

LGBTIQ+ EQUALITY

Achieving equality for every person in the LGBTIQ+ community

All Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ+) people have the right to be free from discrimination, have autonomy over their bodies, and access to holistic and comprehensive health services and secure housing. The Greens will support LGBTIQ+ people and their families to ensure they are treated equally and free from discrimination.



THE GREENS WILL:

- **Protect LGBTIQ+ rights in law**, through a Charter of Rights and by legislating to remove religious exemptions in federal anti-discrimination laws
- Create a national **LGBTIQ+ health strategy**
- Ensure **secular student welfare support** is provided in all schools
- **Address the crisis in housing and homelessness** for LGBTIQ+ people
- Establish a **whole of government ministerial advisory group** on LGBTIQ+ issues
- **Stamp out sexual orientation and gender identity change efforts**
- Appoint an **LGBTIQ+ Human Rights Commissioner**
- Appoint a **Minister for Equality**

PROTECT LGBTIQ+ RIGHTS IN LAW

Our anti-discrimination laws currently include an unacceptable exemption for religious organisations. This means that a religious hospital can refuse to employ a gay doctor; a faith-based homelessness shelter can refuse to accept a transgender resident; and a faith-based school can sack a teacher who marries their same gender partner.¹ In 2017, a teacher was fired from a Baptist school in Perth after disclosing that he was in a long-term relationship with a man. Successive Coalition and Labor governments have maintained these discriminatory laws.

The Greens will remove these exemptions, and enshrine anti-discrimination in a comprehensive charter of rights. Our anti-discrimination laws should apply to everyone.

A NATIONAL LGBTIQ+ HEALTH STRATEGY

LGBTIQ+ people have health care needs which are not always met by the current system.

The Greens will establish a national LGBTIQ+ health strategy to ensure all LGBTIQ+ people have access to holistic and comprehensive health services regardless of whether they live in a capital city or a rural town. It will include national standards and training for health professionals to ensure they can provide world class care to LGBTIQ+ patients, particularly patients who are intersex or transgender.



SECULAR STUDENT SUPPORT IN ALL SCHOOLS

The mental health of LGBTIQ+ people is among the poorest in Australia.² Education, support and acceptance improves the mental wellbeing and lives of LGBTIQ+ young people and whole school communities.³

The Greens will scrap the the School Chaplains Program and invest the money in secular, unbiased and inclusive support for students through counsellors and anti-bullying initiatives such as the Safe Schools Program.

² National LGBTI Health Alliance, *Snapshot of mental health and suicide prevention statistics for LGBTI people*, 2016, <https://lgbtihealth.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/SNAPSHOT-Mental-Health-and-Suicide-Prevention-Outcomes-for-LGBTI-people-and-communities.pdf>

³ Safe Schools Coalition, *Safe schools do better*, 2015, https://www.studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/docs/default-source/safe-schools-do-better_2015-pdf54de61ab913c410c8e5567f80eba699e.pdf?sfvrsn=0

¹ SBS, *Perth Baptist school sacks gay teacher*, 22/11/2017, <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/perth-baptist-school-sacks-gay-teacher>



ADDRESS THE CRISIS IN HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FOR LGBTIQ+ PEOPLE

Housing is a human right. Yet approximately 300,000 people will be homeless at some stage this year, with LGBTIQ+ people being at greater risk of homelessness than the general population.⁴ The Greens will increase funding for general crisis and temporary housing services, including those for LGBTIQ+ people, to \$500 million per year, and guarantee this funding for ten years to provide certainty to service providers.

A MINISTERIAL ADVISORY GROUP ON LGBTIQ+ ISSUES

Too often, LGBTIQ+ communities are shut out of decisions that affect them. LGBTIQ+ issues need to be heard at the highest levels of government and implemented across portfolios.

The Ministerial Advisory Group will provide strategic advice to ministers and ensure decisions affecting LGBTIQ+ communities are made only after meaningful consultation. The work of the group will be supported by working groups that will ensure a whole of government approach. The group will lead on the creation of a whole of government LGBTIQ+ strategy and will be resourced with public service secretariat support.

STAMPING OUT SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY CHANGE EFFORTS

We know from survivors that the ex-gay and ex-trans conversion movement extends further than formalised 'therapies' and that sexual orientation and gender identity change efforts pervade some religious communities, faith-based organisations, schools and the counselling industry in subtle and insidious ways.

The Greens will support survivors of sexual orientation and gender identity change efforts to stamp out these practices and ensure that the specific needs of survivors are met.

The Greens will:

- Invest \$1 million in LGBTIQ+ faith organisations across Australia to build capacity for self advocacy;
- Invest \$500k into a public health and awareness campaign to explicitly target those at risk of the movement's influence and to refute its key messages and assertions;
- Introduce regulatory and legislative enforcement of peak psychological and health bodies to prohibit the use of conversion 'therapy' by mental health professionals, including social workers, unregistered and registered health professionals, teachers and more. These regulatory enforcements will cover any attempts to change, suppress, cure, heal or repair the sexual orientation or gender identity of children or adults;
- Criminalise any attempt to remove a person from Australia for the purposes of conversion change efforts; and
- Consult the broader LGBTIQ+ community to determine whether criminal or civil penalties are appropriate for practitioners and referrers.

⁴ Council to Homeless Persons, *Why LGBTIQ Victorians are twice as likely to face homelessness*, 2017, <http://chp.org.au/lgbtq-victorians-twice-likely-face-homelessness>

APPOINT AN LGBTIQ+ HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONER

Appointing an LGBTIQ+ Human Rights Commissioner will ensure that LGBTIQ+ people are protected from discrimination on the basis of sex, sexuality, gender identity and intersex status. The LGBTIQ+ Human Rights Commissioner will work with communities and champion the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersex, trans and gender diverse Australians within the Government.

APPOINT A MINISTER FOR EQUALITY

Appointing a Minister for Equality will ensure that issues affecting LGBTIQ+ communities are represented in cabinet. Having a minister responsible for LGBTIQ+ equality will raise the profile of the issues affecting LGBTIQ+ communities and will facilitate progress in the areas of legislative reform, community consultation and funding for LGBTIQ+ services and programs.

