



June 10, 2025

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

The Honorable Scott Turner
Secretary
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street SW
Washington, DC 20410

The Honorable Linda McMahon
Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

RE: Complaint Under Title IX – Gender-Based Discriminatory Practices at the YMCA

Dear Secretaries Kennedy, Turner, and McMahon:

I write to file a formal complaint against the YMCA of the USA (“YMCA”) for engaging in unlawful gender-based discrimination in its programs and policies. The YMCA, a recipient of federal funds, is obligated under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 to offer equal opportunities to both males and females. Despite this legal mandate, the YMCA, a national resource office for every regional YMCA in the country, has promulgated multiple initiatives that explicitly disfavor and exclude individuals based on their biological sex. This complaint outlines the YMCA’s discriminatory policies and the ways in which they imperil vulnerable children. I respectfully request that your office open an investigation into these practices and that appropriate corrective action is undertaken to ensure the YMCA’s compliance with federal law.

I. The YMCA Discriminates Based on Gender and Favors Those who Conform to its Gender Ideology

Radical gender ideology pervades YMCA policies. Under this ideology, gender is not based on science or biology; rather it is a fluid “feeling,” determined by one’s subjective gender identity. Under such an ideology, a man can walk into a YMCA locker room where young girls are changing because he feels like a woman. The YMCA policies prioritize the man, but not the young girls in the locker room. As the national resource office for more than 2,500 local YMCAs across the United States, such policies are enormously consequential for the thousands of communities and the four million children and teens the organization serves.¹

Among the YMCA’s objectives is to export this gender ideology by “confound[ing] gender-based assumptions,” employing such techniques as using “gender-neutral (or self-identified) pronouns,” featuring transgender individuals in marketing campaigns, and recommending books featuring very young, gender-confused children.²

The YMCA also directs local YMCA camps to put this gender ideology into dangerous practice, setting forth policy stating that “all [summer] campers and staff have access to the facilities aligned with their gender identity and comfort within facilit[ies].” Such facilities include both bathrooms and cabins. Notably, this YMCA directive is silent about the comfort and safety of the young girls who will undoubtedly be present in those bathrooms and cabins, for it is not their comfort or safety with which the YMCA is concerned.

It is not surprising, then, that the “gender ideology” resources that the YMCA has provided to local YMCAs have caused them to adopt their own egregiously misguided policies. For example, at one YMCA camp in Minnesota, minor biological males who identify as female are bunked together with minor girls. YMCA employees are not required to inform parents of such an arrangement.³ This Minnesota YMCA camp is failing to protect vulnerable girls, favoring confused boys, failing in their obligation to parents who entrust their children to them, and doing all this in accordance with policies set forth by the YMCA. Another local YMCA in New Jersey also follows YMCA’s radical gender policies, permitting access to locker rooms and bathrooms according to gender identity, not biological sex.⁴ This policy creates a needlessly dangerous environment for girls and women.

¹ *Key Facts and Figures*, THE YMCA, <https://www.ymca.org/who-we-are/our-reach/key-facts> (last visited June 4, 2025).

² As with most of its gender-related policies, the YMCA has recently restricted access to this webpage. Many of the archived pages are still available here: <https://www.dailywire.com/news/ymca-scrubs-transgender-guidance-after-parent-group-raises-alarm>.

³ *All Gender FAQ*, Camp Olson YMCA, <https://campolson.org/gender-expansive-faq/>, (last visited June 9, 2025).

⁴ *Privacy and Security Policy*, Lakeland Hills Family Y, <https://lakelandhillsymca.com/about/terms-policies/>, last visited June 9, 2025).

Of particular concern, at four local YMCAs, the enactment of these policies moved from theoretical harm to actual harm. At a YMCA in Kansas City, Missouri, a young girl and her mother were forced to share a *women's* changing room with a nude, biological male.⁵ Instead of promoting the safety of the two women, who were in the correct changing room, the YMCA defended the male's presence in the changing room.⁶ At a YMCA in Santee, California, again in a *women's* locker room, a 17-year-old girl was forced to undress in the same room as a fully nude, biological male.⁷ Like their counterparts in Missouri, the YMCA employees in California informed this teen girl that the biological male was in the correct locker room and that she, not the man, should seek an alternative locker room option.⁸ At yet another YMCA in Xenia, Ohio, a biological male exposed himself in a women's locker room. And at still another YMCA, this one in Port Townsend, Washington, when an elderly woman objected to the presence of a biological male in the women's changing area, she was banned from that YMCA. All of these local YMCAs, in following the YMCA's radical gender ideology, discriminated against women, whom they denied the benefit of a safe space to undress, while granting the biological males' perverse desires to undress alongside women.

Perhaps most concerning is not what is known of the YMCA's gender policies, but what is yet unknown. In recent weeks, the YMCA has either restricted access to the portions of its website that deal with gender policies or has taken down those pages altogether. By no means should one expect that the YMCA is changing its gender policies; rather, the YMCA is shielding those policies and future policies from public scrutiny. Such a lack of transparency by an organization that wields outsized influence over millions of impressionable young Americans is unacceptable.

II. YMCA's Policies Violate Federal Law and Policy

According to the YMCA, it “leverages ... more than \$600[million] in government grants” each year.⁹ As a recipient of federal financial assistance, it is obligated to comply with the mandates of Title IX of the Education Amendments. Title IX states that “no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”¹⁰ There is little room for interpretation where the law is so explicit. This broad prohibition underscores the law's role in eliminating gender-based barriers to women's equal participation in all aspects of programming and activities, providing for “the women of America something that is rightfully theirs—an equal chance.”¹¹

⁵ Malik Jackson, *NKC police investigating after report of indecent exposure at YMCA*, FOX4KC-WDAF, (April 21, 2025), <https://fox4kc.com/news/nkc-police-investigating-after-report-of-indecent-exposure-at-ymca/>.

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ Julia Johnson, *WATCH: Teenage girl cries while recalling transgender woman in YMCA locker room*, WASHINGTON EXAMINER, (January 16, 2023), <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/893321/watch-teenage-girl-cries-while-recalling-transgender-woman-in-ymca-locker-room/>.

⁸ Leif Le Mahieu, *Allowing Boys in Girls' Showers and Cabins*, DAILY WIRE, (May 28, 2025), <https://www.dailywire.com/news/parents-sound-alarm-on-ymca-camps-allowing-men-in-girls-showers-and-cabins?author=Leif+Le+Mahieu&category=News&elementPosition=undefined&row=0&rowType=Vertical+List&title=Parents+Sound+Alarm+On+YMCA+Camps+Allowing+Boys+In+Girls%E2%80%99+Showers+And+Cabins>.

⁹ *Our Impact*, THE YMCA, <https://www.ymca.org/who-we-are/our-impact> (last visited June 4, 2025).

¹⁰ 20 U.S.C. § 1681(a) (1972).

¹¹ *D.N. by Jessica N. v. DeSantis*, 701 F.Supp.3d 1244, 1254 (S.D. Fla. 2023) quoting 118 CONG. REC. 5808 (1972).

The YMCA's policies permitting biological men to invade the sanctity of spaces set aside for women undoubtably violates this law.

Moreover, President Trump issued an Executive Order prohibiting the use of federal funds to promote gender ideology.¹² Given the YMCA's express objective to "confound gender-based assumptions"¹³ and its acceptance of federal funds, it is in direct violation of this Executive Order.

III. Conclusion

The YMCA's policy of disfavoring and imperiling young girls and favoring and empowering those who choose to present as a gender other than their own is antithetical to the principles of federal civil rights law and gender equality. It is morally wrong and legally impermissible. The YMCA is a federally funded entity and is required, just like any other federally funded entity, to adhere to Title IX. Moreover, because the YMCA has recently hidden its policies from public view, federal oversight is even more crucial. For all these reasons, I request that your office commence a formal investigation into the YMCA's policies and their impact on young girls, examining all facets to determine the extent of its gender-based discrimination.

Sincerely,

Alleigh Marré

Alleigh Marré
Executive Director
American Parents Coalition

¹² Exec. Order No. 14168, 90 Fed. Reg. 8615 (Jan. 20, 2025).

¹³ Leif Le Mahieu, *YMCA Scrubs Transgender Guidance After Parent Group Raises Alarm*, DAILY WIRE, (May 30, 2025), <https://www.dailywire.com/news/ymca-scrubs-transgender-guidance-after-parent-group-raises-alarm>.