

Socialist Alliance policy

<http://www.socialist-alliance.org>



Transgender rights

Governments have to ensure that services and laws are in place that provide for those who do not fit prevailing ideas of sex and gender binaries and by unshackling the community from the need to conform to and enforce those ideas, allow each individual to participate in society as themselves.

Trans people are a diverse group of identities, including transsexual, transgendered, crossdressers, gender queers, and gender variants of all kinds. Their common ground is that they do not conform to society's expectations of how someone of their physiological sex assigned at birth is supposed to be in the culture they live in. Most trans people do not seek sex reassignment surgery, although many seek hormone therapy.

Trans people suffer hate crimes, murder, being sacked from jobs, discrimination in renting and buying houses, and high rates of suicide because of the bigotry they face.

In Australia, trans people face barriers in changing their sex. To access any medical transition technologies, such as hormone therapy or surgeries, on Medicare they have to be diagnosed with "gender identity disorder". This is a psychological disorder according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM IV). This pathologising terminology is rejected by the trans movement.

Free, quality surgery is unavailable in Australia. Therefore trans people are forced to access expensive surgeries in the private sector. Hormone therapy is only free to people on the pension. Otherwise, it is very expensive.

Trans people are not granted legal recognition of their gender without surgery. This is a major problem for many trans people who either cannot afford surgery or do not want it. Potential loss of sexual function is one reason why some people do not want surgery. A major problem with the requirement of surgery is that it coerces trans people into sterilisation.

Even after hormones and operations trans people are not granted automatic government recognition of their sex. Expensive passport and birth change processes add to the trauma and humiliation trans people are forced to endure. The Socialist Alliance supports the work of transgender and transsexual rights organisations in their campaigns.

The Socialist Alliance stands for:

1. Free access to hormones, if requested, without being diagnosed with 'gender identity disorder'.
2. Free, quality sex change operations and access to other medical needs such as electrolysis.
3. Full legal recognition of gender identity regardless of whether or not a person gets surgery. This includes but is not limited to passports and birth certificates. A person's legal identity should be "male" or "female" as they choose, or they should also have the option of marking an "X" or "trans", or something else, if they choose.
4. Anti-discrimination laws that support trans people in fighting off discrimination in jobs, housing, schooling.
5. Affirmative action in public housing and employment, including crisis accommodation to cater specifically for the needs of trans people.
6. Anti-bigotry campaigns in schools and wider society that teach people about trans rights.
7. The repeal of all legislation discriminating against trans people.
8. Government funding for services run by and for the trans community, such as Gender Centres. There should be a Gender Centre in every capital city at least.
9. Specific units in hospitals to cater to the needs of trans people.