



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

For science. For action. For health.

AJPH CALL FOR PAPERS SPECIAL SECTION ON GLOBAL LGBTQ+ PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE FACE OF LEGAL PERSECUTION

The *American Journal of Public Health (AJPH)* invites the submission of manuscripts on the topic of the global oppression and legal persecution of LGBTQ+ people and communities, and its implications for public health.

On a global level, a resurgence of anti-LGBTQ+ legislation is under way in a number of countries. The Southern Poverty Law Center reported in 2013 that four US-based anti-LGBTQ+ organizations had “consultative status at the United Nations, giving them special access and input to the deliberations of the UN’s Economic and Social Council, which was established to promote economic and social progress and fundamental human rights.” In 2016, the fundamentalist Christian organization Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) advised Belize-based groups not to support striking down their Colonial-era anti-sodomy law (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2016), and between 2008 and 2019 they poured more than \$38 million into efforts abroad, such as opposing same-sex adoption in Austria and the rights of trans women in France seeking to legally change her gender, by submitting arguments in cases at the European Court of Human Rights (Open Democracy, 2019). These efforts have perhaps been most notable in African countries, where US-based anti-LGBTQ+ crusaders (Christian, Mormon, and Catholic fundamentalists) have found fertile ground for promoting anti-LGBTQ+ hate (Okereke, 2023). Indeed, according to the [Byline Times](#), right-wing American evangelical Christian organizations have spent more than \$20 million in sub-Saharan Africa since 2015.

Legislation passed in Uganda in 2023 has criminalized homosexuality and other queer identities including capital punishment for “serial offenders,” or for transmission of “terminal” illnesses such as HIV. Uganda is not alone in legislating harsh penalties for same-sex acts and even identities. Similar laws that carry sentences of capital punishment or life imprisonment can be found in Mauritania, Somalia, Nigeria, Sudan, Tanzania, and Zambia. The legislature in Ghana has passed a harsh anti-gay bill, and as of this writing, the Ghanaian President is considering signing it. The public health implications of these laws are vast and immediate. In particular, programs that work to prevent and treat HIV are under threat as their clients and patients may opt out of received needed services to avoid the risk of criminalization.

Other key questions about the precipitous impact of this global persecution include: How do outmoded prohibitions against homosexuality and other LGBTQ+ identities impact the mental health and overall wellness of residents of these countries? What are the needs of organizations and community-based service providers, on the ground, in the areas most impacted by this legislation? In what ways can public health funders work to advocate for legislative change, while simultaneously continuing to fund necessary organizations and services? How do the activities of right-wing fundamentalists in Africa, Austria, Belize, France, Argentina, Honduras, India, Mexico, Peru, Germany, Switzerland, and countless other countries, support and fuel the anti-LGBTQ+ and anti-reproductive justice campaigns currently ravaging the United States?



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

For science. For action. For health.

We invite the submission of manuscripts in a number of critical areas related to global LGBTQ+ persecution, public health, and health equity; including, but not limited to topics addressing:

- The history of anti-LGBTQ+ fundamentalism abroad, including an examination of colonial legacies, White Supremacy, and eugenics;
- The connection between anti-LGBTQ+ legislation, human rights violations, and the rise of authoritarianism globally;
- The connection between anti-LGBTQ+ legislation abroad and anti-LGBTQ+/anti-reproductive justice efforts and legislation in the United States;
- The impact of anti-LGBTQ+ legislation on community and population health, including worsening mental health and syndemics (such as with substance use, violence, and HIV/AIDS);
- The role of HIV criminalization laws, HIV-specific sentencing enhancements, or required sex offender registration on effective HIV prevention and treatment;
- The impact of anti-LGBTQ+ legislation on the delivery of LGBTQ+ specific health services, including gender affirming care;
- The role of public health funder advocacy and organizing in challenging harmful laws and supporting LGBTQ+ communities; and
- The importance of building diverse, multi-sector coalitions to support the health and well-being of LGBTQ+ people and communities.

Potential authors should visit the *AJPH* website (www.ajph.org) to review the Instructions for Authors and specific guidelines for the various types of manuscripts. Importantly, submissions must include a cover letter formatted as requested in the Instructions for Authors and should specify that the submission is for the Global LGBTQ+ Public Health special section. In all manuscripts, the number of words, references, and tables/figures must correspond to a specific *AJPH* article format.

Select manuscripts will undergo editorial review and eventual peer review by the *AJPH* editors and peer referees as defined by *AJPH* policy. The submission deadline for research papers has been extended to August 15, 2024, and they can be submitted at <https://www.editorialmanager.com/ajph>. If you are planning to submit a research article and will not be able to meet the submission deadline, please contact Stewart Landers (Stewart_Landers@jsi.com) or B. Ethan Coston (bmcoston@vcu.edu) to request a further extension. Editorials on the topic may be submitted up to September 15, 2024.