



Dublin Lesbian Line,
Outhouse,
105 Capel Street,
Dublin 1.

Gender Recognition Act (2015) Review Submission, Dublin Lesbian Line.

The following outlines Dublin Lesbian Lines' suggestions for updates to the Gender Recognition Act (2015). DLL is a non-judgemental, confidential listening and information support service for the LGBTI+ community, run by female-identified LGBTI+ volunteers. Trans* women are one of the largest demographics we support on the helpline, and in the last year have had engagement from more non-binary and genderqueer people. Our recommendations are based on knowledge gleaned from our experiences supporting trans* people and educating ourselves on how the Gender Recognition Act impacts people's lives. Our recommendations are not exhaustive but based on what has impacted people who engage with our services the most; both service providers and service users.

- **Arrangements for children aged 16 to 17 years**

We would like to see the current legislation that covers all persons over 18 to be lowered to persons aged 16 and over. The current legislation is not practical as the process can be very time consuming and can put a lot of pressure on someone's mental health. We would like 16 and 17 year olds to be able to access the full Act. They should be able to self-determine gender and not need parental consent or have their gender identity be subject to medical scrutiny.

- **Arrangements for children aged under 16 years**

We would like the legislation to recognise that people under 16 may need to access this bill, and so would like to the minimum age for exemption to be removed.

We would ask that the legislation make provisions for guardians to be apply to apply on a child's behalf, not only parents.

We feel that one parent/guardian should be able to apply on behalf of a child.

We would like to see provisions made for children in care to ensure that they would have access to the legislation.

We feel that there should not be a case where children should have to go through the court system as this can be daunting to a child and their family.

A child should be able to apply to change their GRC as many times as they choose without repercussions, court or medical input. We recognise that children should have this process as simple and supportive as possible to allow them to explore their gender identity without fear or restrictions.

We would like to see the school system educated about gender identities and for facilities eg bathrooms to be inclusive of all genders. We would like to see policies in place in all schools to ensure that young people and staff can explore their gender identity and expression in a safe and supportive environment.

- **Arrangements for persons who identify as neither male nor female (e.g. non-binary)**

We would like to see all gendered language removed from the bill. We would like an addition to the legislation to include people who do not identify as male or female eg: non-binary.

We would suggest that an X option be included in all government documents as an option for selection when asked about gender ('f/m/x'). We also would like to see Mx be added as an honorific on forms.

- **Arrangements for intersex people**

Intersex people should be able to access the full legislation without barriers.

We want to see an end to unnecessary surgeries on intersex babies and for this to be made into law.

We would like to see the 'x' option on birth certs for intersex babies so parents do not have to choose/the person can choose when they are older, if they want to.

- **Any other relevant issues, including issues relating to the operation of the current legislative provisions.**

Deed Polls: We want the requirement on a person to change their name by Deed Poll to be eliminated. A person's GRC should act the way a marriage cert does and legally qualify as a name change. A Deed Poll change can create a number of difficulties for a person, due to its public nature. We recognise that some people may still wish to change their name by Deed Poll but want for it not to be necessary to change a name, rather a choice somebody can make if they want to.

Departmental communication regarding a person's gender and name: We would suggest that all government departments communicate in relation to a person's details including gender and name in relation to the gender recognition cert. Many people experience difficulties and trauma due to old birth certs and names coming up when they are accessing state services. We understand privacy regarding a person's data shared with a particular service, but feel that there shouldn't be a need for a person to manually present their GRC and change their details for every government service.

Review: We would like to see a review in five years' time to see the Act needs to be updated or made more inclusive.

Change of mind: We want there to be no limitations or restrictions on the amount of times a can their GRC to reflect their gender identity.

Education: While this may not be the remit of the Act, we feel that mandatory training programmes should be introduced in schools, for medical practitioners and for civil servants who work with the public so that they understand and can support trans* and non-binary people in the best way possible.

Thank you for your time. If you would like clarification on anything or to discuss anything further please contact Laura Louise Condell at info@dublinlesbianline.ie .

