



Advocacy Toolkit

You care about ending
HIV criminalization.
You just don't know it yet.

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Hello!

You are here because you have partnered with people living with HIV (PLHIV), stakeholders, organizations, and networks nationwide to amplify HIV Is Not A Crime Awareness Day (#HINACDay)! The following advocacy social media kit is designed to be used for sample messaging and posts along with resources that will support you and your organization in your own advocacy and social media networks.

Before you get started, a note of gratitude is expressed towards you for joining in on the movement that has been building since 2010! Since the formation of the awareness day, networks, coalitions and organizations led by PLHIV, supported by allies and valued stakeholders have taken the movement to a new level. We are connected by the fight for justice, and as we know according to reports cultivated by [HIV Justice Worldwide](#), it's time for a global transformation. Because of the consistent push and dedication to decriminalizing HIV, [the awareness day is now launching globally so the toolkit, theme and logo all have a new look!](#) We are grateful that you and your organization have agreed to support and promote the work of many communities of PLHIV and allies committed to aligning with the efforts to end HIV criminalization. These are fierce and fearless folks that show up to lead networks and coalitions while working their full time jobs, seeking higher learning, leading their families and saving their communities from the violence and systemic harm these outdated HIV criminalization laws perpetuate.

Questions or concerns on how to use this toolkit? Please contact Kamaria Laffrey, Co-Executive Director at Sero Project kamaria.laffrey@seroproject.com.



A panel discussion during the inaugural HIV Is Not A Crime Awareness Day on February 28, 2022. (Clockwise from upper left: Kamaria Laffrey, SERO Project; Malcolm Reid, THRIVE SS; Tim Mendelson, The Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation; Nick Melloan-Ruiz, SPJI Graduate/Community Advocate)

About

Purpose of Toolkit: This awareness day was created to align communities with various stakeholders across the world to stand in unity against the harms and violence of HIV Criminalization. Joint efforts include partnership with the planning organizers of HIV Is Not A Crime Training Academy, Health Not Prisons Collective, HIV Justice Worldwide, and spaces aligned and resourced to respond to initiatives that support grassroots efforts led by PLHIV to end HIV criminalization.

The choice of February 28 is the bridge that connects the recognition of National Black History Month that houses National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (2/7) and National Women's History month which houses National Women & Girls' HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (3/10). According to the Williams Institute reports done in multiple states, Black and Brown communities are most impacted by HIV criminalization laws as well as further disenfranchised by HIV incidence rates. [Most recently reported in Maryland, 30% of the state population is Black, yet 82% of their HIV-related crimes involve Black people.](#) Black women and women of trans experience are also disproportionately impacted by these laws -- [especially in the system of policing being legitimized with solicitation or loitering laws, harm is inflicted on Black and Brown trans communities for simply existing or "walking while trans."](#) These two demographics are disproportionately impacted by HIV transmission rates and even more so in states that enforce HIV-specific and general laws that criminalize HIV. This date is also a symbolic nod to the legacy of Elizabeth Taylor on what would be her birthday and is someone who held a tireless commitment to bringing awareness to HIV/AIDS globally. Special thank you to The Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation for their ongoing collaborative support and efforts through their HIV Is Not A Crime campaign and ambassadors.



Compelled by radical compassion and bolstered by moral courage, Elizabeth Taylor became the first globally recognized celebrity HIV and AIDS activist.

Theme

You care about ending
HIV criminalization.
You just don't know it yet.



Whoopi Goldberg announced the inaugural HIV Is Not A Crime Awareness Day on the daily talkshow *The View* on February 28, 2022.

Ultimately, this awareness day is the opportunity to amplify the call to action to end state-sanctioned violence towards communities of people living with HIV across the world. Advocates, activists, allies, and accomplices are strengthening their resolve to commit to building and engaging with PLHIV networks, coalitions and people who have experienced HIV criminalization. The mobilization goes beyond blame and the bars of the carceral state by also supporting survivors of criminalization as they rebuild and structure their lives beyond penalties that altered their lives. These efforts to continue the mobilization in decriminalizing HIV include understanding the current and historical political climate as well as the systemic traction of racial, gender, and sexual reproductive justice legislation that has an impact on the quality of life of communities impacted by HIV. The overall goal for this awareness day campaign is to provide hands and feet to the actions laid out in various statements and policy recommendations made highlighting the harms of HIV criminalization, thus helping impacted communities defeat the over-policing and targeting of their health since the White House administration has included [ending HIV criminalization](#) in the [National HIV/AIDS Strategy \(NHAS\)](#) and is one of their top priorities with the support of the Office of National AIDS Policy (ONAP). We cannot end the HIV epidemic by 2030 unless we end the HIV criminalization laws that serve as a barrier to communities everywhere--**now**. For a list of organizations and individuals that have signed on in support of the movement to end HIV criminalization, please [click here](#) where you can also opt to sign on in support.

"It is time for a unified call to action that shows the support within, behind and for the movement to reform and repeal laws in almost 30 states singling out people living with HIV, sex workers, indigenous people, migrant and immigrant communities and LGBTQIA2S+ people."

-HINAC Day Sign On Letter

Recommended Best Practices

- Whenever you post an awareness day event, tag & follow The Sero Project or any of the organizations mentioned (don't forget your local and state organizations) on social media.

HIV Is Not A Crime
Awareness Day

SERO+



[@HINACDay](#)



[@TheSeroProject](#)



[The Sero Project](#)



[@theseroproject](#)

- Like and follow the [HIV Is Not A Crime Awareness Day Facebook page](#) for events and highlights of events you share from your community efforts through our awareness day [event sign up form](#).
- As you post about your events, include our hashtags and tag us so we can follow up and share!

"We need the history and harm behind these dehumanizing laws to stop disenfranchising people living with HIV."

-HINAC Day Sign On Letter

Sample Social Media Posts



X/Twitter

End HIV Criminalization laws! These laws undermine public health efforts by deterring people from HIV testing/treatment, stigmatizing those with HIV, & communities most impacted—incl POC, women, LGBTQ ppl, sex workers, and the formerly incarcerated. #HINACDay #HIVIsNotACrime



FACEBOOK

End the HIV Epidemic? End HIV Criminalization laws! These laws undermine public health efforts by deterring people from seeking HIV testing/treatment, stigmatizing those with HIV, & the communities most impacted by HIV—including POC, women, LGBTQ people, sex workers, and the formerly incarcerated. #HINACDay #HIVIsNotACrime



INSTAGRAM

End the HIV Epidemic? End HIV Criminalization laws! These laws undermine public health efforts by deterring people from seeking HIV testing/treatment, stigmatizing those with HIV, & the communities most impacted by HIV—including POC, women, LGBTQ people, sex workers, and the formerly incarcerated. #HINACDay #HIVIsNotACrime

Just copy and paste!

hashtags

Awareness Day

#HINACDay

COLLABORATIVE POSTS

#HIVIsNotACrime

RESOURCES SHARED

Health Not Prisons Collective

#HealthNotPrisons

Demanding Better

#DemandingBetter

#PeoplesHIVPlan

#HIVResolutions

True (Not) Crime Story

#TrueNotCrimeStory

State Focused

#HINACDay(state abbreviation)
ex: #HINACDayVA or #HINACDayNM



Robert Suttle @suttlepoints · Feb 28, 2022

...

Thank you for the acknowledgment, [#CNPtribe](#), giving justice-impacted Black gay men space to share our story when all some of us have is our voice. [#HINACDay](#) [#HIVIsNotACrime](#)

Please note: By participating in the #HINACDay social media campaign (including any of the above hashtags), you consent and authorize the SERO Project, the Health Not Prisons Collective and their affiliates to use and share your digital content from your tagged social media (pertaining solely to HIV Is Not A Crime Awareness Day) to promote and report on HINAC Day engagement.

Graphics

Click on the image and download from the [Dropbox folder](#). If you need support in using these recommendations, please contact Kamaria Laffrey kamaria.laffrey@seroproject.com



social1.png



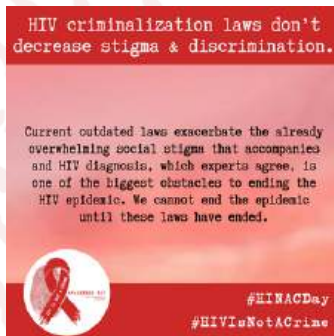
social2.png



social3.png



social4.png



social5.png



social6.png



social7.png



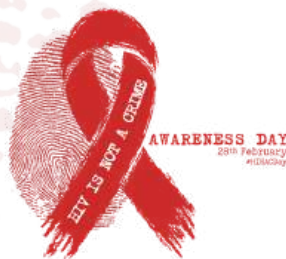
social8.png



social9.png



social10.png



HINACDay logo transparent.png



HINACDay white circle.png

Templates for Proclamation or Resolution

Use this template to request a proclamation for your awareness day. If you have already spoken to the proper officials, then you should reference that conversation in this letter. Be sure to enclose your proclamation draft with your letter. Simply click on the document pictured below. You will be directed to create a force copy of a Google Doc. From there, fill in the information within the brackets. Adjust the language of the letter to reflect the details of the event in your community.

Honorable [Name]
[Official Title]
[Mailing Address]

[Date]

Dear [Name],

February 28 is National HIV Is Not A Crime Awareness Day. HIV criminalization is antiquated enforcement of laws that either criminalize otherwise legal conduct or increase the penalties for illegal conduct based on a person's HIV-positive status regardless of transmission occurring, proof of intent, viral suppression and in many cases without regard to proof of disclosure. According to the Williams Institute, more than two-thirds of U.S. states and territories have enacted HIV criminal laws and are most prevalent in communities disproportionately impacted by HIV/AIDS for Black and Brown Indigenous People of Color, women, LGBTQ+ communities, migrant and immigrant communities, sex workers and people who have experienced incarceration.

This month provides an excellent opportunity for our [City / County / State / School] to demonstrate its support in amplifying the awareness of our community to undo these harmful laws. There is no study or data to support that these laws prevent or lower HIV transmission rates and they work against public health efforts to prevent, test and treat HIV. Moreover, this awareness day serves as a wonderful opportunity to educate the public [or students] on how HIV can be prevented, treated with more options than ever before and how HIV is actually transmitted which many laws disregard as they were written at the onset of the HIV epidemic.

[Your organization's name] would be honored if you would sponsor an official proclamation to recognize February 28 as HIV Is Not A Crime Awareness Day in [City / County / State / School]. Your proclamation would lend official recognition to the important work of educating the public on HIV and AIDS, as well as emphasize your personal commitment to raising awareness to show the impact these laws have on people living with HIV and vulnerable to HIV. Enclosed, please find a sample proclamation which may help your office compose the appropriate proclamation for [City / County / State / School].

[Insert the following paragraph if you are sponsoring a public awareness event.]

[List of organizations] are sponsoring [describe event] on [day] at [time] at [location]. We hope you will attend this special event to present your proclamation. If you are unable to attend, we ask that you or your official representative read the proclamation to our supporters on [day of the event]. If you or your staff have any questions concerning the request, the sample proclamation or ways to further engage for National HIV Is Not A Crime Awareness Day, please contact me at [telephone number]. I will follow up with your office regarding this request in the next few days. Again, we appreciate your support of National HIV Is Not A Crime Awareness Day. Thank you for your consideration of this special request.

Sincerely,

[Name]

Enclosure: Sample Proclamation Language

Sample Proclamation Language

Use this template for sample language to include with the letter when requesting a proclamation for your awareness day. It will guide the Simply click on the document pictured below. You will be directed to create a force copy of a Google Doc. From there, fill in the information within the brackets. Tailor this language to reflect your state/community. **Check out Pennsylvania's [2024 House Resolution No. 310](#) for inspiration!**

[Official's office name, county and state]

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, "HIV rates in [insert statistic relevant to your city/county/state];" and

WHEREAS, According to the AIDSvu interactive mapping system, "In 2020, 68% of people living with HIV in the U.S. resided in the 32 states with specific laws or enhanced sentencing against people living with HIV (PLWH);" and

WHEREAS, [insert specific data of HIV criminalization in your state]

WHEREAS, [insert a statement about MIPA, centering the leadership and voices of those most impacted by HIV criminalization;]" and

WHEREAS, [insert details, stats on impact of criminalization on a person once charged or accused]; and

WHEREAS, fewer than 10% of prosecutions involve actual HIV transmission and up to 25% of the cases prosecuted are for spitting or biting, which do not transmit HIV; more education to law enforcement, stakeholders in the judicial system and communities surrounding is needed on HIV transmission; and

WHEREAS, making a change to these laws includes educating communities, lawmakers, public health support staff, and leaders in impacted communities is a critical step to joining states like IA, CA, CO, NC, MO, NV, WA, VA, and GA that have modernized their laws and IL repealed; and


OR

WHEREAS, advocates in [insert state if you are in a state that changed their laws] have worked diligently to reform these laws but have to stay on defense with every new legislation cycle to ensure new laws aren't created that bring harm to PLHIV; and

WHEREAS, getting our Congress members to sign on in support to the REPEAL HIV Discrimination Act would require the federal government to assess and recommend changes to state and federal, criminal and civil laws that discriminate against people living with HIV furthering the push forward in ending the HIV epidemic; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, [insert name and title of official making the proclamation] do hereby proclaim (date) as NAME OF EVENT in [Name of CITY/COUNTY/STATE] and encourage community members to [call to action].

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the [insert name of county/state], this [__]th day of (month and year).

SEAL 

Officiant's Name, Title, Signature
Officiant's Signature

Additional Resources

The Williams Institute

- Search: HIV Criminalization

Center For HIV Law & Policy

- Sourcebook on State and Federal HIV Criminal Law and Practice

Clinical Guidelines on HIV Criminalization

Demanding Better Policy Agenda

Health Not Prisons Collective

HIV.gov

- Awareness Days

HIVJustice Worldwide Academy

Prosecutorial Guidelines

Ready, Set REPEAL! Advocacy Toolkit

Sero Project Justice Institute Toolkit

- SPJI Hosting an Awareness Day Module

Transgender Law Center

- Trans Agenda for Liberation



Order Swag!



If you are planning an HIV Is Not A Crime Awareness Day event in your community, please fill out [this form](#) to let us know about your plans! We'll then send a HINAC Day swag kit in the mail. (While supplies last. Some items may vary from items in the picture. Please allow 2 weeks for U.S. postal delivery.)