



**LGBTQ QUALITY OF LIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION**

**RECOMMENDATION 20220822-3**  
**BUDGET FOR LGBTQIA+ AFFIRMING MENTAL HEALTHCARE**

**WHEREAS** The Austin-Round Rock-Georgetown metropolitan area had the 3rd largest percentage of LGBTQIA+ people in the U.S., with about 5.0% or 90,000 people identifying as LGBTQIA+.

Commented [PA1]: Source?

**WHEREAS** the City of Austin has an estimated 200-person waitlist for LGBTQIA+ adult and youth-focused mental health services, and

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**WHEREAS** [LGBTQIA+ Quality of Life study](#) respondents are at high risk for serious mental health issues, including 42 % for depression and 12 % suicidal ideation, and

**WHEREAS** [LGBTQIA+ Quality of Life study](#) respondents reported having to put off getting health-related services in the past 12 months because of cost, dental care (29%), mental health care (21%), medical care (18%), and gender affirming care (9%) are among the top services avoided due to cost, and

**WHEREAS** when [LGBTQIA+ Quality of Life study](#) respondents were asked about how they rate their overall mental health since the pandemic, (52%) of the 1,882 respondents rated their mental health as fair, poor, or very poor, a sizeable increase in mental health concern, and

**WHEREAS** More than half (53.5%) of respondents in [QWELL's 2020 survey](#) rated their mental health as poor or fair.

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**WHEREAS** Among Travis County residents, the suicide rate was 12.2 deaths per 100,000 population and highest among males (18.5 deaths per 100,000 population) and White residents (17.1 deaths per 100,000 population) in 2016-2020. In 2020, a higher percentage of females (33.0%) compared to males (20.9%) reported poor mental health, and the prevalence of poor mental health days has increased 7 overall for both genders. In the same year, a higher percent of Hispanic/Latino adults (31.5%) reported poor mental health compared to White (26.3%) and Black/African American (22.9%) adults. In 2020, the highest proportion of adults experiencing poor mental health was seen among adults aged 18-29 (32.6%) and 30-44 years of age (34.3%). Significant mental health needs, stigma around mental health, and limited access to mental health care were common themes among community members and leaders in the [APH Community Health Assessment](#). Some residents perceived an increase in mental health issues during the COVID-19 pandemic, which they linked with the stress and trauma of the COVID-19 pandemic, social isolation, and economic suffering. One community leader shared, "Then we look at the physical piece: depression and anxiety are at an all-time high which affect our physical health. The brain-body connection is huge, and I cannot stress that enough."



**LGBTQ**  
**Quality of Life**  
**Commission**  
[austintexas.gov/lgbtq](http://austintexas.gov/lgbtq)

**WHEREAS** The Trevor Project's [2021 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health](#) found that more than half (52%) of transgender and nonbinary youth seriously considered suicide in the past year and 1 in 5 attempted suicide. Homelessness was an area of concern and disproportionate among LGBTQIA+ youth, people of color, and, more specifically, queer, and transgender people of color. 28% of LGBTQ youth reported experiencing homelessness or housing instability at some point in their lives — and those who did had two to four times the odds of reporting depression, anxiety, self-harm, considering suicide, and attempting suicide compared to those with stable housing. Between 2020 and 2021, the Trevor Project saw a 150% increase in crisis contacts from LGBTQ youth in Texas seeking support.

**WHEREAS** there are increasing numbers of legislative attacks on the LGBTQ youth and community.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the LGBTQ Quality of Life Commission recommends that the Austin City Council direct \$150K annual funding (in addition to the current \$100K/annual funding through equity contracts) for culturally appropriate LGBTQIA+ affirming mental healthcare.



**VOTE**

Date of Approval:

Record of the Vote: Adopted without objection on a X-X vote.

Present:

Attest: Ryn Gonzales, Chair

DRAFT