

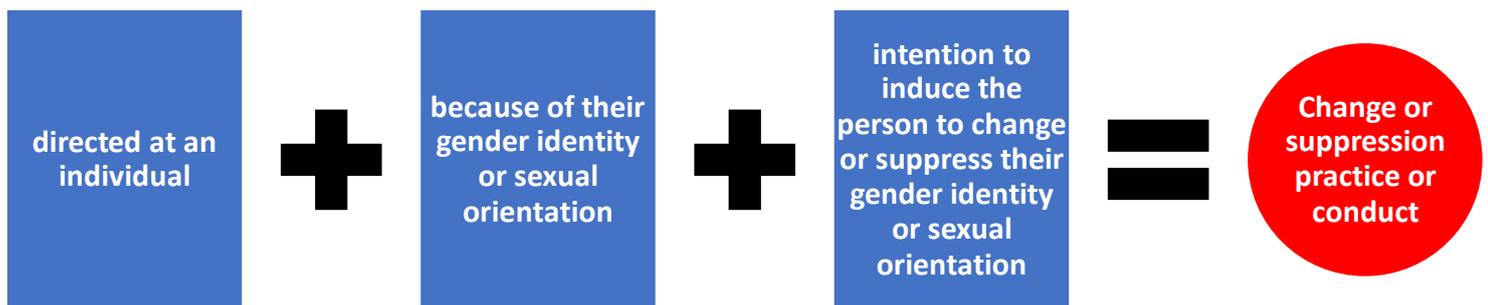
# A summary of the Change or Suppression Prohibition Act 2021

The **Change or Suppression Prohibition (Conversion) Act 2021** was introduced in February 2022. It is now against the law to try to change or suppress someone's sexual orientation or gender identity, **even if they ask for help**.

The Act was developed to outlaw abusive practices employed in psychiatric, religious, or other contexts in order to change or suppress people's sexual orientation or expression. Such practices have caused *significant* suffering and trauma.

## To be considered a change or suppression practice, conduct must include 3 elements:

1. be directed at an *individual*; and
2. *because* of their sexual orientation or gender identity; and
3. undertaken with the *intention* to change or induce that person to change or suppress their sexual orientation or gender identity



## Examples of conduct that would be considered illegal under the Act include:

- ✗ a parent sending their child to an overseas conversion therapy camp to attempt to cure them of being gay
- ✗ running a support group designed to help people not act on their same-sex attraction
- ✗ a church leader telling a member to suppress and ignore their feelings of same-sex attraction
- ✗ questionable practices under the Act also include conversation, prayer, deliverance ministry, or counselling when these are aimed to change or suppress sexual orientation or gender identity

## Examples of conduct that would NOT be considered illegal under the Act include:

- ✓ a religious sermon expressing a general statement of belief (provided it is not directed at an individual)
- ✓ explaining a religious/biblical view of relationships
- ✓ an individual expressing their own view on sexuality and gender
- ✓ discussion with a religious leader about exploring sexual orientation and/or gender identity
- ✓ activities that support or affirm someone's sexual orientation or gender identity, including providing acceptance, support or understanding of a person
- ✓ facilitating a person's coping skills, social support, or identity exploration and development
- ✓ prayer that a person will draw close to God, find peace, wisdom, or spiritual discernment in their faith journey

The Act is not intended to ban general behaviour or mainstream religious practices, but this is a complex topic and religious leaders must work within the limitations of their skills and qualifications. If you aren't sure if your words or conduct is a change or suppression practice, review them against the 3 elements. Please act with care.

As with many issues, know when to refer on to other support organisations and relevant service providers.

Please see the Human Rights Commission website for more information on this topic including training options, service providers you can refer to, and how reports are responded to by the Commission: [www.humanrights.vic.gov.au](http://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au).