rainbow futures wa

JOINT STATEMENT: IDAHOBIT 2026

Safety is for Everyone

To mark the International Day Against LGBTIQA+ Discrimination (IDAHOBIT) on 17 May 2026, we call on the Cook Government to prioritise and deliver the reforms necessary to ensure the safety and dignity of all Western Australians. IDAHOBIT is an annual event that exists because discrimination, violence, and exclusion remain lived realities for LGBTIQA+ people around the world. It is time for our state government to take leadership and put an end to this in WA, making it a safe place for everyone.

What we are calling for

We call on the Cook Government to act before the end of 2026 to deliver:

- **Modernisation of the Equal Opportunity Act**, acting on the Law Reform Commission's report to bring WA into line with contemporary standards and ensure all Western Australians are protected from discrimination
- **Extension of anti-vilification protections** to all communities that experience targeted abuse, including on the basis of sexuality, gender identity, sex characteristics, disability, HIV status, and religion
- **A ban on LGBTQA+ change and suppression (conversion) practices** in Western Australia, consistent with best practice legislation already enacted in Victoria
- **A commitment to ending deferrable medical interventions on intersex people**, in line with the recommendations of national and international human rights bodies

The case for reform is clear

LGBTIQA+ communities have historically faced abuse, threats, and discrimination in public systems and within legal structures. More recently, we have experienced anonymous hate flyer drops in suburban neighbourhoods, organised harassment campaigns online and via apps, escalating anti-trans rhetoric in public and political discourse and a rising wave of abusive conservative rhetoric. These are not isolated incidents. They reflect a broader pattern that requires structural response.

WA's legal framework has not kept pace with social expectations. Our hate crime laws protect on the basis of race alone. Anti-vilification protections remain incomplete. The Equal Opportunity Act, now more than 40 years old, has yet to receive the long-promised modernisation to reflect contemporary community standards. Conversion practices that seek to change a person's sexuality or gender identity remain legal in this state. Children with intersex variations continue to be subjected to unnecessary and deferrable medical interventions without their consent.

These gaps are not technical oversights. They are not occurrences that apply to a few. They are felt every day by people in our communities who navigate public life without the full protection of the law.

Public safety cannot be selective

We acknowledge the steps taken by the Cook Government to date, including abolishing the Gender Reassignment Board, enacting the Assisted Reproductive Technology and Surrogacy Bill, and the establishment of a Hate Crimes Unit within WA Police. These were important signals, but they are not enough. Legislative reform is needed to protect the rights and safety of the LGBTIQA+ community. They are needed to meet the health needs of the community, protect their jobs, and provide schools, employers, health services, and police with the tools they need to respond effectively. Without it, LGBTIQA+ communities will continue to experience the harm that the law should prevent.

Asking for safety and protection is not asking for special treatment. We ask for equal protection - the same standard of safety that every Western Australian deserves. Safety is for everyone.

