

## Gay couples partner with hotel for first same sex weddings

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HONOLULU (HawaiiNewsNow) -

The same sex marriage law goes into effect a week from today. Wedding plans are in high gear and a major hotel is joining the partnership as well.

From the moment the marriage equality bill passed same sex couples have been planning ceremonies for midnight December 2nd the first day possible.

"The great thing about our couples is they understand they are not going to get their perfect wedding, but they are going to get something we think is even better because it's a community event," said Michael Golojuch, Jr., marriage equality supporter.

The Sheraton Waikiki will donate its Leahi Club, its premiere room for couples to marry. They'll have computers so couples can apply for their marriage license and agents there for verification.

"This is a great opportunity for us to make an impact with the gay and lesbian community and just say welcome," said Kelly Sanders, Starwood Hotels & Resorts, Area Managing Director Waikiki. "I think it's going to be a historic thing and something that you'll look back on and say hey I was there when."

Organizers say it's not a race to be first to marry.

"We've worked so hard. We did not stand out there for hours on end getting spit on and yelled at for one couple to be first it's about all of us coming together and crossing that finish line together," said Golojuch. "They have each put in their own into this battle and they will each come out stronger after the ceremonies."

There are also couples who are not going to participate in the group ceremony, and instead are opting for their own private wedding.

"The reason we don't want to wait is because we've been waiting for 15 years. I think that's a very long engagement," said Rev. Dr. Jonipher Kuono Kwong, First Unitarian Church of Honolulu Pastor, who will get married to his partner Chris Nelson.

Family and friends are flying in for the Kwong/Nelson wedding at the First Unitarian Church. Before moving to Hawaii they were living in California. They waited to get married. Then Prop 8 overturned gay marriage which is why this time they are planning a wedding in a two week time frame.

"At points I feel like bridezilla, running around with my head cut off and trying to get all these details together I think what's important is that at the end of the day we will get married," said Kwong.

All part of a historic I do.