

Love ♥ Commitment ▲ Family

WHY MARRIAGE MATTERS

Marriage matters to gay people in similar ways that it matters to everyone. Gay and lesbian couples want to get married to make a lifetime commitment to the person they love and to protect their families.

Marriage says “We are family” in a way that no other word does.



♥ Marriage is one of the few times where people make a public promise of love and responsibility for each other and ask our friends and family to hold us accountable.

▲ Gay and lesbian couples may seem different from straight couples, but we share similar values — like the importance of family and helping out our neighbors; worries — like making ends meet or

the possibility of losing a job; and hopes and dreams — like finding that special someone to grow old with, and standing in front of friends and family to make a lifetime commitment.

It's as basic as the Golden Rule.

♥ Treating others as one would want to be treated includes allowing marriage for gay couples who are truly committed to each other.

▲ Most straight couples would never want someone telling them they couldn't marry, and when they think about it, many say they wouldn't want to deny that for anyone else.

Marriage strengthens families. It gives couples the tools and the security to build a life together and to protect their families.

♥ Couples get married because they want to be there for each other in sickness and in health, when times are good and when things get tough. State and federal marriage laws provide a safety net of legal and economic protections for married couples and their children — including the ability to visit your spouse in the hospital and to transfer property, which can mean being able to remain in the family home when your spouse has passed away.

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JUST THE FACTS — FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why do gay and lesbian couples want to marry?

For similar reasons as anyone who wants to marry. To stand in front of friends and family to make a lifetime commitment to the person they love. To share the joys and the sorrows that life brings. To be a family, and to be able to protect your family.

Does this change the definition of marriage?

No. Allowing same-sex couples to marry does not change the meaning of marriage. It simply allows same-sex couples to marry the person they love, to establish and protect a family and to make a lifetime commitment in the same way that other couples are able to.

How would gay and lesbian couples marry?

All couples that marry get a civil marriage through a license, usually obtained at a courthouse or City Hall. States could make civil marriage available to same-sex couples. Some couples also choose to marry in a religious setting. This would not change.

Does civil marriage for gay people affect churches or other religious institutions?

No. It does not affect religious marriages, religious institutions or clergy in any way. No religion would be forced to marry same-sex couples, or recognize same-sex marriage within the context of their religious beliefs.

Aren't there other alternatives to marriage for gay and lesbian couples?

There have been attempts to create marriage-like relationships, but they don't provide the same protections. For example, Domestic Partnership and Civil Union laws still don't qualify a spouse or children for health care coverage that employers only extend through marriage. If a loved one is sick and needs to take time off from work, same-sex couples are not eligible for family leave.

