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Federal Court Orders Prison to Provide Medically Urgent Gender Confirmation Surgery for Idaho Trans Woman

Preliminary injunction is necessary to stop the “de facto” denial of transgender healthcare to prisoners by the Department of Correction

BOISE, ID.—The U.S. District Court for the District of Idaho issued a preliminary injunction late yesterday in *Edmo v. Idaho Department of Correction* (IDOC), ordering the IDOC to provide Adree Edmo, a Native American transgender woman, with medically necessary gender confirmation surgery. IDOC and its for-profit medical provider, Corizon Health, have denied Ms. Edmo surgery for more than four years despite her clear and urgent need for it. Corizon has [faced allegations in other states](#) for providing medical care so shoddy that it amounts to “cruel and unusual punishment,” in violation of the Constitution’s Eighth Amendment.

A preliminary injunction is an extraordinary legal tool used by the court to prevent irreparable harm while a case is being heard by the court. The court reached its decision to order a preliminary injunction after a three-day evidentiary hearing and extensive briefing. “In refusing to provide surgery, IDOC and Corizon have ignored generally accepted medical standards for the treatment of gender dysphoria,” the court ruled. “This constitutes deliberate indifference to Ms. Edmo’s serious medical needs and violates her rights under the Eighth Amendment to the United States Constitution.”

“I am relieved and grateful that the court validated my right to necessary medical treatment,” said **plaintiff Adree Edmo**. “Not having the care I need is like being in a prison within a prison. Even though I am still living, it has felt like I have been dying inside.”

“As the Court recognized, it is a bedrock principle of our legal system that Constitutional protections apply to all individuals, regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity,” said **National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) Senior Staff Attorney Amy Whelan**. “Intentionally depriving anyone of the critical medical care they need is unacceptable. Idahoans and every American deserves better.”

“Healthcare providers have known for decades how to provide effective and life-saving medical care to transgender people,” said **Lori Rifkin, lead attorney for Ms. Edmo, and a partner at the civil rights law firm, Hadsell Stormer & Renick**. “Our laws require the state officials

running prisons to provide necessary health treatment to the people in their care. Instead, Corizon and IDOC put Ms. Edmo's life at risk."

Today's preliminary injunction orders the Idaho Department of Correction and Corizon to provide Ms. Edmo with access to medically necessary surgery within six months.

Recently, several other federal courts across the country, including in Missouri and Florida, have ruled that transgender people cannot be denied access to medically necessary care in prison. Today's issuance of a preliminary injunction by the U.S. District Court for the District of Idaho is in accordance with those rulings.

"Since the vast majority of prisoners will eventually return to their communities, everyone should care about this issue," said **Craig Durham of Ferguson Durham PLLC**. "No one wins when prisons deny care that not only treats serious medical conditions, but also prevents those conditions from getting much worse."

[Click here](#) to access a copy of the court's preliminary injunction ruling in this case.

The National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) filed this lawsuit on behalf of plaintiff Adree Edmo together with Hadsell Stormer and Renick LLP and Ferguson Durham, PLLC.

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***The National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR)** was the first national LGBTQ legal organization founded by women and brings a fierce, longstanding commitment to racial and economic justice and our community's most vulnerable. Since 1977, we have been at the forefront of advancing the civil and human rights of LGBTQ people and their families through impact litigation, public policy, and public education. Decades ago, NCLR launched the first LGBTQ Immigration Project, Transgender Rights Project, Youth Project, Elder Law Project, and began working to end conversion therapy through what is now our Born Perfect campaign. www.nclrights.org*

***Hadsell Stormer & Renick LLP** is a leading civil rights law firm with offices in Northern and Southern California that was founded in 1991.*

***Ferguson Durham** is a boutique civil and criminal litigation firm based in Boise, Idaho that focuses on civil rights, discrimination, and criminal law. With over 50 years of combined litigation experience, the partners serve their clients with a wealth of experience at the local, state, and federal levels.*