



Updates to Queensland's Anti-Discrimination Act come into effect today

Two important changes to Queensland's Anti-Discrimination Act come into effect today, strengthening our vilification law and closing gaps in protections from discrimination for trans, gender diverse and intersex people.

These updates to the law will help modernise the law to ensure it keeps pace with contemporary community expectations, and work to make Queensland safer and more inclusive.

Stronger vilification law

The new laws strengthen the protections for people who experience vilification. From today:

- the criminal offence of serious vilification has moved from the Anti-Discrimination Act to the Criminal Code, and will have a higher penalty.
- when crimes like assault, going armed so as to cause fear, threatening violence, wilful damage, trespass and public nuisance are motivated by hatred or serious contempt because of the victim's race, religion, sexuality, gender identity or sex characteristics, courts will be able to impose a tougher penalty including longer custodial sentences.
- the public display, public distribution, or publication of hate symbols will constitute vilification. This could include signs, tshirts, tattoos, and publication of prohibited symbols online.
- [sex characteristics](#) will be protected by vilification law, along with race, religion, sexuality, and gender identity.

These changes have come about in part due to a campaign by the Cohesive Communities Coalition, representing over 20 of Queensland's diverse ethnic and faith communities, and the Commission is pleased to see them come into effect today.

Protections for trans, gender diverse and intersex people

Protections against gender identity discrimination and vilification have been in place since 2002 but were unclear and inconsistent, leaving non-binary and intersex people out altogether or forcing them to navigate confusing legislative provisions or multiple jurisdictions to advocate for themselves and their communities.

The changes coming into effect today mean that:

- non-binary or gender diverse people are explicitly protected from discrimination in Queensland, aligning with many laws across Australia
- the definition of gender identity is broader and more inclusive of trans people's experiences of gender expression
- outdated and offensive language has been removed from the law and a new attribute of sex characteristics added to make sure intersex people are protected from discrimination and vilification.

With increasing community understanding and recognition of non-binary and intersex people, these important changes help make sure the law keeps pace with contemporary needs and expectations.

Quotes attributable to Scott McDougall, Queensland Human Rights Commissioner:

- Making the law clearer, more consistent and more inclusive is important if it is to best reflect the needs of a contemporary Queensland.
- The protections for gender diverse and intersex people are particularly important, as these communities have previously been left out or left behind when it comes to anti-discrimination legislation, despite the evidence that they experience significant levels of stigma and discrimination.
- Vilification presents a harmful and insidious threat to our communities and to our shared experience as Queenslanders. It works to make Queenslanders feel that they don't belong in our common spaces or in our local communities, and is severely under-reported.
- Today's changes to vilification and hate crime legislation will provide important, welcome and stronger protections against vilification for Queensland's diverse faith and ethnic communities and our LGBTIQ+ communities, and are long overdue.

More information available on Queensland Human Rights Commission website

- [Stronger hate crime laws are now in effect](#)
- [Trans, gender diverse and intersex people now better protected from discrimination](#)
- [Discrimination on the basis of sex characteristics](#)

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