

Pride Center of Vermont
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Pride Center Of Vermont Faces Severe Hiv Prevention Funding Cut — Calls On State Lawmakers For Urgent Support

Burlington, VT — Pride Center of Vermont (PCVT), the state’s leading LGBTQ+ health and community center, is urgently calling on the Vermont Legislature to provide emergency bridge funding after being notified of a devastating 80% cut to its HIV prevention and health equity funding. The cut, stemming from changes in federal funding priorities at the CDC level, and reallocations of funding by the Vermont Department of Health, will shrink PCVT’s long-standing grant through the Vermont Department of Health from \$250,000 to just \$50,000. Without legislative action, this \$200,000 reduction, set to take effect in June 2025, will jeopardize life-saving services for LGBTQ+ Vermonters across the state.

“We’ve been a trusted partner in Vermont’s HIV prevention and LGBTQ+ health efforts for decades,” said Phoebe Zorn, Executive Director of Pride Center of Vermont. “This unexpected and drastic cut puts essential services—and queer and trans lives—at risk.”

Without restored funding, PCVT will be forced to eliminate or drastically scale back core health equity services that thousands of LGBTQ+ Vermonters across the state rely on, including:

- Free HIV testing and outreach programming
- Transgender health navigation and peer support
- Culturally responsive services for rural, BIPOC, and low-income LGBTQ+ Vermonters

These services are delivered by a small but highly skilled team whose positions are now at risk. **Health & Wellness Director** and **Health & Wellness Manager** positions could be eliminated entirely, and two other roles, the **Trans Program Manager** and **Operations & Outreach Coordinator**, will lose partial funding. These staff provide statewide HIV testing and prevention, trans health navigation, and vital health and safety programming for thousands of LGBTQ+ Vermonters annually. Two of the affected staff are certified HIV testers; the other two are currently completing certification training.

Pride Center of Vermont is calling on the Vermont Legislature to allocate **a minimum of \$200,000 in bridge funding by July 1, 2025**, to stabilize staffing, maintain essential programs, and provide time to develop a sustainable path forward.

“This is a public health issue and an equity issue, and is deeply harmful in a time when queer — and especially trans — rights are under attack in almost every state and at the federal level,” said Kell Arbor, Health & Wellness Director at Pride Center of Vermont. “We are urging lawmakers in Vermont to act now to protect the health and dignity of LGBTQ+ Vermonters.”

About Pride Center of Vermont (PCVT)

Pride Center of Vermont is the state’s leading LGBTQ+ adult community center, with a mission to celebrate, educate, and advocate for and with LGBTQ+ Vermonters. Serving thousands each year, Pride Center of Vermont delivers life-saving health and wellness, anti-violence, and community programs to connect, uplift, and resource Vermont’s LGBTQ+ communities.

Learn more about PCVT’s work and donate to help us navigate this crisis at www.pridecentervt.org/#donate.

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