



This week the delegates of the American Medical Association (AMA) passed a resolution affirming that **“there is no medically valid reason to exclude transgender individuals”** from US military service. This fact sheet contains helpful information for reporters about transgender military service.

- Today, the delegates of the **American Medical Association** passed the [following resolution](#) by a unanimous vote at the group’s annual meeting in Chicago:
 - RESOLVED, that our AMA affirm that there is no medically valid reason to exclude transgender individuals from service in the US military.
 - RESOLVED, that our AMA affirm transgender service members be provided care as determined by patient and physician according to the same medical standards that apply to non-transgender personnel.
- The [AMA resolution](#) also found that the military’s medical regulations governing transgender service are **“out of date** with respect to medical consensus about gender identity.”
- Prior to the vote, four former US Surgeons General issued a statement urging AMA to pass the resolution. The former Surgeons General stated that, **“We agree with the proposed American Medical Association resolution that there is no medically valid reason to exclude transgender individuals from military service. Transgender service members should, as is the case with all personnel, receive the medical care that they need.”**
 - The four former Surgeons General are Dr. Joycelyn Elders, Dr. David Satcher, Dr. Regina Benjamin and Dr. Kenneth Moritsugu (acting).
- The **AMA** is the nation’s largest and oldest association of physicians, with an estimated 220,000 members. It is governed by a House of Delegates, its legislative and policy-making body.
- The GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality (formerly known as the Gay & Lesbian Medical Association) played the lead role in guiding the resolution through the drafting and approval process, with Dr. Brian Hurley, GLMA’s Delegate to the AMA House of Delegates, taking primary responsibility for the effort. GLMA is an organization dedicated to advancing the health needs and concerns of LGBT people.
- **“Transgender”** is an umbrella term for individuals who do not identify with the physical gender they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not

necessarily mean that someone has transitioned or will transition to a different gender, but refers to how the person identifies.

- According to the Williams Institute at UCLA, an estimated **15,500 transgender individuals** serve currently in the U.S. military despite policies that prohibit them from serving and despite the 2011 lifting of the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy that prevented gays and lesbians from serving openly.
- **Eighteen foreign nations** allow transgender personnel to serve in the military, including Britain, Canada and Australia.
- In 2008 the **American Psychological Association** passed a resolution opposing “all public and private discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived gender identity and expression.” In 2012 the **American Psychiatric Association** passed a resolution explicitly citing the military ban as discriminatory and urging “the repeal of laws and policies that discriminate against transgender and gender variant individuals.”
- **Recent research** concludes that the ban on transgender military service is based on out-of-date medical science, and that there is no rationale for continuing the policy. For instance:
 - A [2014 study co-chaired by Dr. Joycelyn Elders](#), former US Surgeon General, concluded that “**there is no compelling medical rationale for banning transgender military service**, and that eliminating the ban would advance a number of military interests.”
 - A [nine-member commission including a former acting US Army Surgeon General issued implementation guidance in 2014](#) for ending the transgender exclusion policy. The commission found that inclusive policy “**is administratively feasible and neither excessively complex nor burdensome.**” Three retired General Officers who served on the commission added that “**implementation could proceed immediately and will be successful in its execution.**”
 - Diane Mazur, Vice President of Legal Research at the Palm Center and a retired law professor, [released a 2014 report identifying six inconsistencies in how military medical policies govern transgender and non-transgender members](#). Mazur concluded that “**two different standards can apply to comparable medical care, or even the same medical care, depending on whether the service member is transgender or not**” and that “**military rules governing gender identity are decades out of date.**”
- The AMA resolution cites research by the following **experts**, all of whom can be reached by contacting the [Palm Center](#):
 - Major General Gale S. Pollock, former acting US Army Surgeon General
 - Brigadier General Clara Adams-Ender, retired Chief of the US Army Nurse Corps
 - Brigadier General Thomas A. Kolditz, Yale University professor and Professor Emeritus at the US Military Academy at West Point

- Admiral Alan Steinman, M.D., former Coast Guard Director of Health and Safety (Surgeon General equivalent)
- Professor Diane H. Mazur, J.D., Vice President, Legal Research at the Palm Center, Professor of Law Emeritus at the University of Florida, and former Air Force officer

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