

May 3, 2024

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Offered By: MAYOR MALIK

ORDINANCE NO. _____-2024 amending and/or supplementing Title 9 “General Provisions,” Chapter 106 “Prohibition of Conversion Therapy on Minors,” Section 106.03 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Akron in order to impose a first-degree misdemeanor penalty for the commission of the offense of conversion therapy on minors; and declaring an emergency.

WHEREAS, conversion therapy, which aims to change a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity, is a practice that is overwhelmingly shunned in the medical community, and is particularly harmful to youth; and

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, the American Counseling Association, and the American Medical Association have all condemned conversion therapy, particularly when practiced on minors; and

WHEREAS, practitioners of conversion therapy operate under the erroneous assumption that non-heterosexual, non-cisgender identities are mental disorders, and that sexual orientation and gender identity can and should be changed. This assumption is not based on medical and scientific evidence and is rejected by the American Medical Association and numerous other professional healthcare associations and advocates; and

WHEREAS, practitioners of conversion therapy often employ aversive conditioning, which involves the use of electric shock, deprivation of food and liquid, smelling salts, and chemically induced nausea. It is a violation of the ethical codes of the American Psychological Association and the American Psychiatric to use aversive conditioning in an attempt to “change” a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity; and

WHEREAS, the City of Akron is proud to celebrate its diversity and is committed to supporting the LGBT+ community; and

WHEREAS, the City has a compelling interest in protecting the physical and psychological well-being of minors, including LGBT+ youth, and in protecting its minors against exposure to the serious harms caused by conversion therapy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED by the Council of the City of Akron:

Section 1. Title 9 “General Provisions,” Chapter 106 “Prohibition of Conversion Therapy on Minors,” Section 106.03 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Akron be, and is hereby amended to read as follows:

106.03 – Enforcement **Penalty**

~~The Akron Civil Rights Commission shall have authority to investigate and consider complaints of a violation of this chapter, and may create such rules and procedures to receive, initiate, investigate, hold hearings, and issue orders and penalties on complaints alleging violations of this chapter.~~

Whoever violates section 106.02 is guilty of conversion therapy on minors, a first-degree misdemeanor. The court shall sentence an offender to a term of imprisonment not to exceed six months, and shall impose a fine not to exceed one thousand five hundred dollars.

Section 2. This ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety for the reason that it is immediately necessary to protect Akron's LGBT+ youth from the harmful practice of conversion therapy and, provided this ordinance receives the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members elected or appointed to Council, it shall take effect and be in force immediately upon its passage and approval by the Mayor; otherwise, it shall take effect and be in force at the earliest time allowed by law.

Passed _____, 2024

Clerk of Council

President of Council

Approved _____, 2024

M A Y O R

Akron City Council - Uniform Council Report (UCR)

PART I – General Information

Subject of Requested Legislation:
Amendment of the Prohibition of Conversion Therapy on Minors ordinance

Department/Division: Mayor's Office

Requestor: Nanette Pitt Phone/Ext: 2345

If applicable, previous legislation on this subject (reference by ordinance/resolution number):

Purpose/Objective of Legislation:
Amend the City of Akron conversion therapy ordinance to make the commission of conversion therapy a first-degree misdemeanor

PART II – Financial Information

Does this Legislation directly involve the expenditure of funds? YES NO
Was this expenditure budgeted for in the current operating budget? YES NO

If "YES," describe how the budgeted amount for the project compares to the actual or estimated costs:

City Expenditures

City Receipts

Budgeted Costs	
Amount:	
Fund:	
Org:	
Acct:	

Estimate of Costs	
Amount:	
Fund:	
Org:	
Acct:	

City Receipt of Funds	
Amount:	
Fund:	
Org:	
Acct:	

Amount:	
Fund:	
Org:	
Acct:	

Amount:	
Fund:	
Org:	
Acct:	

Other Consideration	

Total expenditure (if applicable): \$ _____

Total receipts (if applicable): \$ _____

PART III – DETAILED INFORMATION:

Attach detailed information/documentation, as described in UCR Instruction Sheet.