At this time, most SRS/GRS procedures are not performed local within Alberta. Trans\* Albertans seeking out-of-province medical services, concerns are raised regarding appropriate access to presurgical assessment and care, and apparent lack of approved options for patients who are unable to have surgeries performed at the single currently approved surgical site.

Other barriers also remain: some medications associated with trans\* needs may be restricted substances and only available with a doctor's prescription. At this time, no clinics or physicians in Alberta are known to operate on a model of informed consent to initiate providing prescriptions such as hormones, leaving an effective bottleneck with the two Edmonton-area psychiatrists mentioned above for additional specialist referrals, such as referrals to endocrinologists.

Many members of the Alberta trans\* community have mentioned discrimination by health service providers upon determination that their patient is trans\*. This discrimination can range from misgendering and use of the wrong name to outright refusing service.

### **Recommendations:**

- (a) TESA recommends trans\* treatment options be expanded to include distance-medicine practises such as the adoption of video conferencing services in concert with local doctors providing access to prescriptions as well as positive consideration of informed-consent models of care.
- (b) TESA recommends Alberta physicians and their staff be cognizant of regulations and accepted practises regarding appropriate professional care.

### **Education**

The Alberta Teachers' Association's *Code of Professional Conduct* obligates teachers to teach "in a manner that respects the dignity and rights of all persons without prejudice as to ... gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical characteristics ... [etc.]" (ATA, 2004a, s.1). Similarly, the ATA's *Declaration of Rights and Responsibilities for Teachers*--part of the ATA's constitution--asserts that teachers "have the right to be protected against discrimination on the basis of prejudice as to ... gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical characteristics ... 'etc.]" (ATA, 2004b, s.9).

While the ATA's mandate covers all teachers teaching under the aegis of "public education" (ATA, 2014)--which includes public, separate, and francophone schools--TESA is aware that both teachers and students have faced challenges as trans\* people within Alberta education environments. At this time, TESA is aware of only two school boards in Alberta that have made progress towards trans\*-inclusive policies (TESA, 2011: EPSB; TESA, 2013, St. Albert Public).



**Recommendation:**

- (a) TESA recommends that any act or regulation with regards to public education in Alberta be amended to ensure that the respect and dignity of all persons--including trans\* persons--is unquestionably clear.

**Social Discourse**

While some Alberta politicians have shown strong support for trans\* concerns (Allen, 2012), at least one elected Alberta representative has taken a strongly oppositional perspective (Anders, 2012). Recognising that vigorous debate is important both to the democratic process and to establishing more appropriate legislation and regulation where indicated, TESA strongly supports ongoing discourse on matters concerning trans\* people. However, TESA also notes that such discourse, while often about trans\* people, less often includes actual trans\* people.

**Recommendation:**

- (a) TESA recommends that social (including legislative and regulatory) discourse regarding matters concerning trans\* people continue to seek trans\* perspectives.

**Income & Social Status**

TESA has found that many trans\* people in Alberta face employment issues. TESA anticipates that many employment challenges will be significantly reduced by trans\* Albertans being able to obtain congruent government-issued identification. However, formal paperwork is not a panacea for all social ills. As noted previously, allowing trans\* people to amend their sex designation on their birth certificates is an important step, but such a step may be of little public assistance if the default requirement of legal change of name being published as an Internet-searchable datapoint continues unabated.

Accordingly, to help ensure that all Albertans recognise and respect that full participation in Albertan society is a right of all who call Alberta home, TESA sees the need for Alberta to amend the *Alberta Human Rights Act* to state explicitly that "gender identity" and "gender expression" are listed as protected grounds for discrimination. Although the Alberta Human Rights Commission lists "transgender" (2012, p. 2) as being protected in Alberta, it is protected by inference from other grounds. As most people do not have formal legal training, TESA has observed that most Albertans are genuinely unaware that trans\* Albertans are entitled to the same rights as all other Albertans, just as many Albertans did not realise that after the *Vriend* decision, people with alternate sexual orientation(s) were also fully included within Alberta society (*Alberta Human Rights Act*, preamble).

**Recommendation:**

- (a) TESA recommends the *Alberta Human Rights Act* be amended to make "gender identity" and "gender expression" explicitly stated as prohibited grounds for discrimination in Alberta.

## Social Support Networks

TESA notes that a lack of support from family and friends appears to be somewhat common among Alberta trans\* communities. While TESA and TESA members have undertaken many outreach and education opportunities including formal presentations and media interviews, large-scale social acceptance of trans\* people remains in its infancy. Research from Ontario shows that 42 per cent of trans\* youth had parents who were “not very” or “not at all” supportive. 70 per cent of those whose parents were strongly supportive had positive mental health, as compared to 15 per cent of youth whose parents were not strongly supportive (Travers et al, 2012, p. 2). TESA's knowledge within an Alberta context suggests the Ontario data is comparable to local anecdotal community reporting. The reality of being disowned--in addition to discrimination in educational and employment environments, plus a lack of trans\*-competent medical care--can have severe mental health consequences.

### Recommendation:

- (a) TESA recommends support services for trans\* individuals to ameliorate mental health issues.

## Housing

TESA has no formal data for Alberta; however, TESA considers the American data largely in alignment with observations in the Alberta trans\* community: many trans\* individuals in Alberta seem to rely on public or subsidized housing, and a significant proportion seem to experience a level of homelessness at some point. The American study indicates a high level of homelessness amongst trans\* people. The National Center for Transgender Equality report *Injustice At Every Turn* indicates that 19 per cent of trans people reported having been refused a home, and 19 per cent reported having experienced homelessness at one point.

At this time, some Alberta shelters are now explicitly trans\*-inclusive, although such inclusion appears to be limited to those transitioning to female, with little or no support available for those transitioning to male. TESA notes a number of individuals who stop attending support groups for a number of months, and upon returning, advise that homelessness or lack of employment was the reason for their absence.

### Recommendation:

- (a) TESA recommends assessing and improving the accessibility of social safety-net services (across all domains, including housing) for trans\* individuals.

## Institutionalisation & Incarceration

TESA failed to include institutionalisation and incarceration in our inaugural *State of Trans\* in Alberta*

report. However, institutionalisation and incarceration for trans\* people remains a challenging issue that crosses a number of domains, including health care, education, social discourse, housing, and others. As early as 1999, Canadian lawyer Barbara Findlay noted that "[t]here are at least three issues for transgendered people who are being incarcerated temporarily or permanently: in which gendered facility they will be housed, whether they will be given hormones while in jail, and whether they will be given sex reassignment surgery while in jail" (s.2). Canada has both federal and provincial prison systems. Federally, Correctional Services Canada was ordered to stop providing SRS/GRS to prisoners in 2010 (Harris, 2010; Stone, 2014). Citing Novac et al (2006), the Institute for the Prevention of Crime [Canada] notes that "[c]ertain sub-groups are disproportionately vulnerable to post-incarceration homelessness, such as ... transgender persons whose gender issues are often misunderstood or ignored" (p. 19). TESA was unable to ascertain what legislation, regulations, or policies govern trans\* inmates within Alberta provincial prisons.

### **Recommendations:**

- (a) TESA recommends assessing all Alberta legislation, regulation, and policy regarding trans\* inmates within Alberta prisons.
- (b) TESA further recommends that any such legislation, regulation, or policy be amended to ensure trans\* inmates are housed appropriately according to their needs, have access to any and all trans\*-specific medical care while incarcerated, and ensure that all Alberta-based government-issued identification to such inmates--including birth certificates, health care insurance cards, social assistance records, or other such identifying papers or mechanisms--are congruent to the trans\* individual's lived identity.

## **Conclusion**

As noted in the introduction to this analysis, the above is by no means exhaustive. Trans\* people routinely experience obscure regulations and policies that no non-trans\* person would ever reasonably discover. Conflicting requirements, inadequately-trained personnel, and under-knowledgeable trans\* individuals all combine to make many aspects of participating fully in Albertan society excessively difficult for trans\* Albertans.

TESA holds that all Albertans--indeed, all Canadians--have the same rights, but that for many reasons (some of which are outlined above), trans\* people have difficulties asserting those rights. Amending legislation, regulation and policy would go a long way towards a fully trans\*-inclusive Alberta. TESA hopes that by providing this analysis of some of the more well-known regulatory framework hurdles faced by trans\* Albertans, the Alberta government will be better prepared to identify, assess, and address the many problems arising from explicit or accidental trans\* exclusion.

In our collective experience, trans\* Albertans want what all Albertans want: to be fully part of a vibrant province. Since 2009, TESA's mission to be a witness and a voice for matters concerning trans\* Albertans has given us the privilege of witnessing and speaking to many of the challenges--and

successes--within Alberta's trans\* communities.

TESA appreciates the time and attention of Honourable Associate Minister Sandra Jansen. TESA trusts that your personal mandate to work with vulnerable communities--including the LGBT community--in addition to your elected colleagues' obligation to represent the needs of all constituents, will result in the fully trans\*-inclusive Alberta we envision. TESA hopes that by beginning to make these many persistent issues visible, challenges may be better overcome. TESA looks forward to continued dialogue and consultation for a more complete inclusion for trans\* people within Alberta.

## Collated Recommendations

### Vital Statistics Act: Birth Certificates

- (a) TESA recommends that portions of the *Vital Statistics Act* found to be unconstitutional be struck from the *Act*.
- (b) TESA recommends that changes to the process for amending the sex designation on an Alberta birth certificate be contained within the *Alberta Vital Statistics Act*, rather than regulation.
- (c) TESA recommends that Alberta amends the *Vital Statistics Act* to reflect a process similar to that of British Columbia.
- (d) TESA recommends that any statements made by third parties (such as a medical professional) be limited to an affirmation of the conflict between the sex designation on the birth certificate and the individual's lived identity.
- (e) TESA recommends that Alberta accept trans\* individuals as competent to make declarations without requiring third-party affirmation.

### Vital Statistics Act: Publication of Change of Name

- (a) TESA recommends that Alberta also amend the *Vital Statistics Act* to make the publication of any change of name in the *Alberta Gazette*--whether or not the individual undertaking the change of name is trans\*--to be removed from databases accessible online.

### Operator Licensing and Vehicle Control Regulation:

- (a) TESA recommends that Alberta also amend the *Operator Licensing and Vehicle Control Regulation* in accordance with similar amendments already discussed regarding the *Vital Statistics Act*. Keeping in mind that many Albertans may not have been born within our province, it is important that licensing maintain a clear structure for sex designation amendment as drivers may not have the ability to obtain congruent foundational documents such as birth certificates from their place of birth.

### Identification:

- (a) TESA recommends Alberta accept a sworn declaration by a trans\* individual without requiring affirmation by third parties.

### **Health Care:**

- (a) TESA recommends trans\* treatment options be expanded to include distance-medicine practises such as the adoption of video conferencing services in concert with local doctors providing access to prescriptions as well as positive consideration of informed-consent models of care.
- (b) TESA recommends Alberta physicians and their staff be cognizant of regulations and accepted practises regarding appropriate professional care.

### **Education:**

- (a) TESA recommends that any act or regulation with regards to public education in Alberta be amended to ensure that the respect and dignity of all persons--including trans\* persons--is unquestionably clear.

### **Social Discourse:**

- (a) TESA recommends that social (including legislative and regulatory) discourse regarding matters concerning trans\* people continue to seek trans\* perspectives.

### **Income & Social Status:**

- (a) TESA recommends the *Alberta Human Rights Act* be amended to make "gender identity" and "gender expression" explicitly stated as prohibited grounds for discrimination in Alberta.

### **Social Support Networks:**

- (a) TESA recommends support services for trans\* individuals to ameliorate mental health issues.

### **Housing:**

- (a) TESA recommends assessing and improving the accessibility of social safety-net services (across all domains, including housing) for trans\* individuals.

### **Institutionalisation & Incarceration:**

- (a) TESA recommends assessing all Alberta legislation, regulation, and policy regarding trans\* inmates within Alberta prisons.
- (b) TESA further recommends that any such legislation, regulation, or policy be amended to ensure trans\* inmates are housed appropriately according to their

needs, have access to any and all trans\*-specific medical care while incarcerated, and ensure that all Alberta-based government-issued identification to such inmates--including birth certificates, health care insurance cards, social assistance records, or other such identifying papers or mechanisms--are congruent to the trans\* individual's lived identity.

## **Acknowledgements**

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