



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ISSUE: PASSPORT ISSUES FOR TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS

POLICY DESCRIPTION: The Department of State allows you to change the name of your passport if your name has been legally changed and it has been less than one year since your passport was issued. Currently, the State Department will only change the gender marker on your passport if you have completed sex reassignment surgery or, for one-year provisional passports, are planning to undergo surgery in the near future. To receive a permanent passport, an individual must submit a certified letter from the attending physician or the hospital, stating that sex reassignment surgery has been completed. For a one-year provisional passport, an individual must submit a detailed summary from the attending medical physician outlining past medical history, current treatment stage, and expected date of sex reassignment surgery. The one-year provisional passport is non-renewable.

The current policy creates a particular problem for minors since most transgender minors are unable to undergo sex reassignment surgery (due to the medical profession's unwillingness to perform surgery on those under 18). Therefore, it is practically impossible for minors to receive a passport with the appropriate gender, making overseas travel impossible or dangerous.

Recommendation for Change: We recommend the State Department allow individuals to change their passport to reflect the accurate and appropriate gender in which they live. Until the overall policy is changed to eliminate the surgery requirement, minors should be given provisional passports that expire when they reach 18. It is vital for individuals to have a passport that reflects their appropriate gender in order for them to be able to safely travel.