Healthcare Laws and Policies: “Shield” or “Refuge” Laws Protecting Access to Transgender Health Care

No updates required since July 17, 2023

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Recommended citation:
Background
Transgender people’s access to best practice health care—sometimes also called gender-affirming care—is increasingly under attack. In response, a growing number of states are taking action to protect access to this medically necessary health care. These “shield” or “refuge” laws can vary from one state to the next, but their primary goal is to protect transgender people, their families, and their medical providers against these ongoing attacks and to protect access to transgender-related health care.

Equality Map & Additional Resources
- See our Equality Map: Transgender Healthcare “Shield” Laws, which is updated and maintained in real-time alongside this document.
- See also our Equality Map: Bans on Best Practice Medical Care for Transgender Youth (updated and maintained in real time) and its corresponding citation sheet, which contains additional state-by-state information, links, and analysis.
- For more information about the broader attacks on transgender healthcare, see our 2023 spotlight report, detailing how these attacks are becoming more extreme over time, including to encompass transgender adults.
### Table 1: Summary and Legislation/Executive Orders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Bill/ Link</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>States with “shield” or “refuge” legislation protecting access to transgender health care</strong></td>
<td>11 states + D.C.</td>
<td>California SB107</td>
<td>2022</td>
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<td>Colorado SB23-188</td>
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<td>Connecticut HB5506 (see p13)</td>
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<td>District of Columbia B24-0830</td>
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<td>Illinois HB4664</td>
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<td>Massachusetts H5090</td>
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<td>Minnesota HF146</td>
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<td>Vermont H89</td>
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<td>Washington HB1469</td>
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<td><strong>States with “shield” or “refuge” executive order only protecting access to transgender health care</strong></td>
<td>3 states</td>
<td>Arizona Executive Order 2023-12</td>
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<td>Maryland Executive Order 01.01.2023</td>
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<td>New Jersey Executive Order 326</td>
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<td><strong>States with no “shield” or “refuge” policy for transgender health care</strong></td>
<td>36 states + 5 territories</td>
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**Notes:**
- States with “shield” or “refuge” legislation protecting access to transgender health care include California, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Illinois, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon, New York, Vermont, Washington.
- States with “shield” or “refuge” executive order only protecting access to transgender health care include Arizona, Maryland, New Jersey.
- States with no “shield” or “refuge” policy for transgender health care include Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawai‘i, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah.
Chronology

Order of “Shield” or “Refuge” Laws and Executive Orders
(by date of governor signature; not by effective date)

2022
1. Connecticut – HB5506 (see this amendment, Sec. 503, starting p13) – May 7, 2022

2023
4. District of Columbia – B24-0830 – January 10, 2023
6. Minnesota – Executive Order 23-03 – March 8, 2023
7. New Jersey – Executive Order 326 – April 4, 2023
8. New Mexico – SB13 – April 6, 2023
9. Colorado – SB23-188 – April 21, 2023
   Minnesota – HF146 – April 27, 2023 (building on earlier executive order)
10. Washington – HB1469 – April 27, 2023
11. Vermont – H89 – May 10, 2023
12. Maryland – Executive Order 01.01.2023.08 – June 5, 2023
State-by-State Sources and More Detail

Alabama
• No state "shield" or "refuge" law protecting access to transgender health care

Alaska
• No state "shield" or "refuge" law protecting access to transgender health care

Arizona
• State has "shield" or "refuge" executive order protecting access to transgender health care
  • See Executive Order 2023-12 (2023)

Arkansas
• No state "shield" or "refuge" law protecting access to transgender health care

California
• State has "shield" or "refuge" law protecting access to transgender health care
  • See SB107 (2022)

Colorado
• State has "shield" or "refuge" law protecting access to transgender health care
  • See SB23-188 (2023)

Connecticut
• State has "shield" or "refuge" law protecting access to transgender health care
  • See HB5506 (see this amendment, Sec. 503, starting p13) (2022)

Delaware
• No state "shield" or "refuge" law protecting access to transgender health care

District of Columbia
• State has "shield" or "refuge" law protecting access to transgender health care
  • See B24-0830/Law 24-307 (2023)

Florida
• No state "shield" or "refuge" law protecting access to transgender health care

Georgia
• No state "shield" or "refuge" law protecting access to transgender health care

Hawaiʻi
• No state "shield" or "refuge" law protecting access to transgender health care
Idaho
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Illinois
- State has “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care
- See HB4664 (2023)

Indiana
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Iowa
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Kansas
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Kentucky
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Louisiana
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Maine
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Maryland
- State has “shield” or “refuge” executive order protecting access to transgender health care
- See Executive Order 01.01.2023.08 (2023)

Massachusetts
- State has “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care
- See H5090 (2022)

Michigan
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Minnesota
- State has “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care
- See HF146 (April 2023) and Executive Order 23-03 (March 2023)

Mississippi
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care
Missouri
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Montana
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Nebraska
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Nevada
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

New Hampshire
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

New Jersey
- State has “shield” or “refuge” executive order protecting access to transgender health care
- See Executive Order 326 (2023)

New Mexico
- State has “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care
- See SB13 (2023). See also HB7 (2023), prohibiting public bodies (e.g., state or local governments, agencies, school districts, etc) from discriminating against people seeking transgender-related care and/or reproductive care.

New York
- State has “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care
- See S2475B (2023)

North Carolina
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

North Dakota
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Ohio
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Oklahoma
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Oregon
- State has “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care
- See HB2002 (2023)
Pennsylvania
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Rhode Island
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

South Carolina
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

South Dakota
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Tennessee
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Texas
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Utah
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Vermont
- State has “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care
  - See H89 (2023)

Virginia
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Washington
- State has “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care
  - See HB1469 (2023)

West Virginia
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Wisconsin
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Wyoming
- No state “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care
U.S. Territories

American Samoa
• No territory “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Guam
• No territory “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Northern Mariana Islands
• No territory “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

Puerto Rico
• No territory “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care

U.S. Virgin Islands
• No territory “shield” or “refuge” law protecting access to transgender health care