

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

# TRANSGENDER RIGHTS



The ACLU champions transgender people’s right to be themselves. We’re fighting discrimination in employment, housing, and public places - including restrooms. We’re working to make sure trans people get the health care they need, and we’re challenging obstacles to changing the gender marker on identification documents and obtaining legal name changes. We’re also fighting to protect the right of trans and gender nonconforming students to be treated with respect at school.

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## ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LAWS IN RHODE ISLAND

### **In Employment, Housing, Credit, and Public Accommodations**

Rhode Island law prohibits discrimination against a person on the basis of gender identity or expression in employment, housing, credit, and public accommodations. Therefore, most employers, government or private, cannot refuse to hire or give unequal compensation to a person solely because of their perceived gender identity or conformity. Nor can most landlords refuse to rent, or charge different rent, to a person based on their gender identity or expression.

A place of “public accommodation” is any place that is open to the public, including stores, restaurants, hotels, hospitals, retail stores, etc. They are not permitted to refuse, withhold, or deny a person services because of a person’s perceived or actual gender identity or expression. The Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights is the state agency tasked with investigating complaints about this type of discrimination, and taking legal action when necessary.

### **At School**

Discrimination against students on the basis of their gender identity or gender nonconforming behavior is illegal under federal law. Schools cannot ignore or discount harassment you receive because of your gender identity or expression; they have a legal responsibility to respond to such claims. Some RI public school districts have policies that require schools to respect the gender identity of students, including calling students by their correct names and using appropriate pronouns. Transgender students must be allowed to wear clothes reflecting their gender identity. In addition, the Rhode Island Department of Education has affirmed that transgender students are entitled to use the bathroom of the gender with which they identify.

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**For more information on discrimination, or if you feel your rights have been violated, visit [www.riaclu.org](http://www.riaclu.org) or call the ACLU of RI at (401) 831-7171.**