

INTRODUCED: December 14, 2020

A RESOLUTION No. 2020-R072

To express support for stronger protections and inclusive policies at local shelters for the care and protection of LGBTQ+ people experiencing homelessness in compliance with the Virginia Values Act.

Patrons – Mayor Stoney, Ms. Lynch, Ms. Jordan, President Newbille,
Vice President Robertson, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Jones and Ms. Larson

Approved as to form and legality
by the City Attorney

PUBLIC HEARING: JAN 11 2021 AT 6 P.M.

WHEREAS, LGBTQ+ people, especially transgender people, are disproportionately impacted by homelessness; and,

WHEREAS, the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey, the largest survey of transgender people, found that 30 percent of transgender people have experienced homelessness in their lifetime; and

WHEREAS, more specifically, Black transgender women face extreme risk of violence and death if unsheltered; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, the Human Rights Campaign documented 27 murders of transgender people in the United States, most of whom were Black transgender women, and in 2020, an additional 25 murders of transgender people in the United States were documented; and

AYES: 9 NOES: 0 ABSTAIN: _____

ADOPTED: JAN 11 2021 REJECTED: _____ STRICKEN: _____

WHEREAS, upon information and belief of the City, the foregoing numbers underrepresent the violence faced by transgender people in the United States; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the high risk of violence, the current political and economic climate continues to put transgender Americans at high risk of discrimination when attempting to access shelter; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development recently announced their plan to dismantle protections for transgender people seeking shelter; and

WHEREAS, upon information and belief of the City, LGBTQ+ youth is another group affected by a lack of inclusive policies and, according to the Williams Institute, LGBTQ+ youth make up nine percent of the youth population in the United States, yet 40 percent of youth experiencing homelessness identify as LGBTQ+; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Chapter 1140 of the Acts of Assembly of 2020, known as the Virginia Values Act (hereinafter referred to as the “Act”), the General Assembly of Virginia enacted statewide nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQ+ people with regard to public accommodations, credit, employment, and housing; and

WHEREAS, despite the federal administration’s attempts to limit and deny shelter to LGBTQ+ Americans, homeless services in Virginia must comply with this new state law; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond believes that it is in the best interests of the residents of the city of Richmond that the City of Richmond protect and support the LGBTQ+ community; and

WHEREAS, it is the City’s understanding that local LGBTQ+ organizations believe that standards of care are necessary to ensure safe shelter access for LGBTQ+ people; and

WHEREAS, shelters in the city of Richmond, including both congregate and non-congregate shelters that are classified as places of public accommodation pursuant to the Act, must comply with the Act; and

WHEREAS, the Council believes that it is in the best interests of the residents of the city of Richmond that the Council express support for stronger protections and inclusive policies at local shelters, including both congregate and non-congregate shelters that are classified as places of public accommodation pursuant to the Act, for the care and protection of LGBTQ+ people experiencing homelessness in compliance with the Act;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND:

That the Council expresses support for stronger protections and inclusive policies at local shelters, including both congregate and non-congregate shelters that are classified as places of public accommodation pursuant to the Act, for the care and protection of LGBTQ+ people, including implementation by such shelters of the following standards to further compliance with the Act:

1. A commitment to ensure that the persons entitled to protection under the Act are not discriminated against on the basis of any such person's gender identity or sexual orientation and that any and all policies that are prohibited by the Act are revised or otherwise eliminated, to the extent permitted by law, to comply with the Act.
2. Affirmation of the gender identity of transgender clients, including using their chosen name and pronoun consistently.
3. A commitment to work with individual transgender clients to ensure that shelter placement is client-driven and honors the unique safety needs of that individual;

4. Development and maintenance of an organizational non-discrimination policy that addresses sexual orientation and gender identity issues and encompasses protocols and procedures for shelter staff and clients.

5. Development and maintenance of a standardized data collection system that includes information regarding sexual orientation and gender identity for use by all homeless services providers.

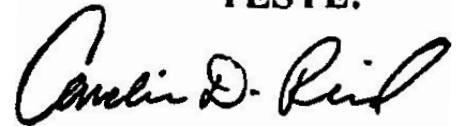
6. A requirement that all shelter staff, particularly front-line staff, complete regular training on how shelter staff may affirm transgender clients and treat them with dignity and respect.

7. A requirement that all shelter staff complete regular conflict resolution training, with an emphasis on how to intervene if shelter residents are engaging in harassment or other forms of violence toward transgender residents.

8. A commitment to provide clients with information about LGBTQ+ affirming resources, including those identified on the Transgender Resource and Referral list maintained by the Virginia Department of Health.

A TRUE COPY:

TESTE:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Camille D. Reed". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

City Clerk



CITY OF RICHMOND

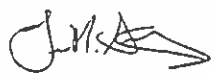
INTRACITY CORRESPONDENCE

O&R

REQUEST

DATE: November 24, 2020 **EDITION:** 1

TO: The Honorable Members of City Council

FROM: The Honorable Levar M. Stoney, Mayor  11/25/2020

RE: Transgender-Affirming Policies in Local Homeless Services

ORD. OR RES. No. _____

PURPOSE: To express support for stronger protections and inclusive policies at local shelters and to support and protect transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals experiencing homelessness.

REASON: To ensure safe shelter access for LGBTQ+ people and compliance with the Virginia Values Act.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval is recommended by the City Administration.

BACKGROUND:

LGBTQ+ people, especially transgender people, are disproportionately impacted by homelessness. The 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey, the largest survey of transgender people, found that 30% of transgender people have experienced homelessness in their lifetime. More specifically, Black transgender women face extreme risk of violence and death if unsheltered. Sitting at the intersection of identities, Black transgender women are targeted for violence rooted in racism, sexism, and transphobia. In 2019, the Human Rights Campaign documented 27 murders of transgender people in the U.S., most of whom were Black transgender women. Already in 2020, 25 murders of transgender people in the U.S. have been documented, and we know that these numbers underrepresent the violence faced by transgender people in the U.S. Furthermore, according to the Williams Institute, LGBTQ+ youth make up 9% of the youth population in the U.S., yet 40% of youth experiencing homelessness identify as LGBTQ+. These data support an urgency around prioritizing spaces where LGBTQ+, and particularly transgender, people experiencing homelessness can find and access affirming shelter with the least barriers possible.

In addition to the high risk of violence, the current political and economic climate continues to put transgender Americans at high risk of discrimination when attempting to access shelter. The U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development has announced their plan to dismantle protections for transgender people seeking shelter. and an internal HUD memo was recently released that

outlines how shelters can identify and ultimately deny service to transgender women. Fortunately, as of July 1, 2020, the Virginia Values Act now provides statewide nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQ+ people in regards to public accommodations (including shelter), credit, employment, and housing. Despite the federal administration's attempts to limit and deny shelter to LGBTQ+ Americans, homeless services in Virginia must comply with this new state law.

FISCAL IMPACT / COST: None.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS: None.

BUDGET AMENDMENT NECESSARY: No.

REVENUE TO CITY: None.

DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon adoption.

REQUESTED INTRODUCTION DATE: December 14, 2020

CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING DATE: January 11, 2021

REQUESTED AGENDA: Consent agenda

RECOMMENDED COUNCIL COMMITTEE: Education and Human Services Committee

CONSIDERATION BY OTHER GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES: None.

AFFECTED AGENCIES: None.

RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING ORD. OR RES.: None.

REQUIRED CHANGES TO WORK PROGRAM(S): None.

ATTACHMENTS: Resolution language.

STAFF: Maggie Anderson, Acting Chief of Staff to Mayor Stoney