

Federal Taxes

Married same-sex couples are not eligible to file federal taxes jointly. This is especially significant when the two partners' incomes differ dramatically, such as in the case of a stay-at-home parent.

Social Security

LGBT people pay the same Social Security taxes, but do not have access to the spousal protections Social Security provides to heterosexual people, including the lump sum survivor benefit generally used for funeral expenses and access to a deceased spouse's higher monthly benefit.

Employment Discrimination

In most states, you can be fired from a job simply for being gay, bi or trans. This is not just an abstract concept. It really happens. Especially in these difficult economic times, LGBT people need a fair chance at keeping their employment.

Immigration Equality

A US citizen cannot sponsor their same-sex partner for immigration purposes. All too often LGBT people find themselves in heart-wrenching dilemmas, forced to choose between their country and the person they love.

Equal Taxes. Equal Rights.

It doesn't matter how long a same-sex couple has been together, come Tax Day they are considered single by the federal government. As single people, they must pretend their finances and their futures are not intertwined and forgo access to the many economic safety nets their tax dollars help fund. Social Security survivor benefits, estate tax deferral when inheriting property, and the ability to file taxes jointly are all denied. Every year, LGBT people are forced to pay taxes on their partner's health care benefits as if it were additional income. Opposite sex couples are exempt from this unfair taxation.

Even in Massachusetts and Connecticut, where same-sex marriages are recognized by the state, they are not recognized by the federal government, so same-sex couples are still deprived of all of the following rights. LGBT citizens pay the same taxes, but are deprived of critical rights.

Inheritance Rights

Current tax law allows a spouse to inherit an unlimited amount without incurring an estate tax. Same-sex couples are denied this right, as well as Tenancy by the Entirety, which ensures that debt inherited cannot be enforced against the couple's jointly owned property.

Family Health Care

Some employers extend health insurance benefits to same-sex couples, but this trend is undermined by the federal government's insistence on tating domestic partner benefits are as additional compensation.

Right to Travel

Most people in America can move and travel between states knowing that their legal rights will come with them. LGBT people cannot make that assumption. Is a better job worth losing family health insurance? If there's an accident during a family vacation will one partner be denied hospital visitation?

Open Military Service

The current Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy deprives LGBT Americans of their right to serve their country openly. This policy forces loyal American soldiers to lie by omission, and devalues their service if they cannot.

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