

RESEARCH THAT MATTERS

THE IMPACT OF ANTI-TRANSGENDER POLICY AND PUBLIC OPINION on Travel and Relocation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Donald Trump's 2024 presidential campaign focused heavily on eliminating legal protections for transgender people. In its first few months, the Trump administration has already attempted to roll back transgender rights in several areas. Recognizing the challenging environment that transgender people would face under the Trump administration, we conducted an anonymous survey of transgender people in December 2024 to understand their concerns and coping strategies. The survey used a two-fold recruitment strategy, and the following findings are based on responses from 302 transgender, nonbinary, and other gender-diverse people we refer to as "transgender" in this report. Over a third of the respondents in our sample were people of color, and over 40% made under \$50,000 a year.

Many of the findings from our post-election survey were published in a topline report in March 2025.¹ The current report focuses on the impact of the results of the 2024 election and the broader social and political climate on transgender people's travel plans and desire to relocate. For example, we address the extent to which transgender people are curtailing travel plans because of the current environment and the extent to which they are making plans to move their residence to particular areas of their state, another state, or another country they viewed as more trans-affirming.

In terms of travel plans, as of December 2024, 30% of respondents said that they were traveling less frequently as a result of the 2024 election, and 70% said that they would be much (48%) or somewhat (22%) less likely to go on vacation to states they view as less trans-affirming.

Regarding relocating, almost half of respondents (48%) had already moved or were considering moving to a location they viewed as more trans-affirming within the United States. Nearly one in four (23%) had already made such a move. Further, 45% of respondents indicated wanting to move out of the country. Respondents who lived in less supportive local communities, those in states with laws and policies that were less supportive of transgender people, and those with concerns about the impact of Trump's presidency on their access to health care, exposure to discrimination, and vulnerability to hate crimes, were more likely to want to move to a state they viewed as more trans-affirming. Those with lower incomes were also more likely to want to relocate, even though they may lack the resources to do so.

KEY FINDINGS

Impact on Traveling in the United States

- Thirty percent of respondents said they were traveling less frequently due to the 2024 election.
- Most respondents (70%) said that they would be much (48%) or somewhat (22%) less likely to go on vacation to states they viewed as less trans-affirming.
- Regarding canceling travel plans, approximately one in six respondents reported having canceled travel plans to a state they viewed as less trans-affirming (8%) or considering canceling travel plans to such a state (8%).
- Respondents generally said that they were avoiding traveling to more politically conservative states, Southern and Midwestern states, and states with high levels of anti-transgender legislation.

¹ Abbie E. Goldberg & Brad Sears, *Perceptions of Transgender Adults Preparing for a Trump Presidency*, THE WILLIAMS INST. (2025), <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Trans-Election-Perceptions-Mar-2025.pdf>.

Impact on Relocation within the United States

- As of December 2024, almost half of respondents (48%) had already moved or were considering moving to a location in the United States they viewed as more trans-affirming.
- When asked more specifically what cities or states they want to move to, most respondents mentioned progressive cities or politically liberal states, with California, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York, and Washington State frequently named.
- Among respondents who were currently employed part-time or full-time in states with laws and policies that were less supportive of transgender people, 40% were either already applying for jobs in states they viewed as more trans-affirming (14%) or were considering applying for employment in such states (26%).
- The most frequently reported reasons for wanting to move were all related to concerns about the increasingly hostile policy landscape or sociopolitical climate for transgender people. These included concerns about LGBTQ rights in general (76%), the sociopolitical climate (71%), anti-trans rhetoric and climate in the state (60%), and anti-transgender laws and policies in their state (47%).
- When asked separately about how much they wanted to move out of state, 37% said they very much (22%) or somewhat (15%) wanted to move out of state. Respondents who lived in states with laws and policies less supportive of transgender people (57%) were more likely to want to move out of state than those who lived in states with more supportive laws and policies (18%).
- For the respondents who indicated that they somewhat or very much wanted to relocate to another state, many frequently selected barriers to moving had to do with the costs of moving and other economic issues. These barriers included the cost of relocating (82%), the cost of living (64%), difficulty in getting another job or other employment concerns (56%), and housing concerns and issues (49%). Other concerns noted by many of these respondents included the hassle of relocating (66%) and that they would be moving away from their family of origin (44%).
 - Notably, these barriers were similar to those most frequently identified by the full sample of respondents (including those who indicated that they did not want to move), suggesting that for some, the barriers to moving might have already dampened their desire to move. Among all respondents, the top barriers to moving identified also included the costs of relocating (54%), the hassle of relocating (49%), the cost of living (43%), and difficulty in getting another job or other employment concerns (36%).

Impact of Relocating to Another Country

- Asked if they wanted to move out of the United States, 45% said they very much (20%) or somewhat (25%) wanted to move out of the country.
- Among those who indicated they somewhat or very much wanted to relocate to another country, the most frequently cited barriers to moving were visa or immigration concerns (85%), language issues (64%), limited travel/exposure outside of the U.S. (54%), and health care concerns (53%).

Factors Impacting Transgender People's Desire to Move

- Nearly half (46%) of those who viewed their local community as less LGBTQ-friendly wanted to move out of their state, compared to 26% of those who viewed their local community as more LGBTQ-friendly. Those in less LGBTQ-friendly local communities were also more likely to want to move out of the country (25% vs. 15%).
- Over half (57%) of those who lived in states with laws and policies that were less supportive of transgender people wanted to move to another state, compared to 18% in states with more supportive laws and policies. Among transgender people in states with laws and policies that were less supportive of transgender people:
 - About two-thirds (65%) of those concerned about what a Trump presidency could mean for them as a transgender person in general wanted to move out of state, compared to 17% of those who were less concerned. They were also more likely to want to move out of the country (22% v. 8%).
 - Nearly three-quarters (72%) of those concerned that the quality of their health care would decrease due to Trump's election wanted to move out of state, compared to one-quarter (26%) of those who were less concerned. They were also more likely to want to move out of the country (26% vs. 6%).
 - Nearly two-thirds (63%) of those who indicated that they were concerned about discrimination as a result of Trump's election wanted to move out of state, compared to 25% of those who were less concerned. They were also more likely to want to move out of the country (25% vs. 4%).
 - Two-thirds (67%) of those who indicated that they were concerned about being the victim of a hate crime as a result of Trump's election wanted to move out of state, compared to one-third (34%) of those who were less concerned. They were also more likely to want to move out of the country (26% vs. 16%).
- Further, among those with lower incomes (\$50K or less in household income) who lived in states with laws and policies that were less supportive of transgender people, 73% wanted to move out of the state, compared to 46% of those with higher incomes in these states. They were also more likely to want to move out of the country (32% vs. 14%).

For those transgender people who do pursue relocating, service providers, businesses, and state and local governments should both consider the costs of losing members of their communities and support and welcome those who are making new homes. Many transgender people will need resources to be able to move, and all will need to stay as informed as possible about what a move will and will not accomplish, given the rapidly changing policy landscape. Ultimately, whether or not most transgender people who want to move will be able to do so, the expression of a desire to move is a measure of the extreme pressure that transgender people are feeling about their and their families' safety and health. Such pressure has mental health, physical health, and economic impacts on those who move and those who remain.

BACKGROUND

Prior research has indicated that transgender people, and LGBTQ people more generally, consider moving or altering their travel plans in response to increasingly threatening social and political climates in order to be in locations with more supportive environments.

Researchers have explored reasons for migration or relocation among LGBTQ people across the globe. While this work has mostly explored the experiences of LGBTQ people seeking asylum in other countries to escape violence because of their SOGIE (sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression), a recurring theme in this literature is the length to which LGBTQ people are willing to migrate to gain freedom from hostile political climates as a means of survival.² Media outlets and nonprofit organizations have increasingly begun to report a similar trend in LGBTQ people expressing the desire to leave Florida and other U.S. states due to increasing political hostility toward them and their families.³

Yet moving is not always possible, even for those most desperate to escape. Residential mobility depends on various factors, including economic resources, job opportunities and mobility, and caregiving responsibilities.⁴ Further, residential mobility is associated with subsequent challenges to well-being and social support,⁵ likely given the stress that moving entails and the lack of established relationships and resources in a new residential area.

Some work has begun to explore relocation desires and actions among LGBTQ individuals in the U.S. as a result of more recent discriminatory legislation and an increasingly negative sociopolitical climate. In a study of transgender and gender-diverse adults after the 2016 election of President Trump, researchers found that participants experienced fear and worry regarding legal and policy changes targeting the transgender community (e.g., rollback of bathroom rights, regulations inhibiting access to gender-affirming care), which amplified feelings of powerlessness and oppression.⁶ Some participants vocalized concerns about needing to move for safety reasons and were considering leaving states that were less supportive of transgender rights in favor of states that had greater

² Azadeh Nematy et al., *LGBTQI+ Refugees' and Asylum Seekers' Mental Health: A Qualitative Systematic Review*, 20 *SEXUALITY RSCH. & Soc. POL'Y* 636 (2023); Ailsa Winton, *Queer Mobilities and the Work of Messy Survival*, 46 *ETHNIC & RACIAL STUD.* 1812 (2023).

³ E.g., Charles M. Blow, *L.G.B.T.Q. Americans Could Become a 'New Class of Political Refugees'*, *N.Y. TIMES* (June 14, 2023), <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/14/opinion/transgender-florida.html>; John Ferrannini, *Families Fleeing Florida, Texas Amid Anti-LGBTQ Legislation, Nonprofit Head Says*, *BAY AREA REPORTER* (May 12, 2023), <https://www.ebar.com/story/69952/News/News/>; Lori Rozsa, *Florida Anti-LGBTQ Laws Prompt Families Who Feel Unsafe to Flee*, *THE WASH. POST* (June 10, 2023), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2023/06/10/florida-anti-lgbtq-laws/>.

⁴ Erin E. Bennett, *Characteristics of Movers and Predictors of Residential Mobility in the Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities (ARIC) Cohort*, 74 *HEALTH & PLACE* 102771 (2022); Blow, *supra* note 3; Abbie E. Goldberg & Roberto Abreu, *LGBTQ Parent Concerns and Parent-Child Communication About the Parental Rights in Education Bill ("Don't Say Gay") in Florida*, 73 *FAM. REL.* 318 (2024); Abbie E. Goldberg et al., *"Don't Say Gay": Implications for Outness and Desire to Move Among LGBTQ Parents in Florida*, 21 *SEXUALITY RSCH. & Soc. POL'Y* 1189 (2024) [hereinafter Goldberg, *Implications for Outness*].

⁵ Bennett, *supra* note 4.

⁶ Sarah F. Price et al., *The Impact of the 2016 US Presidential Elections on Transgender and Gender Diverse People*, 18 *SEXUALITY RSCH. & Soc. POL'Y* 1094 (2021).

protections.⁷ Contemplation of the possibility of moving was associated with feelings of grief and isolation,⁸ highlighting how the decision to move is not easy and may be fraught with ambivalence and tension.

In a study of LGBTQ parents in Florida, which was conducted soon after the passing of the Parental Rights in Education Act (“Don’t Say Gay”), participants coped with stress related to the legislation in a variety of ways, including activism, seeking support, avoiding the news, and planning for the future (e.g., moving).⁹ Over half (56%) of parents said that they had considered moving out of Florida, and 17% had taken steps to do so, with some saying that they were saving money, looking for jobs, and exploring housing markets outside of Florida.¹⁰

In another study of LGBTQ parents’ relocation desires in the wake of the passing of the Parental Rights in Education Act, researchers found more than two-thirds of participants wanted to move. However, less than half that number felt confident they would move in the next several years.¹¹ Barriers to moving included economic factors, employment reasons, caregiving responsibilities, home ownership, and connections to family/friends.¹² Those who were more worried about the law were more likely to want to move and report a greater likelihood of moving.¹³ Those who had lived in Florida for less time reported a greater likelihood of moving.¹⁴

A national survey of over 90,000 transgender people conducted in 2022 found that nearly half (47%) of respondents had thought about moving to another state because their state government considered or passed laws that target transgender people for unequal treatment (such as banning access to bathrooms, health care, or sports), and 5% of respondents had moved out of state because of such state action.¹⁵

Similarly, the Trevor Project, in collaboration with the Movement Advancement Project, found that nearly two in five (39%) LGBTQ young people reported considering moving to a different state, and 4% actually moved due to LGBTQ-related politics or laws.¹⁶ Compared to their cisgender LGBTQ peers, transgender and nonbinary young people reported more frequently considering moving to

⁷ *Id.* at 1099.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Abbie E. Goldberg et al., *Perceived Impact of the Parental Rights in Education Act (“Don’t Say Gay”) on LGBTQ Parents in Florida*, 52 THE COUNSELING PSYCH. 224 (2024). Abbie E. Goldberg *Impact of HB 1557 (Florida’s Don’t Say Gay Bill) on LGBTQ Parents in Florida*, THE WILLIAMS INST. 2 (2023), <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Dont-Say-Gay-Impact-Jan-2023.pdf>.

¹⁰ *Id.* at 246-47.

¹¹ Goldberg, *Implications for Outness*, *supra* note 4, at 1200.

¹² *Id.* at 1200-01.

¹³ *Id.* at 1197.

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ Sandy E. James et al., *Early Insights: A Report of the 2022 U.S. Transgender Survey*, NAT’L CTR. FOR TRANSGENDER EQUAL. 23 (Feb. 2024), https://transequality.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/2022%20USTS%20Early%20Insights%20Report_FINAL.pdf.

¹⁶ THE TREVOR PROJECT & MOVEMENT ADVANCEMENT PROJECT, RESEARCH BRIEF: HOW STATE POLICY AFFECTS THE WELL-BEING AND RELOCATION OF LGBTQ YOUNG PEOPLE 3 (Jan. 2025), <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/research-briefs/how-state-policy-affects-the-well-being-and-relocation-of-lgbtq-young-people/>.

a different state (45% vs. 26%) and actually moving to a different state (4% vs. 3%).¹⁷ The study also found that LGBTQ young people's consideration and decision to leave a state varied by state policy environment.¹⁸ This effect was particularly pronounced among trans and nonbinary young people living in a state with a negative LGBTQ policy environment, with nearly seven in ten (68%) such young people having considered moving to another state.¹⁹

Finally, a survey of LGBTQ faculty members' responses to anti-DEI laws and initiatives found that nearly half (48%) were considering moving out of state, with 23% having planned or actively taking steps to move out of state, 20% having already applied for a new job out of state, and 19% already searching for housing in other states.²⁰ Over half (52%) said that they would like to move out of their state, with 38% saying that they would "very much" like to move and 14% indicating that they would "somewhat" like to move.²¹ Those who lived in anti-DEI states were more likely to want to move.²² Barriers to moving identified by respondents included the challenges associated with getting another academic job (86%), the hassle of moving (44%), the cost of living in their current state (39%), love for their home (38%) and community (33%), family caregiving responsibilities (27%), family living nearby (26%), the weather (25%), and inability to afford to move (18%).²³

Informed by this research, in December of 2024, we conducted an anonymous survey of transgender people to explore the impact of the results of the 2024 election and the broader social and political climate on transgender people's travel plans and desire to relocate. The survey used a two-fold recruitment strategy, as described in the Methodology section. The following findings are based on responses from 302 transgender, nonbinary, and other gender-diverse people we refer to as "transgender" in this report.

¹⁷ *Id.*

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ *Id.* at 3-4.

²⁰ Abbie E. Goldberg, *The Impact of Anti-DEI Legislation on LGBTQ Faculty in Higher Education*, THE WILLIAMS INST. 30 (May 2024), <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Anti-DEI-Laws-May-2024.pdf>.

²¹ *Id.*

²² *Id.* at 30-31.

²³ *Id.* at 31-32.

FINDINGS

DEMOGRAPHICS

- **Gender identity and sexual orientation.** Participants were invited to select any and all gender identity categories that they identified with and the one that, if forced to choose, they would say best reflected their identity. To the first question, 30% of respondents said transgender man, 13% said man, 18% said transgender woman, 15% said woman, 57% said nonbinary, and 15% said another gender. When asked, “If you had to choose ONE option to describe your gender, what would it be?” 11% said man, 12% said woman, 14% said transgender man, 9% said transgender woman, 46% said nonbinary, and 8% said something else (e.g., genderqueer).
- **Sexual orientation.** Over one-quarter (27%) of respondents identified as queer, over one-quarter (27%) identified as bisexual, 11% as asexual, 10% as pansexual, 10% as lesbian, 6% as gay, 5% as straight/heterosexual, 1% as two-spirit, and 3% as something else (e.g., demisexual, greysexual, fluid and queer, ace and pan).
- **Age.** Almost sixty percent (58%) of the sample was 30 or younger. Almost thirty percent (29%) were 31-40, and the remainder (13%) were over 40.
- **Race.** Sixty-five percent of participants identified as White only. Over one-third of the sample were people of color, meaning they identified with a race/ethnicity other than White (35%).
- **Households and relationships.** Most participants (90%) indicated living with one or more other people. Almost one-third (33%) reported they were partnered but not married, and 16% said they were married. Thirteen percent were parents.
- **Education and employment.** Over forty percent of the sample (43%) had less than a college education. Most participants were employed full-time (44%) or part-time (18%), with 13% stating they were unemployed. Thirteen percent said they were self-employed, and 14% reported they were students.
- **Income.** One-fifth of the sample reported a family or household income of under \$25,000/year (22%); 22% reported \$26,000-\$50,000, 27% reported \$51,000-\$100,000, and the remainder (21%) reported over \$100,000 a year in household income.

More information about the demographics of the sample can be found in our report, *Perceptions of Transgender Adults Preparing for a Trump Presidency*.²⁴

FACTORS IMPACTING TRAVEL AND RELOCATION

In December of 2024, transgender people were experiencing several types of pressures that might lead them to relocate from an area in the United States they viewed as less transgender-affirming area to one they viewed as more transgender-affirming. These pressures included 1) their state law and policy environment, 2) the supportiveness of their local environment, and 3) their concerns about the incoming Trump administration.

²⁴ Goldberg & Sears, *supra* note 1.

Transgender people may want to relocate from a less supportive local environment to a more supportive one because they are concerned about how they or their family will be treated in their current location, including experiencing discrimination or violence. For those who live in states that lack state-level discrimination protections that include discrimination on the basis of gender identity or have recently passed laws limiting transgender people’s access to gender-affirming care, sports participation, or bathrooms, moving to a state with discrimination protections and without laws targeting transgender people may be viewed as a way to better protect and support themselves and their families. Finally, the Trump administration has attempted to define transgender people out of existence, roll back federal discrimination protections, ban gender-affirming care for minors, and end federal funding for gender-affirming care more broadly. Without federal protections and support, transgender people living in locations in the United States they view as less affirming may feel even more vulnerable, leading them to want to move to states that have more state-level protections and state-funded services, including for healthcare.

State Policy Environment

At the end of 2024, transgender people were facing an increasingly hostile environment. We used the Movement Advancement Project’s gender identity policy tally for each state and their categorization of states as “high, medium, fair, low, or negative” in terms of their gender identity protective policies to categorize states as “high or medium” (i.e., relatively positive/supportive state context) or “fair, low or negative” (i.e., relatively negative/non-supportive state context). Based on these categorizations, 53% of participants lived in a state with a high or medium gender identity policy environment, and 47% lived in a state with a fair, low, or negative gender identity policy environment.²⁵ Participants in high or medium gender identity policy environments were considered to live in “states with laws and policies that were more supportive of transgender people” for purposes of our analysis. Those in fair, low, or negative policy environments were considered to live in “states with laws and policies that were less supportive of transgender people.”

Table 1. State policy environment of participants

| STATES WITH LAWS AND POLICIES MORE SUPPORTIVE OF TRANSGENDER PEOPLE (N = 161) | | STATES WITH LAWS AND POLICIES LESS SUPPORTIVE OF TRANSGENDER PEOPLE (N = 141) | |
|---|----------|---|----------|
| STATE | % OF 302 | STATE | % OF 302 |
| California | 9% | Florida | 7% |
| New York | 8% | Pennsylvania | 6% |
| Washington | 7% | Texas | 5% |
| Illinois | 6% | Ohio | 4% |
| Massachusetts | 5% | North Carolina | 3% |
| Colorado | 3% | Georgia | 3% |
| Oregon | 3% | Arizona | 2% |
| Connecticut | 2% | Indiana | 2% |
| Michigan | 2% | Tennessee | 2% |

²⁵ Of note is that only two states represented in the dataset, Pennsylvania and Virginia, had a ‘fair’ policy rating. Participants in these states represented 6% and 1.3% of the sample, respectively.

| STATES WITH LAWS AND POLICIES MORE SUPPORTIVE OF TRANSGENDER PEOPLE (N = 161) | | STATES WITH LAWS AND POLICIES LESS SUPPORTIVE OF TRANSGENDER PEOPLE (N = 141) | |
|---|----------|---|----------|
| STATE | % OF 302 | STATE | % OF 302 |
| Minnesota | 2% | Arizona | 1.7% |
| Other states (<2% in each) | 6% | Indiana | 1.7% |
| | | Missouri | 1.3% |
| | | Virginia | 1.3% |
| | | Other states (<1.3% in each) | 7% |

Views on Local Climate

Participants in our survey were asked, “How LGBTQ-friendly is your community?” A total of 29% said “very LGBTQ friendly,” 32% said “somewhat,” 24% said “mixed/neutral”, 12% said not very, and 3% said not at all. For our analysis, we used responses to this question as a measure of how participants viewed the degree to which their local community was “LGBTQ friendly” (as opposed to, more specifically, transgender affirming). We defined those living in “more LGBTQ- friendly communities” as those who described their communities as somewhat or very LGBTQ-friendly and the remainder as living in less LGBTQ-friendly communities.

Participants also reported on whether the area where they lived was “a good place” for (a) trans/nonbinary people, (b) sexual minorities/LGBQ+ people, (c) immigrants from outside the U.S., and (d) racial/ethnic minorities. Thirty-three percent (33%) of respondents reported that where they lived was not a good place for transgender people. See Table 2.

Participants who viewed the area where they lived as not a good place for transgender people (n = 100, 33.1% of the sample) also tended to report it as not a good place for LGBQ+ people (r = .76), racial/ethnic minorities (r = .56), and immigrants (r = .51), p < .001 for all correlations.

Table 2. Is the area where you live a good place or not a good place for...?

| GROUP | NOT A GOOD PLACE | A GOOD PLACE | NEUTRAL | DON'T KNOW |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|---------|---------------|
| | % | % | % | % |
| Trans/nonbinary people | 33.1% | 40.4% | 21.5% | 5.0% |
| Gay/lesbian/bisexual people | 23.5% | 49.3% | 22.5% | 4.6% |
| Racial/ethnic minorities | 25.5% | 33.4% | 32.5% | 8.6% |
| Immigrants from outside of the U.S. | 24.8% | 32.5% | 27.2% | 15.6% |

Specific Concerns Related to a Trump Presidency

With the election of President Trump to a second term on November 5, 2024, many transgender Americans experienced significant fear, worry, and anger.²⁶

²⁶ David Crary, *Transgender-Rights Advocates Say the Election of Trump and His Allies Marks a Major Setback*, ASSOCIATED PRESS (Nov. 15, 2025, 2:37 PM), <https://apnews.com/article/election-2024-transgender-rights-lgbtq-donald-trump-3bb3ace81ff32b6dec>

In the first months of the Trump administration, executive orders and policies have sought to redefine sex as sex as assigned at birth, ban gender-affirming care for minors, ban transgender women and girls from participating in sports consistent with their gender identity, ban transgender people from serving in the military, and force transgender people to use their sex assigned at birth on their passports.²⁷ The administration's executive orders issued to date also have sweeping implications for non-discrimination protections, housing for transgender people who are incarcerated, access to shelters and other services, data collection and research, and transgender students' access to equal education, including access to bathrooms and participation in sports.²⁸

The impact of the Trump administration on transgender and nonbinary people extends beyond explicitly anti-transgender policies. For example, many transgender people have other identities that create additional vulnerabilities under various Trump administration policies, such as having low incomes, being an immigrant, or being a person of color.²⁹ Yet, while facing greater challenges, transgender people with multiple vulnerabilities often demonstrate notable resilience, determination, and community connections and support.

The current study was initiated after the election and prior to inauguration day, when there was still uncertainty surrounding many of the specifics of the anti-transgender policies the Trump administration would ultimately pursue.³⁰ However, given the profound implications of the 2024 election results for transgender people, the study aimed to better understand transgender people's fears and concerns related to a Trump presidency. These concerns are discussed in depth in *Perceptions of Transgender Adults Preparing for a Trump Presidency*, published in March 2025.

Overall, 93% of respondents were concerned about what a Trump presidency might mean for transgender people.³¹ When asked if they felt hopeful about the future, 42% said they were not very hopeful or not at all hopeful.³²

In terms of anticipated discrimination, harassment, and safety threats, participants indicated the following had changed for them due to the outcome of the 2024 election:³³

- 83% were more concerned about being discriminated against
- 79% were more concerned about being verbally attacked
- 80% were more concerned about being the victim of a hate crime
- 74% were more concerned about being physically attacked

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²⁷ Exec. Order No. 14,168, 90 Fed. Reg. 8615 (Jan. 20, 2025); Exec. Order No. 14,187, 90 Fed. Reg. 8771 (Jan. 28, 2025); Exec. Order No. 14,201, 90 Fed. Reg. 9279 (Feb. 5, 2025); Exec. Order 14,183, 90 Fed. Reg. 8757 (Jan. 27, 2025).

²⁸ Elana Redfield & Ishani Chokshi, *Impact of the Executive Order Redefining Sex on Transgender, Nonbinary, and Intersex People*, THE WILLIAMS INST. (Jan. 2025), <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Sex-Definition-EO-Jan-2025.pdf>.

²⁹ James et al., *supra* note 15, at 14-15, 21.

³⁰ Kate Sosin, *The Post-Election Question: What Comes Next for Trans People?*, THE 19TH (Nov. 18, 2024, 9:00AM), <https://19thnews.org/2024/11/lgbtq-trans-issues-trump-second-term/>.

³¹ Goldberg & Sears, *supra* note 1, at 15.

³² *Id.*

³³ *Id.* at 15.

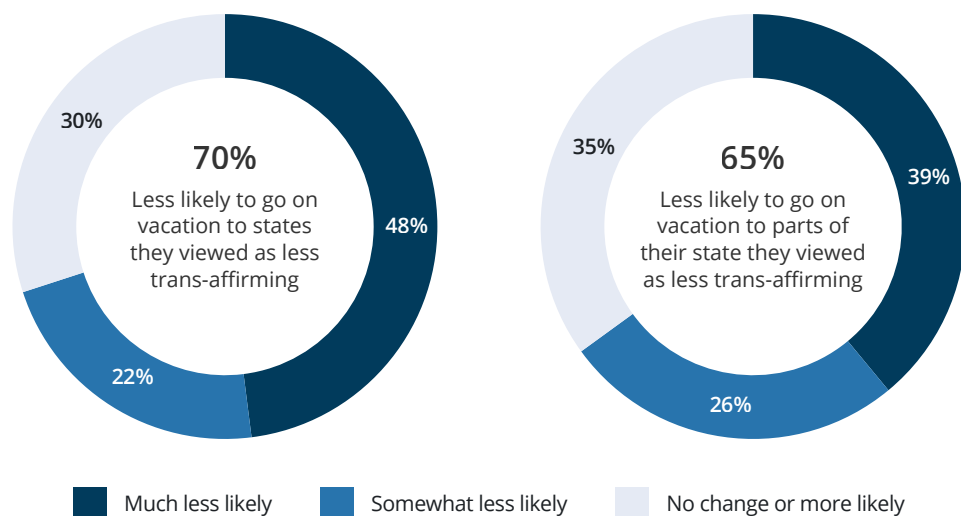
- 59% were more concerned about being the victim of any crime, with participants in states with laws and policies that are less supportive of transgender people being more concerned than those with more supportive laws and policies.

In terms of their health and well-being, due to the outcome of the 2024 election, 83% were more concerned about their mental health, and 65% were more concerned about their physical health.³⁴ In terms of access to health care, almost two-thirds (65%) of the sample were very (40%) or somewhat (25%) concerned about future access to GAC as a result of the 2024 election.³⁵ In addition, almost three-fourths of participants (73%) were concerned that the quality of their health care, in general, would worsen due to the 2024 election outcome.³⁶ Notably, those with household incomes less than \$25,000 per year were significantly more likely to voice concern (89%) that their health care in general would become worse than those whose household income exceeded \$25,000 per year (68%).³⁷

TRAVELING

We asked respondents whether the current social and political environment and, specifically, the outcome of the 2024 election, were impacting their travel plans. Thirty percent said that they were traveling less frequently as a result of the 2024 election. Most (70%) said that they would be much (48%) or somewhat (22%) less likely to go on vacation to states they viewed as less trans-affirming. Almost two-thirds (65%) said they would be much (39%) or somewhat (26%) less likely to go on vacation or travel to parts of their state they viewed as less trans-affirming.

Figure 1. Attitudes toward traveling to less transgender-affirming places after the 2024 election



In terms of canceling travel plans, approximately one in six respondents (16%) reported having canceled travel plans to a state they viewed as less trans-affirming (8%) or were considering canceling travel plans to such a state (8%). When asked more specifically what states or communities they

³⁴ *Id.* at 16.

³⁵ *Id.* at 16.

³⁶ *Id.* at 19-20.

³⁷ *Id.*

would be avoiding, respondents generally said that they were avoiding politically conservative states, Southern and Midwestern states, and states with high levels of anti-LGBTQ and/or anti-trans legislation. Some further specified that they were avoiding rural and/or religious areas. Sample quotes include:

Any states that are really religious or super red are ones that I'm staying out of. I haven't canceled any trips completely, but my future trips are definitely getting rerouted a little bit.

Before, red states were a maybe, but now, they are a complete no, as with Trump winning, they feel entitled to be much more openly hateful than before.

I am specifically avoiding states that strongly voted for Trump, such as the Midwest. I am also avoiding states or communities that have flipped or become more supportive of conservative values in addition to voting or supporting Donald Trump.

Table 3. Travel plans

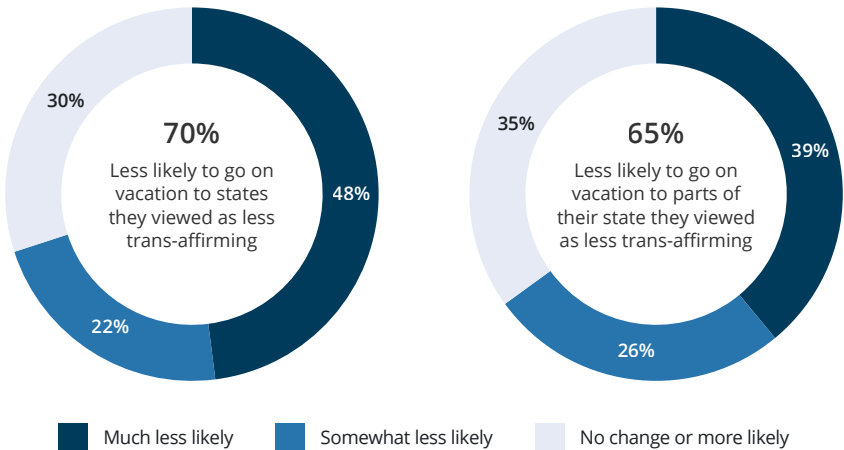
| ACTION RELATED TO TRAVEL | YES |
|---|------|
| I have canceled travel plans to a less trans-affirming part of my state | 3.3% |
| I have considered canceling travel plans to a less trans-affirming part of my state | 5.0% |
| I have canceled travel plans to a less trans-affirming state | 7.9% |
| I have considered canceling travel plans to a less trans-affirming state | 7.9% |

RELOCATING

Considering Moving and Already Moved

As of December 2024, almost half of the respondents (48%) had already moved or were considering moving to a location in the United States they viewed as more trans-affirming. Nearly one in four (23%) had already moved to a state or a part of their state they viewed as more transgender-affirming.

Figure 2. Moving



Note: Each respondent could select more than one response in Figure 2. Forty-eight percent of respondents selected at least one of the first four listed responses. Twenty-three percent selected at least one of the first two listed responses.

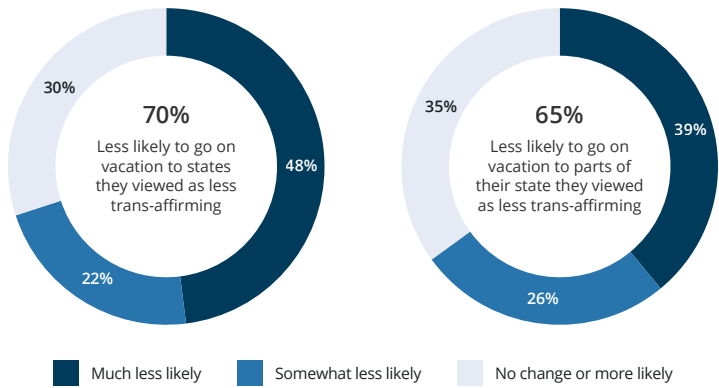
- **Moving to a more trans-affirming part of the same state.** Eight percent of respondents had already moved to a part of their state they viewed as more trans-affirming, and 10% were considering doing so.
- **Moving out of the state.** Twenty-one percent of respondents had already moved to a state they viewed as more trans-affirming, and 25% were considering doing so. When asked more specifically what cities or states they want to move to, respondents detailed progressive cities and politically liberal states, with California, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York, and Washington State frequently named. Some said, “Anywhere blue.”
- **Moving related to college and employment.** Of respondents aged 18-25, 10% indicated that their desire to be in a state they viewed as more trans-affirming had shaped their decisions about college. Among those respondents aged 18-25 who lived in a state with laws and policies that were less supportive of transgender people, 13% said they were considering choosing or transferring to a college in a state they viewed as more trans-affirming.
 - Regarding employment, of those currently employed part-time or full-time, 24% indicated that they either were applying for jobs (9%) or considering applying for jobs (15%) in states they viewed as more trans-affirming. Among employed participants in states with laws and policies that were less supportive of transgender people, 40% were either already applying for jobs in states they viewed as more trans-affirming (14%) or were considering applying for employment in such states (26%).
- **Moving to a less transgender-affirming location.** Recognizing that many factors impact transgender people’s ability and desire to move, participants were asked about whether they planned to move to a location they viewed as *less* transgender-affirming within their state or in another state. Four percent of respondents said yes. Asked why, they cited reasons such as less expensive housing/cost of living, graduate school, a desire for a larger living space, job possibilities, greater racial diversity, and wanting to be closer to family.

Strength of Desire to Move out of State or Country

When asked separately about how much they wanted to move out of state, 37% said they very much (22%) or somewhat (15%) wanted to move out of state. The remainder were either neutral/mixed (15%) or said they were not very much (11%) or not at all (37%) considering moving out of state. Respondents who lived in states with laws and policies less supportive of transgender people (57%) were more likely to want to move out of state than those who lived in states with more supportive laws and policies (19%).

Asked how much they wanted to move out of the United States, 45% said they very much (20%) or somewhat (25%) wanted to move out of the country. The remainder were either neutral/mixed (24%) about moving out of the country or said they were not very much (12%) or not at all (19%) wanting to move out of the country.

Figure 3. Strength of desire to move out of state and country



Reasons for Moving

Participants who said they somewhat or very much wanted to move from their state to a state they viewed as more trans-affirming were asked to indicate their reasons for wanting to move. See Table 6. The most frequently selected reasons for wanting to move were all related to concerns about the increasingly hostile policy landscape and sociopolitical climate for transgender people. These included concerns about LGBTQ rights in general (76%), the social-political climate (71%), anti-transgender rhetoric and climate in the state (60%), and anti-transgender laws and policies in their state, such as bathroom restrictions, state ID restrictions, and bans on gender-affirming care (47%).

Table 4. Reasons for wanting to move out of state

| REASONS | YES (%) |
|--|---------|
| Anti-trans rhetoric and climate in my state | 59.5% |
| Anti-trans laws and policies in my state (such as bathroom restrictions, state ID restrictions, and bans on gender-affirming care) | 46.8% |
| Social-political climate | 71.2% |
| Concerns about LGBTQ rights | 75.7% |
| Employment reasons | 25.2% |
| Cost of living (e.g., housing) | 42.3% |
| Be closer to family | 6.3% |
| Other reasons | 26.1% |

Respondents who selected “other reasons” were given an opportunity to write in those reasons for wanting to move out of state. These included being closer to friends or their partner (6), Don’t Say Gay laws or book bans (4), being further away from family (3), for educational reasons (e.g., grad school) (3), and dislike for their current region of the country (3). Other reasons included gun laws, climate change, weather, the cost of health care, and access to transportation.

Participants were also offered the opportunity to elaborate on any of the items in Table 6 that they selected, and some did so. LGBTQ climate, rights, and rhetoric were the most frequently mentioned issues:

Simply put, my state does not offer the safety I deserve in order to live comfortably, and these are the main reasons I'm highly considering moving.

We just bought this house before the election. I really, really don't want to have to move again. But I've been thinking about Minnesota since it has codified trans protections into its constitution.

Minnesota's governor basically said, "Over my dead body" would he give people up, and it's got the lowest cost of living out of all the places we want to run. Also, it is much closer to the Canadian border in an emergency.

Barriers to Moving

All participants were asked about barriers to moving. Many of the most frequently selected barriers to moving for all participants had to do with the costs of moving and other economic issues. These included the costs of relocating (54%), the cost of living (43%), difficulty in getting another job or other employment concerns (36%), and housing issues and concerns (31%). In addition, many respondents reported the hassle of relocating (49%) and the fact that they currently lived near their family of origin (32%) as barriers to moving. See Table 7.

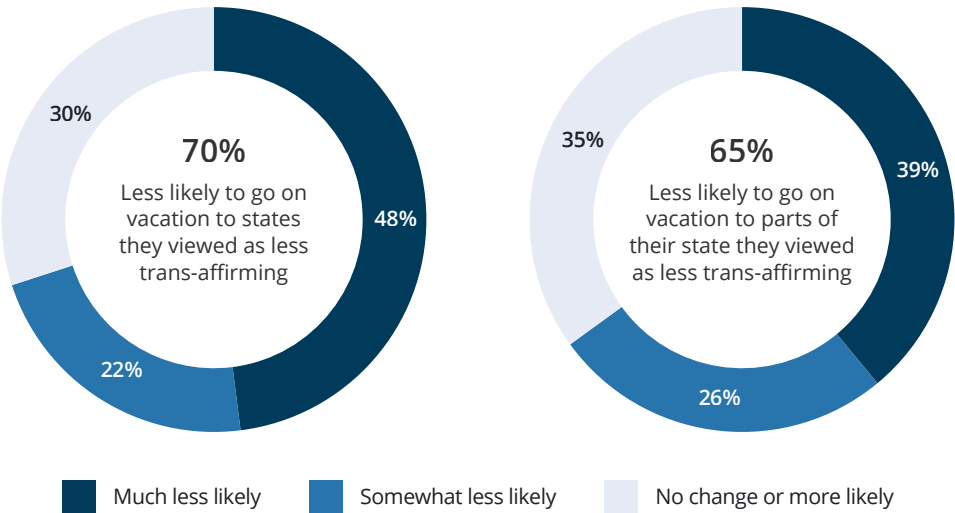
For those who indicated they somewhat or very much wanted to move to a state they viewed as more trans-affirming, the economic barriers were even more pronounced: 82% selected the cost of living as a barrier to moving, 56% selected difficulty in getting another job or other employment concerns, and 49% selected housing concerns and issues. In addition, these respondents were more likely to report the hassle of relocating (66%) and the fact that they currently lived near their family of origin (44%) as barriers to moving. See Table 5 and Figure 4.

Table 5. Barriers to moving to a more transgender-affirming state

| REASONS | YES (%) | YES (%) |
|--|--------------------------|--|
| | FULL SAMPLE (N = 302) | THOSE WHO SOMEWHAT OR VERY MUCH WANT TO MOVE (N = 111) |
| Family of origin is here | 31.8% | 44.1% |
| Caregiving responsibilities (e.g., for older family members) | 9.6% | 12.6% |
| Hard to get another job/employment concerns | 35.8% | 55.9% |
| Cost of living | 43.4% | 64.0% |
| Hassle of relocating | 49.3% | 65.8% |
| Cost of relocating | 54.3% | 83.0% |
| Housing issues/concerns | 30.8% | 48.6% |
| Social-political climate (better here than in other states) | 13.9% | 9.0% |
| Anti-trans rhetoric and climate in other states | 13.2% | 10.8% |
| Anti-trans laws and policies in other states | 13.2% | 13.5% |

| REASONS | YES (%) | YES (%) |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| | FULL SAMPLE (N = 302) | THOSE WHO SOMEWHAT OR VERY MUCH WANT TO MOVE (N = 111) |
| Unable to safely access gender-affirming care in other states | 7.6% | 10.8% |
| Concerns about LGBTQ rights in other states | 18.9% | 23.4% |
| Don't want children to have to move schools | 2.3% | 1.8% |
| I/we love our home | 17.9% | 20.7% |
| I/we love our community | 13.9% | 12.6% |
| Other barriers | 7.6% | 9.0% |

Figure 4. Barriers to moving to a more transgender-affirming state among those who want to move



Respondents who selected “other barriers” were given an opportunity to write in the other barriers for them to moving. These included disability (5), challenges around relocating pets (5), access to health care providers (3), that their partner was rooted to their current location (3), and employment and educational opportunities (e.g., new promotion, graduate program) (3). Other barriers identified included their friends in their current location, their religious community, and better access to outdoor hobbies in their current location.

- **Barriers to moving internationally.** Participants were asked about additional, unique barriers that might exist to moving outside of the country. Among those who indicated they somewhat or very much wanted to relocate to another country, the most frequently cited barriers to moving were visa or immigration concerns (85%), language issues (64%), limited travel/exposure outside of the U.S. (54%), and health care concerns (53%).

FACTORS IMPACTING TRANSGENDER PEOPLE’S DESIRE TO MOVE

Based on the reasons respondents gave for wanting to move, we explored the impact of the following factors on their desire to move. For this analysis, we considered whether views about local climate, the state law and policy environment, and concerns about the Trump presidency impacted whether respondents were very much or somewhat more likely to want to move to another state (37% of respondents) or another country (45% of respondents) as a result of Trump’s election.

Views about Local Climate

Respondents in less LGBTQ-friendly communities were significantly more likely to want to move out of state.³⁸ Specifically, 46% of those who lived in less LGBTQ-friendly communities wanted to move (i.e., communities they described as mixed, not very LGBTQ friendly, or not at all LGBTQ friendly), compared to 26% of those in more LGBTQ-friendly communities (i.e., communities described as somewhat or very LGBTQ friendly). They were also more likely to want to move out of the country.³⁹ One-quarter (25%) of those in less friendly communities wanted to move, compared to 15% in more LGBTQ-friendly communities.

State Law and Policy Environment

Those in states with laws and policies that were less supportive of transgender people (57%) were more likely to want to move out of state than those in states with laws and policies that were more supportive of transgender people (18%).⁴⁰ Those in states with laws and policies that were less supportive of transgender people were not more likely to want to move out of the country.

General, Health Care, Discrimination, and Safety Concerns Related to Desire to Move

We considered the impact of participants’ concerns about the Trump presidency on their desire to move by considering 1) participants overall and 2) just those participants who lived in states with laws and policies that were less supportive of transgender people. We found that while participants with concerns about the Trump presidency were more likely to want to relocate no matter where they

³⁸ $\chi^2 (1, 302) = 25.46, p < .001$

³⁹ $\chi^2 (1, 302) = 4.27, p = .028$

⁴⁰ $\chi^2 (1, 302) = 48.71, p < .001$

lived, those who lived in states with laws and policies that were less supportive of transgender people were even more likely to want to relocate.

For those who lived in states with laws and policies that were less supportive of transgender people, the overlay of increasingly hostile federal policies under the Trump administration may lead them to seek the state-level protections and services found in states with more supportive laws and policies. For example, suppose a transgender person is concerned that the Trump administration will not enforce federal non-discrimination laws to protect transgender people. In that case, they might want to move to a state that has amended its non-discrimination laws to include gender identity protections.

We also considered the concerns of respondents in all states because the reasons for relocation might be complex and not as directly tied to state law and policy. This could lead some transgender people to desire to move from one state with more supportive laws and policies to another as a result of Trump's presidency. There is a great range of law and policy differences across the states that we have classified as more supportive. For example, according to the Movement Advancement Project's (MAP) gender identity policy tally, New York scores a 24 while New Hampshire scores 15.75. However, both are considered states with more supportive laws and policies by MAP and in our analysis.

Further, what might lead someone to move is not how many supportive laws and policies a state has (their overall MAP score) but that it has the specific policies that are the most important to that individual. For example, a state's high scores on non-discrimination protections may not be as important for an individual as a state's commitment to Medicaid or other resources to cover gender-affirming care.

Finally, beyond considerations of state law and policy, some transgender people might want to move from one state with more supportive laws and policies to another such state because it has a larger transgender community and more services and support or is the home of family and friends that they want to rely on as the national legal and social climate becomes increasingly hostile. Others may simply fear they can no longer afford to live on their own in their current state of residence. The Trump presidency has already resulted in federal employees who live throughout the country being laid off, reductions to college and university budgets, increases in student loan payments, grants being cut from organizations that both employ and serve transgender people, and more negative predictions about unemployment, inflation, and the possibility of a recession. Further, as cuts to key support programs such as Medicaid and food stamp benefits (SNAP) remain probable, many transgender people who have lower incomes may need to move to another state, with supportive laws and policies or not, where they can rely on economic support from family or friends. Moving "back home" may be a financial necessity for these respondents, even if not desired. See Table 6.

Table 6. Participant concerns in relation to desire to move

| CONCERN | ALL PARTICIPANTS (N = 302) | | PARTICIPANTS IN STATES WITH LAWS AND POLICIES THAT ARE LESS SUPPORTIVE OF TRANSGENDER PEOPLE (N = 141) | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| | WANT TO MOVE OUT OF STATE | WANT TO MOVE OUT OF COUNTRY | WANT TO MOVE OUT OF STATE | WANT TO MOVE OUT OF COUNTRY |
| Concerned about Trump presidency | 39% | 20% | 65% | 22% |
| Less concerned about Trump presidency | 15% | 10% | 17% | 8% |
| Concerned about health care | 52% | 24% | 72% | 26% |
| Less concerned about health care | 24% | 7% | 26% | 6% |
| Concerned about discrimination | 41% | 22% | 63% | 25% |
| Less concerned about discrimination | 20% | 8% | 31% | 4% |
| Concerned about hate crime | 42% | 23% | 67% | 26% |
| Less concerned about hate crime | 23% | 10% | 34% | 16% |

With this in mind, when considering all participants:⁴¹

- Those who indicated that they were concerned about what a Trump presidency could mean for them as a transgender person, in general, were more likely to want to move out of state than those who said that they were less concerned.⁴² Specifically, 39% of concerned participants wanted to move, versus 15% of less concerned participants. Regarding moving out of the country, 20% of concerned participants wanted to move, versus 10% of less concerned participants.
- Those who were very or somewhat concerned that the quality of their health care would worsen due to Trump's election were more likely to want to move out of state.⁴³ About half (52%) of somewhat or very concerned participants wanted to move, compared to one-quarter (24%) of less concerned participants. Concerned participants were also more likely to want to move out of the country, 24% vs. 7%.

⁴¹ We do not report chi square statistics for analyses on desire to move out of the country, due to small n's/cell sizes. However, we include these findings because it is clear that concerned participants were consistently more likely to want to move out of the country than those who were less concerned, paralleling the findings related to those who wanted to move to another state within the United States.

⁴² $\chi^2 (1, 302) = 4.55, p = .024$

⁴³ $\chi^2 (1, 302) = 18.21, p < .001$

- Those who indicated that they were very or somewhat concerned about discrimination were more likely to want to move out of the state.⁴⁴ About forty percent (41%) of concerned participants wanted to move, versus 20% of those less concerned. Concerned participants were also more likely to want to move out of the country, 22% vs. 8%.
- Those who indicated that they were very or somewhat concerned about being the victim of a hate crime were more likely to want to move out of the state.⁴⁵ About forty percent (42%) of concerned participants wanted to move, versus 23% of those less concerned. Concerned participants were also more likely to want to move out of the country, 23% vs. 10%.

Looking more narrowly at the participants in states with laws and policies that were less supportive of transgender people, those who were concerned about the quality of their health care, discrimination, and hate crimes as a result of Trump's presidency were even more likely to want to move to another state or out of the country.

Among participants in states with laws and policies that were less supportive of transgender people:

- Those who indicated that they were concerned about what a Trump presidency could mean for them as a transgender person, in general, were more likely to want to move out of the state than those who said that they were less concerned.⁴⁶ About two-thirds (65%) of concerned participants wanted to move, versus 17% of less concerned participants. Likewise, 22% of concerned participants wanted to move out of the country, compared to 8% of less concerned participants.
- Those who were very or somewhat concerned that the quality of their health care would worsen as a result of Trump's election were more likely to want to move out of state.⁴⁷ Nearly three-quarters (72%) of concerned participants wanted to move, compared to 26% of less concerned participants. Concerned participants were also more likely to want to move out of the country, 26% vs. 6%.
- Participants who indicated that they were very or somewhat concerned about discrimination were more likely to want to move out of the state.⁴⁸ Nearly two-thirds (63%) of concerned participants wanted to move, versus about one-third (31%) of those less concerned. More concerned participants were also more likely to want to move out of the country, 25% vs. 4%.
- Participants who indicated that they were very or somewhat concerned about being the victim of a hate crime were more likely to want to move out of the state.⁴⁹ About two-thirds (67%) of concerned participants wanted to move, versus one-third (34%) of those less concerned. More concerned participants were also more likely to want to move out of the country, 26% vs 16%.

⁴⁴ $\chi^2 (1, 302) = 9.04, p = .002$

⁴⁵ $\chi^2 (1, 302) = 9.96, p = .001$

⁴⁶ $\chi^2 (1, 141) = 10.5, p = .002$

⁴⁷ $\chi^2 (1, 141) = 22.44, p < .001$

⁴⁸ $\chi^2 (1, 141) = 9.28, p = .002$

⁴⁹ $\chi^2 (1, 141) = 12.84, p < .001$

Income

As discussed above, respondents indicated that cost was a significant barrier to moving. Accordingly, we considered the impact of income on the desire to move. Interestingly, however, transgender people with lower incomes were, in fact, more likely to want to move, perhaps because of their additional vulnerability amid Trump's proposed policies. Overall, those with lower incomes (\$50K or less in household income) were more likely than participants with higher incomes to want to move out of the state, 43% vs. 32%,⁵⁰ and move out of the country, 27% vs. 14%.⁵¹ This difference was even more pronounced among respondents who lived in states with laws and policies that were less supportive of transgender people. In those states, 73% of those with lower incomes wanted to move out of the state, compared to 46% of those with higher incomes.⁵² And in those states, those with lower incomes were also more likely to want to move out of the country than those with higher incomes, 32% vs. 14%.⁵³

⁵⁰ $\chi^2 (1, 141) = 12.84, p < .001$

⁵¹ $\chi^2 (1, 302) = 7.92, p = .004$

⁵² $\chi^2 (1, 141) = 10.78, p < .001$

⁵³ $\chi^2 (1, 141) = 6.73, p = .009$

CONCLUSION

Transgender people have experienced large waves of anti-transgender state legislation over the past several years, one of the most anti-transgender presidential campaigns in the history of the United States, and several anti-transgender policy actions by the current presidential administration. As a result, many transgender people have been considering curtailing travel plans and moving to more affirming locations to protect themselves and their families. Almost half of the survey respondents (48%) had already moved or were considering moving to a location they viewed as more trans-affirming in the United States. Forty-five percent very much or somewhat wanted to move out of the United States altogether. Approximately one in six respondents reported having canceled plans to travel to a state they viewed as less trans-affirming or were considering doing so. Those participants with lower incomes, who lived in less supportive local communities or states with laws and policies less supportive of transgender people, and those with concerns about the impact of Trump's presidency on their access to health care, exposure to discrimination, and vulnerability to hate crimes were more likely to want to move to state they viewed as more trans-affirming or out of the United States altogether.

It is important to remember that our survey was conducted in December 2024. The desire to relocate and fears around traveling for transgender people may be even greater today. Alternatively, the application and enforcement of new anti-transgender federal policies, even in states with laws and policies more supportive of transgender people, may have dampened the sense that relocating will make a meaningful difference. For example, gender-affirming care services for youth were stopped, at least temporarily, as a result of actual or threatened federal funding cuts in states with more transgender-affirming policy environments, such as California, Colorado, New York, and Illinois.⁵⁴

Alongside their desire to move, many transgender people face economic and other barriers to doing so. Significantly, our survey revealed that the desire to move was higher among those with lower incomes, suggesting that they may feel trapped in less affirming locations because they lack the resources to move to more affirming ones.

These findings have implications for service providers, businesses, and policymakers. Organizations serving members of the transgender community should be aware of transgender people's desire to relocate, particularly among those who lack the financial resources to do so. Depending on available resources, service providers should consider support and services that facilitate relocating and provide assistance for new members to their local communities. Providing reliable information about what protections and support a move will result in, as well as any offsetting risks and costs of moving, is critical. Before engaging in the cost and work of moving, transgender people should be well-informed about what improvements will be possible. This is particularly true for those seeking access to gender-affirming care or health care in general.

The desire to move and forgo travel has economic implications for businesses, employers, and colleges. In the end, people who move have the most capacity to move. Employers and schools in less

⁵⁴ Adrianna Rodriguez, *These Hospitals Suspended Transgender Care Amid Trump's Executive Order. But Can They Do That?*, USA TODAY (Feb. 4, 2025, 1:28 PM), <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2025/02/04/transgender-hospitals-gender-affirming-care/78204417007/>.

supportive environments risk losing talented employees and students and incurring recruitment and replacement costs. State and local governments risk losing valuable members who contribute to their communities in many ways, including by volunteering and paying taxes.

Finally, policymakers should take all of these effects into account and evaluate the impact that supportive and hostile laws have on transgender people moving and traveling, on businesses and schools, on families and communities, as well as economic and fiscal impacts. While the transgender population is not large, in a time of shrinking financial support for state and local governments, any cost of anti-transgender legislation takes on greater significance. During a time when organizations serving transgender people are also experiencing federal funding cuts, policymakers should also consider budget allocations to support transgender people who are looking to relocate to protect their health, safety, and families.

Whether or not the transgender people who want to move will be able to do so, the expression of a desire to move is a measure of the extreme pressure that transgender people are feeling about their, and their families', safety and health. That pressure has mental health, physical health, and economic impacts on those who move and those who remain.

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RESEARCH THAT MATTERS



METHODS

SAMPLE

A two-fold strategy was enlisted to recruit participants for our anonymous survey. First, we used Prolific, a web-based research platform that includes multiple safeguards for preserving data quality, minimizes bots and bad actors, and has been shown to be a reliable and efficient means of collecting data.⁵⁵ Prolific's participant pool has significant economic and racial diversity, ensuring that individuals who are often less likely to be included in research on the LGBTQ community (e.g., less educated, lower income, of color) are adequately represented.⁵⁶ Second, we recruited additional participants using convenience sampling, relying on listservs, professional and personal contacts, and private channels to spread the word—strategies that often result in including people who are more strongly connected to the LGBTQ community, as well as more well-educated and affluent LGBTQ people.⁵⁷ By deploying both recruitment strategies, the goal was to obtain a richer and more diverse sample with respect to gender identities, educational level, income, and other social locations that vary within the transgender community. Ultimately, in our final sample, 215 (71%) participants were recruited via Prolific, and 87 (29%) were recruited via convenience sampling, for a total of 302 participants. Prolific participants were compensated for their participation, while community participants were not.

The survey was available from December 9 to December 31. Participants were eligible for the study if they identified as transgender ("Do you consider yourself to be transgender, trans, nonbinary, or another gender that is different from the sex assigned to you at birth?"), were over 18 and lived in the United States. Our final sample of individuals who a) completed at least 75% of the questions and b) were deemed legitimate participants based on validity checks and careful inspection of the data was 302 participants.

A small group of participants indicated that they were transgender but ultimately identified a sex assigned at birth that was consistent with their gender identity (e.g., male and man). These participants' data (closed- and open-ended responses) were subjected to close inspection and discussion with the research team. Those participants who clearly either (a) rejected the sex assigned at birth question as irrelevant, inappropriate, or offensive, and therefore chose to mark a sex consistent with their gender identity, and/or (b) also selected other gender identities (e.g., nonbinary, genderqueer) were retained in the sample. This resulted in the deletion of 23 cases (e.g., who may have misunderstood the trans screening question or may have ultimately been motivated to complete the survey for Prolific for financial compensation).

⁵⁵ Phelim Bradley, *Bots and Data Quality on Crowdsourcing Platforms*, PROLIFIC (Aug. 10, 2018), <https://www.prolific.com/resources/bots-and-data-quality-on-crowdsourcing-platforms>; Hannah Lettmann, *Prolific's Participant Pool – The Present and the Future*, PROLIFIC (Sept. 18, 2018), <https://www.prolific.com/resources/prolifics-participant-pool-its-present-and-its-future>; Stefan Palan & Christian Schitter, *Prolific.ac – A Subject Pool for Online Experiments*, 17 J. OF BEHAV. & EXPERIMENTAL FIN. 22 (2018).

⁵⁶ Abbie E. Goldberg & Reihonna L. Frost, "Saying 'I'm Not Okay' Is Extremely Risky": *Postpartum Mental Health, Delayed Help-Seeking, and Fears of the Child Welfare System Among Queer Parents*, 64 FAM. PROCESS 1 (2025).

⁵⁷ Emma C. Potter & Daniel J. Potter, *Methods, Recruitment, and Sampling in Research with LGBTQ-Parent Families*, in LGBTQ-PARENT FAMILIES: INNOVATIONS IN RESEARCH AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE 507 (Abbie E. Goldberg & Katherine R. Allen, eds., 2d ed. 2020).

SURVEY METHOD

Potential participants were invited to complete a 25-30 minute anonymous mixed-methods survey hosted by the platform Qualtrics (desktop or mobile version). Survey items were developed by the investigators in consultation with members of the Williams Institute staff (see Acknowledgements). At the beginning of the survey, an information sheet was provided to respondents that included information on the research entities conducting the survey, their contact information, funding sources, aims, risks, benefits, duration of the survey, and the confidential and voluntary nature of the survey. Potential participants were told that the survey was open to “anyone who (a) identifies as trans and/or nonbinary, and/or whose gender differs from the gender they were assigned at birth, and (b) is currently living in the United States.” They were further told that the survey “asks questions about how you are preparing for a Trump presidency, as well as questions about concerns, experiences, and plans you are making amid anti-trans legislation and/or climate in the United States. It also asks questions about coping, support networks, and hopes for the future. Respondents were also asked a number of demographic questions (See Demographics section). They were also told they could drop out of the survey at any time. This anonymous survey was approved by Clark University’s Human Subjects Board.

PRIVACY AND DATA PROTECTION

The data collected for this report is anonymous. We, the researchers, have no access to information about participants’ identities. We did not ask for identifying information (e.g., birth dates), nor did participants report it. Prolific, which is based in the United Kingdom, takes seriously the privacy of participants and the maintenance of their anonymity. Participants are assigned a unique, 24-character participant ID. Participants are fully anonymized. Further, Prolific uses encrypted HTTPS connections secured by Transport Layer Security (TLS). User data are stored in a secure cloud container environment, and passwords are hashed using industry-approved technologies, stored securely, and cannot be viewed by Prolific. All participants are free to opt-out at any time, and Prolific is fully GDPR compliant.

ANALYSIS

We used descriptive statistics and qualitative content analysis in this report. We also conducted a limited number of chi-square tests to examine whether certain outcomes differed according to state policy context and/or participant income or education level, based on our expectation that participants’ experiences of and perspectives on the consequences of the election might vary on these particular variables.

In presenting quotes, we have edited minor spelling and grammar errors to increase readability.