

SUCCESS STORY: MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

In June 2008, Mayor Tom Barrett underscored the necessity to re-energize the City of Milwaukee Equal Rights Commission (ERC). Since then, the ERC has remained steadfast in the charge to ensure that all people in Milwaukee are equally protected against discrimination.



Recognizing increasing disparities in state and federal protections, the ERC worked tirelessly to rewrite its governing ordinance to extend employment, housing, and public accommodation safeguards that include gender identity, gender expression, domestic partners, HIV status, and more. In collaboration with community stakeholders, the rewrite of the city's Equal Rights Ordinance, Chapter 109, expanded the protected classes and provided remedies for victims of discrimination in the City. It unanimously passed the full Common Council in October 2017—readying the ERC to act against those who abuse the rights of others and serve as a link between the public and city government.

Through the passion, partnership, and expertise of local organizations such as the Milwaukee LGBT Center, and the acumen and drive of Alderman Cavalier Johnson, the Common Council, and the

Mayor, Milwaukee became the first Wisconsin municipality to protect minors from so-called “conversion therapy”—leading the way for other municipalities and, with hope, the State of Wisconsin to also protect youth from this harmful and discredited practice.

As an equality and equity policy influencer and defender of equal rights, the ERC will work closely with the Mayor's Office, Common Council and city departments to invest in all-gender single-stall bathrooms in all city buildings and additional resources for LGBTQ+ city employees and future recruiting. The ERC is committed to working collaboratively with community groups and individuals to advance fairness, dignity, and respect for all who live, work, and play in the City of Milwaukee.

**THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE
EQUAL RIGHTS COMMISSION**



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