



TransFORWARD
Improving Transgender Lives

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Outcomes of COVID-19 among Transgender and Gender-Diverse Texans

This fact sheet summarizes key findings identified through four, one-hour group sessions on mental health, housing, employment, and COVID-19 in each of the eight TransFORWARD regions in Texas.



41% of participants reported a lack of employment opportunities due to being transgender or gender diverse.

75% of participants reported delaying gender affirming medical treatment like HRT during the pandemic.

Employment

Participants reported multiple COVID-related changes to paid work, including delays and difficulty changing names or correcting gender markers, isolation due to remote work, and an increasing reliance on gig work—including online sex work.



Mental Health

Fear and anxiety, loneliness, and isolation were the most often cited mental health experiences of participants. The switch to telehealth was a rare bright spot, increasing access to mental health treatment.



Housing

Lack of quality, affordable housing, and discrimination were major concerns. Some turned to communal living situations during lockdowns, while others found themselves living alone.



COVID-19

The pandemic had a significant impact on respondents who reported anxiety, depression, isolation, and increased barriers to accessing employment, housing and legal services related to name or gender marker change.



Project Timeline

Planning

October 2021 through early March 2022

Region Meetings

April 2022 through September 2022

Analysis

October 2022 through February 2023

Community Voices

Throughout the focus group sessions, members of the transgender and gender diverse community in Texas openly shared their COVID-19 experiences. Their concerns and triumphs are reflected in the word cloud to the right and the comments below.



How did COVID-19 personally affect you?

EMPLOYMENT



"Trans and immunocompromised means no in-person work."

"Places of employment sometimes take advantage of trans folks like they do undocumented [workers]."

"OnlyFans and other online sex work offer some measures of safety but still involve exploitation."

"Transphobia exacerbates all issues in employment."



MENTAL HEALTH



"...more difficult to have meaningful connection..."

"Isolation. Imprisoned. Stuck alone."

"...outing myself for care..."

"..traumatic in Texas..."

"...frustration with virtual therapy..."

"...anti-LGBTQ+ legislation..."



HOUSING



"(I) opened my apartment to unhoused friends."

"The house was full of six people working and going to school from home."

"Lots of people had no consistent housing."

"Trans people become full-time caseworkers for our community."

"I moved back with family."

"No affordable housing..."



COVID-19 PANDEMIC



"...lag time for name changes..."

"...immunocompromised, can't leave house..."

"...deepened sense of community..."

"All-time low for depression pushed me into deep survival mode and challenged me to find new ways to adapt."

"...losing friends who don't wear a mask..."

