



July 14, 2025

To Toronto 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee

CUPE Local 2998, Association of Community Centres members would like to express our - support for - Gender Affirming Care benefits for all City of Toronto employees - at your July 15 meeting, agenda item: QS8.2 Expanding Health Benefits for City of Toronto Staff. This is a bargaining -priority for our members. Our local has been faced with roadblocks providing this benefit to our members as we share our group benefit plan with the entire city.

Gender affirming procedures and devices are medically necessary and often life-saving. They can include surgeries, hormone replacement therapy, prosthetic devices, electrolysis (hair removal) and other care. Extended health benefits should cover drugs, devices and procedures not covered by provincial or territorial health plans.

The City of Toronto has been listed as 1 of “Canada’s Top 100 Employers” and “Canada's Best Diversity Employers” to continue this commitment as an inclusive and equity employer it is crucial that you recognize the importance of providing health care that supports the most vulnerable and at risk members of – our staff. Statistics show that non-access to gender affirming surgery leads to a 73% increase in suicide attempts compared to trans individuals who can access care. This benefit will strengthen the City’s ability to recruit, retain, and provide safe and affirming workplaces for 2STNB (2 spirit, trans, nonbinary) staff.

The City should:

1. Cover gender-affirming surgical care, medication, counseling and related services and products such as hormone therapy, electrolysis, breast or penile prosthesis, wigs, gaffer underwear, chest binders, voice classes, medical-related travel expenses and other costs.
2. Provide leaves of absence (paid, flexible and without loss of service or seniority) and strong return to work and accommodation for workers accessing gender affirming care. Offer transition and support plans.

In conclusion, CUPE 2998 agrees with the goals of expanding Health Benefits for Toronto Employees to Include Gender-Affirming Care and urge committee members to instruct Councillor Chris Moise, and Councillor Paul Ainslie to bring this initiative to City Council. In a time of the rise of hate, and increased attacks upon trans people, the City is well positioned to demonstrate leadership in its support of our trans and gender diverse staff and committees, Any further delay for this medically necessary health care access is an act of a negligence and harm towards our employees who require these services.

Lainey Little, President CUPE Local 2998

Susy Glass, Secretary Treasurer CUPE Local 2998