

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WPATH Takes Stand for First Amendment Rights of Medical Community; Files Complaint to Stop FTC Investigation

Washington, DC - The World Professional Association of Transgender Health (WPATH) filed a lawsuit on February 18, 2026 in response to the most recent attacks brought forth by the U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) as part of an all-of-government campaign to undermine access to gender-affirming care and attack the First Amendment rights of medical organizations.

“The federal government’s continued campaign to undermine gender-affirming care by attacking the First Amendment should be cause for concern among the broader medical community. By cherry picking who is able to benefit from free speech and who is not, the federal government is signaling that medical autonomy for all is at risk,” **said a spokesperson for WPATH.** “Actions like these should serve as a canary in the coal mine for what may happen to other areas of medicine if serious action is not taken. That’s why we filed this complaint today. For more than 50 years, WPATH has been committed to developing guidelines informed by established scientific standards, expert consensus, and patient centered values. WPATH supports individualized patient care, not a “one size fits all” approach. That is why we are making our position clear - patients deserve the highest level of care from their medical professionals and the Standards of Care are designed to promote this through open dialogue and clear communication. Our filing today is intended to preserve this right not just for our organization, but serve as a beacon for the broader medical community about what must be saved and what is at stake.”

“The FTC’s investigation is a blatant and retaliatory attack on the first amendment rights of WPATH, attempting to silence and punish an organization who has worked to deliver evidence-based guidelines for care for transgender individuals,” **said Abbe D. Lowell of Lowell & Associates.** “ This complaint should serve as a warning light for the medical community and the potential overreach that could seep into other aspects of care.”

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On January 16, 2026, the FTC served an investigative demand on WPATH. The FTC has no place in the middle of individualized medical decision-making—nor does it have any jurisdiction over WPATH and its noncommercial speech. For these reasons, the FTC’s burdensome and intrusive investigation into WPATH is a violation of the First and Fourth Amendments and has already chilled the protected First Amendment activities of WPATH, its members, and the medical community.

Today’s complaint was filed in the District of Columbia federal district court. To view the filing, please visit the following link, [HERE](#).

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About WPATH: The World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, interdisciplinary professional and educational organization devoted to transgender health. Our professional, supporting, and student members engage in academic research to develop evidence-based medicine and strive to promote a high quality of care for transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals internationally. We are funded primarily through the support of our membership, and through donations and grants sponsored by noncommercial sources.

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