

Statement from the NASW-TX SOGIE Committee on Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton's Opinion Letter

On Friday, March 14, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton released an [opinion letter](#) stating that transgender Texans cannot use court orders to update the gender markers on their driver's licenses, birth certificates, and other government documents. Furthermore, the letter suggests that state agencies forcibly change gender markers on official documents to a person's sex assigned at birth. The NASW-TX SOGIE Committee condemns this latest attack on the rights and dignity of transgender Texans, as well as intersex Texans, and all those who continue to be impacted by Texas state leadership's blatant discrimination..

This is NOT a legally binding directive. To be clear, this is simply an opinion issued by the Attorney General of Texas. However, it serves as yet another tool to harass transgender people and sow chaos within already burdened state systems. This is similar to Attorney General Paxton's [2022 opinion letter](#) and Gov. Abbott's [subsequent letter](#) both of which sought to weaponize the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) against families affirming their transgender children. **These opinions are issued not as law but as political maneuvers designed to intimidate and marginalize an already vulnerable community and cause confusion and fear within agencies.**

Transgender Texans deserve to live with dignity, free from government-sanctioned harassment. We will not be silent in the face of injustice, and we will continue to work towards the goal of all Texans being treated with respect and affirmed in their identities.

Social workers have a professional and ethical duty to resist and challenge these acts of targeted oppression. The National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics calls on social workers to advocate for social justice and to protect the rights of marginalized populations. This includes actively opposing policies and opinions that seek to erase transgender identities, restrict access to affirming documentation, and subject transgender people to increased scrutiny and discrimination.

We call on social workers across Texas to stand in solidarity with transgender individuals, to push back against this attempt to undermine transgender individuals' dignity and legal recognition, and to continue fighting for policies that affirm and uphold the transgender community's rights. We urge state agencies and officials to not enforce this opinion and to recognize it for what it is: a harmful and baseless political attack.

What can social workers do?

Contact your State Representative/Senator and tell them that you are tired of Ken Paxton using his office to bully Transgender Texans. You can find out who represents you and contact them here: <https://wrm.capitol.texas.gov/home>

Support and follow organizations which are working to protect and support transgender people, such as:

TENT

Equality Texas

Lambda Legal

Contact the head of the Texas LGBTQ Caucus to thank them for their efforts and give them support.

Birk Wilkison Birk.Wilkison@house.texas.gov

You can read their statement on [Facebook here](#) or on [Instagram here](#).

In solidarity,



Ashley Heidebrecht, LMSW
Chair, NASW-TX SOGIE Committee