

25 October 2019 - Salt Lake City | Official Statement

Church Continues to Oppose Conversion Therapy



Updated October 25, 2019

Update Regarding Opposition to Utah Psychologist Licensing Act Rule

In response to the many stories inaccurately reported by the media that do not reflect the Church’s position, Marty Stephens, director of government and community relations, gave the following clarification:

“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints opposes ‘conversion therapy’ and our therapists do not practice it.”

This clarification is the latest in a series of statements on the topic. The most recent statement —released October 15, 2019 — that opposes the proposed Utah Psychologist Licensing Act provided these [Family Services](#) notes:

Family Services has a longstanding and express policy against using therapies that seek to ‘repair,’ ‘convert,’ or ‘change’ sexual orientation, such as from homosexual to heterosexual. Research demonstrates that electric shock, aversion and other analogous therapies are [ineffective] and harmful to youth who experience same-sex attraction. Those, including youth, who seek therapies that constitute sexual orientation change efforts will not receive them from Family Services counselors.

February 2019

Statement as Utah Legislature Introduced House Bill 399

“The Church denounces any therapy, including conversion and reparative therapies, that subject an individual to abusive practices, not only in Utah, but throughout the world.”

March 2016

First Presidency Statement

“The Church denounces any therapy that subjects an individual to abusive practices.”



October 15, 2019

Original Statement Issued October 15, 2019

The Church has released the following statement in connection with [comments filed](#) by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Family Services regarding a proposed professional licensing rule governing sexual orientation and gender identity change efforts.

The Church hopes that those who experience same-sex attraction and gender dysphoria find compassion and understanding from family members, Church leaders and members, and professional counselors. The Church denounces any abusive professional practice or treatment.

We teach the right of individuals to self-determination and the right of parents to guide the development of their children. We also believe faith-based perspectives have an important and ethically appropriate role in professional counseling.

As detailed in the comments submitted by Family Services, the Church is concerned that the proposed professional licensing rule is ambiguous in key areas and overreaches in others. For example, it fails to protect individual religious beliefs and does not account for important realities of gender identity in the development of children.

We therefore oppose the proposed rule in its current form and respectfully request that it be appropriately amended to address the concerns raised in Family Services’ comments, or that Utah’s lawmakers provide statutory guidance on this important issue.

Additional Resources

[Proposed Amendment to the Psychologist Licensing Act Rule and to the Mental Health Professional Practice Act Rule](#)



Previous Article

[Latter-day Saints Around the World: Country Newsroom Websites, October 25, 2019](#)

Next Article

[Church Leaders Visit New Zealand Mosque](#) >

STYLE GUIDE NOTE: When reporting about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, please use the complete name of the Church in the first reference. For more information on the use of the name of the Church, go to our online [Style Guide](#).

