

GAY PARTNER RIGHTS

Rights for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered (GLBT) individuals are in heated debate currently in the United States. Due to several factors, including a notable shift in the public's attitude toward sexualities that are different than heterosexuality, more and more Americans are open gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered. Although there are many issues that are currently in debate regarding the GLBT community, in terms of employment, GLBT workers are most likely to request benefits that are similar to benefits that are offered to same-sex domestic partners (see Domestic Partner Benefits). In the United States, Massachusetts is the only state that recognizes same-sex marriages; Vermont recognizes civil unions. Outside of these places, currently, the law does not require that employers provide GLBT employees with benefits for their partners, but it is becoming more and more common, especially within the field of higher education.

Although Vermont and Massachusetts recognize formal unions between same-sex couples, these unions are not legally binding in other states.¹ Therefore a couple who is married in Massachusetts may not qualify for domestic partner benefits, or similar, in another state.

See also Domestic Partner Benefits.

NOTE

1. Public Agenda, *Gay Rights: Overview* (n.d.), http://www.publicagenda.org/issues/overview.cfm?issue_type=gay_rights (accessed October 3, 2007).

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