

Our Mission

The goal of the ACLU Lesbian & Gay Rights and AIDS Project is equal treatment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. That means no discrimination by government, no discrimination in employment, housing, schools and public places, and fair treatment of our families and our relationships.

We also work to make sure that as society reacts to the AIDS epidemic, it does not discriminate against people with HIV, nor needlessly invade privacy or other basic rights.



The Lesbian & Gay Rights and AIDS Project

of the American Civil Liberties Union Foundation

The ACLU

America's foremost advocate of individual rights, the American Civil Liberties Union is a nonpartisan organization founded in 1920. With national headquarters in New York and Washington and 52 affiliates throughout the country, it is widely regarded as the nation's premier public interest law firm. The ACLU believes that the only way to protect freedom is to stand fast for the idea that everyone, no matter how unpopular, has the same rights.

As a part of the ACLU, the Project is in a unique position to work for equality. The ACLU's national network of affiliates broadens the Project's reach into every locality and into the federal government. Today, the ACLU brings more LGBT cases and advocacy initiatives than any other national civil rights organization.

Furthermore, the Project's work as part of the broad civil liberties agenda of the ACLU demonstrates how the LGBT and AIDS communities can work in concert with other social change movements to achieve a just society for all.

Contact Us

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LESBIAN & GAY RIGHTS and AIDS PROJECT

The Project

Founded in 1986, the Lesbian & Gay Rights and AIDS Project is a special division of the American Civil Liberties Union. The Project's staff are experts in constitutional law and civil rights, specializing in sexual orientation, gender identity, and HIV/AIDS.

What We Do

The Project brings "impact" lawsuits in state and federal courts throughout the country - cases designed to have a significant effect on the lives of LGBT people and those with HIV/AIDS. In coalition with other civil rights groups, we also lobby in Congress and support grassroots advocacy from local school boards to state legislatures. Our legal strategies are built on the idea that fighting for civil rights means not just persuading judges but ultimately changing the way people think. As we work in the courts for change, we use targeted media and outreach campaigns to change public attitudes and to give people the tools they need to act.

We Need Your Support

The ACLU accepts no government funding; we depend entirely on gifts from individuals and a small number of foundations. The Project's ability to work for equality depends on your support. Contributions to the ACLU's Lesbian & Gay Rights and AIDS Project are tax-deductible and support both national and local work.

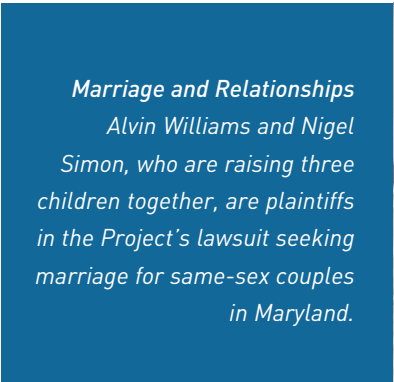
www.aclu.org/lgbt



Parenting
When her partner died, Tina Burch was forced into a custody dispute over her son with her partner’s parents. The West Virginia Supreme Court reversed a lower court and awarded her custody.

Parenting

Protecting the rights of LGBT parents and their children is central to achieving equality for all LGBT people. We work to remove all discriminatory restrictions on parenting by challenging laws that ban LGBT people from adopting or becoming foster parents, and fighting the penalties that gay parents face in child custody and visitation. Our work shows how limits on LGBT parenting hurt kids and debunks myths about same-sex couples raising children, while making the diversity of our families more visible.



Marriage and Relationships
Alvin Williams and Nigel Simon, who are raising three children together, are plaintiffs in the Project’s lawsuit seeking marriage for same-sex couples in Maryland.

Marriage and Relationships

The ACLU works for legal recognition for LGBT relationships and to achieve marriage for same-sex couples. Our cases show that same-sex couples are hurt in very real ways when their relationships are not protected in the way that marriage protects heterosexual couples. Couples should not be denied access to the benefits and responsibilities of legally recognized relationships – including health insurance, taxes, unemployment compensation, immigration status, family leave, inheritance, and hospital visitation.

Discrimination

Ensuring basic civil rights is at the heart of everything we do. The Project’s anti-discrimination work ranges from employment, to housing and public accommodations, to criminal justice reform, and the abolition of biased laws and regulations. The Project fought for years to help bring down state sodomy laws. We advocate for local and federal non-discrimination laws and insist that religious beliefs cannot be used to justify bias.

HIV/AIDS

The Project is working to eliminate discrimination against people with HIV in employment, including in sensitive jobs such as health care and food service, and in residential and nursing facilities. We work to make sure that a parent’s rights are not violated simply because of his or her HIV status. We seek to end censorship of AIDS prevention education. We’re committed to making sure that people are not deprived of the basic constitutional protections of equality, privacy, and free expression simply because they have HIV.

Youth and Schools

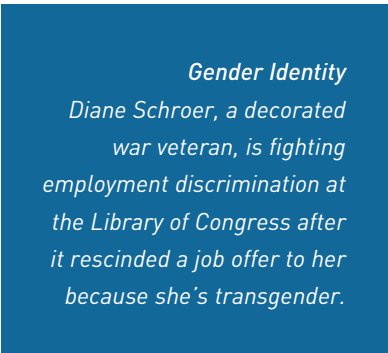
The Project has a special initiative focused on LGBT youth and schools. Through this program we’re working to make schools safe and bias-free for LGBT kids and teachers. For students, this includes the right to free expression, to establish gay-straight alliance clubs, to bring a same-sex date to the prom, and to be taught in an environment respectful of their sexual orientation or gender identity.



Youth and Schools
Marla Dukler and 16 of her classmates successfully fought to create a gay-straight alliance at Klein High School in Texas.

Gender Identity

The ACLU fights for the rights of transgender and gender nonconforming people. We bring impact lawsuits to end discrimination against transgender people in employment, schools and public accommodations. We believe that transgender people’s relationships should be recognized and legally protected. Similarly, we work to ensure that gender identity is not used against transgender parents in custody and visitation determinations. We work to get gender identity inclusion in state and local anti-discrimination policies, conduct outreach to transgender youth and students on their legal rights, and develop public education campaigns that raise awareness of the types of harms transgender people face.



Gender Identity
Diane Schroer, a decorated war veteran, is fighting employment discrimination at the Library of Congress after it rescinded a job offer to her because she’s transgender.

ACLU LESBIAN & GAY RIGHTS AND AIDS PROJECT

PLEASE CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE

Yes, I'd like to support the work of the Project by making a contribution. Like all ACLU special projects, the Lesbian & Gay Rights and AIDS Project is funded by contributions specifically designated for it. Contributions to the Project are tax-deductible.

Gift Amount: \$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1,000 \$ _____ (Other)

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