



US

# US judge strikes out cruel Florida rule on trans healthcare

Jun 22 • Written by Amelia Hansford

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The ruling comes amid a wave of judges slapping down trans healthcare bans. (Getty)

## A federal judge has struck down a rule

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## that would have banned Medicaid payments for trans healthcare in Florida, in yet another win for LGBTQ+ rights.

US district judge Robert Hinkle ruled on Wednesday (21 June) that Florida's attempts to violate the federal Medicaid statute and the Affordable Care Act were unconstitutional.

He imposed a permanent injunction on the rule, writing in a ruling opinion that it violated the 14th Amendment, which provides "equal protection" under US law.

He stated that the rule is "invalid to the extent they categorically ban Medicaid payment for puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones for the treatment of gender dysphoria."

Florida had reportedly chosen to block Medicaid payment for some treatments for "political reasons" which the judge said was decided through a biased and unscientific process.

"Pushing individuals away from their transgender identity is not a legitimate state interest," the ruling opinion continued.

While still significant, the injunction was expected following Hinkle's ruling on 6 June that legislation blocking trans healthcare for under-18s was **similarly unjust**.

In his ruling at the time, Hinkle said that **proponents** of these bills "tend to disapprove all things transgender" and, as a result, oppose medical care that has been cited multiple times as life-saving.

"The elephant in the room should be noted at the outset. Gender identity is real. The record makes this clear, the medical defendants, speaking through their attorneys, have admitted it," he wrote.

If passed, the bill would have effectively banned gender-affirming care, including physically reversible puberty blockers, by imposing sanctions on medical organisations that prescribe them.

It would have also banned gender-affirming surgeries despite there being no medical organisations that perform them on under-15s, with under-18s undergoing treatment in exceptionally rare circumstances.



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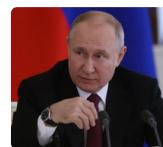
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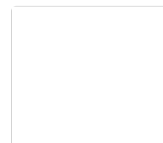
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The district judge noted that gender-affirming care has been accepted by every major medical organisation across the US while shutting down claims that Florida would join an “international consensus” in banning treatments.

“This assertion is false. No matter how many times the defendants say it, it will still be false,” the judge made clear.

“No country in Europe entirely bans these treatments.”

## Judge slaps down gender-affirming care ban in Arkansas

The Florida ruling comes just a day after a similar ruling was made against an Arkansas law that would have imposed similar restrictions on trans healthcare.

US district judge Jay Moody issued a permanent injunction against the Republican-led law after saying that it was unconstitutional.

“Rather than protecting children or safeguarding medical ethics, the evidence showed that the prohibited medical care improves the mental health and well-being of **patients** and that, by prohibiting it, the state undermines the interests it claimed to be advancing,” Moody wrote in his ruling.

He also remarked that judges had made similar decisions in temporarily blocking bans in Alabama and Indiana.

The ACLU, which **filed the legal claims**, said it was “relieved and grateful” at the decision, adding that the care should be available to “all trans youth.”

“This decision sends a clear message. Fear-mongering and misinformation about this health care do not hold up to scrutiny; it hurts trans youth and must end,” ACLU Arkansas executive director Holly Dickson said.

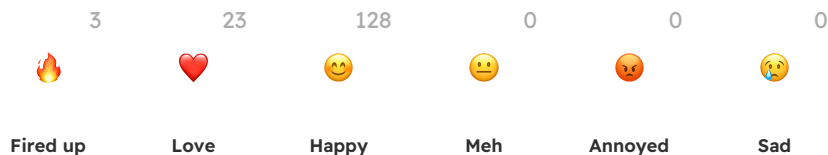
“Science, medicine, and law are clear: gender-affirming care is necessary to ensure these young Arkansans can thrive and be healthy.”

The legal advocacy group is currently tracking 491 anti-LGBTQ+ laws across state legislatures in the US, with 130 of those being related to LGBTQ+ healthcare.

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