

Writing Letters of Recommendation for Gender-Affirming Care: An Anti-Oppressive Approach

DATE & TIME:

June 24, 2026

9:00AM – 4:00PM

Sign-in begins 15 minutes prior to the training time. All participants must arrive during the sign-in period. Late arrivals will not be admitted.

PLACE: California Endowment Tahoe Conference Room
1000 N. Alameda Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

PARKING: Free, limited parking available on site. Early arrival recommended.

REGISTRATION: <https://eventshub.dmh.lacounty.gov>

DESCRIPTION: Mental health professionals play a crucial role in facilitating access to gender-affirming surgical care by writing letters of recommendation. However, traditional letter-writing practices often reinforce gatekeeping and uphold oppressive power dynamics that pathologize trans and non-binary individuals. This training equips clinicians with the knowledge and skills to write affirming, client-centered letters that align with the World Professional Association for Transgender Health's Standards of Care, Version 8, through an anti-oppressive framework. Participants will explore the historical context of medical gatekeeping and learn strategies for writing letters that prioritize autonomy, dignity, and access. The training will also address common challenges clinicians face, including provider bias and systemic obstacles. Through discussion, case examples, and practical guidance, attendees will gain a comprehensive understanding of how to advocate effectively for their clients while challenging pathologizing models of care.

TARGET AUDIENCE: DMH clinical staff with a master's level or doctoral degree. Prior knowledge and experience in working with transgender and gender non-conforming individuals is preferred.

OBJECTIVES: As a result of attending this training, participants should be able to:

1. Describe the historical and systemic factors that contribute to gatekeeping in gender-affirming medical care.
2. Explain the difference between traditional pathologizing models of letter-writing and an anti-oppressive, client-centered approach.
3. Identify the required components of letters of recommendation for gender-affirming care as outlined by the Standards of Care, Version 8.
4. Apply the WPATH Standards of Care, Version 8 to letter-writing practices while centering client autonomy and informed consent.
5. Formulate at least one culturally responsive approach that mental health professionals can use to reduce mental health disparities among transgender and gender diverse clients.
6. Demonstrate the ability to write letters of recommendation for gender-affirming surgical care that safeguard client privacy and uphold autonomy.

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COORDINATED BY: Marcela Barajas, LCSW, Training Coordinator
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DEADLINE: When capacity is reached.

CONTINUING EDUCATION: 6.0 hours for BBS, BRN, CCAPP-EI
6.0 CE for Psychologist

COST: NONE

