



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT HONORS TRANS ACTIVIST ELISE MALARY AND
ANNOUNCES PARTICIPATION IN HIRE TRANS NOW PLEDGE**

*Partnership with Chicago Therapy Collective will create a trans-inclusive hiring policy
in the Mayor's Office while encouraging 250 businesses to sign the 'Hire Trans Now'
Pledge*

CHICAGO — Mayor Lightfoot and City Council today passed a resolution in recognition of Transgender Day of Resilience and in memory of Elise Malary, a beloved sister, friend, advocate, and community leader lost in March 2022 at the young age of 31. The resolution resolved to support *Hire Trans Now*, the initiative Elise led and championed at Chicago Therapy Collective. The Mayor's Office has partnered with the Chicago Therapy Collective to evaluate and develop Trans-inclusive employment practices. Additionally, the Mayor's Office and City Council members have pledged to support *Hire Trans Now* and work towards recruiting 250 businesses to receive free services and commit to incorporating the *Hire Trans Now* best practices, which will help foster more safe, just, and inclusive workplaces for Trans people across Chicago.

"With the Hire Trans Now resolution, we are honoring the legacy of Trans activist Elise Malary and demonstrating the City's commitment to creating more equitable and fair workplaces for Trans employees," said Mayor Lightfoot. "This effort will be supported by a partnership between the City and the Chicago Therapy Collective resulting in the formation of inclusive policies benefitting LGBTQ+ employees within the Mayor's Office while sending a message to the rest of our city that LGBTQ+ inclusion must be a priority."

The resolution is possible thanks to Elise Malary's advocacy and dedication to equity. Elise's life work involved fighting discrimination, especially for Trans people of color. She interned at the AIDS Foundation Chicago and worked at Equality Illinois, the Chicago Reader, and the Civil Rights Bureau of the Illinois Attorney General's Office. Elise was a founding member of the Chicago Therapy Collective and spearheaded the *Hire Trans Now* initiative.



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“Elise would be very proud of what happened here today,” Chicago Therapy Collective’s Director, Iggy Ladden says. “Elise wanted allies in positions of power to take action, to use their privilege to disrupt systemic injustice and prioritize the economic health and wellbeing of the Trans community. Today we heard the highest levels of city government respond to her call and set an example for Trans-inclusion across Chicago by embracing Hire Trans Now.”

Hire Trans Now combats the biases perpetuating high rates of unemployment and workplace discrimination against Trans workers by providing resources, training, and support directly to employers. Hire Trans Now provides employers with clear and actionable trans-inclusive best practices for hiring and employment tailored to their organization’s size and needs ensuring equitable consideration to every applicant. *Hire Trans Now’s* consultancy and training are sliding-scale and free to small businesses.

Chicago’s 2023 budget included \$75,600 in funds for a year-long project to evaluate hiring practices, conduct training, and draft policy to advance the inclusion of transgender individuals in the Mayor’s Office. This investment will also provide opportunities for small businesses in Chicago to participate in *Hire Trans Now* and receive free consultancy, training, and resources. The Chicago Therapy Collective in collaboration with Mayor Lightfoot’s Advisory Council on LGBTQ+ Affairs hopes to leverage this commitment to achieve a goal of 250 Chicago businesses signing the Hire Trans Now pledge.

“The Advisory Council on LGBTQ+ Affairs applauds the passage of this resolution, and, importantly, we are encouraged that Mayor Lightfoot and the City Council are backing up these important words with tangible actions to improve the lives of our Trans brothers and sisters,” says Butch Trusty, Chair of Mayor Lightfoot’s Advisory Council for LGBTQ+ Affairs. “The Advisory Council looks forward to continuing to support the community, businesses, and city agencies during implementation.”

Employment discrimination and injustice against the Transgender community are rampant. A 2021 study by the UCLA School of Law’s Williams Institute found that 49% of Transgender employees reported experiencing discrimination — being fired or not hired — based on their LGBTQ+ status. Additionally, 46% of Transgender employees reported experiencing harassment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.



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“Trans and gender-expansive individuals often experience discrimination and bias when pursuing employment,” says Myles Brady Davis, Director of Communications at Equality Illinois. “The #HireTransNow initiative and pledge across the city will empower businesses with the proper cultural competency in order to create a pipeline of Trans talent across a myriad of fields expanding the rich diversity of our great city.”

For more information about how businesses can join the *Hire Trans Now pledge*, please visit transinclusivechicago.org/hire.

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