



NON-DISCRIMINATION LAWS: A FAIR SHOT

No one should have to worry about being fired from a job, evicted from an apartment, or turned away at the corner store because of who you are or whom you love. But in Texas, discrimination against someone on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression *still* isn't prohibited by law. Updating our laws to help end unfair discrimination is long overdue.

OPPORTUNITY IS FOR EVERYONE

The time is now for updating our non-discrimination laws to include LGBTQ Texans. According to a recent poll, **64% of Texans support updating non-discrimination laws** to cover lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people. It's shocking to realize that, despite this overwhelming support, our state laws prohibiting unfair discrimination *still* don't include LGBTQ Texans.

Laws that protect people from discrimination are about treating others as we want to be treated. LGBTQ Texans are our coworkers, neighbors, fellow parishioners, friends, and family. They work hard to take care of their families, pay their taxes, and contribute to their communities. So when they apply for a job, look for a safe place to live, or walk into a business open to the public, they deserve to be treated just like everyone else.

DISCRIMINATION LIMITS POTENTIAL

Despite the progress we've made, discrimination still shapes the lives of many LGBTQ people and their families. A recent study found that a quarter of LGBTQ adults experienced discrimination in the last year. And even those who had not reported that the risk of discrimination affected major life decisions such as where to live or whether to apply for a new job.

Experts tell us that although LGBTQ people have more education on average than their peers, they make less money and are more likely to live in poverty. They are more likely to experience food insecurity, housing instability, and unemployment or underemployment. And for LGBTQ people of color, these disparities are especially pronounced.

Updating non-discrimination laws can't end discrimination or poverty, but it would help ensure that LGBTQ Texans have the same opportunity to use their God-given talents to try to build a better life for themselves and their families as everyone else.

STATE LAW A KEY TOOL

Most employers, landlords, business owners, and government workers treat people fairly, but there will always be some who only do the right thing if the law requires it. We need good laws so that all Texans, including those who are LGBTQ, are treated the same—nothing more, nothing less.

LGBTQ Texans who face discrimination currently have little recourse. Although six Texas cities have enacted local ordinances that provide a measure of protection to their residents, these local laws cover only 20% of the population in the state. And the remedies provided by local laws are limited to municipal fines. A comprehensive state law is the only guarantee that everyone is covered.

SUPPORT COMPREHENSIVE NON-DISCRIMINATION PROTECTIONS

www.equalitytexas.org